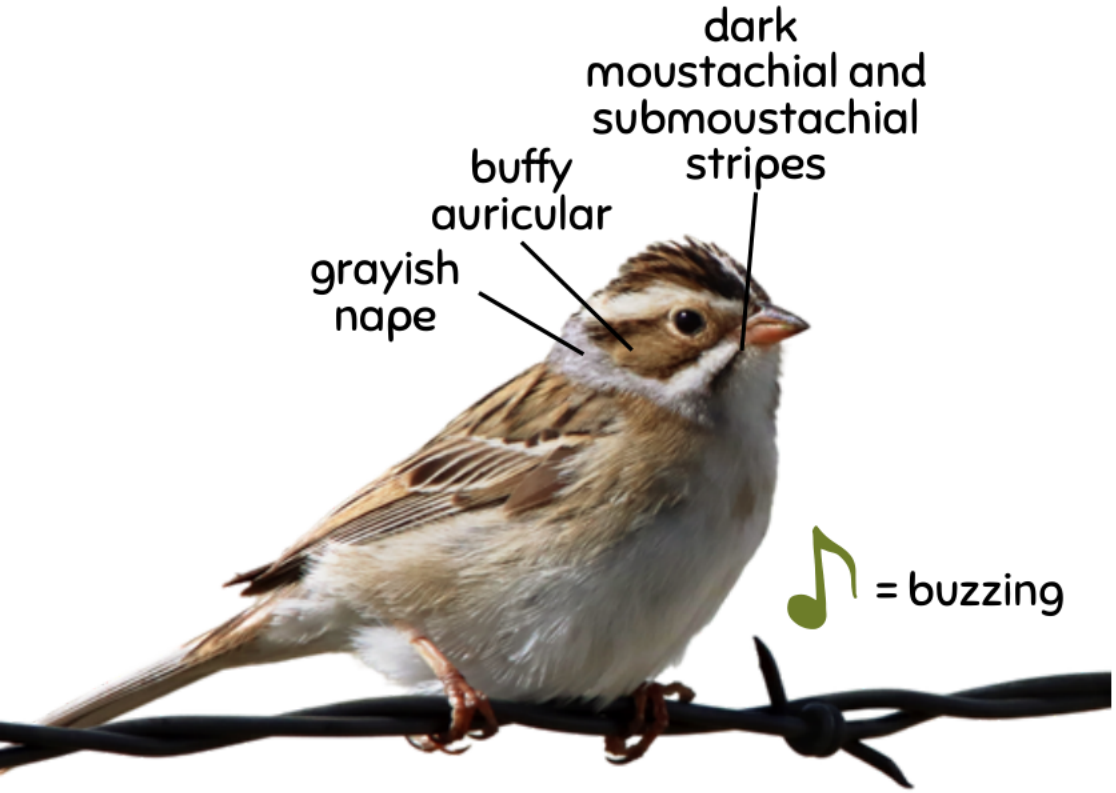
A.E. WILSON PARK
BIRD WATCHING
BIRD
FRIENDLY
REGINA

Clay-colored Sparrow

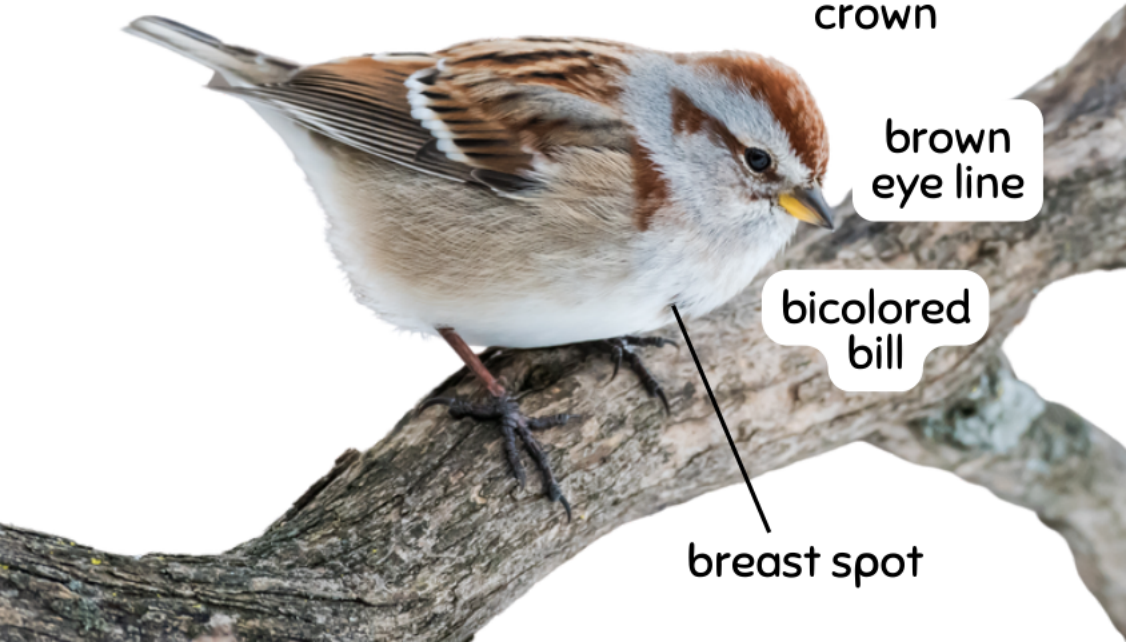


The Clay-colored Sparrow's buzzy song is a signature sound of the vast shrublands of the northern prairie and Great