

Common Birds in the Chicago area:

SMALL BIRDS (under 6 inches)

House Sparrow (the black bib is a key sign of the male house sparrow):

Male



Female



Dark-eyed Junco (male is darker than the female)



Chickadee (a distinctive black cap)



House Finch



Gold Finch



MEDIUM SIZE BIRDS (6 to 10 inches)

Cardinal:

Male

Female



Robin



Redwing Blackbird (common in prairie type areas)



Blue Jay



Starling (note the light beak and speckled wings)



Grackle (note the head color, often a bluish, greenish color)



Blackbird (unlike the Crow, a light colored bill)



Downy Woodpecker (listen for them tapping on the trees)



Flicker (similar to downy woodpecker at a distance, but darker speckled breast and larger size)



LARGE BIRDS (ABOVE 10 INCHES)

Mourning Dove



Pigeon



Common Gull (watch for them flying above, displaying their pointed wings)



Crow



WATER BIRDS

Mallard



Canadian Goose



Coot (sometimes called a mud hen)



Blue Heron (often in creeks and shallow ponds)



HAWKS, FALCONS, ETC.

Red tailed Hawk (commonly spotted atop light poles along major roads, tail flashes red in flight)



Coopers Hawk (smaller than the red tailed hawk)



Peregrine Falcon (smaller than the Coopers hawk)



Turkey Vulture (often circling over roadkill, appears all black at a distance)



Identification site: There are many online resources. Try this one which highlights Illinois birds.

<http://www.illinoisraptorcenter.org/birdguide.html>

Bird Calls:

Pay attention to the bird calls. For Birding Merit Badge, you must be able to recognize 5 different birds by their call alone. Some of our local birds have very distinctive calls: Cardinal, Robin, Sparrow, Red Wing Blackbird, Canadian Goose, Crow, Mourning Dove, Mallard.