



On the Watch
June Hitchcox

RED-TAILED HAWKS!

What a thrill in late March! Previously, we have been watching, every day, a large bird gliding along horizontally, using the support of the thermals. And then finally, one day it soared upwards away from us showing it rufous red tail. It was a Red-tailed Hawk! What a wonderful sight!

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Their plumage colours vary, but the tail told the story. This sighting was followed by terrible weather; gale-force winds, rain, snow, and ice. On April 19th, the hawk reappeared. It had survived! The Red-tails are really big birds; up to 26" long, with a wing-spread as great as 57". Those broad wings are fairly rounded, and so they easily get the support of thermal currents. The tails are relatively short.

Red-tails eat rodents, insect larvae, fish, small animals, and carrion. They perch high on trees or telephone poles and watch for prey on open ground, and in a second, swoop down for it. They breed all across Canada, all the way north to the tree line, and as well as far south as Panama.

This breed is thriving due to man opening fields for farms where bush used to be. Their nests are easily 4' wide and 3' deep. Their call is a high screech. If you hear this as you walk a trail, look up high. You may see a huge nest being protected by Red-tailed parents.

Photo below by Philip Brown on Unsplash.



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LAWYER



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