

How to Use Peterson Field Guide to Eastern Birds

The Guide is grouped by eight main, visual categories:

1. Swimmers
2. Aerialists
3. Long-legged waders
4. Smaller waders
5. Fowl-like birds
6. Birds of prey
7. Non-passerine land birds
8. Passerine (perching) birds

Within each visual category, you need to know:

1. What size is the bird? Compare it to something you know. Is it bigger than a house sparrow, robin or pigeon?
2. What is its shape? Is it plump like a starling or slender like a cuckoo?
3. What shape are its wings?
4. What shape is its bill...short and stout, small and fine, dagger-shaped or hooked tipped?
5. What shape is its tail...square tipped, deeply forked, notched or rounded?
6. How does it behave?
7. Does it climb trees like a woodpecker?
8. How does it fly?
9. Does it swim or wade?
10. What are its field marks...spotted, streaked or plain?
11. Any tail patterns?
12. Any rump patches?
13. Any eye stripes and/or eye rings?
14. Any wing bars?
15. Any wing patterns?

The text is located next to the plates and includes voice, actions, habitat and similar species.

Range maps are located in the back and are easy to locate by gray thumb marks at the top of the page.

Red = Breeding range

Blue = Winter Range

Purple = Resident year-round

Red dots = Localized breeding area