Plains. Though they're not brightly colored, their pale tones and overall clean, crisp markings help set them apart from other sparrows.

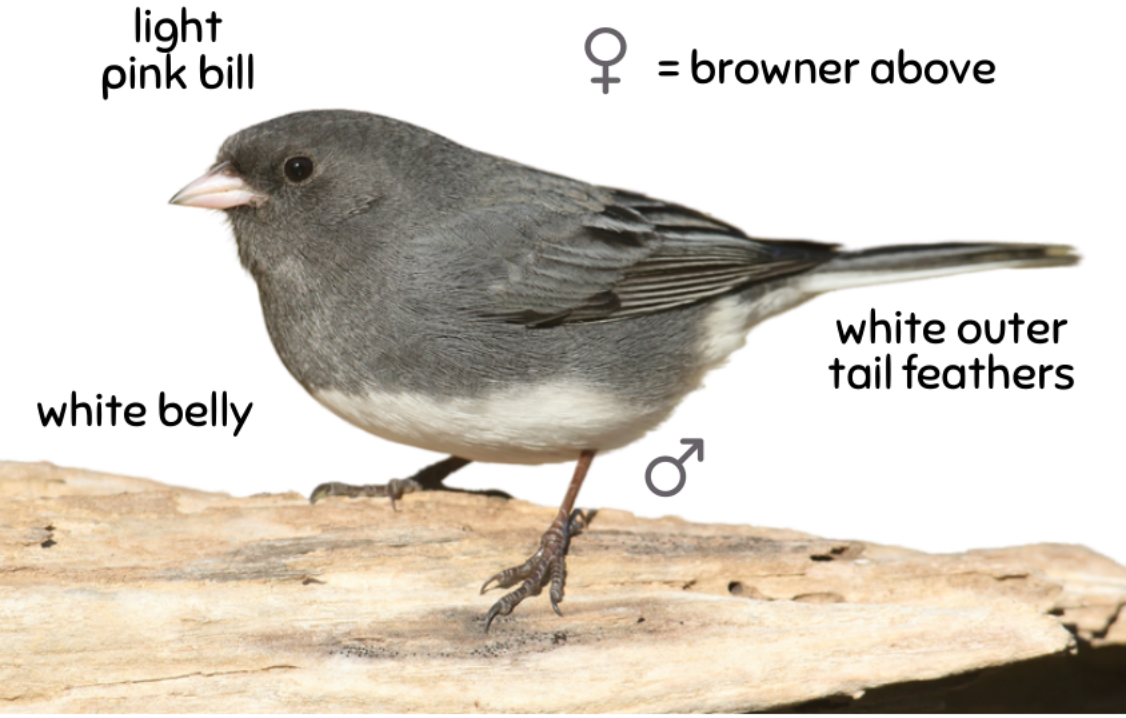
Chipping Sparrow

Misleadingly named, these sparrows are ground birds – foraging and nesting on the ground.

