

Ornithology Lab 2011

TA: Andrew Crosby

Basic Bird ID

“You can observe a lot by just watching”

- Yogi Berra



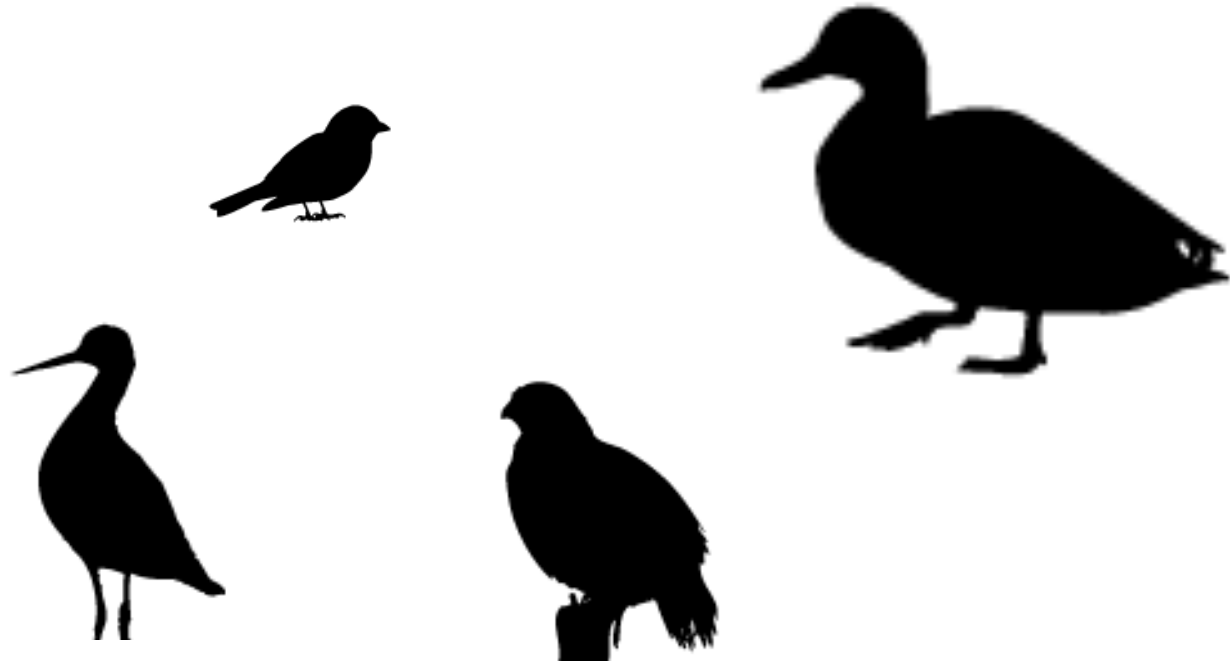
The 4 basics of bird identification

<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1189>

- Size and Shape
- Color Pattern
- Behavior
- Habitat



Size and Shape



<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/browse>

Size and Shape – similar passerines



- General shape
- Bill Size
- Bill Shape
- Posture

<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/browse>

Example – check-down list



- Short, fat and brown
- Bill – short and thick
- Streaked breast? – no
- Rusty cap? – yes
- Facial markings? – eye ring
- Conclusion –

Field sparrow

Other clues

- Wing bars
- Tail pattern
- Breast color
- Eye line
- Eyebrow stripe
- Mustache stripe
- Wing Pattern

Wing Bars

Yellow-rumped Warbler (winter)



Orange-crowned Warbler (winter)



