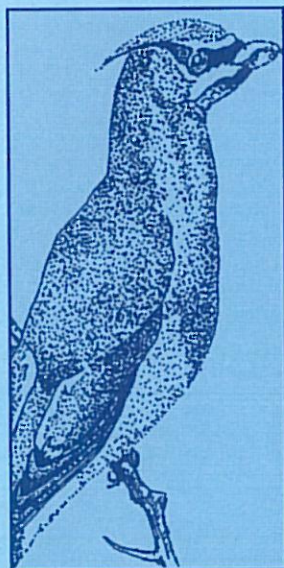


COMMON  
SASKATCHEWAN  
RIVER VALLEY  
BIRDS & ANIMALS



BY JOE MEEHAN  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JULIAN SADLOWSKI

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# Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges with profound gratitude the following for assistance provided. While the task may have been carried on by the author, the assistance, material and services rendered in its preparation, has made it the work of a community of persons interested in identifying animal species of the River Valley

The Magnificent Artwork of Julian Sadlowski

Keith Anderson, Horticulturist, City of North Battleford

Bernard Milliette and Clarence Briand  
for computer expertise

W.A. (Bill) Chappell Field Biologist,  
Ducks Unlimited Canada

Rena Meehan for her encouragement and (not the least)  
her typing

Dedicated to the memory of Steven Beardsworth

# INTRODUCTION

Local artist Julian Sadlowski appeared in the office one day with 43 sketches of birds and animals that inhabit the Saskatchewan River Valley. He said, "Keith, I think we should do another book." What are you going to say? The fact that the artwork was already complete at a reasonable cost (free) made the possibility of the book a reality.

Common Saskatchewan River Valley Birds and Animals is the second book in a series of unknown limits. With each book published, a few more titles of books yet to be written come to mind.

The people who make up a community have always amazed me. Firstly, in any given community reside the talented and qualified people to accomplish almost anything. Secondly, there are always people prepared to give of their time and/or work for wages that do not even come close to compensating them for their abilities. To be part of such a community is an enriching and enduring experience.

I was fortunate in securing the authoring services of Joe Meehan to write this book. Those of you who have read the first book, "Common Saskatchewan River Valley Plants," will recognize Joe's name as author of that publication. Joe Meehan currently works as a high school teacher in North Battleford. He comes from a strong forestry background and worked in that industry for some time. Joe's interests in nature and natural ecosystems have led him to innumerable wonderful experiences in the wilds of this country as well as countries abroad. He is an inspiration and a pleasure to work with.

This book is not a comprehensive listing but is intended to assist the amateur nature enthusiasts of the Saskatchewan River Valley to identify the wildlife commonly encountered there. Joe's descriptive text, along with the beautiful sketches from Julian Sadlowski, make this book as easy to use as the first one. It is a wonderful thing to have locally produced nature books specific to the plants, birds and animals in the area where you are hiking. I hope you find this book useful and informative and like Joe said in the first book, "Happy hiking; let your senses drink in the wonders of creation.

Keith Anderson

## What's in a Name?

Taxonomy is the name given to the universal process whereby living organisms get scientifically classified and named. The common name that we know animals by, for instance the beaver, has a different common name in other languages. In French it is called "le castor". For scientists around the world to know that they are discussing the same plant, animal or other organism, a universal naming system had to be developed which became known as taxonomy.

In the 1700's Swedish naturalist Carolus Linnaeus developed the system that is currently used. The system he devised was based on the unique characteristics an organism possessed. At the same time, Linnaeus invented the binomial (two name) method of name classification or the genus/species method. Latin is the official language used in this process.

At its inception, this system was thought to be quite crude; however, overtime, it has been refined and continually developed as more information about organisms became available to scientists. Now the naming and grouping of organisms depends not only on unique external physical characteristics but also genetics and other characteristics that could include such things as feeding habits.

The following is an example of the scientific naming of the Beaver. The naming of any organism begins with its placement in a large general grouping known as a kingdom. It is then progressively placed into smaller groupings (see opposite) that share similar characteristics. The final descriptive name given to an organism is the species name, which identifies it specifically.

1. Kingdom     Animalia  
(as opposed to plant or other organism - more than  
1 million species in the group)

2. Phylum     Chordata  
(animals that have spinal support  
- more than 40,000 species in this group)

Sub-phylum   Vertabrata  
(animals that have a backbone)

3. Class         Mammalia  
(animals that produce milk - more than 5,000 species  
in this group)

4. Order         Rodentia  
(more than 3,000 species in this group all with 2pr. of  
incisor-type teeth. Rodo-to gnaw)

5. Family       Castoridae  
(rodents with flattened, scaly tails)

6. Genus        Castor     (latin for beaver)

7. Species      canadensis  
(refers to the species found in Canada)

The scientific name for the beaver is  
Castor canadensis



# *Index of Species*

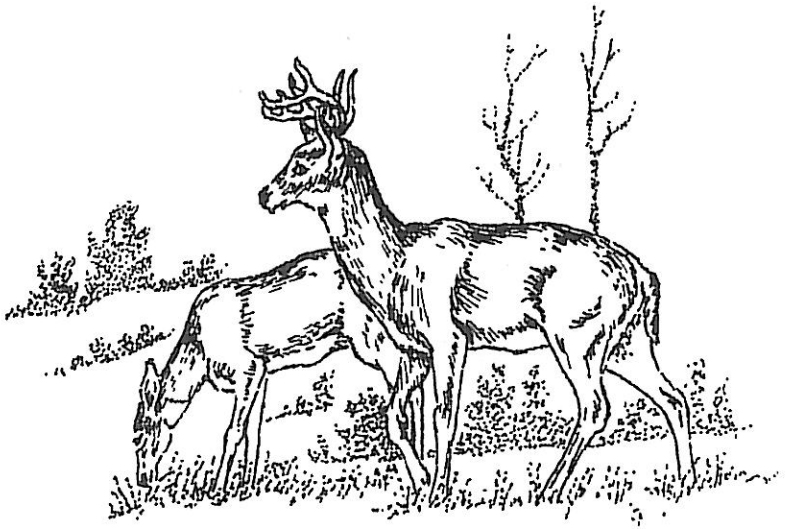
## **MAMMALS**

1. White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)
2. Coyote (*Canis latrans*)
3. Snowshoe hare (*Lepus americanus*)
4. Short-tailed weasel (*Mustela erminea*)
5. Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*)
6. Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)
7. Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)
8. Red squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
9. Least chipmunk (*Eutamias minimus*)

## **BIRDS**

10. Black-billed magpie (*pica pica*)
11. American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
12. Blue jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*)
13. Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
14. Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
15. Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)
16. Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*)
17. Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)
18. Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*)
19. Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens*)
20. Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*)
21. Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*)
22. Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

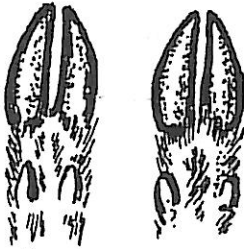
23. Northern Oriole (*Icterus galbula*)
24. House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)
25. Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*)
26. Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)
27. Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)
28. Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)
29. Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*)
30. Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*)
31. Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)
32. Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)
33. Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*)
34. White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*)
35. Black-capped chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*)
36. Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)
37. American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*)
38. Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*)
39. Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)
40. Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*)
41. Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*)
42. Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*)
43. White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*)
44. Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*)
45. Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*)
46. American Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*)



### White-tailed deer

Phylum: Chordata  
 Class: Mammal  
 Order: Artiodactyla  
 Family: Cervidae  
 Genus: *Odocoileus*  
 Species: *virginianus*

# 1

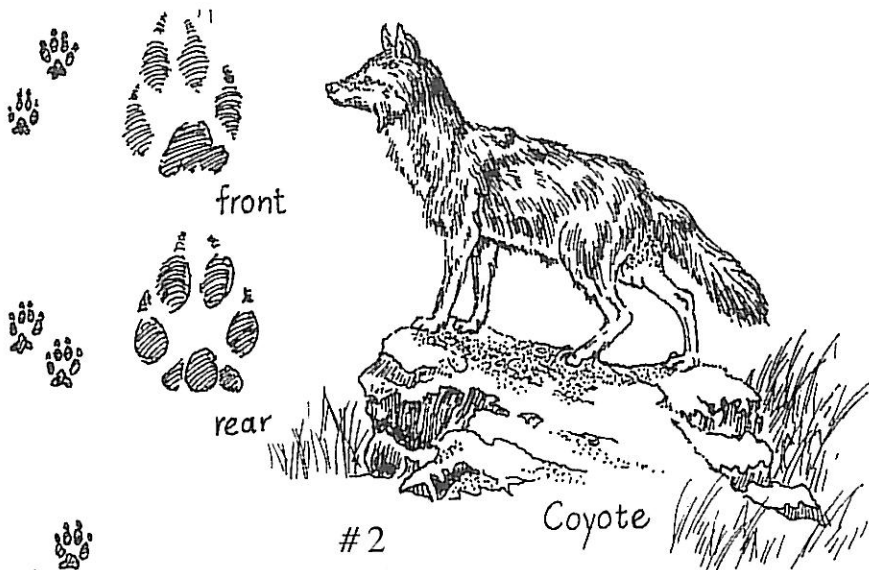


front rear  
 foot prints

tracks

Until the 1880s, the prairies were the domain of Mule Deer but as human settlement proceeded west the White Tail deer did too. The White Tail

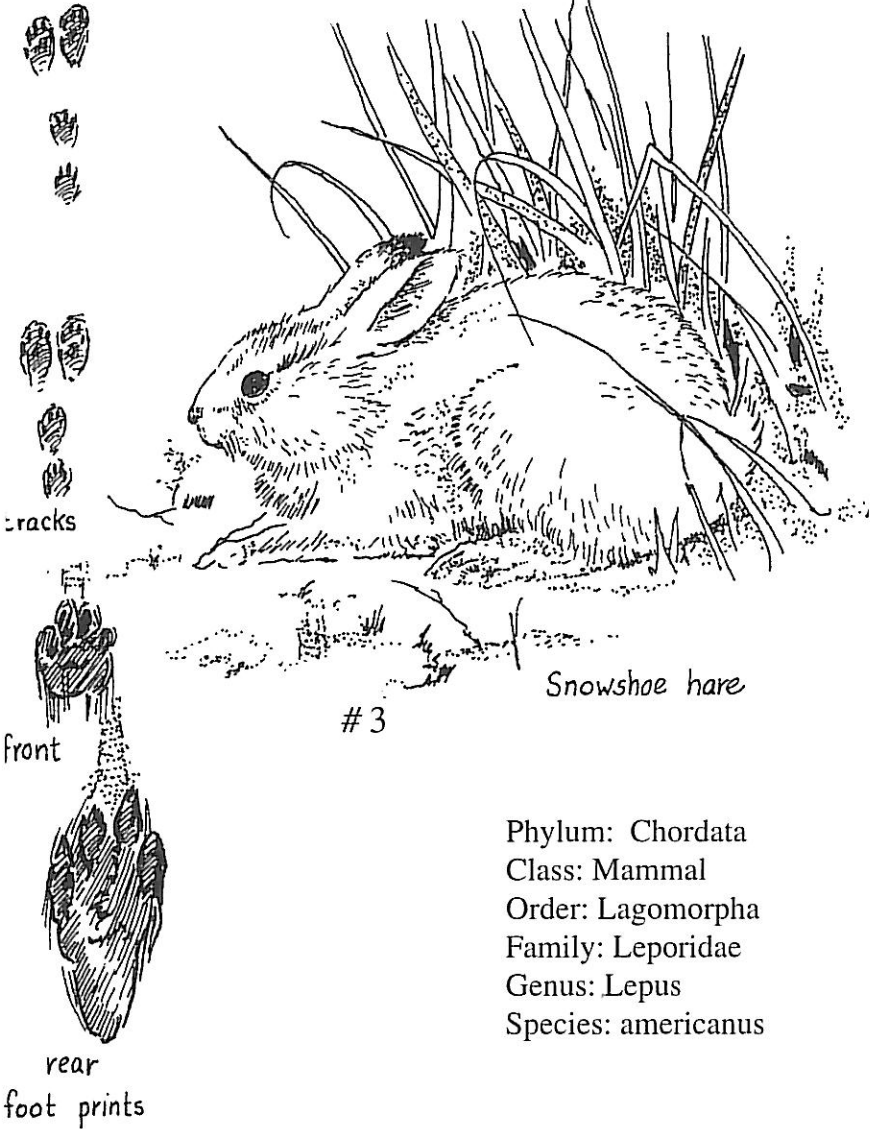
is easily distinguished from the Mule deer when it flees. When it sprints away the White Tail deer raises its tail & flashes the flag-like underside which is white. The antlers on a White tail have tines, or points that simply extend outward from the main beam. Deer usually eat during the half-light of dawn and dusk, but in the spring the demands of pregnancy force does to eat during the day. Their social habits are generally solitary. Deer have a keen sense of smell and use scent glands to communicate dominance, territory, etc. They are primarily browsers, living on buds & twigs in winter & supplement their diet with grass in summer. Their principle enemy on the prairies is the coyote.