American Tree Sparrow



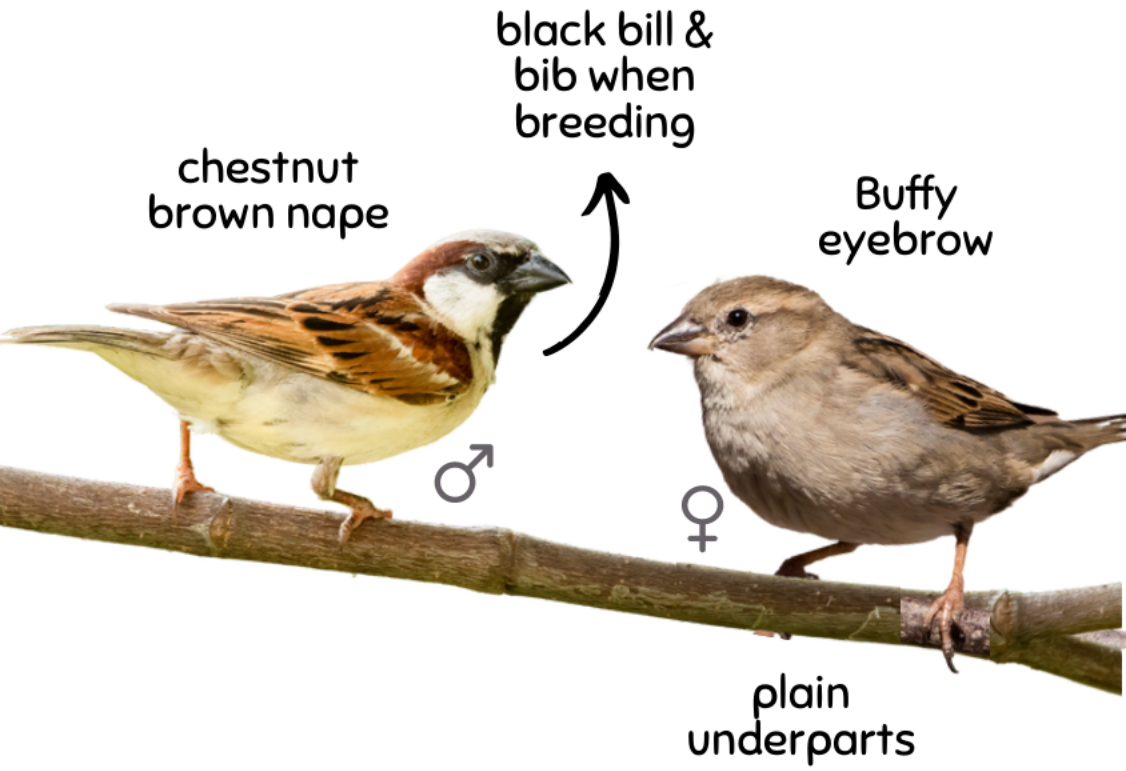
Dark-eyed Junco



Subspecies: slate-colored

Dark-eyed Juncos are flashy little sparrows. They're easy to recognize by their crisp (though extremely variable) markings and the bright white tail feathers they habitually flash in flight.

