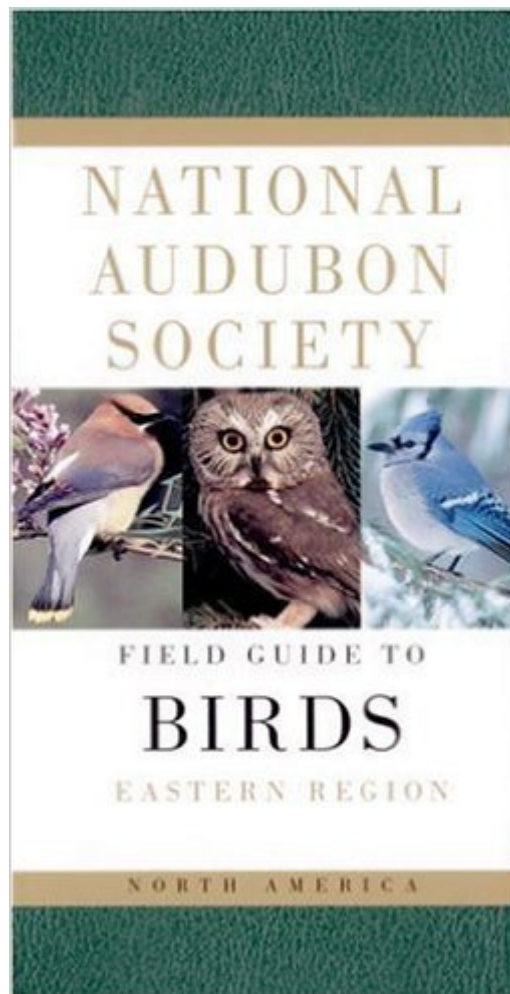


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# National Audubon Society Field Guide To North American Birds: Eastern Region, Revised Edition



## Synopsis

Introduced in 1977 and completely revised in 1994, these bestselling photographic field guides have become the birding bibles of more than four million enthusiasts. Virtually every bird found in North America is brought to life in a full-color photograph and with textual information on the bird's voice, nesting habits, habitat, range, and interesting behaviors. Accompanying range maps; overhead flight silhouettes; sections on bird-watching, accidental species, and endangered birds make these the most comprehensive field guides to birds available. Note: the Eastern Edition generally covers states east of the Rocky Mountains, while the Western Edition covers the Rocky Mountain range and all the states to the west of it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This National Audubon Society field guide to birds has lots and lots of nice, but small, photos of birds. That's nice. This guide also includes most of the birds of the region. Those are the plusses of this book. There are, however, a number of minuses that come along with this book. First of all, no photograph-based field guide can show the important characteristics needed to identify most birds as clearly as a good illustration can. Next, the only info that accompanies each photograph is the common name of the bird, along with its gender, average size, and a reference to a page number to a section in the back of the book that provides all of the descriptive narrative information for each species. That info includes each bird's physical description, voice (call), habitat, nesting info, and geographic range (with a map by the info -- that's nice). The part that's frustrating for me is that I have to spend time flipping back and forth between the photo section at the front of the book and

the info section at the back of the book in order to get the info I'm looking for! While I'm in the field birding, that's a hassle! I therefore much prefer the illustrated format that has pictures and descriptive info of the Peterson Guides to the Audubon guides. Still, the Audubon guides are useful, though I use mine primarily as a secondary source, and it usually stays inside when I go out -- Peterson is my guide of choice. I am, by the way, a novice birder myself, and find that the Peterson Guides help me to ID birds faster and with fewer errors than the Audubon guides do. 5 points for photos, but 3 points for ease of use, for 4 points overall. Good luck, and happy spotting! Alan Holyoak, Dept of Biology, Manchester College, IN

Field guides are great to have because they're small and their entire aim is to help you immediately identify a bird you see before you. Every birder should have at least one field guide, and maybe even several - some to keep in the car or by a window. Being published by the National Audubon Society, you'd expect this field guide to be top-notch, one developed and tested by thousands of birders. Indeed, the photos are very nice, full color and in 'native habitat'. The descriptions are pretty complete - with size, key things to look for, song, habitat. There's a little map showing range, and the range is also described as well. The problem is with the layout. All of the pictures are at the front of the book - put into groups by bird type, three to a page. Often there's only one photo of a bird, even though they look different during different years of life or seasons. If you see something that seems it might be right, now you have to go flipping through many pages to track down the actual \*information\* on that bird. Does it even live where you're looking? Are there other similar birds it might be instead? What are those key features you're supposed to be watching for? By the time you figure any of this out, the bird is probably back in hiding. It seems with their knowledge of birders and how birders operate, they'd have arranged this book in an easier-to-use fashion. While this is a nice book to have for its lovely pictures, it's not what I grab when I need to bring a field book with me on a trip.

I have used many of Audubon's Field Guides, and they are very helpful and usually organized and easy to understand. However, this one is extremely complex and confusing. When I find an interesting bird, I would go grab my binoculars and field guide and look it up. I go to the correct category and frantically search for the bird. When I find it, it gives me a detailed color picture that helps identify the bird. However, if you want more information, it then refers you to a different page, hundreds of thin pages away. You then need to go and find the page, but by then, the bird is gone. When I do get to the page, it is filled with wonderful detailed information of appearance, voice,

habitat, nesting, range, map of habitat, and a brief summary. The book is nice, but I would recommend buying another one with more organization.

This field guide contains most of the wild birds found in the eastern United States. The photos are very good and the descriptions make identification of birds a cinch. Compact size fits well in glove box or on the window sill next to the feeder.

I've got this edition and an older addition. Excellent information and great live photos of the different birds of Eastern North America. Would rather prefer a birding guide with the text with the photo on the same page though. But that aside, this is recommended.

For amateur bird-identification, this is clearly the best book of its kind. The photographs are clear and vivid, and capture many birds in natural settings, showing them doing things that they actually do. For identification, this helps, as you get a sense of what kind of place you're likely to see the bird. For example, the pictures of the thrushes clearly indicate that they are deep-woods birds. The text descriptions are wonderful, offering detailed information about physical appearance, egg size and number, breeding season, male/female physical differences, migration pattern, and food preferences. One of the most useful descriptions is of the birds' songs. In addition to these "technical" data, every bird has a section of general description where the editors include comments on behavior (for example, telling you how friendly chickadees can be), their history, environmental factors, and the bird's relationship to humans. Sometimes, the editors are a little too human-oriented in their descriptions. For example, the book accurately describes European Starlings as pests, and mentions that starlings ended up in America because people brought them here from Europe. However, the book loses a golden opportunity to make a comment on the ignorance of introduced species. Likewise, in the description of the Common Crow, the editors mention how they are more numerous now than when settlers first arrived in the United States. However, they fail to explain that there is a connection between human activity and the rise in crow populations. This criticism aside, the text descriptions offer some great insights into the lives of the birds, and allows you to see your backyard visitors, or those deep-woods residents, in a whole new light. Anyone who has even a little interest in birds should have this book on hand.

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