

Red-shouldered Hawk: *Buteo lineatus*



The Red-shouldered Hawk is a medium-sized hawk, 16-24 in. long and a wingspan of up to 40 in., with reddish shoulders and a long white narrowly banded tail. This hawk is found in lowlands near water, especially in swamps and bogs. Its distinctive, screaming “kee-aah” call is usually repeated 3-4 times. In forested areas, these hawks hunt by sitting quietly on a low perch before dropping down on their prey. When in clearings, they will fly low in order to surprise their prey which consists of small mammals, snakes, frogs, large insects and small birds. During winter months, they sometimes prey on birds found at bird feeders.

Red-shouldered Hawks are permanent residents throughout most of their range, although the birds in the northern reaches will migrate south all the way to central Mexico. Their nests are made of leaves and twigs, built 20-60 ft. high in trees. Deforestation is a major modern threat to the Red-shouldered Hawk, leading to an increase in habitat for the Red-tailed Hawk.