Tail Pattern



Breast and Throat Color



Eyeline



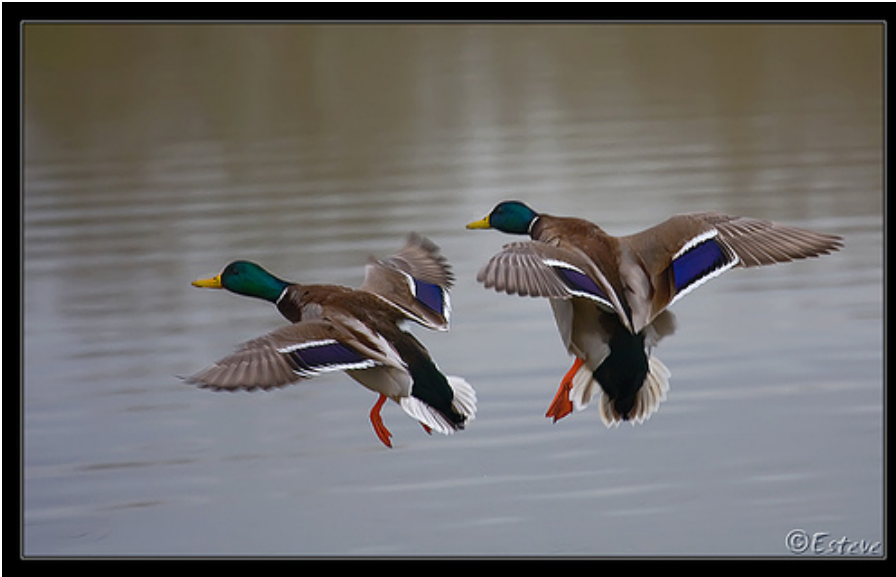
Eye-brow Stripe



Mustache Stripe



Wing Pattern



Behavior

- Posture
- Movement
- Flight Pattern
- Feeding Style
- Flocking

Posture



Example: Flocking Behavior



American Robin
•Very loose flocks



Brewer's Blackbird
•Tighter flocks



Cedar Waxwing
•Very tight flocks – like schools of fish

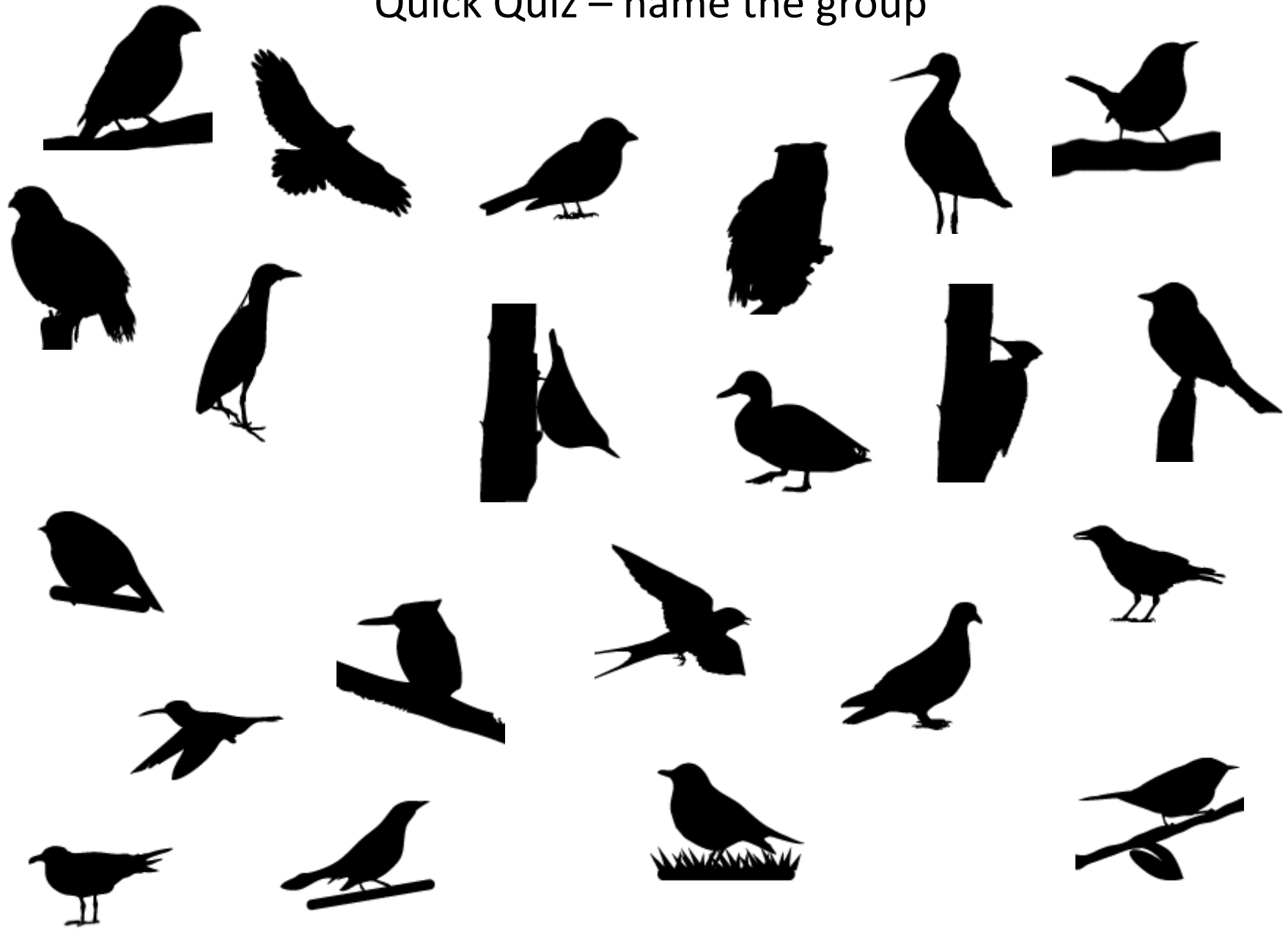
Habitat

- Woods
- Shrubs
- Fields
- Water
- Urban



- By paying attention to habitat, you can know what to expect, or what you “probably” won’t see.

Quick Quiz – name the group



<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/browse?shape=35,14>

What are the differences?



What is the same?



Field Marks

Distinctive
stripes, spots,
patterns,
colors, and
highlights

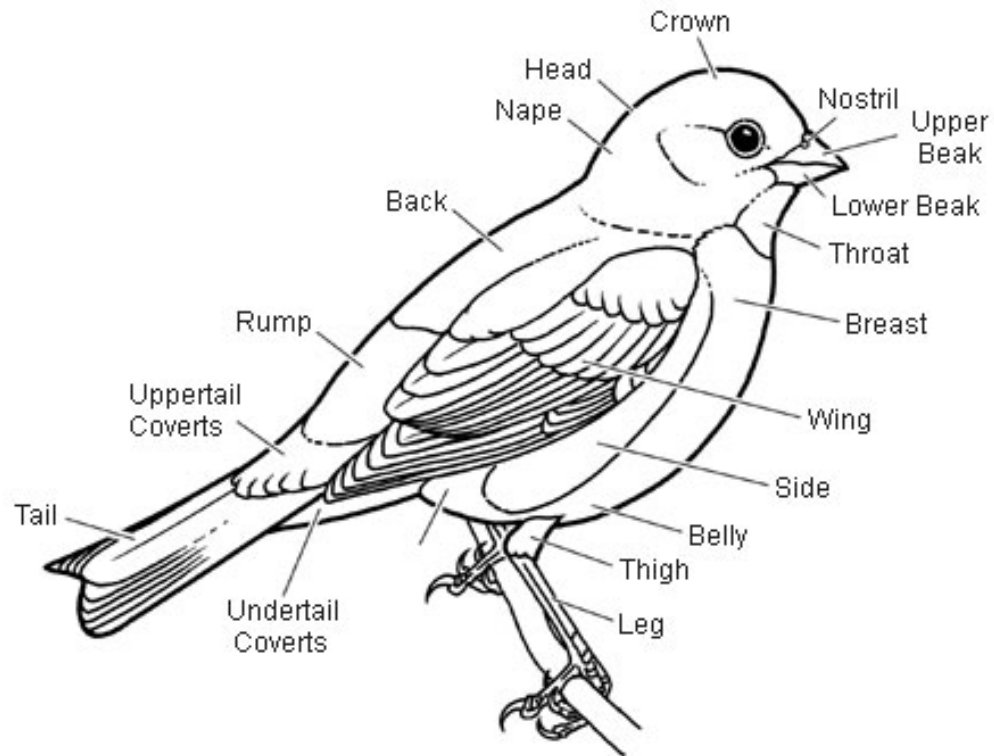


Image © Charles L. Ripper/CLO

5 birds that you see every day

Mimidae



Cardinalidae

Corvidae



Turdidae

American Robin



What are the field marks?