Phylum: Chordata  
 Class: Mammal  
 Order: Carnivora  
 Family: Canidae  
 Genus: Canis  
 Species: latrans

Its scientific name means “the barking dog” which is derived from the Aztec name for it, coyotl.

It is a medium sized dog with a slender muzzle, large pointed ears, long slender legs, small feet and a tail about one half its body length. Its general colour is buffy grizzled gray, the throat & belly are white, the long guard hairs are black-tipped producing a dominant dorsal stripe and grizzled flanks. The tail is also black tipped. Their maximum weight is about 34kg. They are very intelligent, & timid. They are very social among other coyotes, and live in family packs. Both parents raise the pups. Their calls consist of a quick series of yelps, followed by a falsetto howl. They can run 35-43 m.p.h. and bound up to 14 feet. They are primarily nocturnal. Their hunting territory can be up to 12 miles in diameter. They feed largely upon small mammals and carrion and to a lesser extent on birds, deer, insects and vegetation. Coyotes prefer to live in hilly areas with poplar or willow bluffs.



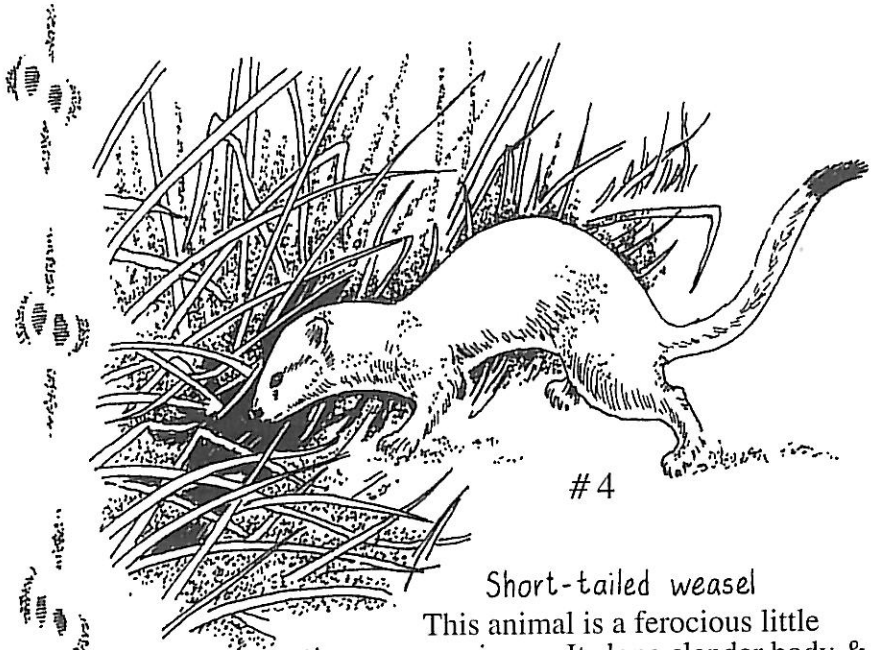
Phylum: Chordata  
 Class: Mammal  
 Order: Lagomorpha  
 Family: Leporidae  
 Genus: Lepus  
 Species: americanus

## Snowshoe hare

The snowshoe hare is a medium-sized hare, weighing about 2 Kg, with large broad hind feet and larger ears than the cotton tail rabbit. In summer it is a grizzled rusty or grayish brown with a blackish mid-dorsal line, buffy gray flanks & a white belly. The face legs & throat are cinnamon brown, the ears are brownish & black tipped with a white border. In winter it turns white, and only the eyelids and tips of the ears are black. The large hind feet are padded with thick stiff hairs hence the name "snowshoe hare". The change of colour of the hare is triggered by the length of day. It achieves this by molting or shedding one coat of hair which is replaced by the opposite colour.

It is nocturnal in its activity which is a response to light so it may emerge from cover and begin to feed on cloudy/ dull days. They follow familiar runways to their feeding areas and in the summer they groom their trails by clipping the growing vegetation from them.

Snowshoe hares rely mostly on their sense of hearing and communicate by thumping their hind feet rapidly. They are social animals and often, several hares inhabit the same area. They live their whole lives in a relatively small area. In the summer they eat a large range of vegetation, and in winter buds twigs and bark. They are forest dwellers and avoid open areas in their feeding and limited travel.



# 4

### Short-tailed weasel

This animal is a ferocious little carnivore. Its long slender body & tail is up to 12 inches long. Its small face is not broader than its neck, and its tail is about 1/3 its length. It has prominent scent glands which give it a musky odour when it is aroused. The male is about twice as large as the female.

Phylum: Chordata Family: Mustelidae Class: Mammal  
 Genus: Mustela  
 Order: Carnivora  
 Species: erminea



front



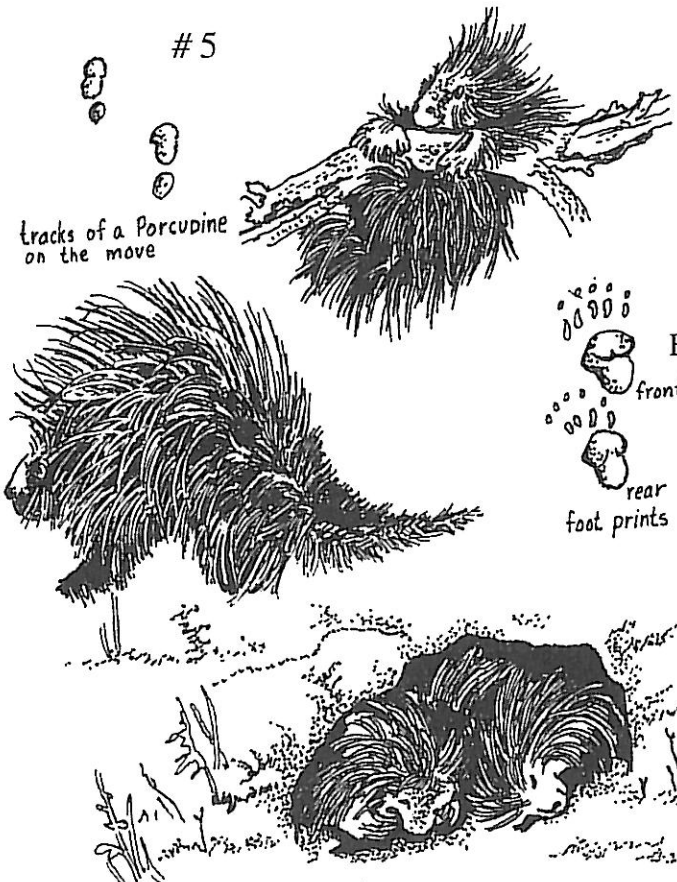
rear

foot prints

tracks of a Weasel on the move

### Porcupine

The Porcupine is Canada's second largest rodent, measuring up to 1m. in total length & weighing up to 6.5 kg. It has a robust body, a small head with a blunt muzzle, a thick tail, short legs and long curved claws with 4 toes on the fore feet & 5 on the rear. It is covered with a dense woolly brown undercoat, long cream coloured guard hairs & stiff quills. The quills are located on the head & neck to rump, & tail. Those on the back are longest. Quills replace themselves in 10 days to 6 months. The brown tip of each quill is covered with backward projecting scales,



Phylum: Chordata  
 Class: Mammal  
 Order: Rodentia  
 Family: Erethizontidae  
 Genus: Erethizon  
 Species: dorsatum

Porcupine

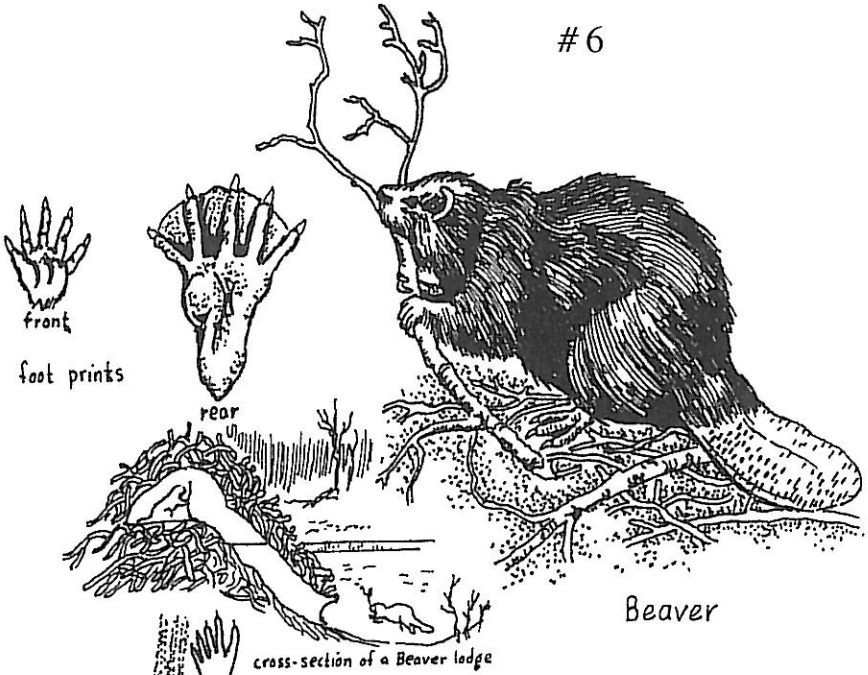
Porcupine cont.:

which cause the tip to gradually work inward.

During most of the year they are solitary, the exception is mating season. They are vocal during mating season and their grunts and squeals can be heard from a great distance. Their sense of smell and hearing is acute. Porcupines walk with a shuffling gait and break into a lumbering gallop when alarmed but can easily be overtaken. They are excellent tree climbers and swimmers, are primarily nocturnal and are active all winter. Their diet includes the leaves of forbs, shrubs, and trees. In winter they eat the inner bark of trees as well as twigs and buds. They are found in both deciduous and coniferous forests. They are preyed upon by bobcats, coyotes, and foxes,



#6



Beaver

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Mammal  
Order: Rodentia  
Family: Castoridae  
Genus: *Castor*  
Species: *canadensis*

tracks of a Beaver on the move.

## Beaver

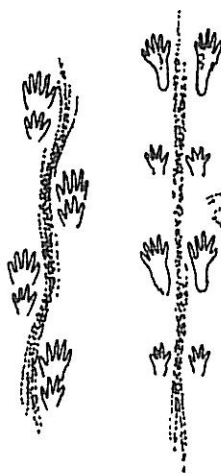
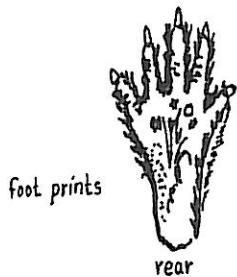
The beaver is Canada's national animal emblem. It was the first natural resource to be exploited, and played a leading role in the development of New France and Ruperts Land (former Hudson Bay Co. Territory).

The beaver pelt actually became a unit of currency and was the cause of bitter trade wars and competition.

The ears and nostrils are equipped with valve-like flaps which close under water. The small forepaws have elongated digits and slender claws to handle wood. The second claw on the hind feet is serrated & used to comb & groom the coat. The unique tail is sparsely haired, the caudal vertebrae are flattened and surrounded by a gelatinous cortex. It serves as a rudder while swimming, a prop in standing & a lever in dragging logs. Near its anus it has two large scent glands (castors) which discharge a musky scent, and also oil glands which provide oil for grooming the hair. The under layer of hair is dense & dark the outer layer ( guard hairs) are long & a rich brown colour. The head & shoulders are brighter brown than the back & the underparts are dull chestnut brown. Adults usually weigh between 15 & 35 kg.

Beavers have an elaborate society with the female as the central figure. There is a well developed social hierarchy based on size and clan communization. They have auditory signals of low whines & bellows & the tail-wack alarm. They are usually nocturnal but are active on dull days or late afternoon. They swim with only the hind legs using the tail as a rudder. Beavers are active all winter in their lodges & beneath the ice.

Beavers are most known for their dams which are built to achieve a pond of 6 to 10 feet in depth to permit winter swimming under the ice. The lodge may be built in the pond or excavated from the stream bank. Their food consists of the bark, leaves, & buds of trees as well as aquatic vegetation. They build up feed piles of Aspen near the lodge in the fall for winter food.



