

Corvidae

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There are 20 species of corvidae, but only 3 common ones in the Kingston Region: (1) Blue Jay, (2) American Crow, and (3) Common Raven. The Gray Jay is common to the north and west of Napanee and it is doubtful you will encounter a Gray Jay in Kingston.

Bird Identification using Field Guide Measurements

When you have the bird in hand you can use a measuring tape to measure the total length of the bird laying on its back from the tip of the beak to the tip of the tail. The wing span is measured from the longest primary wing feather to the opposite longest primary wing feather.

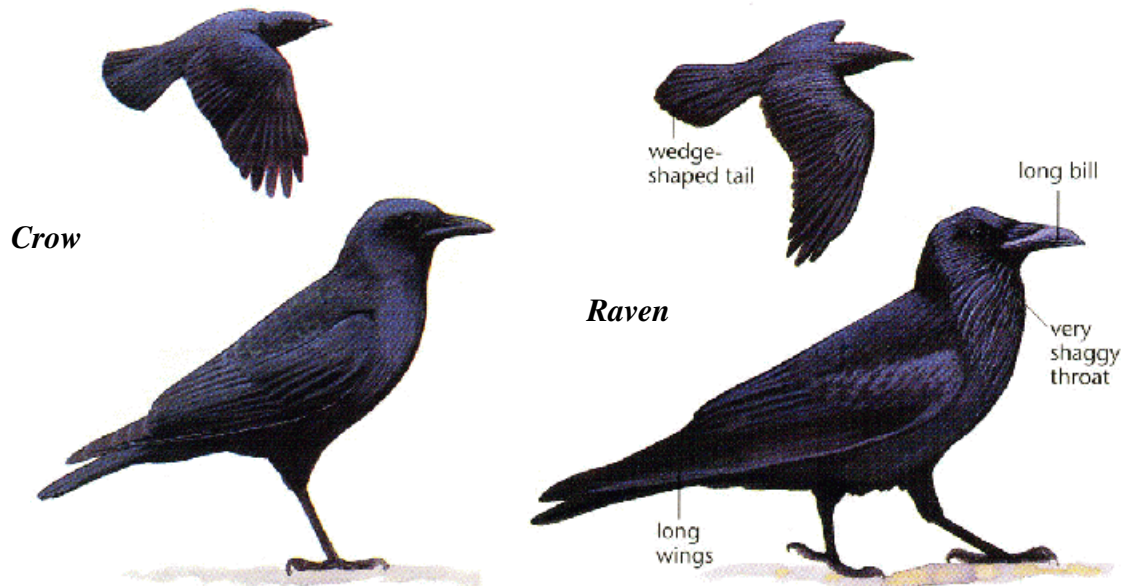


Total Length

Wing Span



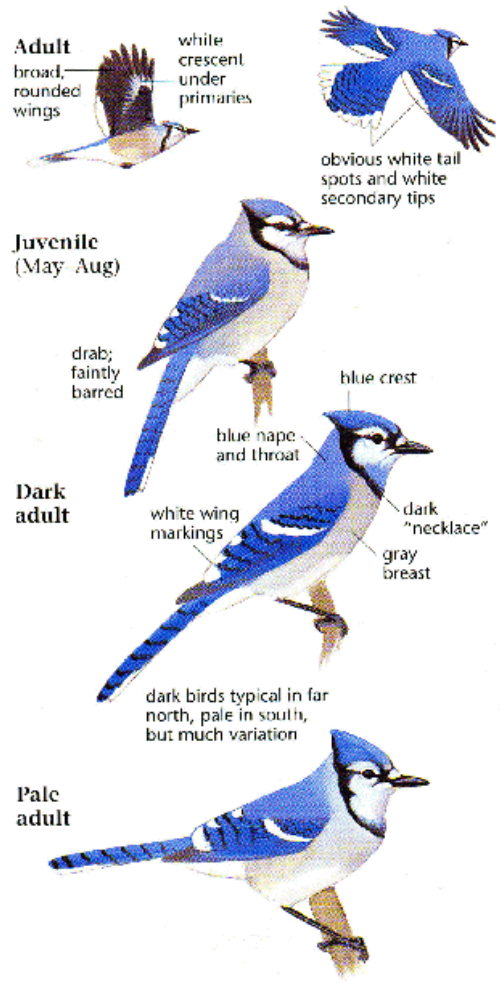
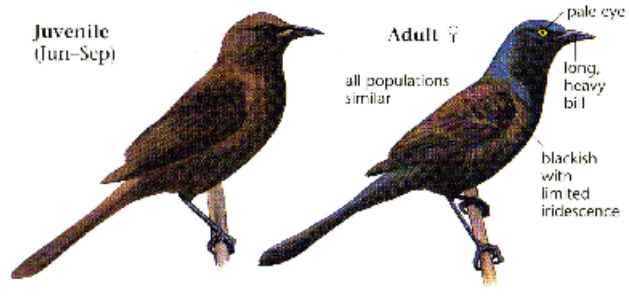
How to identify a Crow from a Raven



The crow is smaller, total length = 17.5" and a wing span of 39" while the Raven is the larger with a total length=24" and a wing span of 53". The tail of the raven is wedge shaped.