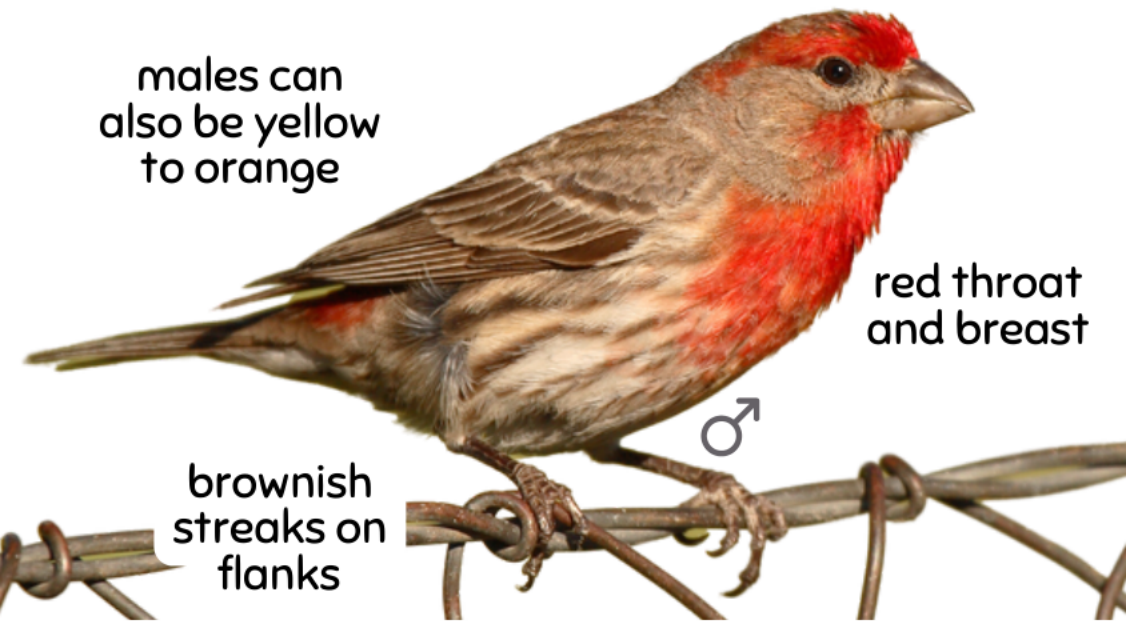
House Sparrow



Many people regard House Sparrows as undesirable in their yards, since they aren't native and can be a menace to native species. Let's dig into the history of this!

In the 1850s, the elm spanworm was experiencing a boom in North America. To help with this situation, 16 House Sparrows were imported from England. They multiplied and spread so quickly that some wondered if the experiment was too successful. Today the House Sparrow nests on every continent but Antarctica. Though the human–sparrow relationship is still complicated, for those of us in urban areas it's an important connection to the natural world.

House Finch



The red comes from pigments contained in food during feather growth. The more pigment in the food, the redder the male.

The House Finch is a recent introduction, but has received a warmer reception than other arrivals. The House Finch was originally found in western US. In 1940 a small number of finches were turned loose in New York, after failed attempts to sell them ("Hollywood finches"). They quickly started breeding and spread across almost all of the eastern US and southern Canada.

Yellow Warbler

The nests of the Yellow Warbler are frequently parasitized by the Brown-headed Cowbird. This means Cowbirds lay their eggs in other bird's nests. The Yellow Warbler recognizes the intruding egg and will often build a new nest directly on top of the parasitized one, sometimes resulting in nests with up to six tiers!

unmarked face, accentuating the large black eye

= sweet sweet sweet I'm so sweet

males have rusty streaking in chest

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Their excitable yank-yank calls sound like tiny tin horns being honked in the treetops.

♂

In both species, females are slightly duller in color.

You may notice Nuthatches making quick trips to and from your feeder – caching (storing) the seeds for winter months.