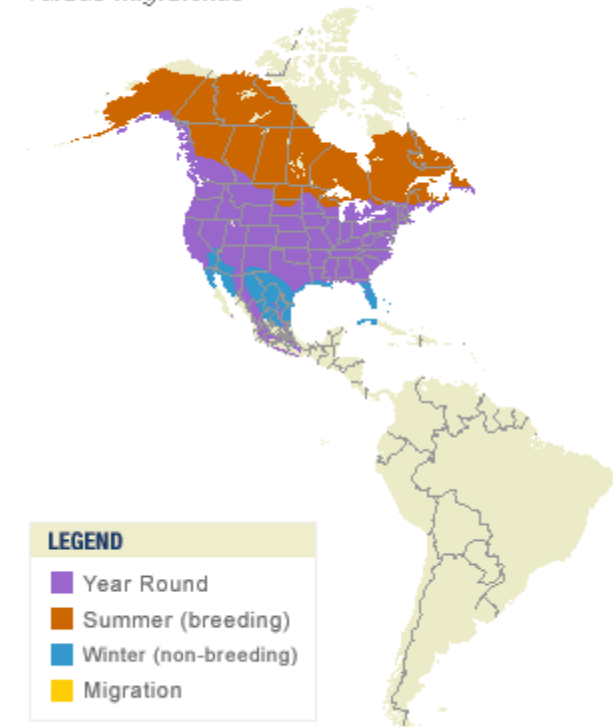
Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – tree or shrub

Range Map

American Robin
Turdus migratorius



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

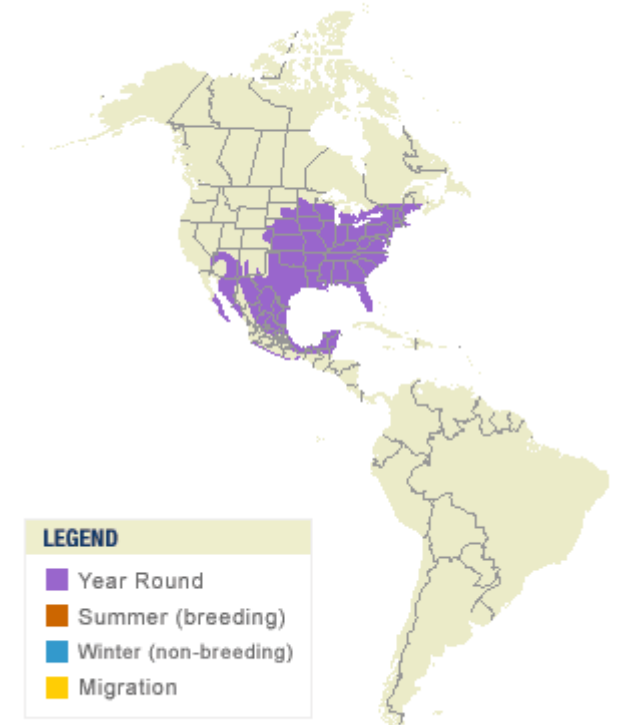
Northern Cardinal



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Northern Cardinal
Cardinalis cardinalis



LEGEND

- Year Round
- Summer (breeding)
- Winter (non-breeding)
- Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting - shrub

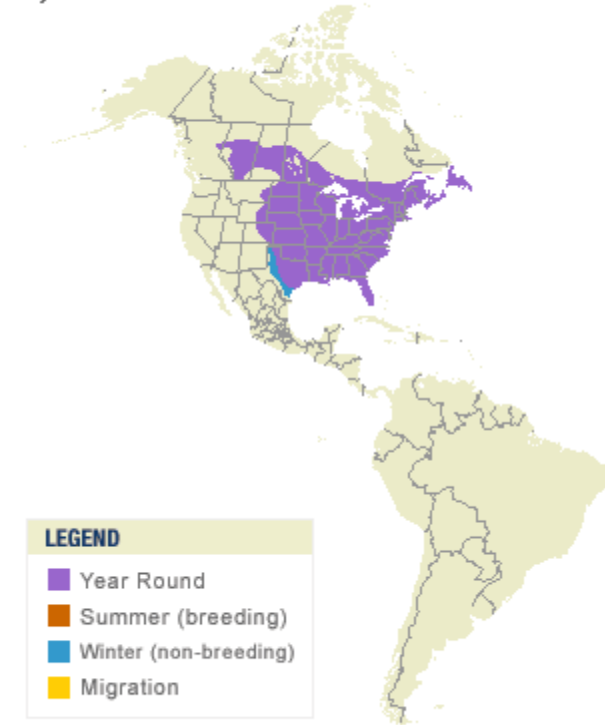
Blue Jay



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Blue Jay
Cyanocitta cristata



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – tree or shrub

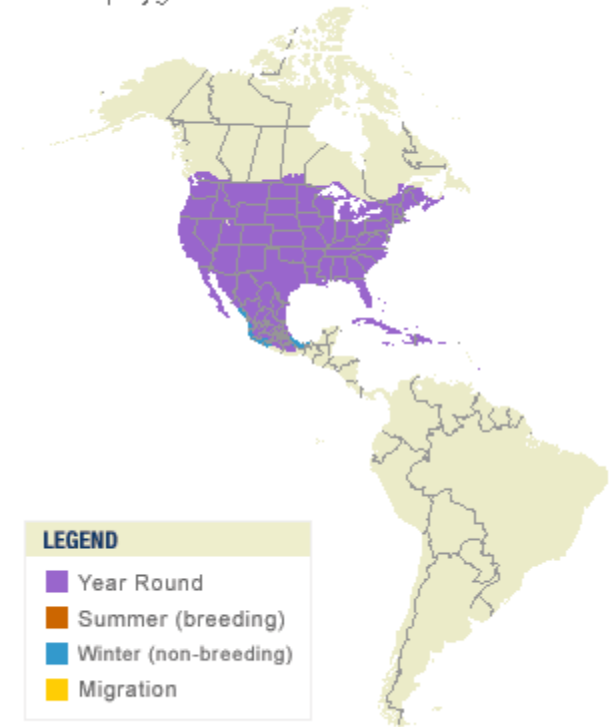
Northern Mockingbird



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Northern Mockingbird
Mimus polyglottos