Muskrat

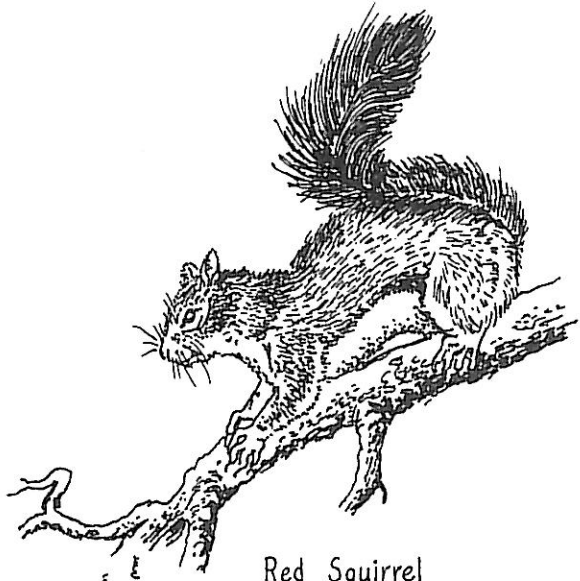
Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Mammal  
Order: Rodentia  
Family: Muridae  
Genus: Ondatra  
Species: zibethicus

## Muskrat

The Muskrat is the largest of the North American rats growing up to 60 cm in total length & weighing up to 2 kg. It is adapted to an aquatic life and is an important fur bearer. Like the beaver, it has fleshy furred lips which close behind the incisors to enable it to gnaw under water without getting water in its mouth. It has short legs & grasping front feet. The hind feet are large with padded toes which are slightly webbed. The long tail is laterally compressed & only sparsely covered with hair. The waterproof fur is composed of a dense, soft under fur & longer guard hairs. The dorsal fur is mahogany brown, darkest on the head & rump. The flanks are chestnut and the underside is olive gray.

As an amphibious rodent that spends most of its time in water, it is an excellent swimmer and can remain submerged for up to seventeen minutes under stress but 2-3 minutes is the normal period of submergence. It is mostly nocturnal but may be seen feeding in daylight, particularly on cloudy days.

They are vicious fighters & dangerous when cornered. They live in family units, occupying a home territory of 69-79 meters. Their homes are constructed of rushes and cattails and plastered with mud. They also use bank dens with the entrance under water or build push up dens of mud & pond vegetation over a hole in the ice. They feed on pond vegetation and aquatic animals such as mussels. Northern Pike (Jackfish) and mink are their serious enemies.



Red Squirrel



front



rear

tracks of a Red Squirrel  
on the move

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammal

Order: Rodentia

Family: Sciuridae

Genus: *Tamiasciurus*

Species: *hudsonicus*

## Red Squirrel

Red Squirrels make their presence known from the safety of a tree limb by their constant scolding of intruders . They begin their alarm with a chik-chick-chick sound, which increases to a cherrr & a whuck-whuck as a stranger approaches.

The red squirrel seldom exceeds 45 cm. in total length, its tail is about 3/4 the length of the body. The head is short & broad. Black whiskers (vibrissae) are prominent on the nose, cheeks, & eye-brows. The summer coat is glossy olive brown above, the underparts are white. The backs of the ears & legs are cinnamon coloured. There is a prominent white eye-ring and black flank stripe. In winter the fur is much longer & silkier. The undercoat is a thick lead gray, but the general coat colour is much brighter. A clear orange- red stripe runs from head to tail & the flanks are more reddish-brown.

Squirrels possess speed , agility & boundless energy. They are solitary, & intolerant of strange animals including its own species. They are territorial, and seldom venture far from the trees to feed, they rest in the middle of the summer day & usually restrict their winter activity to the warmer part of the day. They are active food gatherers & store their winter needs during the summer harvest. Their food items are conifer seeds, nuts, fruits, bark, & mushrooms which are cut & hung to dry in the trees. They are also carnivorous, and are an important link in the Boreal food chain.



Least chipmunk



front



rear  
foot prints

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Mammal  
Order: Rodentia  
Family: Sciuridae  
Genus: Eutamias  
Species: minimus

tracks of the Least chipmunk on the move

## Least Chipmunk

There are 4 species of chipmunk in Western Canada of which, the Least Chipmunk, is the smallest. Its forehead is brown, there are 3 brown stripes crossing the cheeks with the middle one running through the eye; between these are white lines and the nape is gray. There are 5 dorsal black stripes, edged in brown down the back, the middle one running from base of forehead to base of tail. The lateral dark stripes are short & run only from flanks to the hips. Between the dark stripes are 4 gray lines. The shoulders are tan, the rump & hind legs are gray, and the underparts are white. In summer their coats are more tan than the grayish winter coat. Their length is about 22cm with an average weight of about 43g.

The Chipmunk is quick and agile and preoccupied with gathering food. It is active only in daylight. It utters a wide variety of calls from a monotonous wop-wop & bird-like chip-chip to an alarm call tsp prrr followed by a trill.

In winter it enters a semi hibernation in which it wakes to take food from its store pile. It lives & stores its food underground. It's diet includes a wide range of seeds from berries, and it rejects the pulp. They also eat the seed of grasses, sedges, & weeds, and eat insects & occasional young birds. They are preyed upon by snakes, hawks, and weasels.



# 10



Black-billed magpie

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Corvidae  
Genus: Pica  
Species: pica

# Black-billed Magpie

## Identification

44-55cm. long, tail 24-30cm. The black-billed magpie is a black and white-backed bird with a long tail and partly white wings, a member of the crow family. Its young birds have white spots on the black throat and upper breast. The white markings are a washed sooty color. The magpie is of the few birds which keep the same mate year after year.

## Habits

Thickets lining the banks of the North Saskatchewan River, through open farm land as well in the residential area of the city of North Battleford and Battleford. Their food is chiefly animal, large numbers of insects, grasshoppers & cutworms are their favorites but they take mice, snakes, young birds and eggs, carrion, fruit and waste grain. They frequently pick insects and ticks off the backs of livestock, deer and other large animals. Magpies are one of the few birds that have been seen eating salt.

## Voice

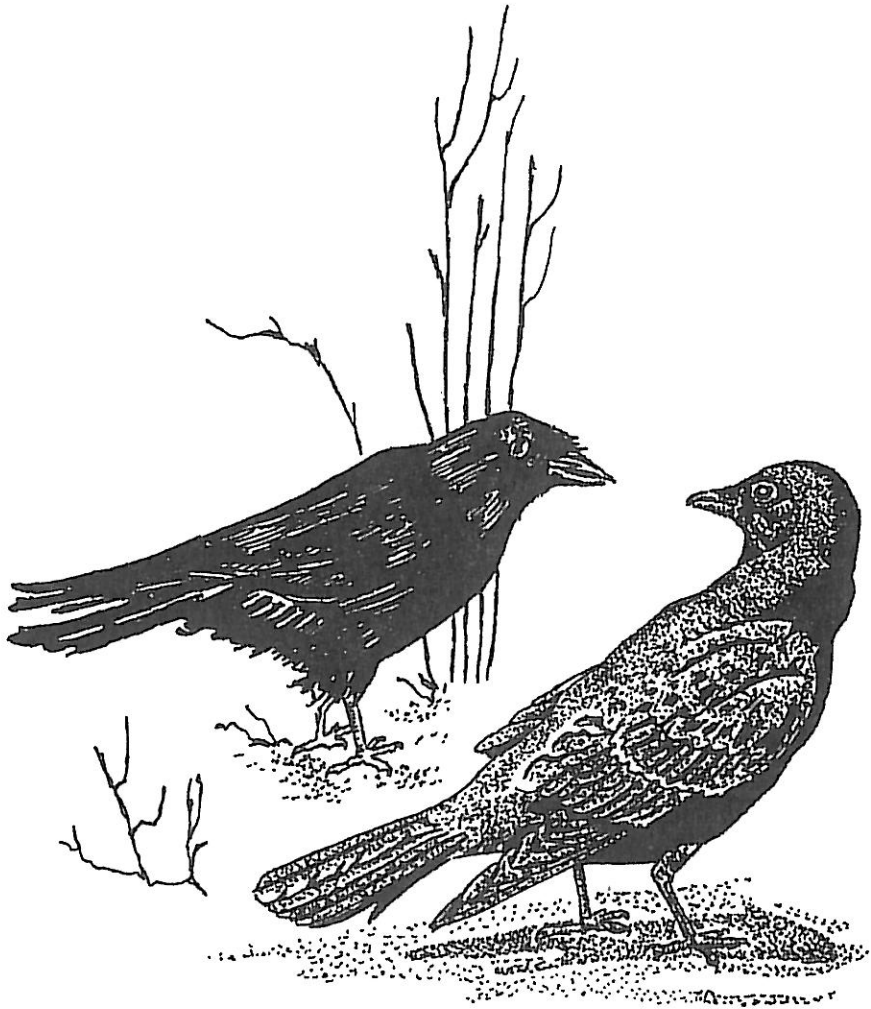
The magpies' calls ranges from harsh cacks to mellow whistles. In captivity they imitate humans speech.

## Nest

A huge mass of coarse sticks with an opening in both sides leading to a cup of fine twigs, grasses, and rootlets cemented with mud and lined with fine grass and hair, the same nest is used by a single pair as long as they breed together. Magpies breed in loose colonies. Nests may be almost at the ground or as high as 18 meters. The 5 to 9 eggs are evenly and heavily marked with brown.

## Range

Magpies are permanent residents. They are common in the southern portion of the province but are rarely observed in the far northern forested area. The magpie is not a migratory bird.



*American Crow*

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Corvidae  
Genus: Corvus  
Species: brachyrhynchos

## Identification

35-45cm., black. It is distinguished by its deep, steady wing beat..

## Habits

The changes brought by civilization have been very favorable to the common crow. Crop lands replacing forests give year-round feeding ground, and scattered forest remnants proved ideal nesting sites . When the breeding season is over crows begin to gather in flocks and in the fall the more northern birds move southward. In winter communal roosts are established where 5,000 to 200,000 birds gather for the night. During the day they travel out as much as 90 Kms. to feed. The common crow eats quantities of insects, both as adults and as larvae. The birds are omnivorous, as opportunity presents they eat carrion, shellfish, mice, reptiles, wild fruit seeds, nuts, and the eggs and young of birds. They are often persecuted because of these much exaggerated depredations. Actually there is no proof that any species of bird is less numerous because of the crow.

## Voice

Everyone knows the adult's ca-ah, ca-ah. Young crows have a different squack-like call and adults are capable of a variety of calls at various pitches. Crows can be taught to mimic human speech. One personal observation was the pleasant cooing sound when the female sits on a nest preparing to lay eggs. The cooing is a soft murmuring sound like pigeons or doves but reference to this was not found in any of the books used to research the crow.

## Nest

Usually in woods well up in a tree but occasionally as low as 6ft. Sometimes in an isolated tree or bush. The large, well built nest is made of sticks lined with soft material. The 3 to 5 greenish eggs are irregularly blotched with brown, both parents incubate the eggs. Crow nests weather well and are often used in subsequent years by other birds, like owls and various hawks.

## Range

They are found in the Northern Hemisphere. Crows are seldom seen in Saskatchewan in the winter.

# 12



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Corvidae  
Genus: Cyanocitta  
Species: crista

Identification:  
(30cm) Crested, slightly bigger than a robin, blue upper parts, gray under parts, black necklace & white spots in wings and tail. Young similar to adults.

### Habits

The big, noisy blue jay is one of the most colorful of the wild birds that have responded favorably to civilization and become common in the shade trees of eastern towns, but it is essentially a woodland creature and is still most abundant in open oak and beech forest of Eastern Canada. After breeding jays gather in flocks that do much to enliven the fall woods with their calls and flashes of blue.

The blue jay is about three quarters vegetarian-- deciduous woodland nuts & seeds, and corn being its staple foods. During summer its diet becomes preponderantly insectivorous. Jays bury more acorns and beach nuts than they can eat and therefore become beneficial in planting forests.

### Voice

Extremely varied, harsh calls, a trumpeting whistle, scream like a red-shouldered hawk, a flute-like call, and a song of soft warble and twitters

### Nest

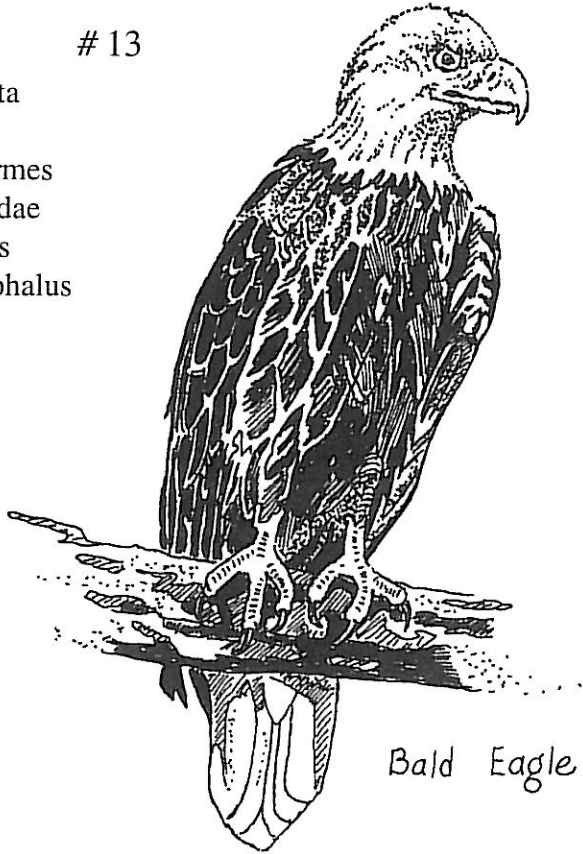
In a tree crotch or on branches near the main trunk up 10-15 ft, made of sticks with grass and other softer material at the center to form a cup. The 4-6 buff to greenish eggs are spotted with brown, mostly heavily at the large end.