Nuthatches can easily maneuver down tree trunks

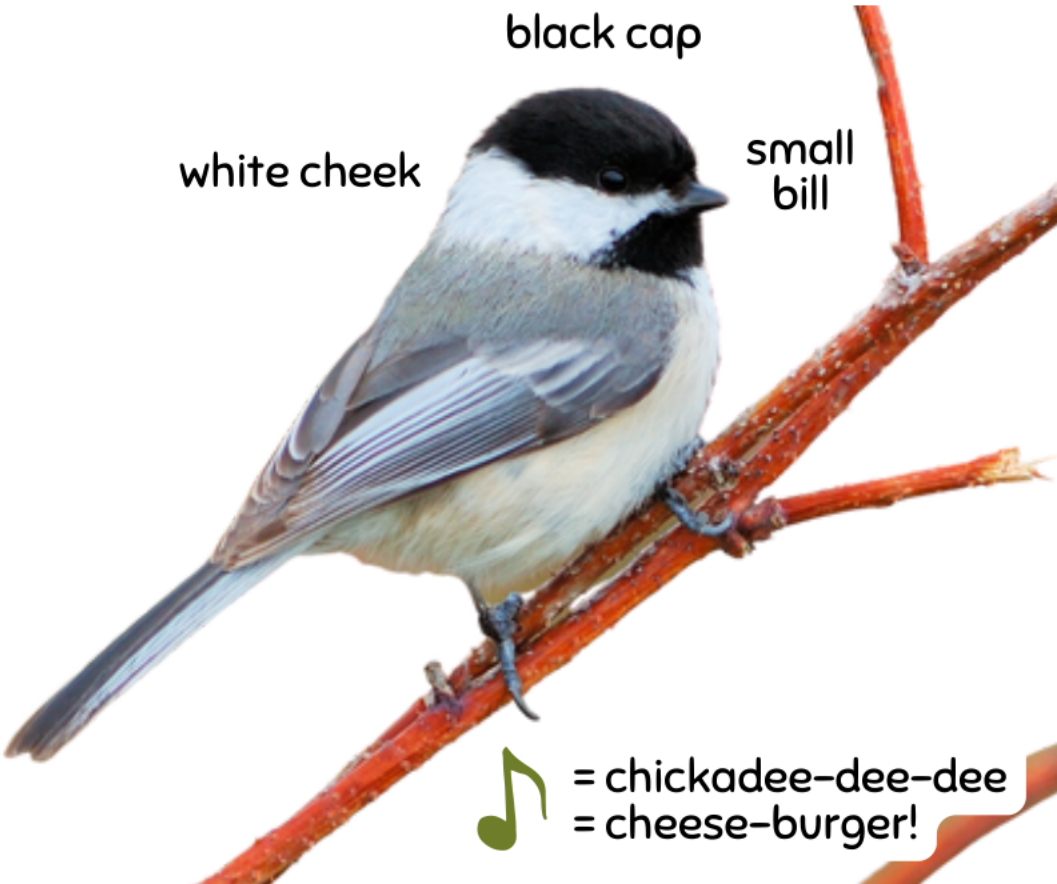
♂

White-breasted Nuthatch

Black-capped Chickadee

Every autumn the volume of the their hippocampus (responsible for memory) expands by about 30% allowing them to expertly find their cached seeds from thousands of hiding places.

Chickadee calls are complex, communicating information on identity and recognition of other flocks as well as predator alarms and contact calls. The more dee notes in a chickadee-dee-dee call, the higher the threat level.



House Wren

Look for a tiny brown bird with a tail that stands upright!

The House Wren has one of the largest ranges of any songbird. It breeds from Canada through the West Indies and Central America, southward to the southernmost point of South America.

Listen for its rush-and-jumble song in summer and you'll find this species zipping through shrubs and low tree branches, snatching insects.

Cedar Waxwings

♪

Unlike many songbirds, waxwings do not have a true song! They communicate with high-pitched calls as they roam around in large groups looking for fruit.

If you see one Cedar Waxwing, look closely and you may see dozens sitting still within the tree branches!

Bohemian Waxwing

Waxwings have an uncanny ability to find fruit nearly everywhere, almost as though they have a GPS tracker specifically for berries! Flocks have been known to turn up to an isolated shrub in desert areas, devour its fruit in minutes, and move on!

They get their name from the red, waxy secretions on the tips of their wing feathers and yellow tips on the tail. Their color comes from carotenoid pigments found in the fruit they eat. As the birds age their waxy tips grow larger.

American Robin

Although robins are considered harbingers of spring, many American Robins spend the whole winter in their breeding range. But because they spend more time roosting in trees and less time in your yard, you're much less likely to see them.

Because they forage largely on lawns, they are vulnerable to pesticide poisoning and can be an important indicator of chemical pollution.