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting - shrub

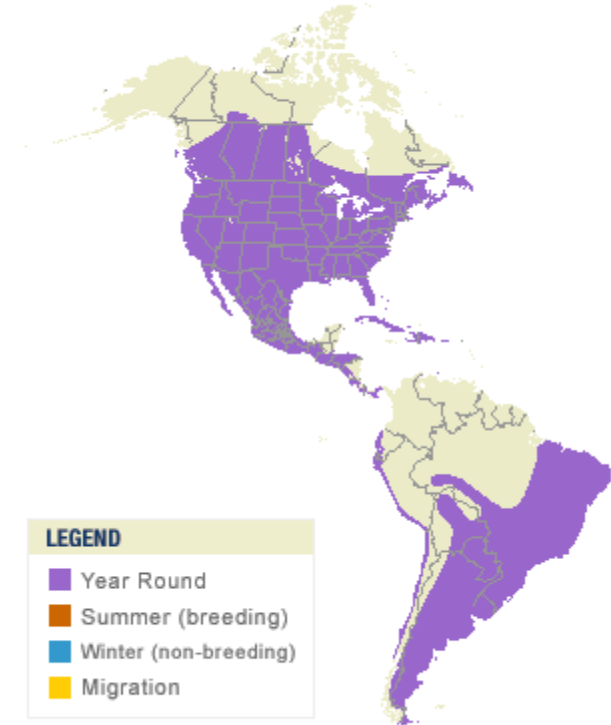
House Sparrow



What are the field marks?

Range Map

House Sparrow
Passer domesticus



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting - cavity

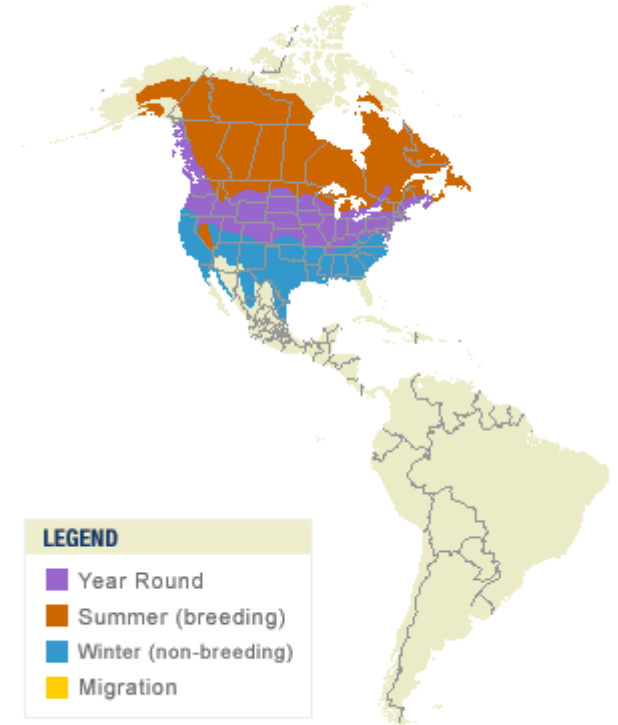
Canada Goose



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Canada Goose
Branta canadensis



LEGEND

- Year Round
- Summer (breeding)
- Winter (non-breeding)
- Migration

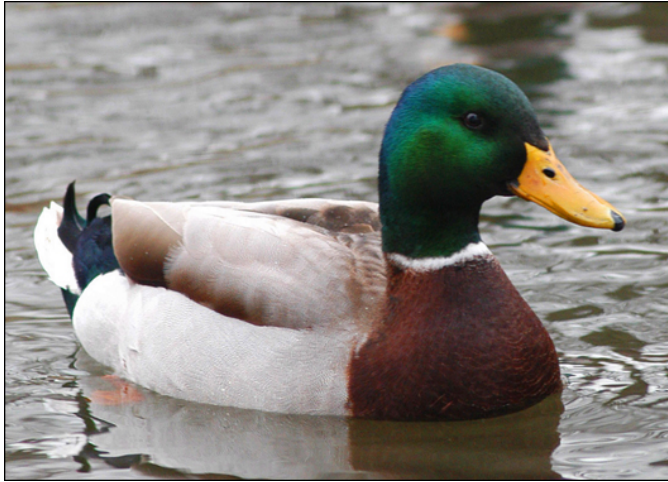
Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe (in part)

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – ground

Mallard

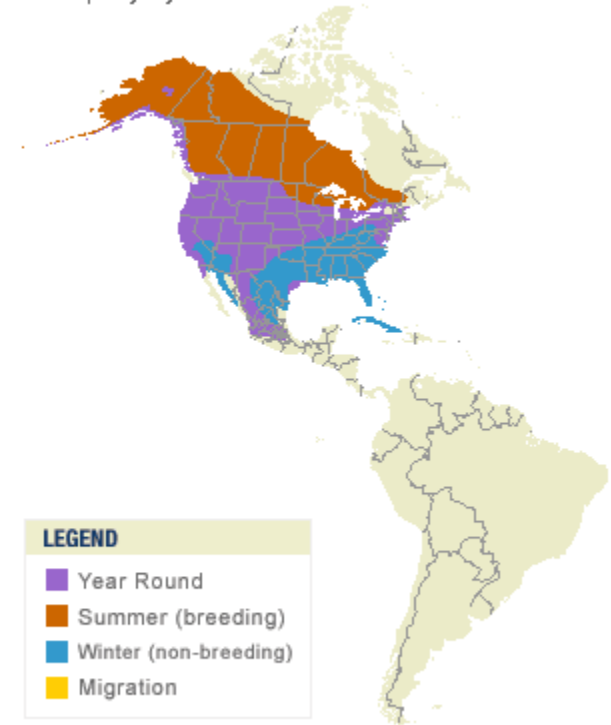


What are the field marks?

Range Map

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-water

Feeding

Nesting - ground

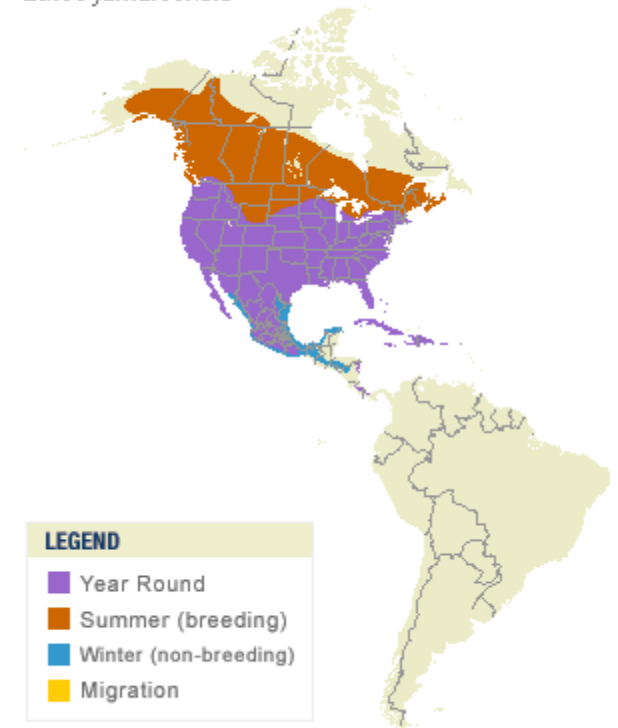
Red-tailed Hawk



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Red-tailed Hawk
Buteo jamaicensis



