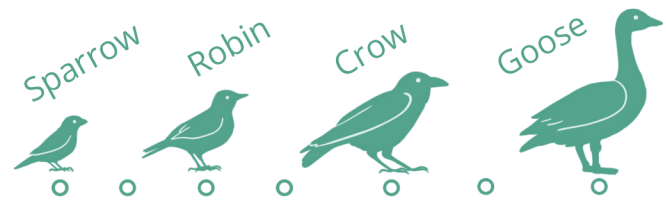




Bird Identification Tips

Size & Shape

- You can place birds into size categories based on common objects (phone, loaf of bread, etc.) or common birds
- Whether the bird is stocky or thin, has a crest, has long or short legs, etc. can help narrow it down (i.e. sparrows are stockier while warblers are thinner)
- Focus on the shape of the bill, tail, or feet.
 - Bill shape can help clue you into what family the bird belongs to
 - Bill size can help distinguish similar species like hairy and downy woodpeckers!



Colors & Patterns

- Pay attention to the primary colors, location of color patches, presence of wing bars, eye stripes, streaks, or spots
- Look at the color of the bill, legs, and feet



Sound

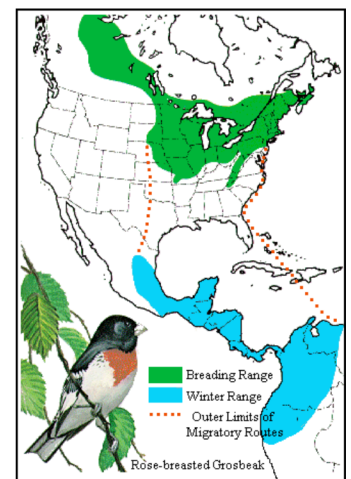
- Note whether the call is buzzy or clear, fast or slow, high or low pitched
- Call patterns can be remembered with some common mnemonics

Behavior

- Observe how the bird moves through the landscape
 - Soaring, flitting through a tree, perching, hopping on the ground
 - Some birds may have distinctive behaviors (i.e. eastern phoebes will tail wag)
- Flight pattern
 - Different groups of birds have distinctive flight patterns
 - Woodpeckers have undulating flight, raptors soar, etc.

Range / Season / Habitat

- Migratory birds like warblers may only be in VA for a few months each year
- Some birds like cardinals or bluebirds can be found in VA year round
- VA has many diverse habitats like wetlands, forests, and grasslands, that host their own groups of birds!
























BIRDING MNEMONICS



Smithsonian
National Zoological Park
Conservation Biology Institute

A song tends to be more complex, while a call is shorter and more simple

	pew pew pew, purdy-purdy- purdy-purdy		potato chip		teakettle teakettle teakettle Jimmy-Jimmy- Jimmy
	whoooo-AA- whoo, coo, coo		descending "cheer-cheery- cheer"		peter peter peter
	steady trill		Abrupt, evenly- spaced first few notes leads to bouncing trill		dropped ping pong ball
	witchety- witchety- witchety		here-I-am, look- up-here, see- me, high-in-the- tree, can-you- see-me?		Increasing zee-zee-zee- zee-zee- zeeee
	but-I-DO-love- you Seeoo Seeyeer		konk-a-reee!		poor...bob- WHITE!
	drink-your- teaaa!		sweet, sweet, chew, chew, see-it, see-it		slow, varied song of whistles and harsh notes
	Repeats phrase 2-8 times before next phrase		Rambling warble but includes distinct "maaaanh"		Repeats phrase twice before next phrase