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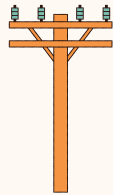
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RED-TAILED HAWK

Buteo jamaicensis

Range & Habitat

One of the most common raptors in Pennsylvania, Red-tailed Hawks are frequently seen perched along roadsides and nesting in various types of habitats including artificial structures such as towers and buildings. Red-tailed Hawks have adapted to human landscapes and have benefited from the construction of highways and open woodlots from forest thinning.



Nesting Behavior

Red-tailed Hawks prefer woodland edges with tall trees or high bluffs for nesting. They can also be found in mixed forests and fields, suburban or urban areas with tall trees or parkland.

Pairs form monogamous pairs and typically remain with the same mate for many years. The breeding season starts in March and extends through June. Red-tailed Hawks lay between 1-5 eggs and the typical incubation period ranges from 28-35 days. After hatching, the adult female will brood the young and after 40-46 days the young will fledge from the nest. Young will continue to hang around their parents so they can be fed, improve their hunting and flying skills. During this time you will hear the noisy bunch screaming out their hoarse 'kee-eeeeee-arr' call.



Chunky, light-colored, broad-winged buteo. Adults have rufous tails; juveniles have barred brownish tails.



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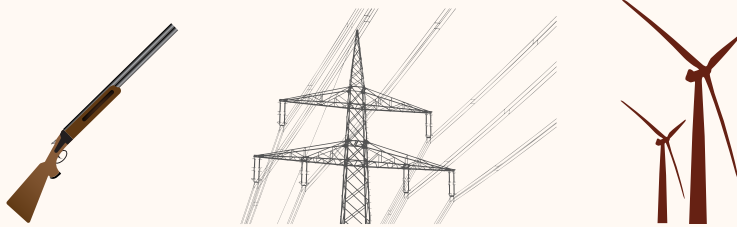
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What Does a Red-tailed Hawk Nest Look Like?

Red-tailed Hawks build large stick nests that sometimes measure 30 inches across. Nests, built by both members of the pair, are usually placed in the crowns of tall trees in woodlots and forest edges, and can be placed up to 120 feet above the ground. Nests are often reused for several years.

Status & Threats

In Pennsylvania, the Red-tailed Hawk is considered “Secure”. In some regions, humans still persecute and illegally shoot Red-tailed Hawks as they can prey on free roaming chickens. Like other raptors, loss of habitat, electrocution from power lines, and collisions with vehicles and wind turbines can all jeopardize their survival in the wild.



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Conservation & Management

Using insulators or conductor covers on electrical lines will reduce mortality from electrocution. In addition, not throwing organic food matter from your car window can limit prey abundance near roadsides and reduce hawk and vehicle collisions.