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-generalist

Feeding

Nesting – tree or cliff

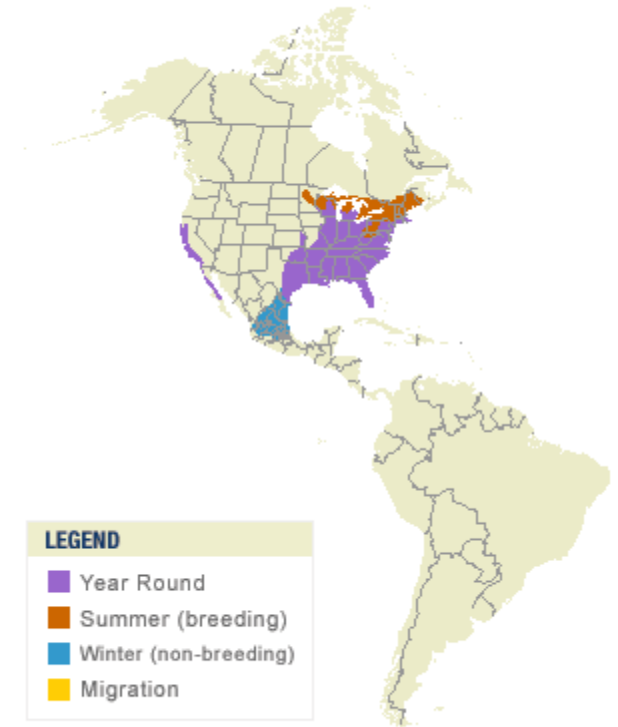
Red-shouldered Hawk



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Red-shouldered Hawk
Buteo lineatus



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-forest

Feeding

Nesting - tree

Northern Harrier



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Northern Harrier
Circus cyaneus



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-grassland/field

Feeding

Nesting – ground

American Kestrel

What are the field marks?



Habitat-grassland/field

Feeding

Nesting – cavity

Range Map

American Kestrel
Falco sparverius



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

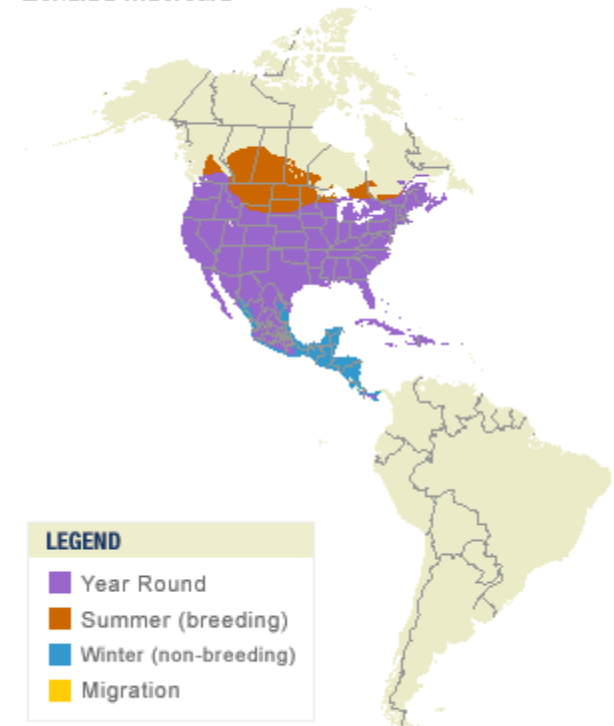
Mourning Dove



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Mourning Dove
Zenaida macroura



LEGEND

- Year Round
- Summer (breeding)
- Winter (non-breeding)
- Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – tree or shrub

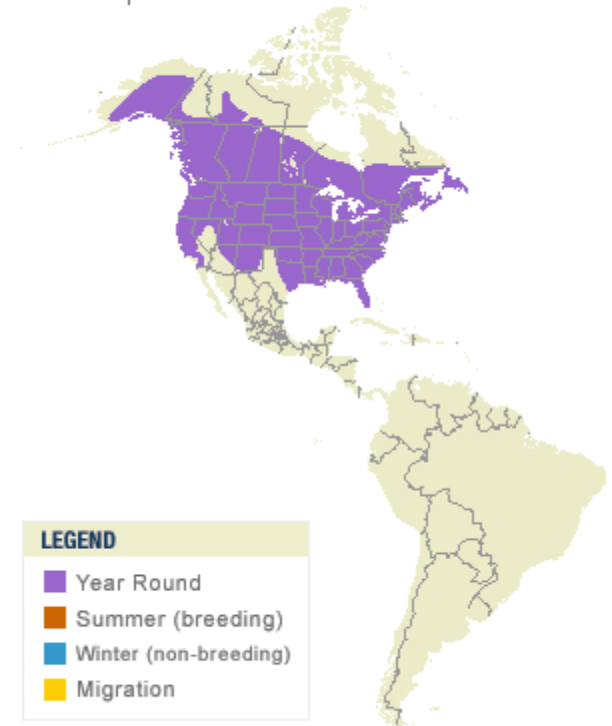
Downy Woodpecker



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Downy Woodpecker
Picoides pubescens



LEGEND	
■	Year Round
■	Summer (breeding)
■	Winter (non-breeding)
■	Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – cavity

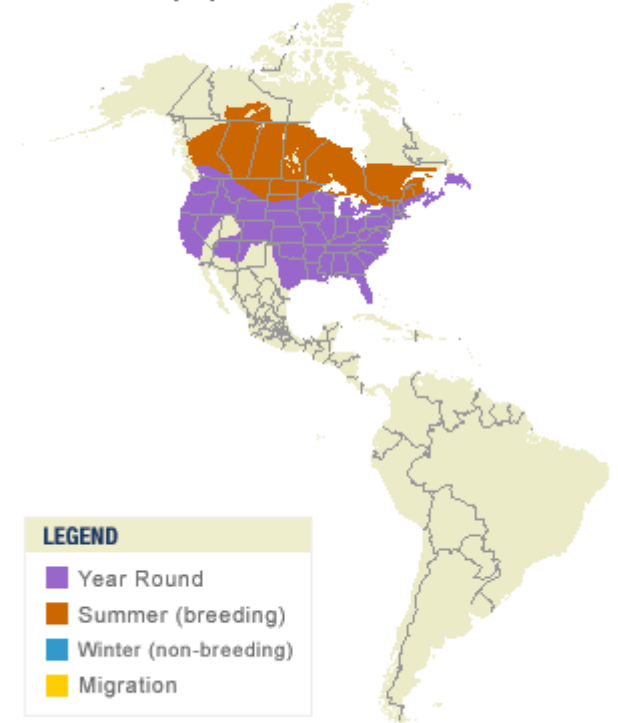
American Crow



What are the field marks?