Quite often a Grackle will be confused with a Crow but you can ask the caller to use their hand as a size comparison (bird's body is smaller or same size as their hand = grackle; bird's body bigger than their hand and they need to use 2 hands to hold the bird = Crow or Raven). Raven's only occur in the shield area north of Kingston around Dog Lake and Seeley's Bay northward. Therefore birds found in Kingston will be Crows.

Grackle

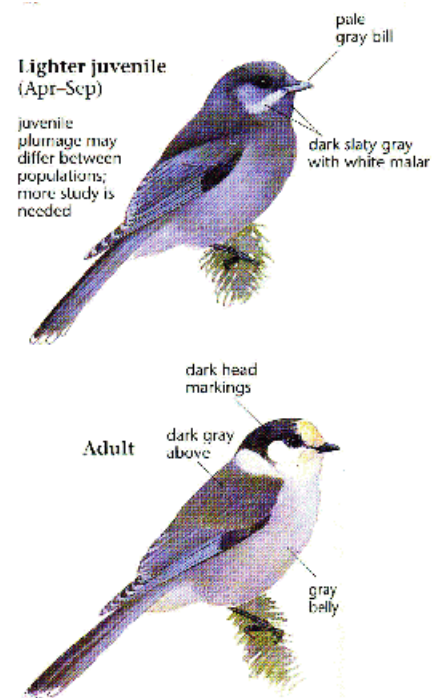


Blue Jay

Not too many birds can be mistaken for a Blue Jay (pictured left) as there are few "blue" colored birds in our area.

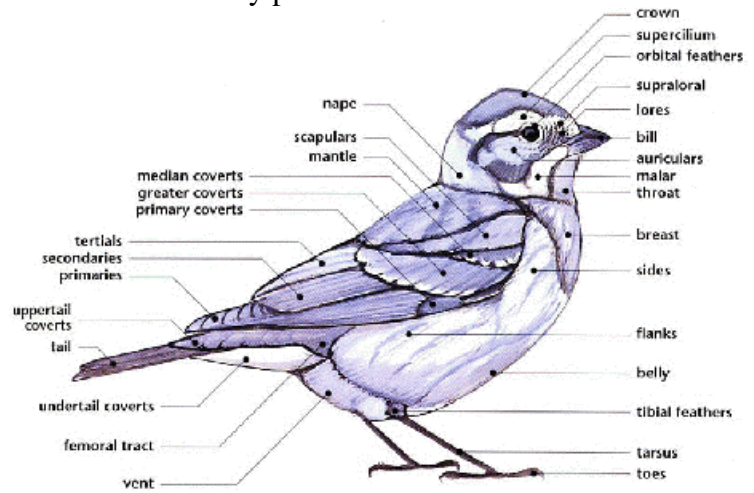
Gray Jay

They are found to the north and west of Napanee and not in the immediate Kingston region. They are gray in color and could be confused with several other local birds like the Northern Mockingbird.



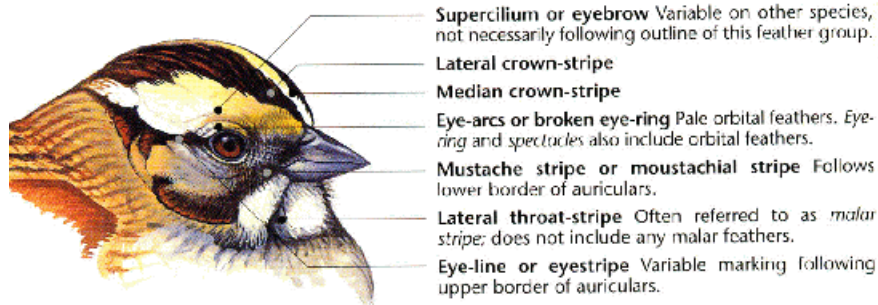
Identifying Birds

In the field guides bird descriptions refer to the different body parts:

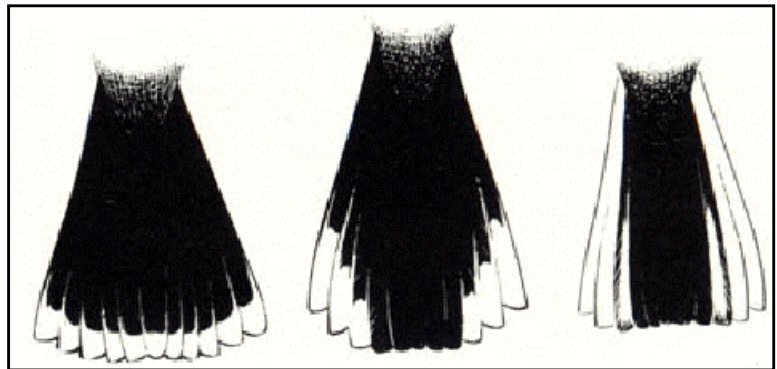


Chief areas to keep in mind to help you in your identification:

- (1) size (ie: smaller/bigger than a Robin or House Sparrow)
- (2) color (ie: all black, iridescent color, eye color, etc.)
- (3) shape of the bill (to help know it is a seed eater vs insect eater, etc.)
- (4) shape of the tail and wings (difficult with a dead bird)
- (5) **field marks**: is there any pattern to the face (eye stripes or rings), wings (one vs two wing bars), tail (solid color or are there patterns of white).



Facial Patterns



Tail Patterns