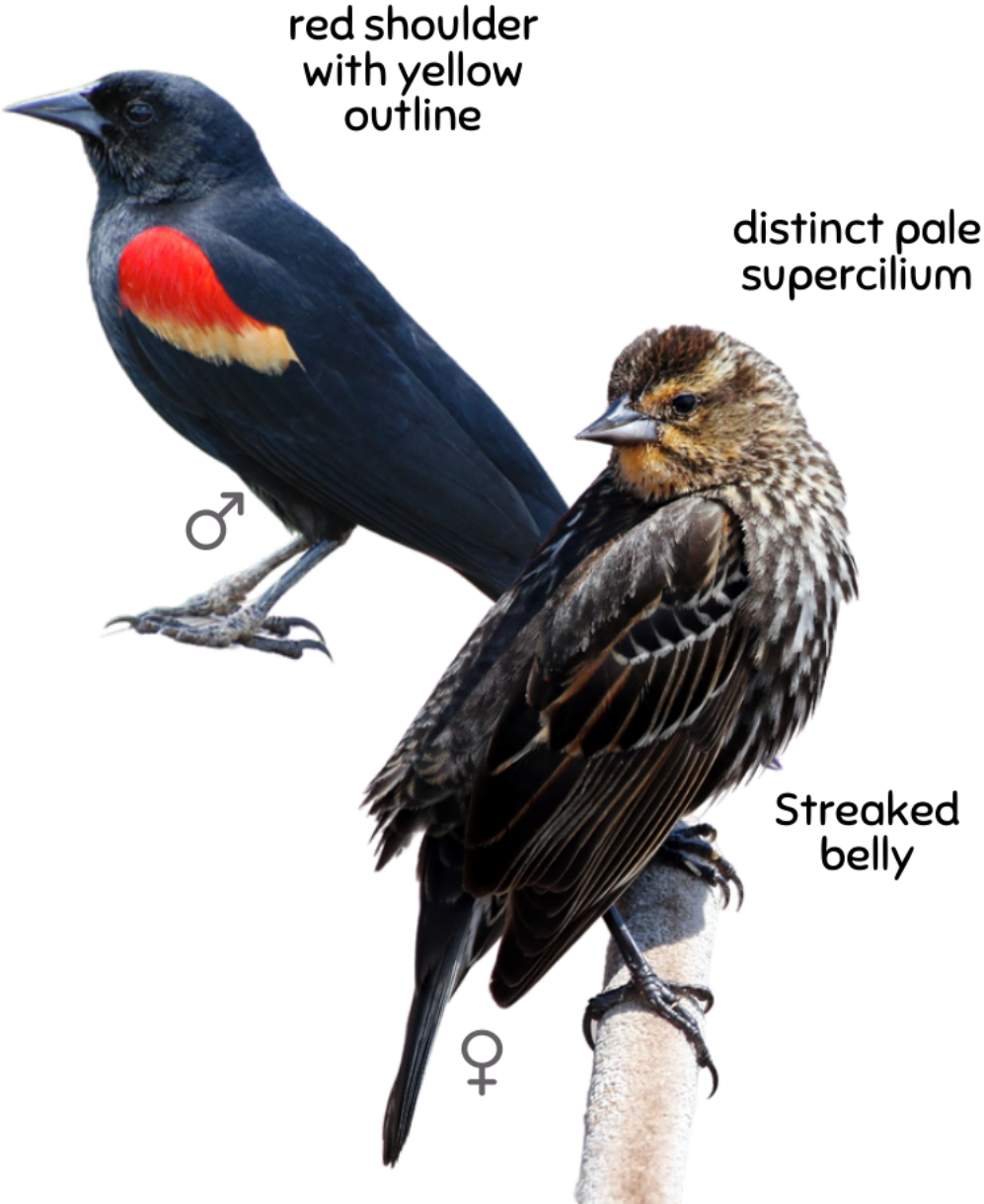
Their song is a string of 10+ clear whistles assembled from a few often-repeated syllables: cheerily, cheer up, cheer up, cheerily, cheer up.

♂

♀ = duller overall

Red-winged Blackbird

Male Red-winged Blackbirds fiercely defend their territories during the breeding season, spending more than a quarter of daylight hours in territory defense. He chases other males out of the territory and attacks nest predators, sometimes going after much larger animals, including horses and people.