Range Map

American Crow
Corvus brachyrhynchos



LEGEND	
	Year Round
	Summer (breeding)
	Winter (non-breeding)
	Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – tree

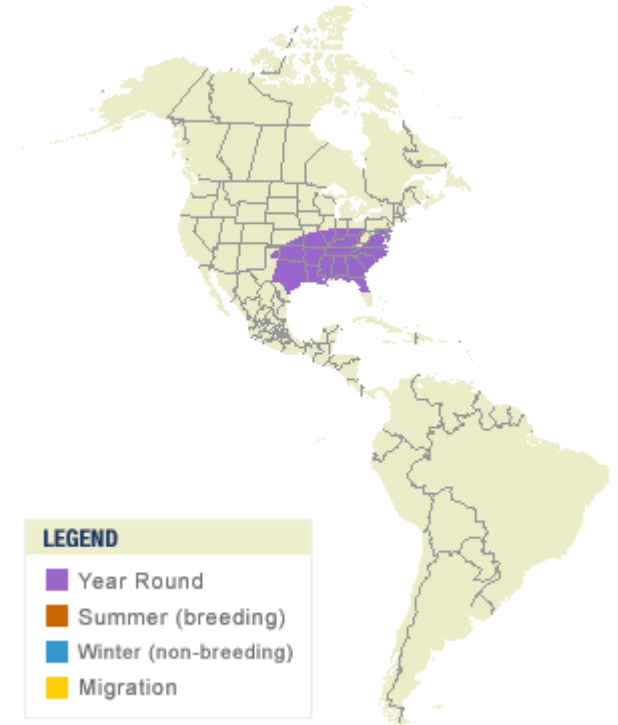
Carolina Chickadee



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Carolina Chickadee
Poecile carolinensis



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-forest

Feeding

Nesting – cavity

Tufted Titmouse



Habitat-forest

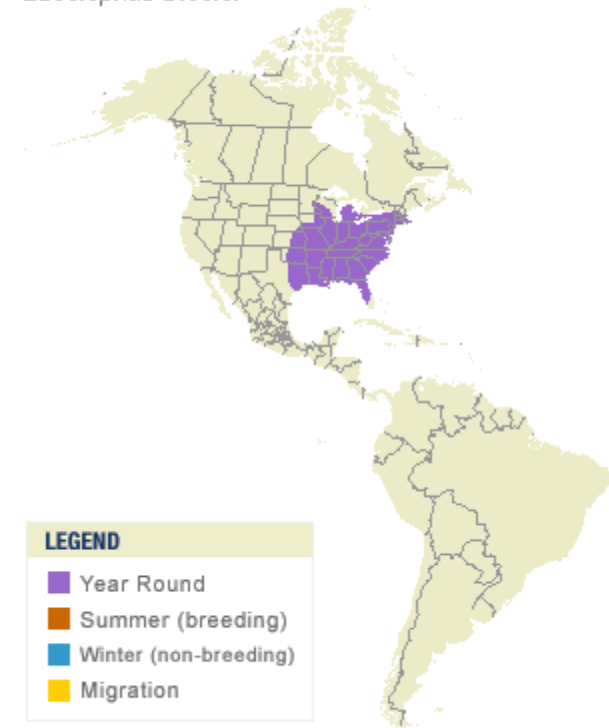
Feeding

Nesting - cavity

What are the field marks?

Range Map

Tufted Titmouse
Baeolophus bicolor



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

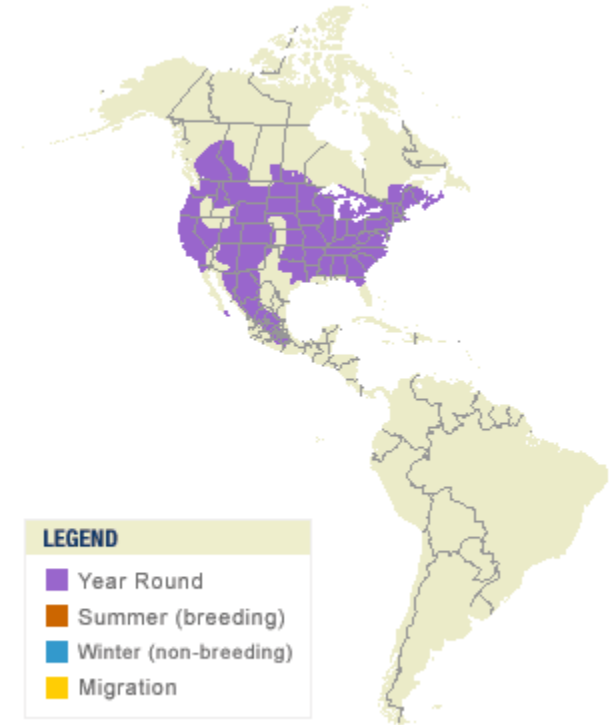
White-breasted Nuthatch



What are the field marks?

Range Map

White-breasted Nuthatch
Sitta carolinensis



LEGEND

- Year Round
- Summer (breeding)
- Winter (non-breeding)
- Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-forest

Feeding

Nesting – cavity

Carolina Wren



What are the field marks?