### Range

Partially migratory, although primarily an eastern bird they are occasionally seen in Saskatchewan.

# 13

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Falconiformes  
Family: Accipitridae  
Genus: Haliaeetus  
Species: leucocephalus



Bald Eagle

**Identification:**

(78-108cm) (spread 2-2.5m) The adult has a white head & tail, a yellow bill, and is very large. The immature birds have a dusky head and tail and a dark bill and its under wing & tail feathers are whitish.

**Habits:**

It glides & soars with occasional wing beats as it watches for prey with its very sharp eyes. It feeds mostly upon fish and therefore lives near water.

**Voice**

A harsh creaking cackle, kleeek-kik-ik-ik-ik or a lone kak-kak.

**Range:** It is found from the Prairies to the coast.

# 14



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Falconiformes  
Family: Acciptridae  
Genus: Buteo  
Species: jamaicensis

Red-tailed Hawk

Identification:

(48-63cm) A large, broad-winged, wide-tailed hawk. From above, it's tail is rust-red, from below, the tail is pale. There is a dark bar on the fore edge of the wing. Immature birds have grayish tails that may or may not show narrow banding. Their breast is light with a broad bank of streaks across the belly.

Habits:

They usually perch conspicuously. They prey on rodents & rabbits. They nest in woodlands & feed in open country.

Voice:

A downward slurring squeal Keer-r-r.

Range:

Across North & Central America. They do not winter in Canada or the Northern plains of the U.S.A.

# 15

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Strigiformes  
Family: Strigidae  
Genus: Bubo  
Species: virginianus



Great Horned Owl

Identification:

(45-63cm) A large owl with ear tufts or "horns".

It has a white throat bib, & a heavily barred underside. In flight it appears large-headed & looks neckless.

Habits:

Feeds on rodents, birds, insects. Inhabits forests, stream sides, & open country

Voice:

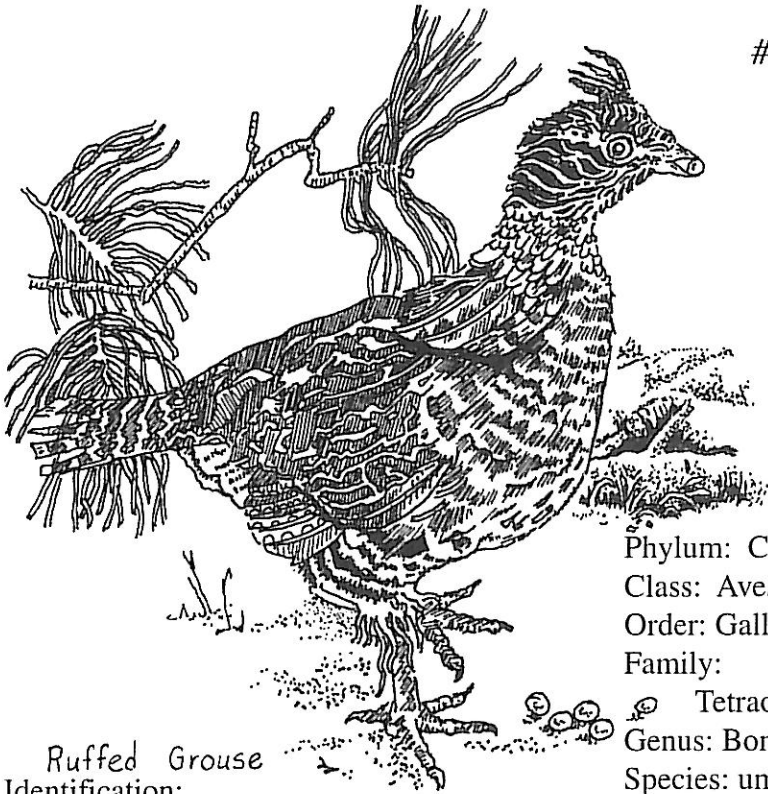
Male- 5 or 6 resonant hoots Hoo! hu-hu-hu, Hoo!,Hpp!

Female- hoots are higher, in shorter sequence.

Range:

All of North & South America with the exception of the high arctic





### Ruffed Grouse

#### Identification:

(40-48cm) Best identified by its broad fan-shaped tail, with a broad black band near the tip. Its body is large, chicken-like, red-brown to gray-brown. It is usually not seen until it flushes with a startling whir.

#### Habits:

They are woodland dwellers which feed on seeds, buds, berries, & insects.

#### Voice:

During mating season the male "drums" to attract a mate. The drumming sounds like a hollow roll. Muffled thumping starts slowly, accelerating into a whir. Bup-Bup-Bup-Bup-bup, up, rrrrr.

#### Range:

The Boreal forest and northern park land.

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Galliformes

Family:

Tetraoninae

Genus: Bonasa

Species: umbellus

# 17

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Coraciiformes  
Family: Picidae  
Genus: Colaptes  
Species: auratus



Identification:

(30-35cm) These birds are barred brown & black and have a conspicuous white rump when seen in flight. There is also a black patch across the chest. The subspecies of this bird which is native to our area is the "yellow-shafted" flicker. It flashes golden yellow under the wings and tail, has a red crescent on it's nape and the male has a black mustache. The Flicker belongs to the Woodpecker family.

Habits:

It flies in an undulating manner, it has an awkward hopping gait on the ground and it feeds on ants.

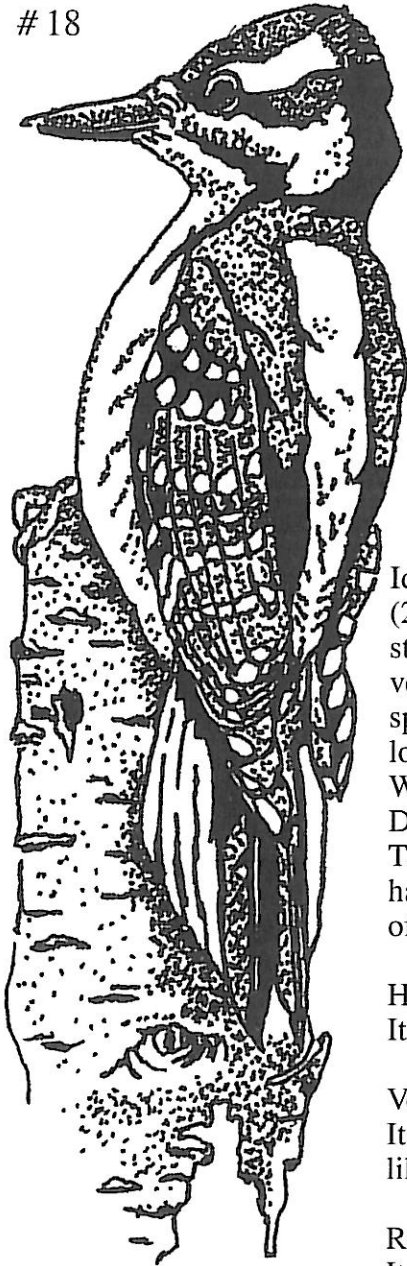
Voice:

A loud wick wick wick as well as a Klee-yer & squeaky flick-a flick-a.

Range:

Found in all of Canada east of the Rockies & south of the high arctic.

# 18



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Coraciiformes  
Family: Picidae  
Genus: Picoides  
Species: villosus

Identification:

(24cm) It has a vertical white stripe on its back and its bill is very large. It is checkered & spotted with black & white and looks very similar to the Downy Woodpecker. It is larger than the Downy but is smaller than the Three-toed Woodpecker. Males have a small red patch on the back of the head

Habits:

It eats tree-boring insects

Voice:

Its call is a peek and a kingfisher-like rattle.

Range:

It is found in all of North America south of the high arctic.

Hairy Woodpecker

# 19

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Coraciiformes  
Family: Picidae  
Genus: Dryobates  
Species: pubescens



Downy  
Woodpecker

**Identification:**

(16cm) Looks like a miniature Hairy Woodpecker with the white vertical stripe on its back, but has a short slender bill. Its outer tail feathers are black barred.

**Habits:**

Is common in residential areas as well as in the woods.

**Voice:**

A rapid repetition of pic-pic-pic which descends in pitch toward the end.

**Range:** Found across the treed areas of North America.



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Coraciiformes  
Family: Picidae  
Genus: Picoides  
Species: tridactylus

## Three-toed Woodpecker

### Identification:

(23-25cm) Black wings, rump and tail, black bars on sides and back. Males have a yellow patch on the crown of their head.

### Habits:

This is a coniferous/Boreal forest inhabiting species which would be only occasionally seen in this area.

### Voice:

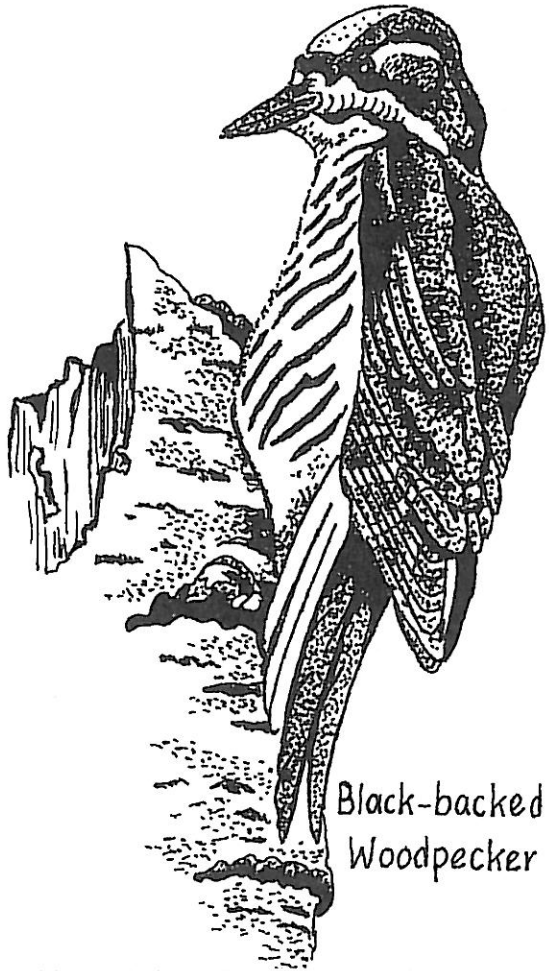
A similar Pik Pik sound to other woodpeckers.

### Range:

It is native to the Boreal and cordilleran forests.

# 21

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Coraciiformes  
Family: Picidae  
Genus: Picoides  
Species: arcticus



Black-backed  
Woodpecker

**Identification:**

(23-25cm) Black back and barred sides, Males have yellow cap. Like the Three-toed Woodpecker it also has three toes.

**Habits:**

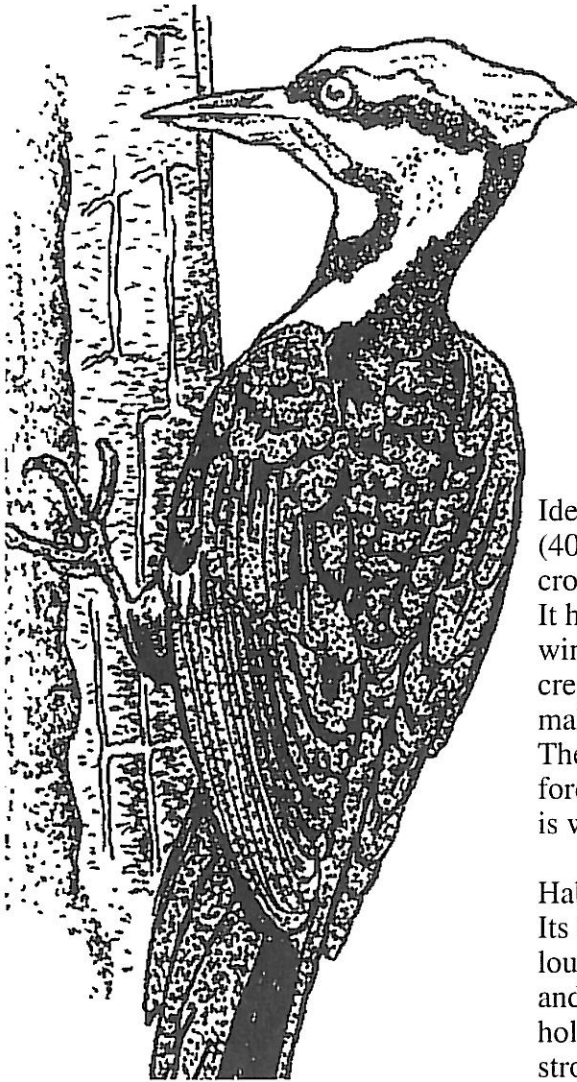
This is an uncommon species in our area as it inhabits colder coniferous forests where it peels the bark from dead conifers to get at the insects and larvae.

