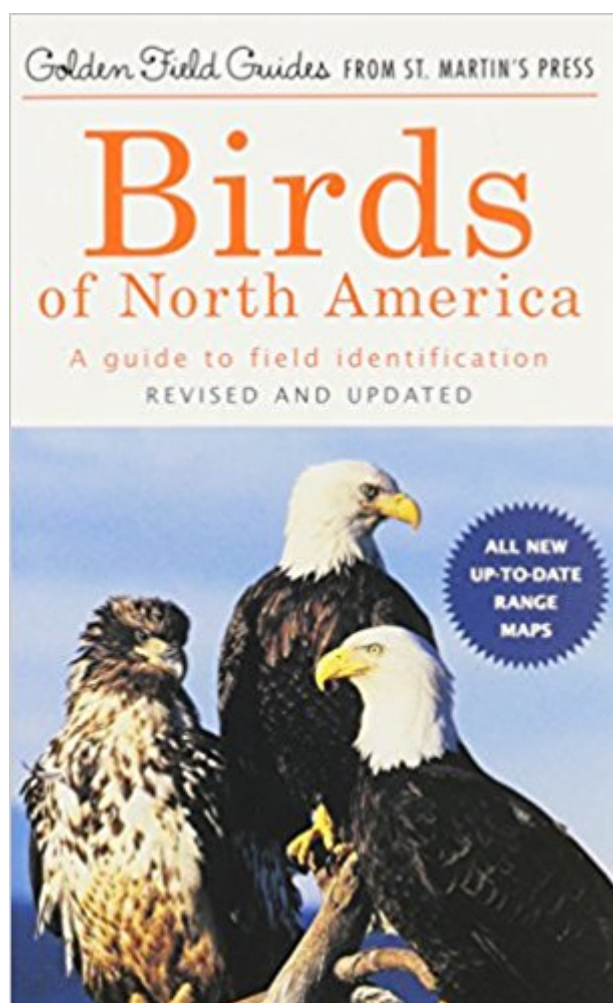


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# Birds Of North America: A Guide To Field Identification (Golden Field Guide F/St. Martin's Press)



## Synopsis

Spot the silhouette of a Northern Goshawk in flight. Identify the raucous call of the Red-winged Blackbird. Discover the secret of picking out a Chipping Sparrow from its look-alike cousins. It's simple with this classic field guide, a treasured favorite among amateur bird lovers and exacting professionals. Recognized as the authority on bird identification, this invaluable resource provides:-All of North America in one volume-Over 800 species and 600 range maps-Arthur Singer's famous illustrations featuring male, female, and juvenile plumage-Sonograms that picture sound for easy song recognition-Migration routes, feeding habits, and characteristic flight patterns-American ornithologists' classifications-Convenient check boxes to record birds you have identified -Color tabs for quick references

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Golden Guides first appeared in 1949 and quickly established themselves as authorities on subjects from Natural History to Science. Relunched in 2000, Golden Guides from St. Martin's Press feature modern, new covers as part of a multi-year, million-dollar program to revise, update, and expand the complete line of guides for a new generation of students.

Wish I could rate this item 0. You DO NOT want this book. I returned my order to , would not consider owning it. In Introduction it is stated "...we have sought to preserve the strengths of the

previous editor." The former publisher, Western Publishing (printed in USA) should be gnashing their teeth at this statement. The current St. Martins Press (printed in China) edition is a disgrace as a birders field guide. I have been a hobby birder for 40 years and cut my teeth on the Golden Field Guides since the 1966 edition and replacing my guide with the 1983 printing. The color in these books were superb. The current guide's color is pale and washed out losing a lot of bird features and badly off-color that an experienced birder would have difficulty in matching their sighting with anything in this book, let alone getting a beginning birder off to an encouraging experience using this printing (China must not understand bird coloration as seen in previous "Western Publishing" edition.) The bird images are very light so details are lost compared to bird's true colors, the images all seem to have a green tint. --- I've never seen a green (white) bird. The location maps do not have enough background shading to outline the North America map. What a shame to have such a good field guide as the Golden Field Guide bird series reputation ruined by the issuing of this edition by St. Martins Press. And worse yet to have the Press claim that previous quality and integrity are being maintained. This is a rip off publication.

I bought this to give as a gift. I've been using my copy for I don't know how many years, and I have my dad's copy that dates back to the 1960s (at least). The earlier editions had little boxes in the index next to the name of the bird you could use to check-off when you saw one. This new edition doesn't have those. That's too bad - it was a nice feature. You can still make a mark, but, well, there isn't the little box! At any rate, this is a very user-friendly book to all bird-watchers from novice to expert. The illustrations are very good and show quite a bit of detail. The descriptions also are detailed enough so that you will be able to distinguish between different varieties of the same species. I have Sibley's but almost never use it - I find this book sufficient for my, amateur, watching needs.

There are indeed more comprehensive field guides to North American birds. There are field guides that more closely follow the most current taxonomy. But for all the taxonomic changes since 2001 most of the birds depicted in this guide retain the same English names and their field characteristics certainly haven't changed. The plates are arranged to simplify the comparison of similar species, and for the most part you'll find more species per page than in guides preferred by most advanced birders. New birders aren't overwhelmed with more information than is needed to identify (especially) the most commonly seen birds. You can fit this guide in a pocket and it holds up well to field use. Most people who get serious about birding will move on to NGS or Sibley or Peterson

(among others), but before they do so the Golden Guide will do much to promote their development as birders. It's for that reason I rate it so highly. It doesn't pretend to be a guide that works well for advanced birders, but I consider it perhaps the best guide on the market for beginners. A new edition with taxonomic updates would be nice, but for novice birders it's certainly not necessary.

This is hands down the best bird book I have ever owned. I love having the maps on the same page as the descriptions, as it makes identifying birds so much easier. The index in the back is helpful and you can make your own index using the quick guide in the front, a ruler and a marker. Some of the pages also compare similar looking birds during flight. I take this book with me everywhere I go and even gave one to my sister in law because she loved mine so much.

The scans of Arthur Singer's beautiful plates are sharp and fairly good in color, a bit too yellow and pale sometimes. A quick ten minutes showed the following problems: The kingbird plate is MISSING. Instead the myiarchus flycatcher plate is shown twice. Many of the plates are cropped so parts of birds are missing. Half of the Yellow-breasted Chat. Bill of the Mourning Warbler. The little range maps following each species account are sometimes after the wrong species. Gilded Flicker for example. How much more would it cost to do it right? Do not buy. Hard copies of this book are easily available.

I was introduced to this hidden treasure in an ornithology class in the seventies. My professor was an avid birdwatcher and highly recommended this book. (It was the required bird identification book for all his classes) The illustrations are excellent, and the range maps (so you know a particular species cannot be misidentified because it lives in the NW and you're in the NE) and sonagrams of bird songs included on every page, and the varieties listed together in evolutionary order w/waterbirds first & ending with sparrows makes finding your species much easier. Best of all is a birdlist index at the back, w/boxes to check when you identify your bird. (I also put the date & place) The book is small and light enough to put in a pocket and take on walks, avoiding the inconvenience of larger, heavier bird books. I have tried other more expensive and highly recommended books, but in my humble opinion, this is the very best book for identifying birds in the field that I have ever used.

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