Downy Woodpecker

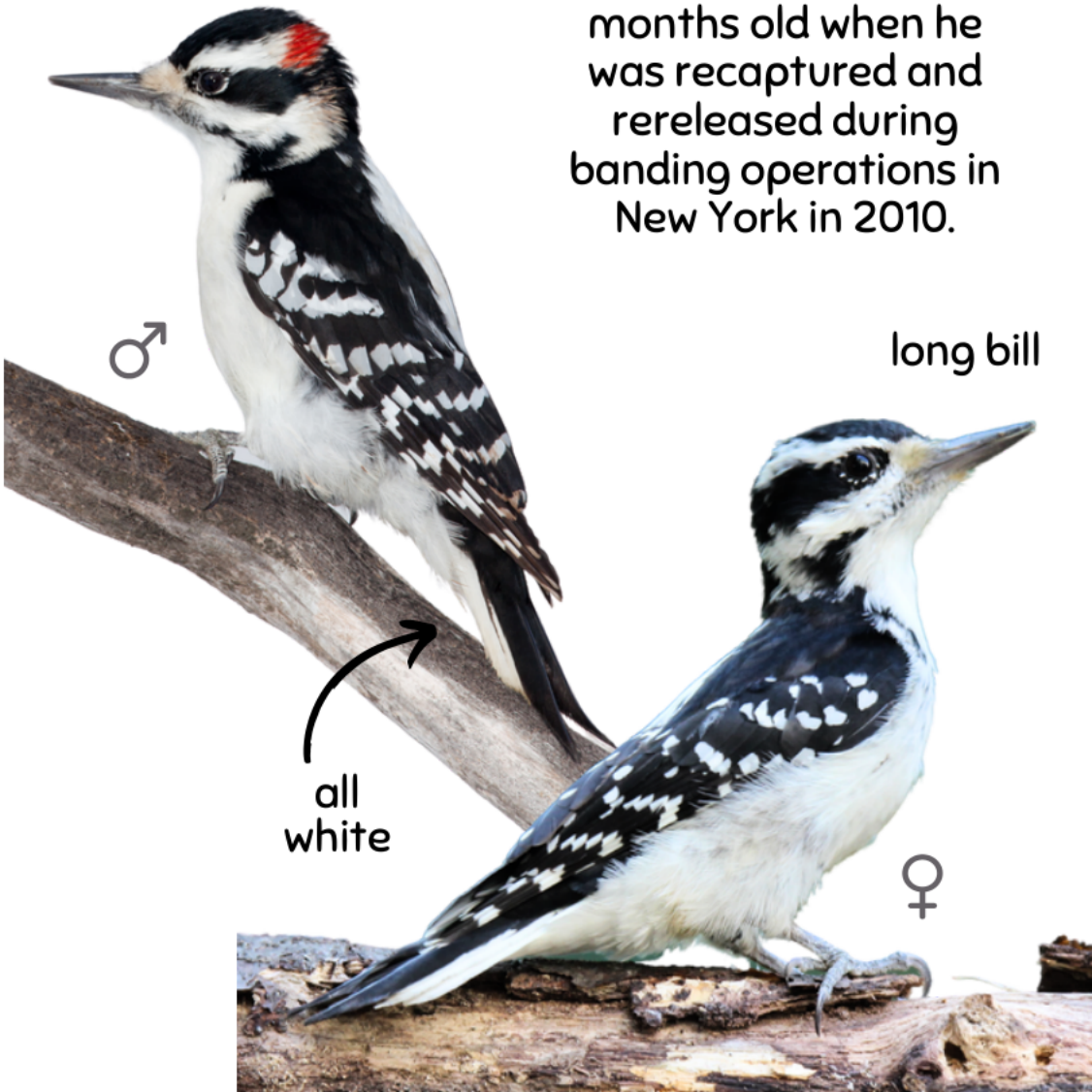
In spring and summer, Downy Woodpeckers make a lot of noise with their shrill whinnying call and by drumming on trees. Their rhythmic drumming works like many birds' songs: it broadcasts to other woodpeckers over a long distance a clear assertion of territorial and mating rights.

Hairy Woodpecker

If you have dead trees in your yard, or dead parts in a living tree, and if it's safe to leave them standing, a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers might try to start a family there. In later years, their hole might become a home for other cavity nesters.

males have a red nape patch

The oldest recorded Hairy Woodpecker at least 15 years, 11 months old when he was recaptured and rereleased during banding operations in New York in 2010.