**Voice:** A similar Pik-Pik sound to other woodpeckers.

**Range**

Restricted to the northern Boreal and cordilleran forest.

# 22



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Coraciiformes  
Family: Picidae  
Genus: Dryocopus  
Species: pileatus

Identification:

(40-49 cm) A beautiful, crow-sized woodpecker. It has a black back and wings and a flame red crest on its head. The male has a red mustache. The female has a black forehead. The underwing is white.

Habits:

Its drumming (pecking) is loud & slow & distinctive and leaves rectangular holes in trees. It is a strong flyer, flying with strong irregular flaps of its wings.

## *Pileated Woodpecker*

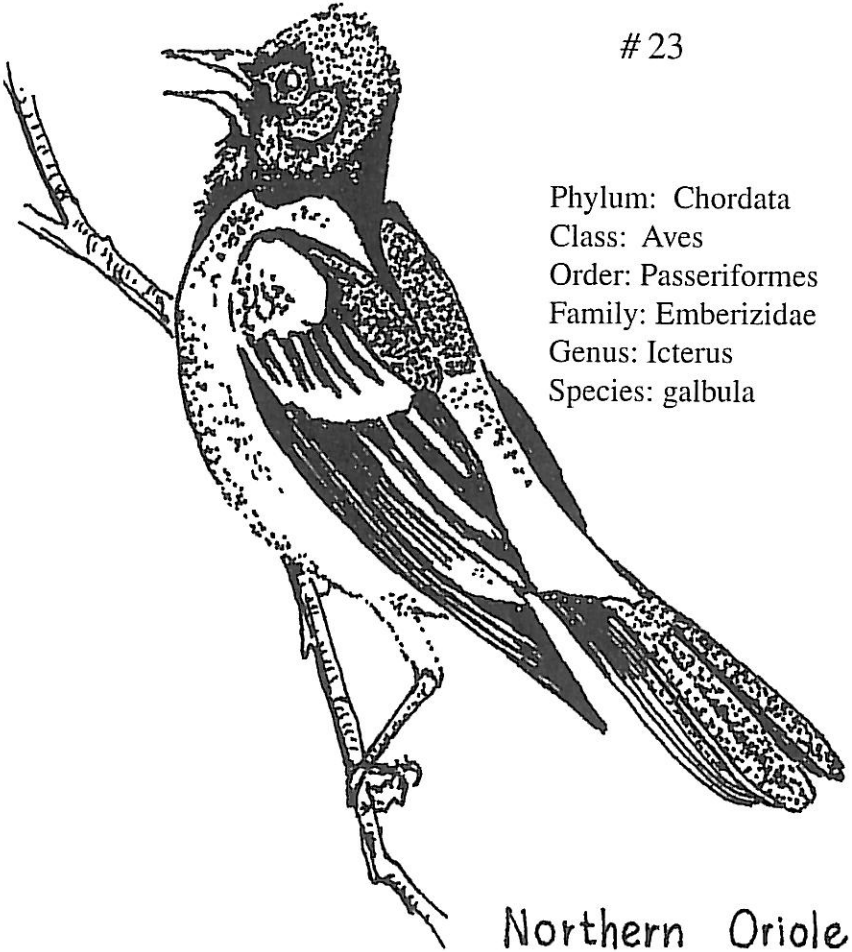
Voice:

Kik-kik-kikkik-kik-kik the call is a series, never single.

Range:

It inhabits conifer and mixed-wood forests in which old growth and dead trees provide both a food source and nesting sites.

#23



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Icterus  
Species: galbula

## Northern Oriole

### Identification:

(18-20cm) Males are flame orange & black with a solid black head. Females & immature birds are burnt orange below and olive-brown above. They have 2 white bars on their wings.

### Habits:

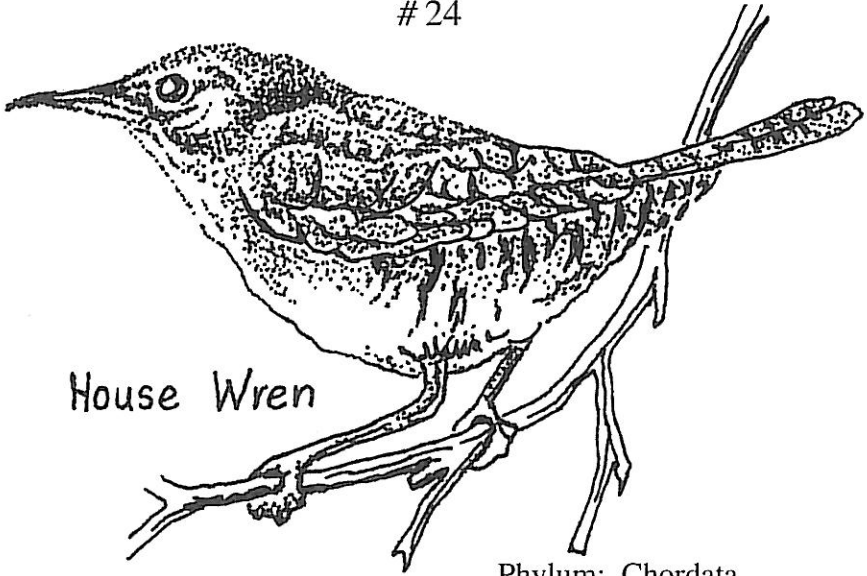
It is a migratory bird which breeds in Canada & U.S.A. to Mexico and winters from the S. E. Coast of the U. S. to S. Mexico.

### Voice:

Clear flute-like song either singly or in varied series



# 24



House Wren

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Troglodytidae  
Genus: Troglodytes  
Species: aedon

Identification:

It is small (12cm), energetic. gray-brown with a light eye-ring, It is the dullest of the wrens.

Habits:

It is aggressive and lives in open woods, towns, gardens, etc. It often nests in bird houses.

Voice:

A stuttering, bubbling song, rising in a musical burst, which falls at the end.

Range:

It winters in the southern U.S. and spends its summers in the rest of North America, south of the arctic.

# 25

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Tyrannidae  
Genus: Empidonax  
Species: minimus



Identification:  
(13cm) Small, short-tailed  
flycatcher, with eye rings  
and wing bars.

Least  
Flycatcher

Habits:

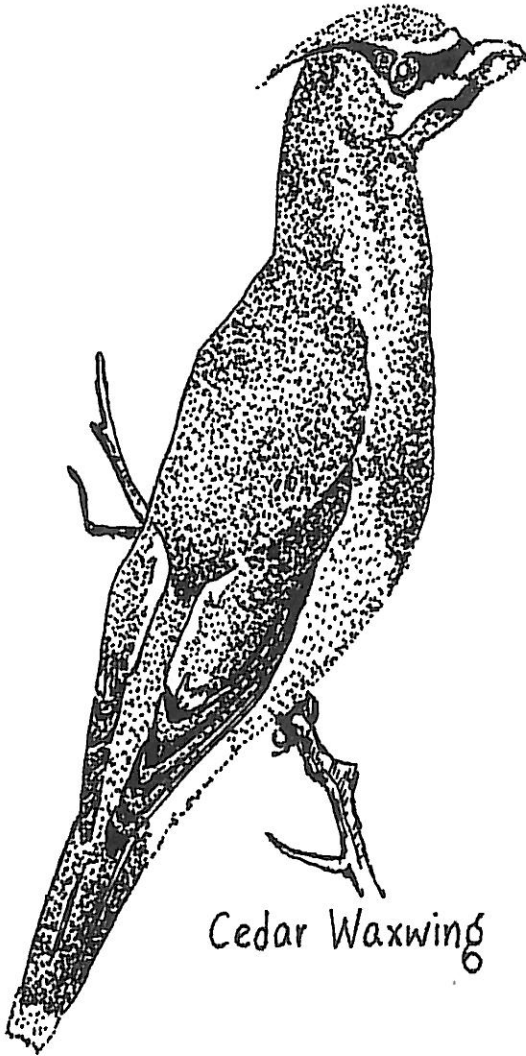
Actively flicks its wings & tail. Common in scrub growth, wood margins, and gardens.

Voice:

A sharp che-bek repeated 50-70 times per minute.

Range:

Summers in Canada & U.S., east of the mountains.  
Winters from Mexico to Panama.



Cedar Waxwing

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Bombycillidae  
Genus: Bombycilla  
Species: cedrorum

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Bombycillidae  
Genus: Bombycilla  
Species: garrulus

Cedar Waxwing

# 26

Identification:

(18cm) Black mask, crested head on males, white under tail, & yellowish belly.

Habits:

Seldom seen alone except when nesting. Irregular in its wanderings, and occasionally gathers in compact flocks in trees & shrubs that have berries.

Voice:

A high thin lisp (zeee) the call has a slight waver.

Range:

Summers as far north as the Boreal forest & winters from mid- U.S to Panama.

Bohemian Waxwing ( no picture ) # 27

Identification:

(20cm) Larger & grayer than the Cedar Waxwing with no yellow on its belly. The underside of the tail is a deep rusty red. Has the crest & black mask of the wax wing as well as yellow fringe to its tail.

Habits:

Travels in large flocks feeds on berries & insects.

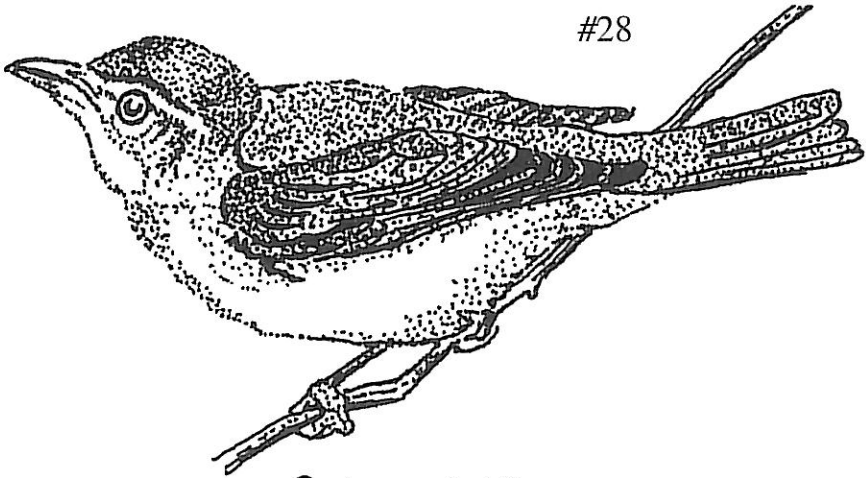
Voice:

Zree. rougher than the thin note of the Cedar Waxwing.

Range:

Summers in Boreal forests, Winters in towns in Canada in search of fruit left on trees.

#28



*Red-eyed Vireo*

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Vireonidae  
Genus: Vireo  
Species: olivaceus

**Identification:**

(9 - 15 cm) Red eye capped with a prominent white, black bordered eye stripe. The head has a blue-gray cap. The body is dull olive-green above and white beneath.

**Habits:**

Inhabits woods and shade trees where it feeds on crawling insects. It is a persistent singer.