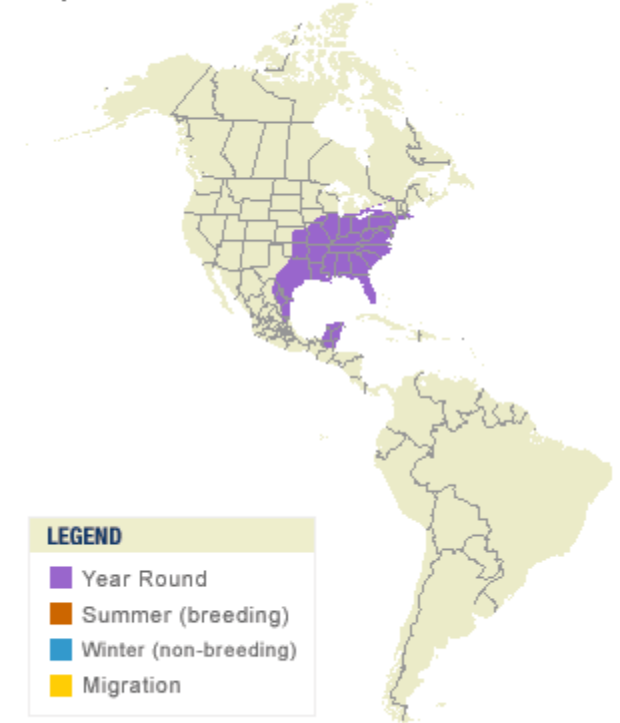
Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting - cavity

Range Map

Carolina Wren
Thryothorus ludovicianus



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Eastern Bluebird



What are the field marks?



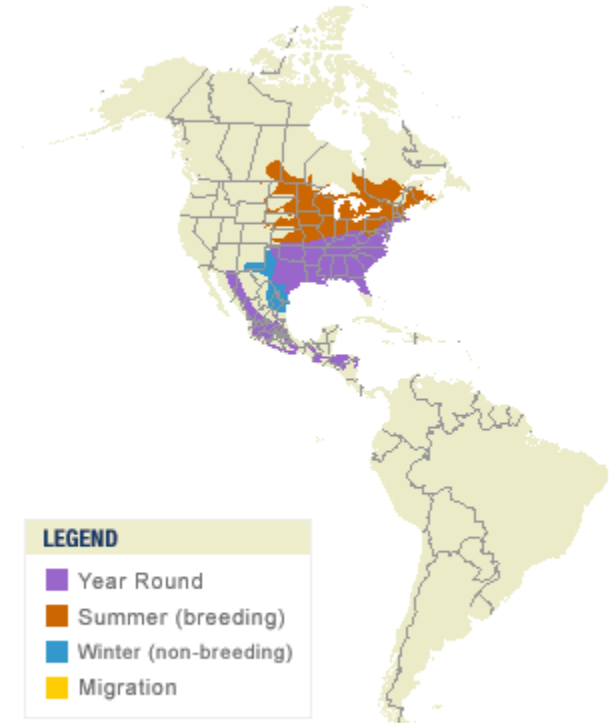
Habitat-grassland/field

Feeding

Nesting - cavity

Range Map

Eastern Bluebird
Sialia sialis



LEGEND	
■	Year Round
■	Summer (breeding)
■	Winter (non-breeding)
■	Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

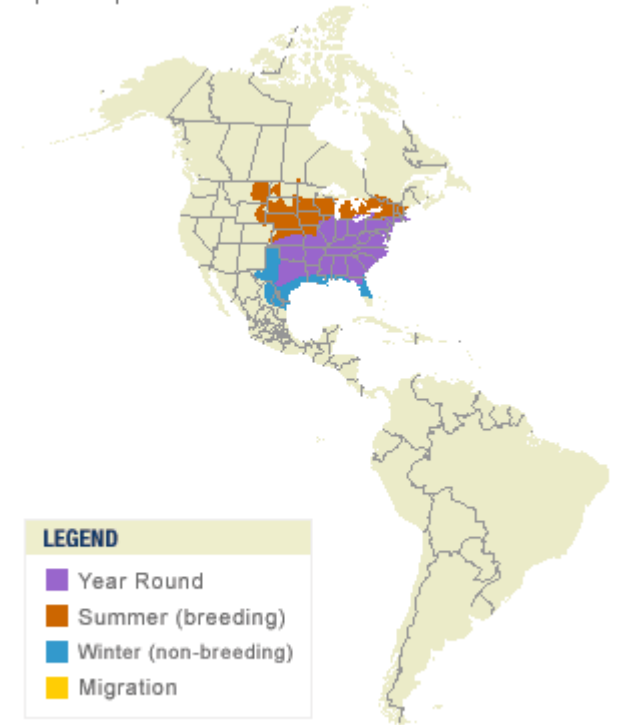
Field Sparrow



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Field Sparrow
Spizella pusilla



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-grassland/field

Feeding

Nesting – ground or shrub

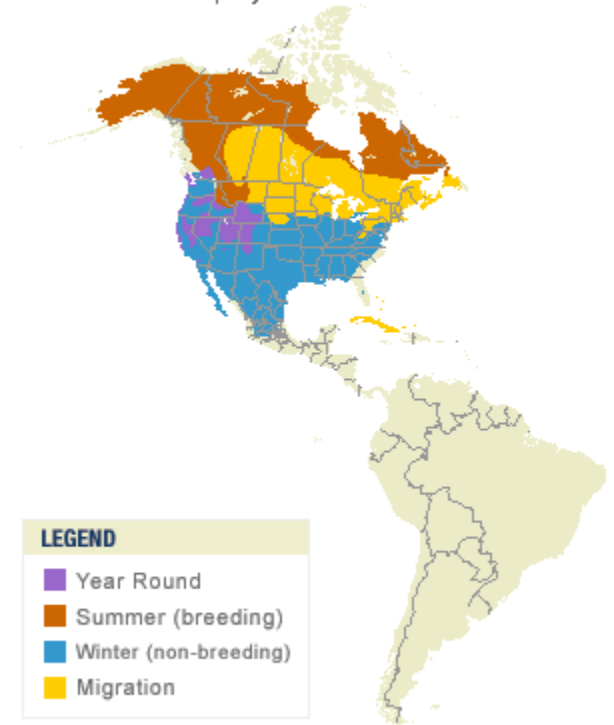
White-crowned Sparrow



What are the field marks?

Range Map

White-crowned Sparrow
Zonotrichia leucophrys



LEGEND

- Year Round
- Summer (breeding)
- Winter (non-breeding)
- Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-shrubland

Feeding

Nesting – ground

Dark-eyed Junco



What are the field marks?