Comparison between Downy & Hairy Woodpeckers

Downy vs Hairy

short bill

long bill

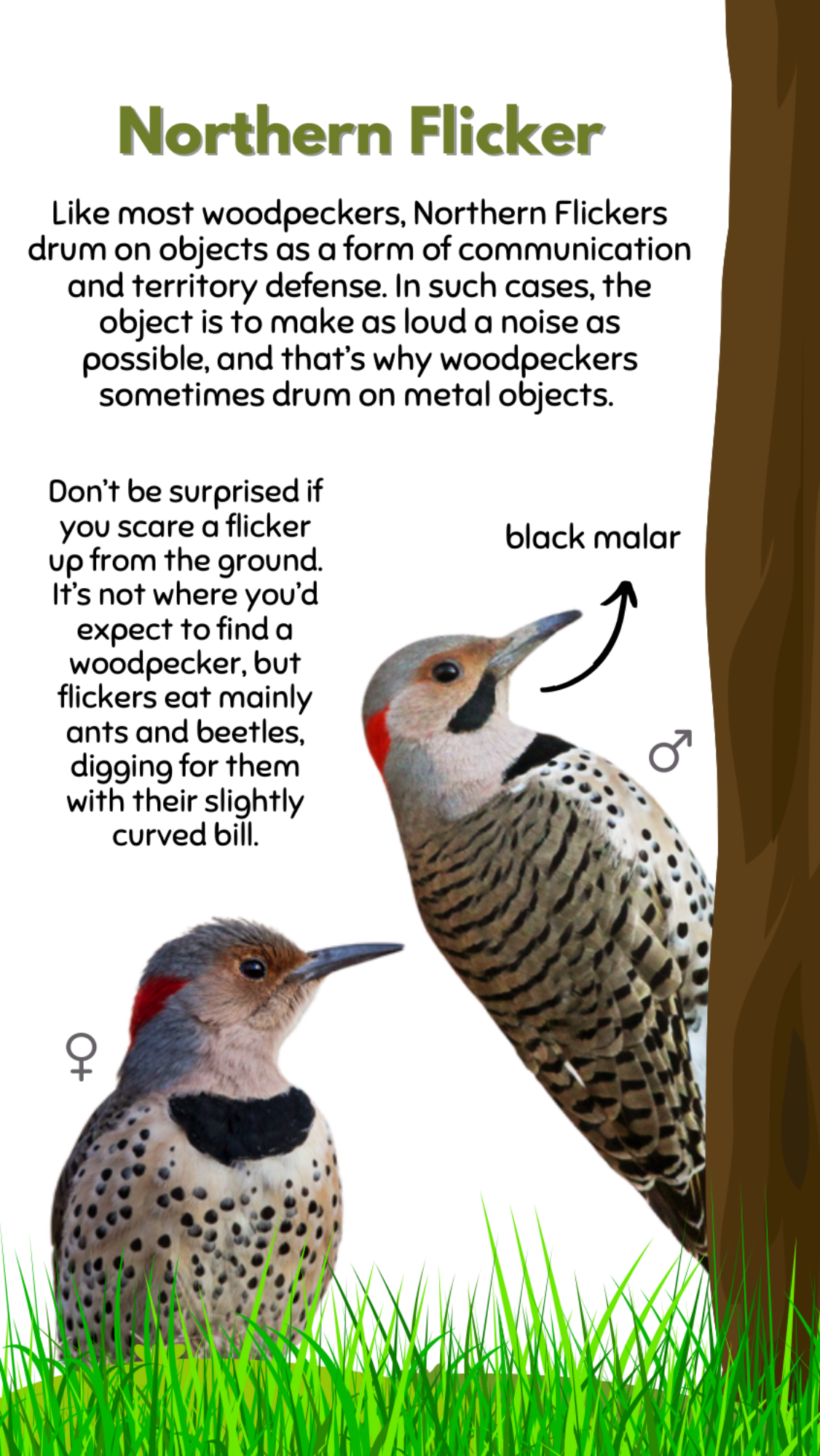
overall smaller

overall larger

Northern Flicker

Like most woodpeckers, Northern Flickers drum on objects as a form of communication and territory defense. In such cases, the object is to make as loud a noise as possible, and that's why woodpeckers sometimes drum on metal objects.

Don't be surprised if you scare a flicker up from the ground. It's not where you'd expect to find a woodpecker, but flickers eat mainly ants and beetles, digging for them with their slightly curved bill.



THIS IS A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO BIRDS WE MAY FIND IN THIS LOCAL PARK.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

All About Birds
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Merlin App
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

The Sibley Guide to Birds
National Audubon Society

Field Guide to the Birds of North America
National Geographic

Saskatchewan Birds
Alan Smith

Backyard Bird Feeding: A Saskatchewan Guide
Trevor Herriot & Myrna Pearman

Birds of Saskatchewan