**Voice:**

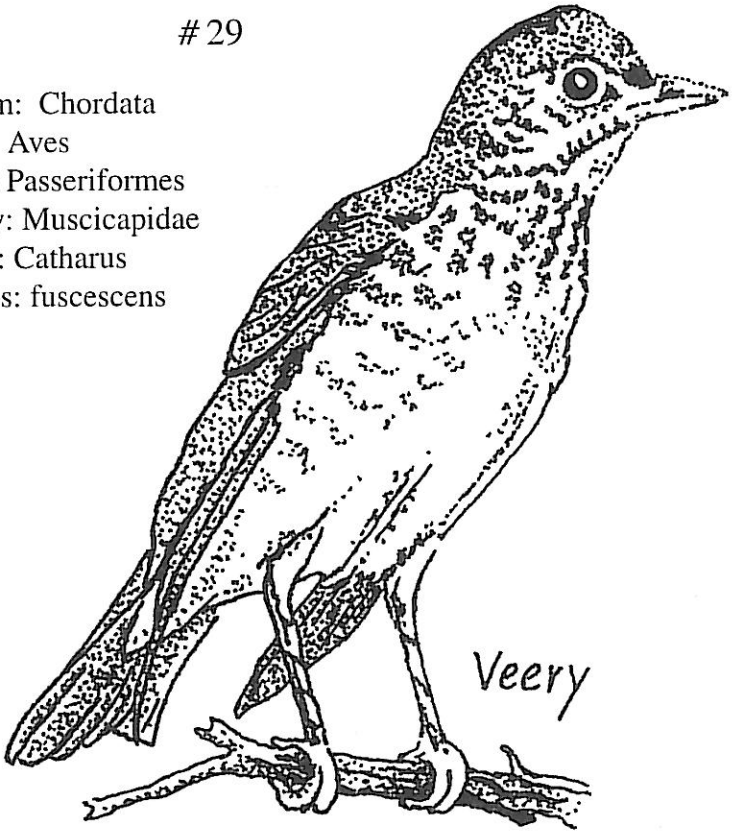
Monotonous, nasal, shining chway which is repeated up to 40 times/min.

**Range:**

All of Canada south of the Arctic to the South Eastern U.S.A. It winters in the Amazon basin in South America.

# 29

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Muscicapidae  
Genus: Catharus  
Species: fuscescens



**Identification:**

Like all their cousins in the thrush family the Veery is a large eyed, slender billed, brown backed bird with a spotted breast. It is (16-19cm) long, and has grayish flanks.

**Habits:**

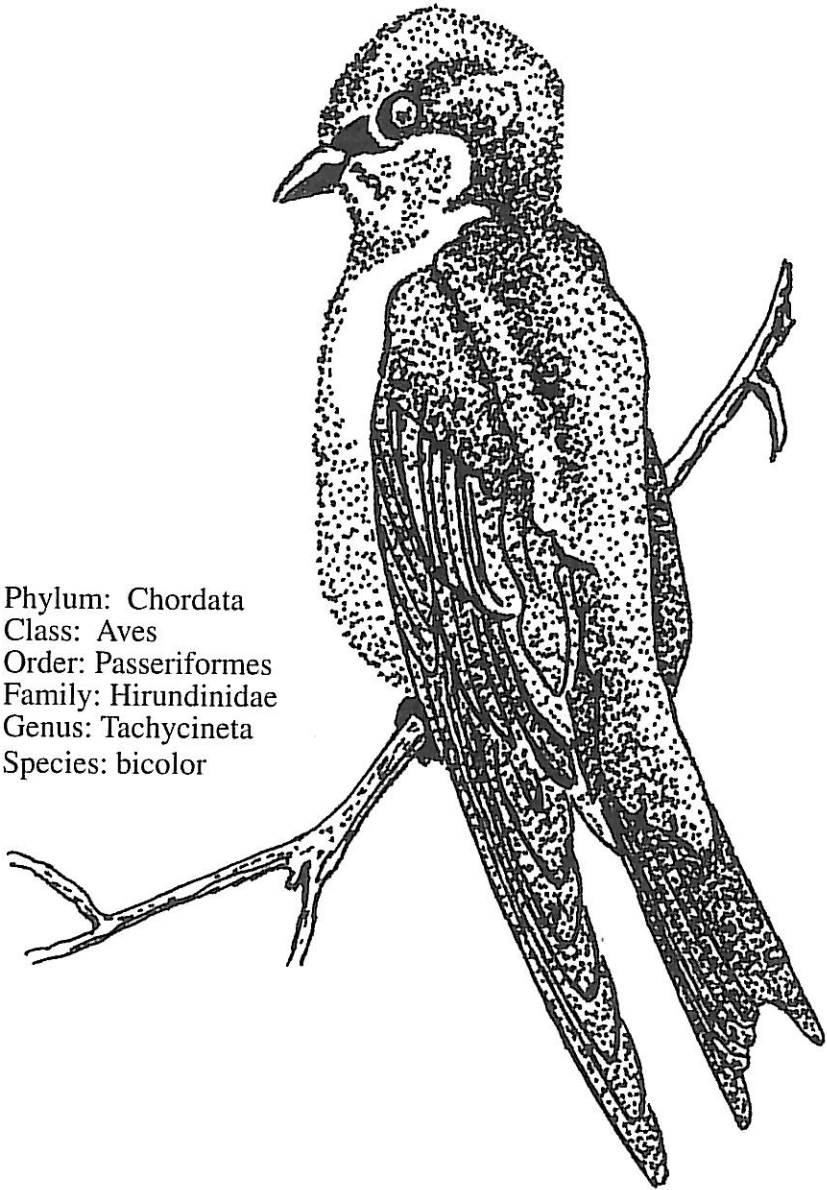
They are fine singers, who eat worms, snails, berries & fruits, and nest on or near the ground.

**Voice:**

A light, breezy Vee-ur Vee-ur Veer Veer and a low phew

**Range:**

Summers in deciduous forests, preferring wetter habitats. Winters in Central & South America.



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Hirundinidae  
Genus: Tachycineta  
Species: bicolor

Tree Swallow

## Tree Swallow

#30

### Identification:

(13-15cm) Long pointed wings, notched tail. Strong, elegant flyers.

It is the only green-backed swallow. Throat and breast are white.

### Habits:

Gathers in large flocks, eats flying insects. Glides in circles, ending glides with a wing flick and a short climb.

### Voice :

Cheet or cho-veet; a twitter weet, trit, .

### Range:

Summer-central U.S. to northern Boreal forest. Winter - Southern U.S. coastal areas.

## Bank Swallow

# 31

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Hirundinidae

Genus: Riparia

Species: riparia

### Identification: (No Picture)

(11-14cm) A brown-backed swallow with a dark breast band

### Habits:

Lives near water . Insect feeder, has a fluttery, irregular flight.

### Nests

in burrows on stream banks in colonial flocks.

### Voice:

cheet or chi-veet & a twitter . weet, trit, weet.

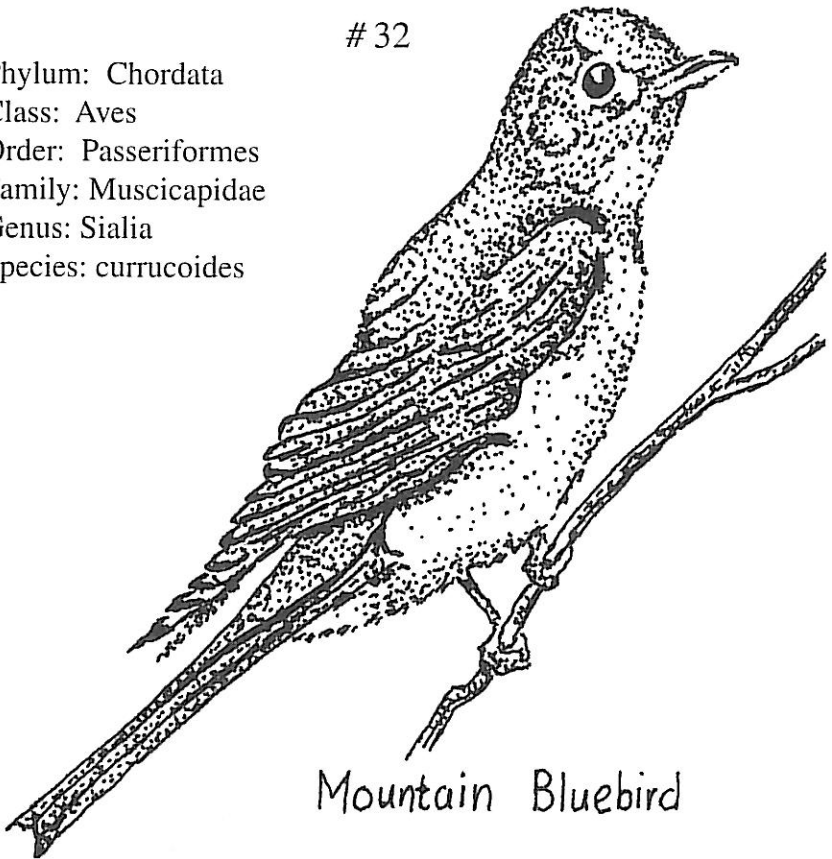
### Range:

Summers in Canada. Winters in S. America



# 32

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Muscicapidae  
Genus: Sialia  
Species: currucoides



Mountain Bluebird

Identification :

Male- turquoise blue, paler below, belly whitish.

Female - dull brownish, with a little blue on its rump, tail & wings.  
Is about 18cm long.

Habits:

Hovers low over ground as it hunts for insects. Lives in high mountain elevations, seen in this area on its seasonal migration.

Voice:

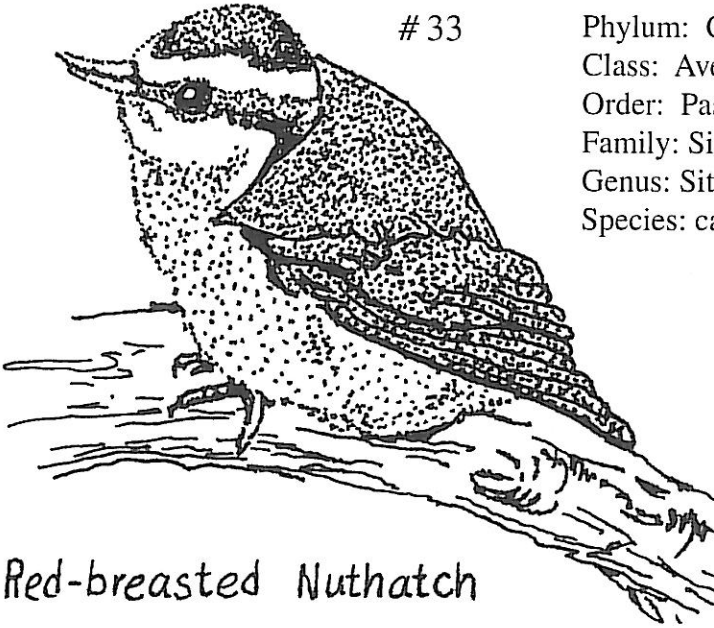
A low chur or phew in a subdued warble.

Range:

Summers in western North America & winters in South Western U.S. & Mexico.

# 33

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Sittidae  
Genus: Sitta  
Species: canadensis



## Red-breasted Nuthatch

### Identification:

Small (11cm), stubby tree- climber with a strong bill, and a short square tail. Has a black head cap with a white stripe above the eye and a black stripe through the eye and white beneath. The underside is rusty red and the back is silver to dark gray .

### Habits:

Frequents conifer trees and feeds on bark insects, seeds & nuts. It is attracted to sunflower seeds & suet. It usually descends trees in the upside down position.

### Voice:

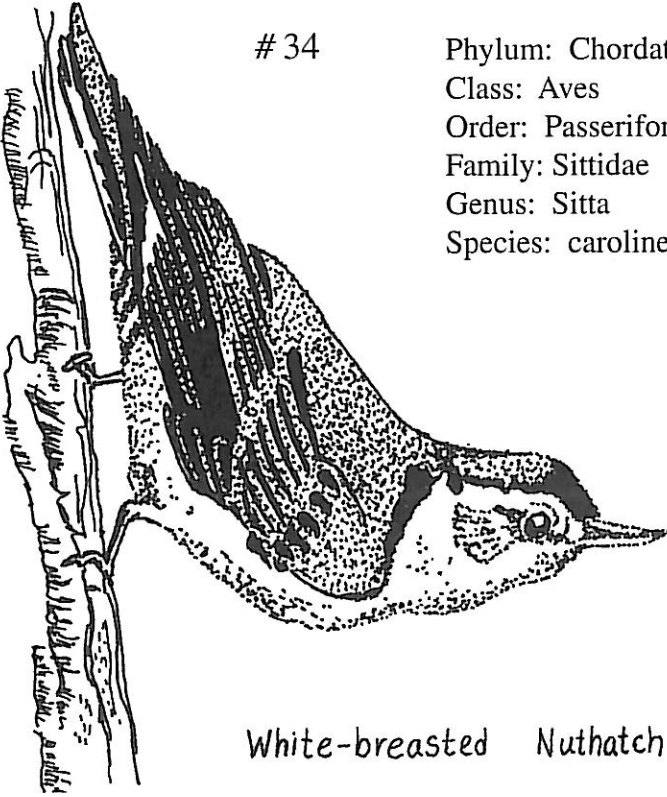
A nasal ank or enk

### Range;

Across N. America, south of the arctic but only found in the southern part of its range in the winter.

# 34

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Sittidae  
Genus: Sitta  
Species: carolinensis



White-breasted Nuthatch

Identification:

Small (13-15cm), tree climber with strong bill, a short, square-cut tail. Has a black cap, beady black eyes, with a white face, and breast and a gray back.

