

# Birds of South Dakota

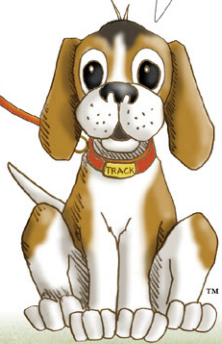
**White-breasted Nuthatch**  
*Sitta carolinensis*  
 nasal "yenk yenk"

Use this brochure to discover how you can identify birds with clues such as location, behavior, size, shape and field marks.

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## Field Marks

In addition to size, shape, location and behavior, field marks can be used to help identify birds. If you can't identify a bird on your hike, remembering what certain parts of the bird looked like can help you identify it when you get home. On your birding adventure, try to find a bird you don't know and see if it has any of the following field marks:

**wing bars**  
Does the bird have wing bars or patches?

**tail bars**  
Are there any stripes across the bird's tail?

**tail markings**  
Does the bird have white edges on its tail or a different color on the tip?

**nape**  
Is the bird's nape a different color?

**crest**  
Does the bird have a colored "cap" or a crest on its head?

**eyestripe**  
Does the bird have a stripe through the eye?

**eyebrow**  
Does the bird have an eyebrow? What color?

**beak or bill**  
What shape and color are the beak?

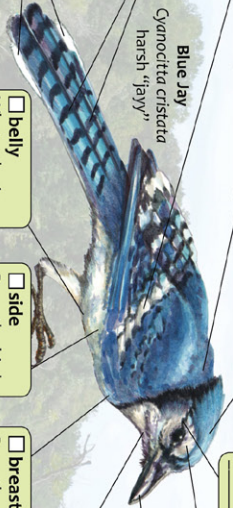
**belly**  
What color is the bird's belly?

**side**  
Does the bird have coloring on the sides?

**breast**  
Does the breast have speckles or bands of color?

**throat**  
Is the bird's throat a different color?

Blue Jay  
*Cyanocitta cristata*  
 harsh "jayy"





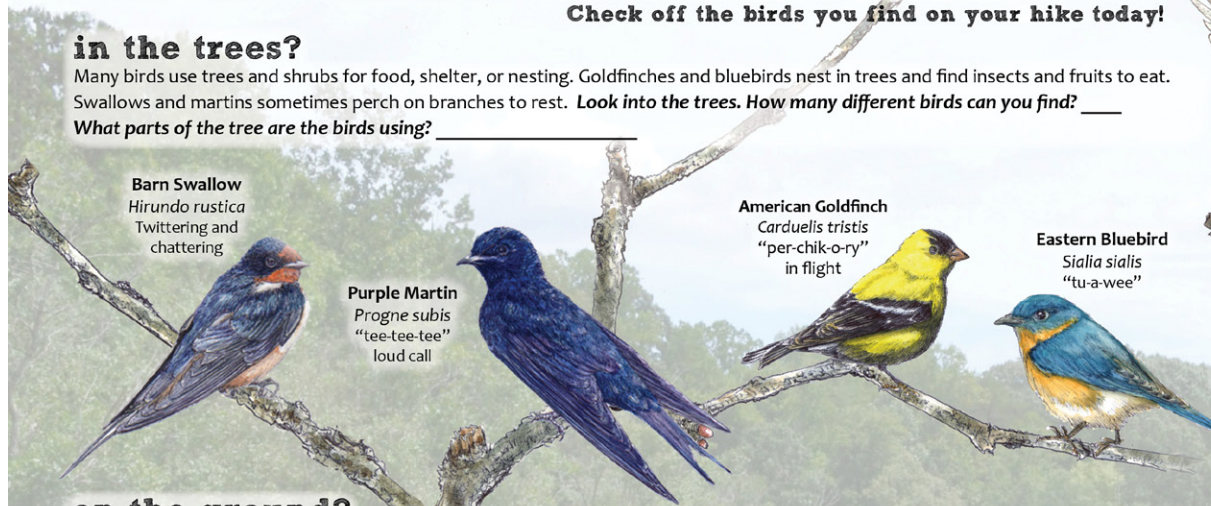
# What kind of bird is that...

