S.E. MICHIGAN **BIRDS of PREY**

(up to an 8' wing-span) They are not likely to be mistaken for a Hawk.

RAPTORS 1D HOW TO START IDENTIFYING

Many times, the best way to identify a Raptor is by it's silhouette. Each species has a distictive shape.

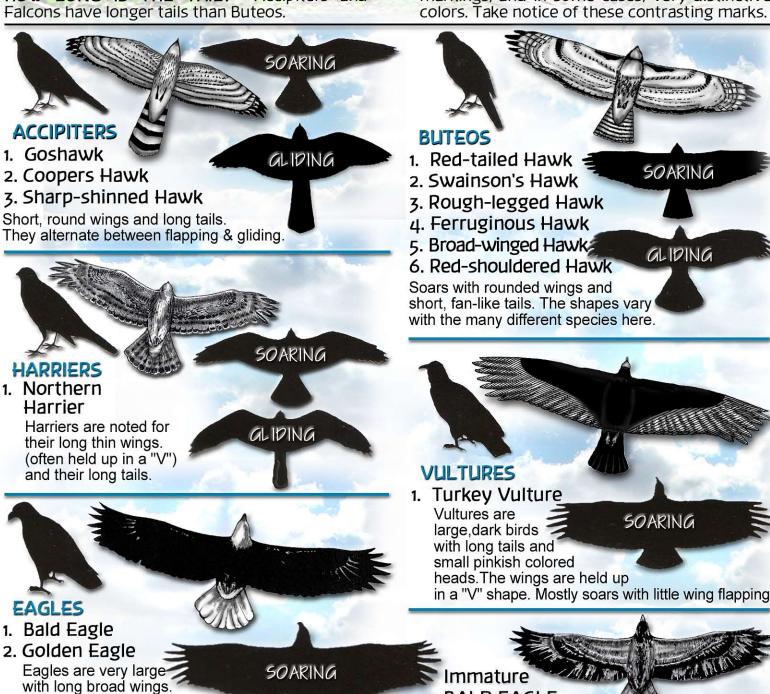
HOW BIG IS IT? Size is difficult to determine at a distance, but it can help. Sizes range from eagles, with 8 foot wingspans, to small falcons with a 20 inch wing span,

WHAT SHAPE ARE THE WINGS? Different groups of birds have different shaped wings. Falcons have pointed wings, Accipiters have short rounded wings, and Buteos have long, broad wings.

HOW LONG IS THE TAIL? Accipiters and Falcons have longer tails than Buteos.

HOW DOES IT FLAP IT'S WINGS? Study the birds wing beats. Larger birds tend to flap slower than smaller birds. Also, different birds have a characteristic "wing snap", posture, or flapping cadence that helps to identify them.

WHAT PATTERNS AND COLORS DO YOU SEE? Most raptors are made up of brown and gray colors, but some have distinctive contrasting markings, and in some cases, very distinctive colors. Take notice of these contrasting marks.



BALD EAGLE

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S.E. MICHIGAN **BIRDS of PREY**

are mostly gliding birds, so they fly

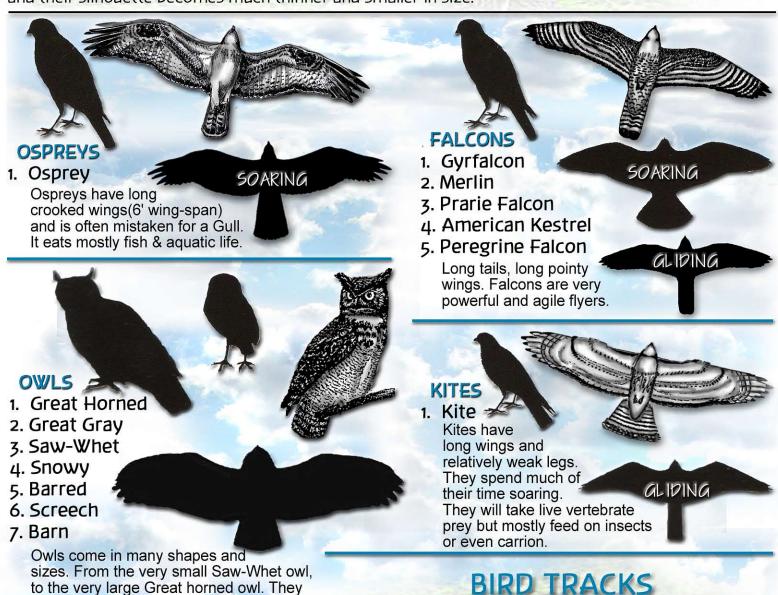
hunters.

very quietly. They are primarily night

RAPTORS 1D HOW TO START IDENTIFYING

Many times, the best way to identify a Raptor is by it's silhouette. Each species has a distictive shape.

GLIDING and SOARING: Raptors have different silhouette depending on their flight. When soaring their wings and bodies are more extended. When Gliding, they make their bodies as stream-lined as possible, and their silhouette becomes much thinner and smaller in size.



BIRD TRACKS

You mostly find Raptor and some other Bird tracks along stream banks and the muddy edges of ponds and lakes. All the bird tracks below are from birds who hunt fish and aquatic life for food. Tracks can tell a lot about just what the bird is doing, feeding on, and it's size.