Habits:

Feeds on bark insects, seeds, nuts, and is attracted to suet and sunflower seeds. Descends trees headfirst.

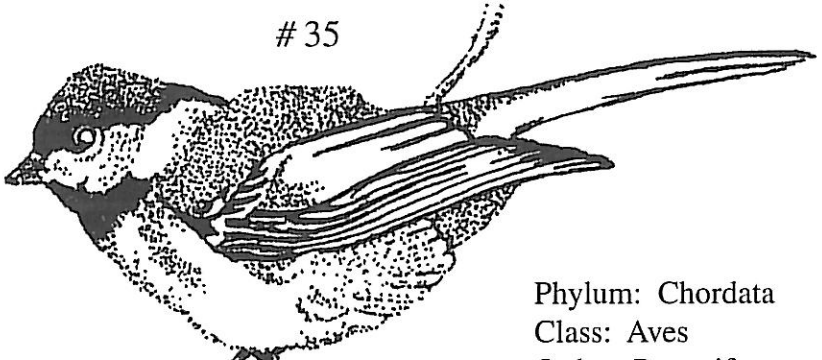
Voice:

Rapid series of low, nasal, whistled notes in one pitch- whi whi whi or who who who & a nasal tootoo

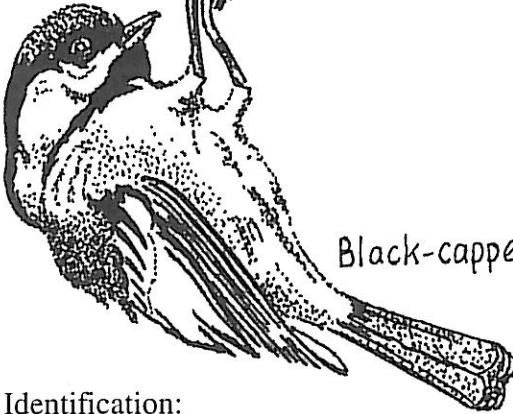
Range:

Found throughout most of North America.

# 35



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Paridae  
Genus: Parus  
Species: atricapillus



Black-capped chickadee

Identification:

(12-14cm) Black cap & bib, rust sides, gray back, white cheeks and white feather edges on the wings.

Habits:

Acrobatic, & friendly, nests in tree cavities or nest boxes. Inhabits deciduous woods & groves. Visits feeders for suet & sunflower seeds.

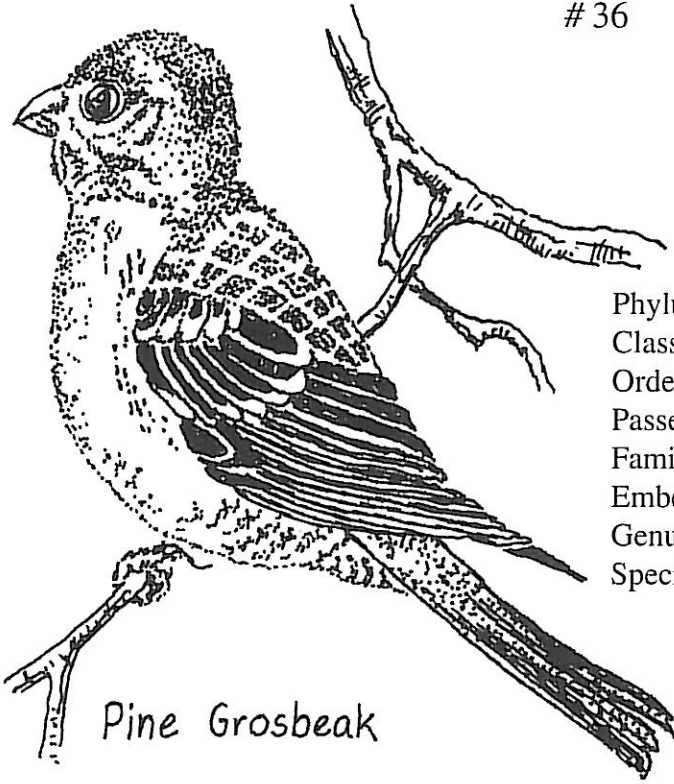
Voice:

Song: chick a dee dee dee

Whistle: fee bee ee (first note higher)

Range;

Found in all of temperate North America where deciduous groves may be found.



Pine Grosbeak

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order:  
Passeriformes  
Family:  
Emberizidae  
Genus: Pinicola  
Species: enucleator

Identification:

(20-25cm) Robin size with a long tail & a thick triangular beak. Male adult is a dull rose-red, dark wings with 2 white bars. Female is gray, with 2 white wings bars, head & rump are tinged with yellow.

Habits:

Feeds on seeds & fruits, flight undulates deeply. A native of the Boreal forest.

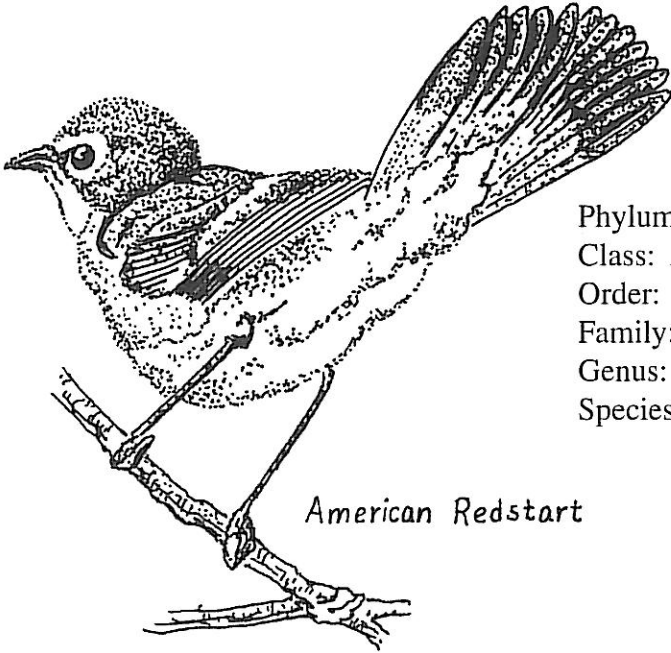
Voice:

A whistled tee tew tew and a musical chee vli

Range:

Boreal and mountain forests of North America.

# 37



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Setophaga  
Species: ruticilla

American Redstart

Identification:

(13cm) Butterfly--like, actively flitting, drooping wings, spread tail,

Male: black, bright orange patches on wings & tail.

Female: Olive-brown, yellow patches on wings & tail.

Habits:

Common in deciduous understory, especially near water, is a very active fly-catcher & warbler.

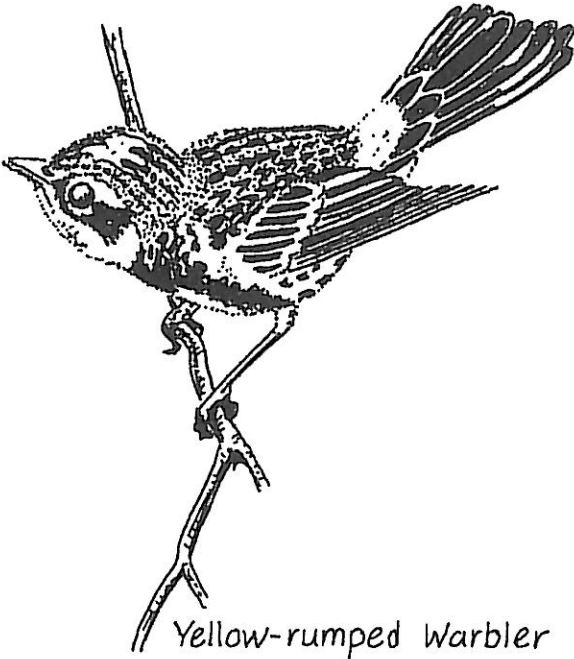
Voice:

see see see see swee (last note higher), tsee tsee tsee tsee tsee-o (last note dropping) & teetsa teetsa teetsa teetsa teet.

Range:

Boreal North America to Central America.

# 38



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Dendroica  
Species: coronata

Yellow-rumped Warbler

**Identification:**

(13-15cm) Bright yellow rump. Male: Blue-gray above, black breast patch; throat, crown & side yellow patches, yellow throat, large white wing patches. Female: Brown, pattern similar except for wing patch.

**Habits:**

Nests in spruce-fir forests. Eats berries when flying insects are not available.

**Voice:**

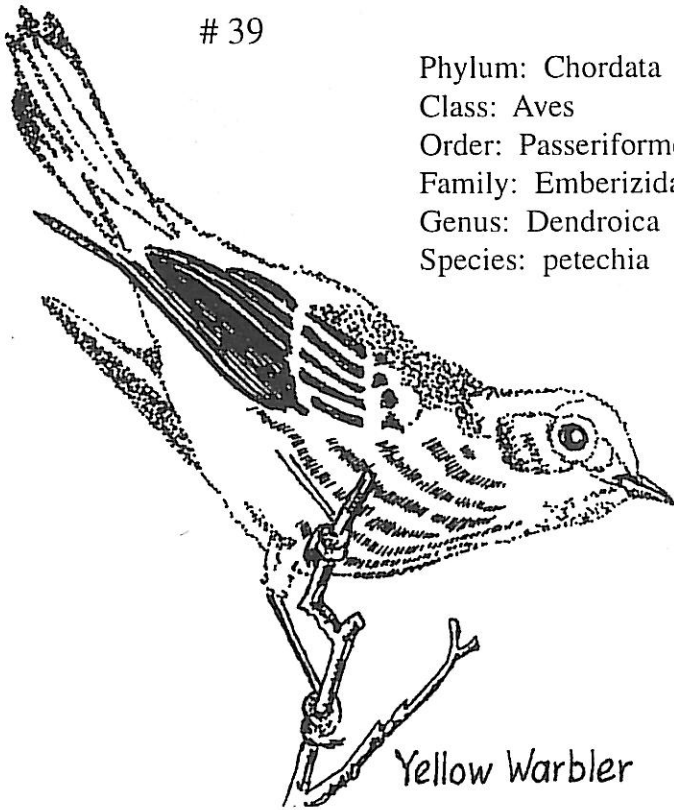
Two part, rising & drooping seet-seet-seet-seet, trrrrr and a loud check.

**Range:**

Summers in Boreal forest region & winters in Western U.S. to Central America.

# 39

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Dendroica  
Species: petechia



Yellow Warbler

Identification:

(13cm) It is the only all yellow warbler. It has no white plumage. The male has rusty streaks on its breast.

Habits:

Common in willow thickets and suburban shrubbery. Feeds mainly on insects.

Voice:

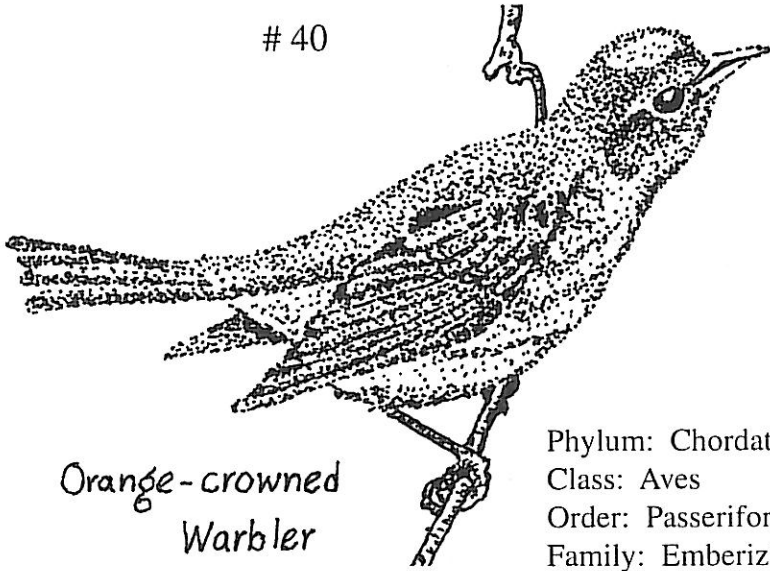
tsee-tsee-tsee-tsee-titi-wee or weet-weet-weet-weet-tsee-tsee both are variable & given rapidly

Range:

Found in all of Canada except the very high Arctic. It winters in Southern U.S. & Caribbean.



# 40



Orange-crowned  
Warbler

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Vermivora  
Species: celata

Identification:

(11-14cm) Dull coloured, no wing bars or other distinctive marks. Olive green above, greenish yellow below. It has very faint breast streaks and a small and seldom visible orange crown patch. Quite gray in winter.

Habits:

Forages for insects in shrubs and low trees.

Voice:

A colourless trill, weaker toward the end, often changing pitch.

Range:

Summers in Canada & Alaska, winters in Southern U.S. to Central America.

