



Silhouettes of Birds of Prey in Flight

Here are the flight silhouettes of different types of diurnal birds of prey. Being able to recognize the silhouette (shape) of a raptor makes it easier to identify it.

Falcons (*Falco*)

Falcons are small, medium or large raptors with long, pointed wings; long tails and squarer heads than other birds of prey. They are quick and agile flyers that are usually found in open areas.

Falcons of Quebec:

- American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)
- Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
- Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*)



Buteo Hawks (*Buteo*)

Buteos are medium or large raptors with long, wide, rounded wings and with relatively short fan-shaped tails. Hawks are high-soaring birds that like to perch on lonely snags. They are most often seen in open areas or forested habitats.

Buteos of Quebec:

- Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
- Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)
- Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)
- Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*)



Accipiter Hawks (*Accipiter*)

Accipiters are small or large raptors with relatively short, rounded wings and a long tail. They are very agile and hunt in forests.

Accipiters of Quebec:

- Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)
- Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)
- Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)





Harrier

The Harrier has long, narrow wings and a long tail. It can be seen in open areas (fields, marshes, etc.) where it glides a few meters above the ground while hunting.

Harrier of Quebec:

- Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)



Vulture

The vulture is a large bird that spends most of its time soaring. Its silhouette is dark and its featherless head appears small. In flight, its primary feathers are very noticeable and look like fingers.

Vulture of Quebec:

- Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)



Osprey

The Osprey is a large raptor with a very distinct M-shaped silhouette. A black line that crosses near its eye makes it easy to identify. It is most often seen near large bodies of water since it feeds mainly on fish.

Osprey of Quebec:

- Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)



Eagles

Eagles are large raptors with dark silhouettes. They are soaring birds with a silhouette similar to that of a hawk but with proportionally longer wings. The head also appears longer because they have larger beaks.

Eagles of Quebec:

- Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)
- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

