



© Bill Moses

© Bill Moses

# RED-SHOULDERED HAWK

*Buteo lineatus*

## Range & Habitat

Red-shouldered Hawks are found throughout the state with nesting most common in northwestern Pennsylvania. More conspicuous outside of the nesting period, this secretive species is often found nesting in riparian habitats within mixed or lowland deciduous forests.



## Nesting Behavior

Red-shouldered Hawks can be found in large, mature hardwood stands, flooded deciduous swamps, and mixed deciduous-conifer forests. While they have an affinity for forested areas near riparian zones and wetlands, they are not strictly deep-forest birds. Some populations have adapted to suburban settings, coexisting with human structures integrated into woodlands.

Red-shouldered Hawks will begin nesting in March-April, and incubate eggs for about 33 days. In June-July, the young will fledge from the nest between 35 and 45 days old. Red-shouldered Hawks will commonly reuse nests from previous years and their call, a loud, repeated "kee-aah" will often be heard as the adults defend the nest from other raptors and intruders.



Slender buteo, with red shoulder patches and crescent-shaped wing panels. Dark and white striped tail.



© Bill Moses



© Holly Merker

## What Does a Red-shouldered Hawk Nest Look Like?

Nests are 18-24 inches across and 8-12 inches deep, and are lined with natural materials like moss, bark, and conifer sprigs. Nests, built by both adults, are placed below the canopy, typically in the main crotch of the tree.

## Status & Threats

The Red-shouldered Hawk is a species listed as of “Maintenance Concern” in Pennsylvania. Habitat loss resulting from clearing or draining wetlands and disturbance of low elevation mature forests is a primary concern. This can lead to diminished populations and make Red-shouldered Hawks vulnerable to predation, notably from the Great Horned Owl.



© r/birding

## Conservation & Management

Preserving mature large mixed forests and protecting or establishing forested wetlands is pivotal for conservation of the species in the state. Recommendations also suggest limiting timber cuts, especially around the nest, and maintaining continuous canopy cover in forests to deter Red-tailed Hawk nesting.



© National Audubon Society



To report an active raptor nest visit [www.hawkmountain.org/sightingforms](http://www.hawkmountain.org/sightingforms)