# 41

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: *Wilsonia*  
Species: *canadensis*



*Canada Warbler*

**Identification:**

(13-14cm) A yellow breasted warbler with a characteristic black necklace. The male is gray above and yellow below. The female is similar but the necklace is quite faint. Both have yellow spectacles.

**Habits:**

Inhabits northern forest underbrush where it feeds on insects.

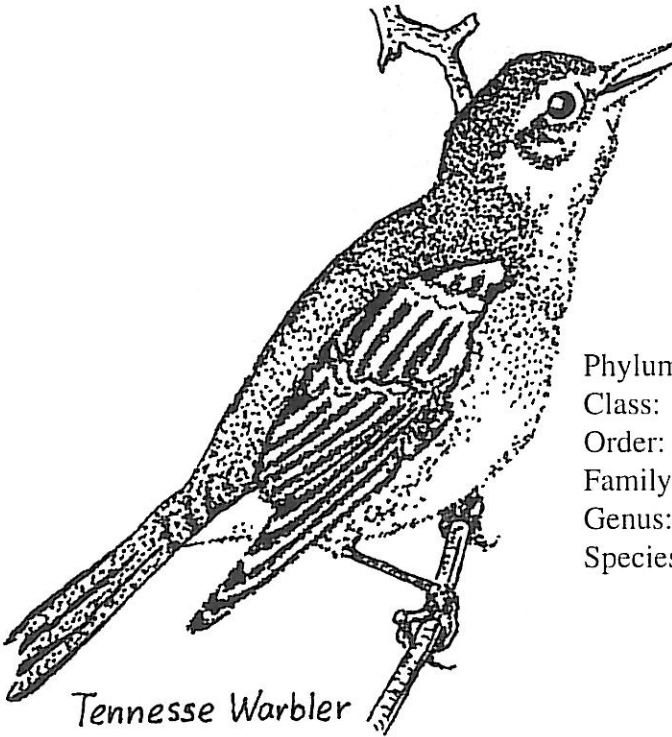
**Voice:**

Irregular, staccato burst- ship, shupety swee-ditchety and a tchip

**Range:**

Canada, east of the Rockies, winters in Central America

# 42



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: *Vermivora*  
Species: *peregrina*

**Identification:**

(12cm) Slender bill, white eye-brown stripe. Has whitish underparts but the female is washed with yellow on the white underplumage. Male has a gray head and greenish back. The female head is less gray. In the fall a white wing bar is present.

**Habits:**

Common in aspen and spruce woods. Stays high in trees in spring. It feeds mainly on insects.

**Voice:**

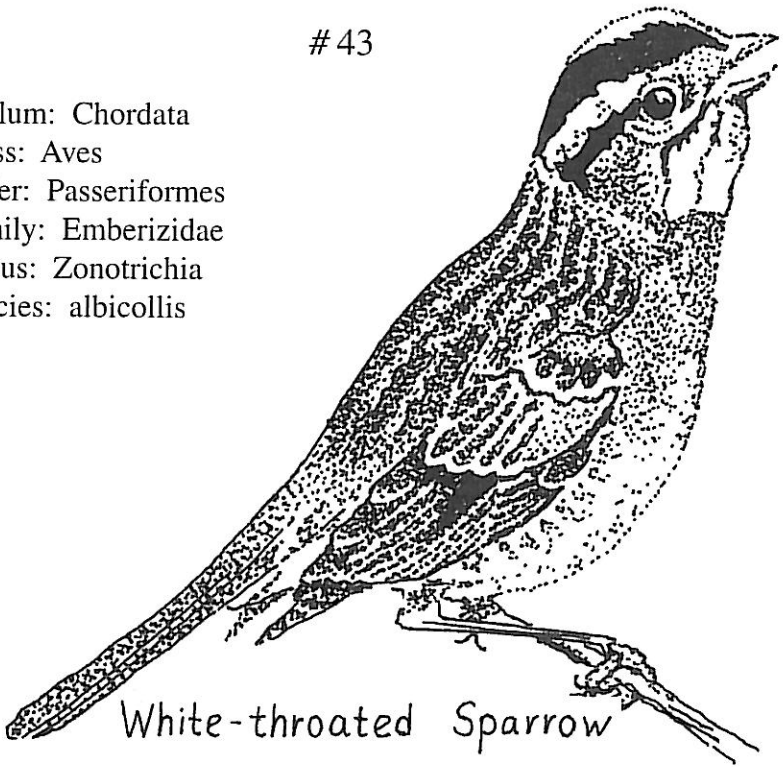
Song, staccato, two or three parted: tecka ticka ticka ticka swit swit, shew chew chew chew chew, in a 4-6 minute slow trill.

**Range:**

Summers in Canada, winters in Mexico to Venezuela

# 43

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Zonotrichia  
Species: albicollis



White-throated Sparrow

Identification:

(16-18cm) A gray-breasted sparrow with brown body & a white throat patch. There is a yellow spot between the eye & the bill. The bill is dark or black. Over the eye is a white head stripe extending to the back of the head.

Habits:

Usually feeds on the ground.

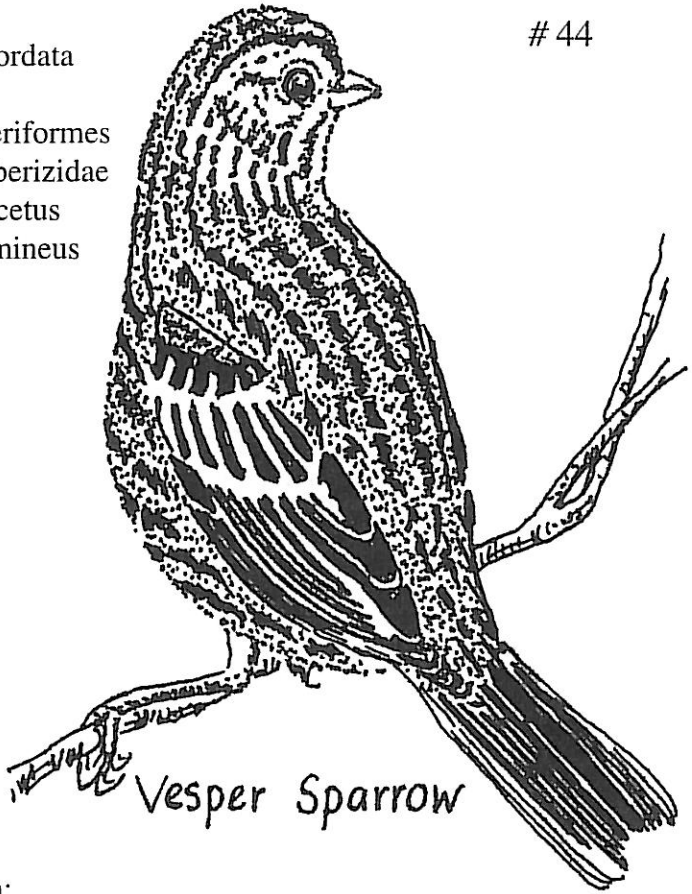
Voice:

A slurred tseet & a hard chink.

Range:

Summers in Canada East of the Rockies. Winters in South Eastern U.S.

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Poecetes  
Species: gramineus



**Identification:**

(15cm) Can be distinguished from other brown sparrows by white outer feathers on its notched tail, which are conspicuous in flight as is the chestnut colour on the underside of the wing fronts. It also possesses a whitish eye ring.

**Habits:**

Common in meadows, pastures, hay & grain fields. Feeds on fruits and insects.

**Voice:**

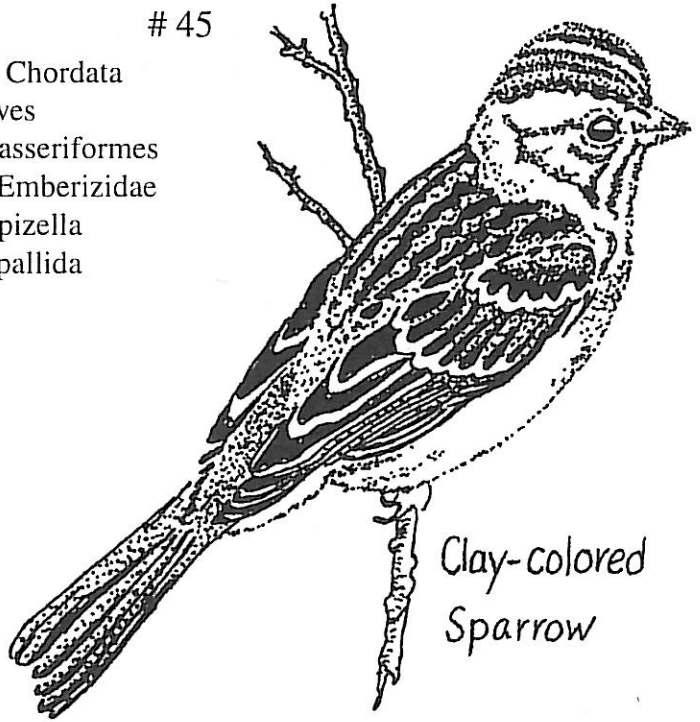
Low clear minor notes and two higher ones.

**Range:**

Summers in Canada, winters in southern U.S. to Central America

# 45

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Spizella  
Species: pallida



Identification:

(13cm) Buff-colored, brown cheek patch, whitish sharply outlined streak over eye, extending to the back of the head.

Habits:

Common in open brush land. Feeds on fruits and insects.

Voice:

3-5 low, flat, slow buzzes, bzzz bzzz bzzz

Range:

Summers in Western Canada, winters in Central America.

# 46



Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae  
Genus: Spizella  
Species: arborea

*American Tree Sparrow*

**Identification:**

(15-16-cm) The brightest & largest of the rusty-capped sparrows. It is the only one with a large, dark spot on its breast. It has a 2-toned bill, dark legs, and 2 white wing bars.

**Habits:**

Feeds on fruits and insects. Common in willow thickets, weedy fields, & hedgerows.

**Voice:**

Variable, sweet tones opens with one or two high, clear notes tseet or telwit

**Range:**

Summers in northern Boreal zone, winters in Mid-U.S.A.

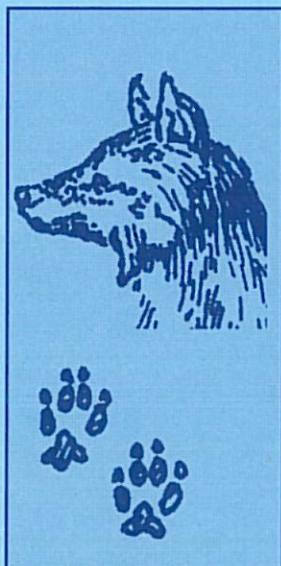
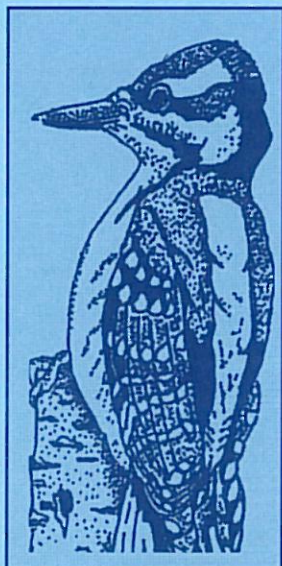
## SPECIES CHECKLIST

Use the list below to check-off each species that you identify

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 White-tailed deer        | 24 House wren              |
| 2 Coyote                   | 25 Least flycatcher        |
| 3 Snowshoe hare            | 26 Cedar waxwing           |
| 4 Short-tailed weasel      | 27 Bohemian waxwing        |
| 5 Porcupine                | 28 Red-eyed vireo          |
| 6 Beaver                   | 29 Veery                   |
| 7 Muskrat                  | 30 Tree swallow            |
| 8 Red squirrel             | 31 Bank swallow            |
| 9 Least chipmunk           | 32 Mountain bluebird       |
| 10 Black-billed magpie     | 33 Red-breasted nuthatch   |
| 11 American crow           | 34 White-breasted nuthatch |
| 12 Blue jay                | 35 Black-capped chickadee  |
| 13 Bald eagle              | 36 Pine grosbeak           |
| 14 Red-tailed hawk         | 37 American redstart       |
| 15 Great Horned owl        | 38 Yellow-rumped warbler   |
| 16 Ruffed grouse           | 39 Yellow warbler          |
| 17 Northern flicker        | 40 Orange-crowned warbler  |
| 18 Hairy woodpecker        | 41 Canada warbler          |
| 19 Downy woodpecker        | 42 Tennessee warbler       |
| 20 Three-toed woodpecker   | 43 White-throated sparrow  |
| 21 Black-backed woodpecker | 44 Vesper sparrow          |
| 22 Pileated woodpecker     | 45 Clay-coloured sparrow   |
| 23 Northern oriole         | 46 American-tree sparrow   |



# FIELD NOTES



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