
Frequently Asked Questions about Red-shouldered Hawks

Post Date:

Sunday, March 4, 2018

Frequently Asked Questions about Red-shouldered Hawks**Q: What exactly *is* a Red-shouldered Hawk?**

A: Red-shouldered Hawks (http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Red-shouldered_Hawk/id/ac), are medium-to-large, heavy-bodied birds, with broad wings and a long tail. Adults have a barred, rust-colored pattern on their pale chest, reddish shoulders — hence their name — and a dark tail with several narrow white bands. While soaring, a translucent crescent at the base of the primary feathers is visible. Red-shouldered Hawks are found in the eastern half of the United States and in California. They often are very vocal hawks! Red-shouldered Hawks generally avoid habitats where Red-tailed Hawks live, though the Red-shouldered Hawks can occupy the same territory as Barred Owls, since they do have the same preference for prey, but are active during different times of the day and night.

Q: What do Red-shouldered Hawks normally eat in the wild and what do Red-shouldered Hawks eat at the Wildlife Center?

A: Red-shouldered Hawks generally survive on a diet of small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and even crayfish! Red-shouldered Hawks are also diurnal, meaning they are active and hunt mostly during daylight hours. At the Center, hawk patients primarily eat dead mice and rats.

Q: How big are Red-shouldered Hawks?

A: On average, Red-shouldered Hawks are about 17 inches in length, and have a wing-span of just over three feet. They are smaller than Red-tailed Hawks and larger than Broad-winged Hawks.

Q: How long do Red-shouldered Hawks normally live?

A: According to the Birds of North America online (<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna>), first-year mortality rates of Red-shouldered Hawks are high -- in one study, only about 50% of hatched Red-shouldered

Hawks survived to be one year old. For those that survive their first year, Red-shouldered Hawks can live to be 15-19 years old in the wild, with one report of a 26-year-old hawk!