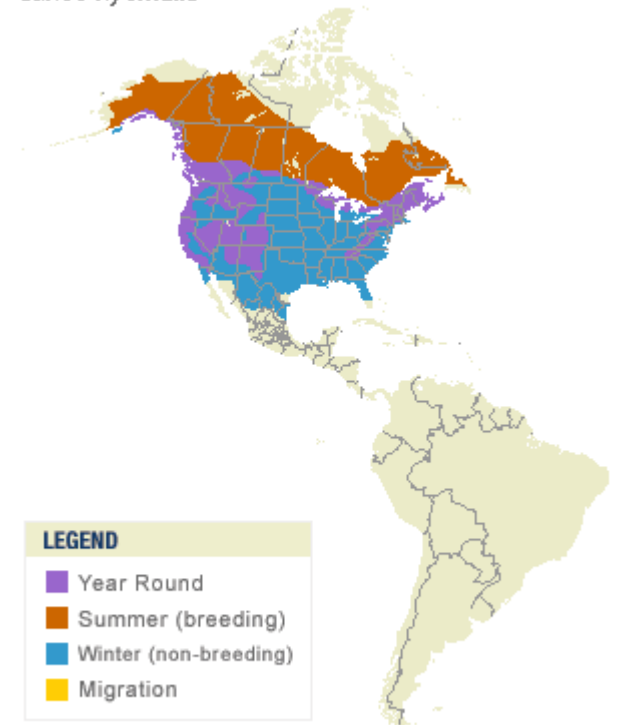
Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – ground

Range Map

Dark-eyed Junco
Junco hyemalis



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

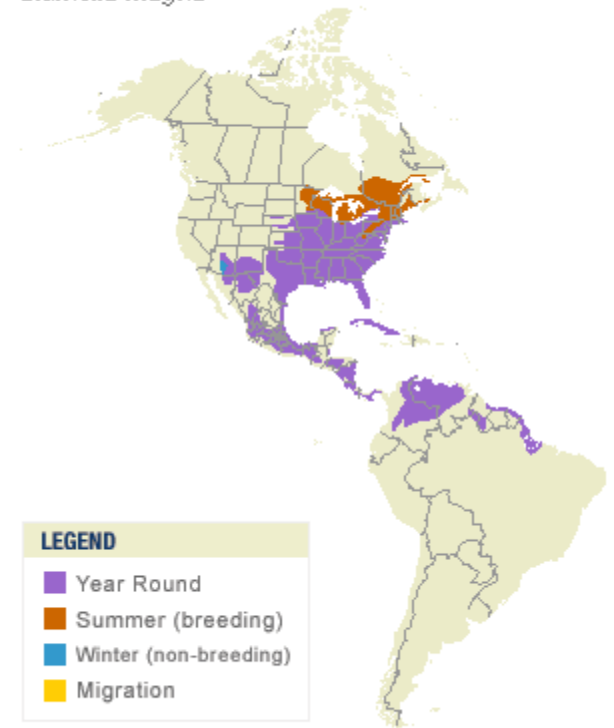
Eastern Meadowlark



What are the field marks?

Range Map

Eastern Meadowlark
Sturnella magna



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-grassland/field

Feeding

Nesting - ground

House Finch

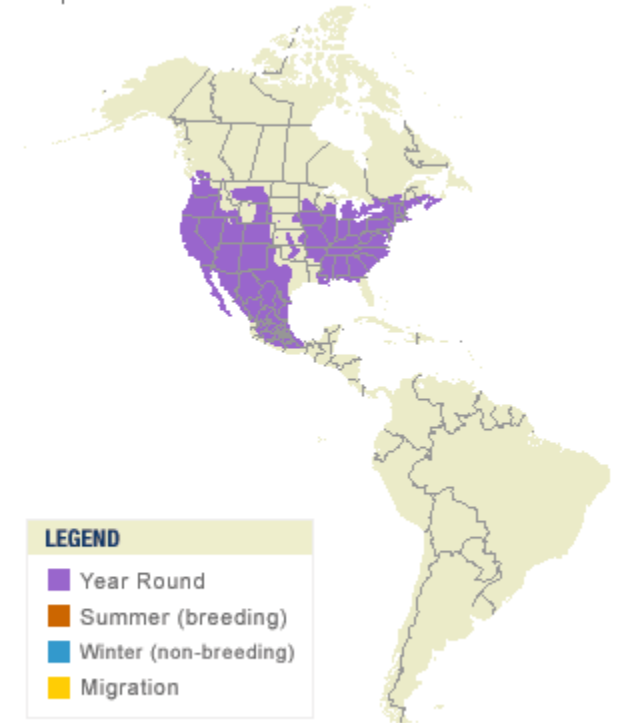


What are the field marks?

Range Map

House Finch

Carpodacus mexicanus



LEGEND

- Year Round
- Summer (breeding)
- Winter (non-breeding)
- Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – trees

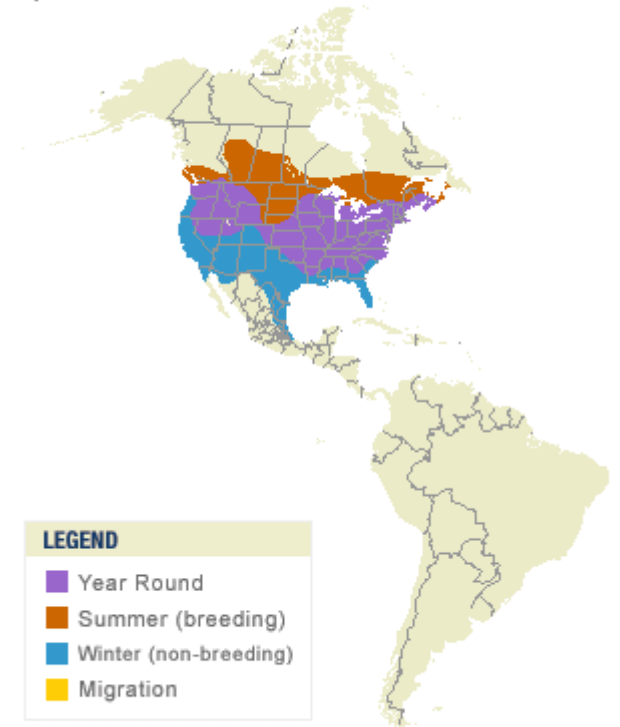
American Goldfinch



What are the field marks?

Range Map

American Goldfinch
Spinus tristis



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Habitat-urban/feeder

Feeding

Nesting – trees