When trying to identify a bird, the first things to look for are location and behavior. Is the bird up high making noise, or on the ground digging in leaves? Next, think about size and shape. Is it big like a crow or small like a sparrow? Does it have pointy wings or a long tail? Finally, you can use field marks to identify birds – flip to the side panel to discover how.

**Check off the birds you find on your hike today!**

## in the trees?

Many birds use trees and shrubs for food, shelter, or nesting. Goldfinches and bluebirds nest in trees and find insects and fruits to eat. Swallows and martins sometimes perch on branches to rest. **Look into the trees. How many different birds can you find? \_\_\_\_\_**  
**What parts of the tree are the birds using? \_\_\_\_\_**



**Barn Swallow**  
*Hirundo rustica*  
Twittering and chattering

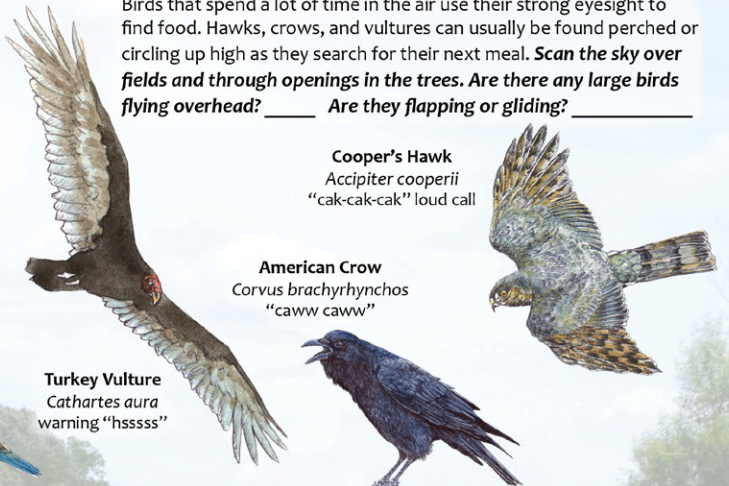
**Purple Martin**  
*Progne subis*  
"tee-tee-tee"  
loud call

**American Goldfinch**  
*Carduelis tristis*  
"per-chik-o-ry"  
in flight

**Eastern Bluebird**  
*Sialia sialis*  
"tu-a-wee"

## in the air?

Birds that spend a lot of time in the air use their strong eyesight to find food. Hawks, crows, and vultures can usually be found perched or circling up high as they search for their next meal. **Scan the sky over fields and through openings in the trees. Are there any large birds flying overhead? \_\_\_\_\_ Are they flapping or gliding? \_\_\_\_\_**



**Cooper's Hawk**  
*Accipiter cooperii*  
"cak-cak-cak" loud call

**American Crow**  
*Corvus brachyrhynchos*  
"caww caww"

**Turkey Vulture**  
*Cathartes aura*  
warning "hsssss"

## on the ground?

Birds that feed on the ground usually specialize in catching bugs or finding seeds. Robins use their beaks to pull earthworms from the ground. Cardinals scratch through leaves to uncover fallen seeds and berries. Mourning doves pick seeds and insects from areas of open ground. **Check the ground near trail, stream, and field edges. How many different birds can you find? \_\_\_\_\_ Can you tell what they are eating? \_\_\_\_\_**



**American Robin**  
*Turdus migratorious*  
"plurri, kliwi,  
plurri, kliwi"

**Mourning Dove**  
*Zenaida macroura*  
mournful "ooOOH  
cooo coo coo"

**Northern Cardinal**  
*Cardinalis cardinalis*  
whistles "woit woit  
chew chew chew."

**Downy Woodpecker**  
*Picoides pubescens*  
"Pik, pik, pik"

**Black-capped Chickadee**  
*Poecile atricapillus*  
"chickadeedeede"

## making noise?

Birds make all kinds of noises – some sing to attract a mate, while others will call attention to food, danger, or territory. The loud "piks" of the downy woodpecker often warn other birds of danger. Chickadees sometimes use their calls to signal that there's food in the area. **Close your eyes and listen for one minute. How many different birds can you hear around you? \_\_\_\_\_**

illustrations by David Williams,  
Wingin' It Works