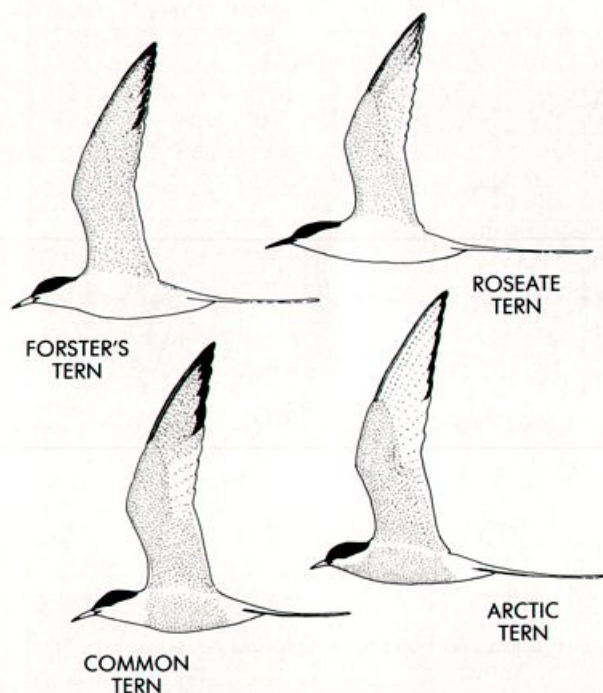


# A Look at Kenn Kaufman's New Field Guide

## 138 THE MEDIUM-SIZED TERNS



**Fig. 48. Underwing patterns**, as seen on adult terns in summer. The most critical point to notice is the pattern of the trailing edge of the primaries. Unlike many other field marks, this trailing edge pattern on the underwing remains consistent for all ages and all seasons and provides an excellent distinction: Common and Forster's are similar, but the other two are quite different.

The amount and pattern of *translucence* of the wings, shown here as paler areas, can be a very good field mark when the birds are overhead against a bright sky. In Arctic Terns most of the flight feathers are translucent and glow bright white when backlit, while in Common Terns the area that admits light is limited to the inner primaries and outer secondaries. In Roseate Terns the whole trailing edge of the wing is brightly translucent, while the rest of the area of the flight feathers admits light in a diffuse way. Although the wings of Forster's are quite pale, they show little translucence even when they are brightly backlit.

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OUR ASSOCIATE EDITOR, KENN Kaufman, is a man who has always carried off big challenges with admirable results. With his new book, *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, he'll certainly take his audience by storm. His absolute mastery of field identification of birds is manifest from the start.

Kenn tackles the monumental but curiously elusive subject of identification of those bird groups crowded with "look-alikes." Most birds are fairly easy to identify given sufficient study and field experience, but, there is precious little available to assist the birder with all of those nonconforming immatures, females in offbeat plumage, wandering rarities, or nonsinging species temporarily or spatially misplaced.

Kaufman has moved into new and, for some of us, terrifically interesting territory. With this book, the game of positive field identification has just catapulted into hyperspace.

This book is a deft treatment of an impossibly complicated subject. The prose standard is uncommonly high, as is the level of sophistication. Don't overlook his immensely readable, virtuoso advice in Chapter 1: "Challenges in Birding and How to Approach Them." The clear insights on difficult-to-identify-groups flow from there.

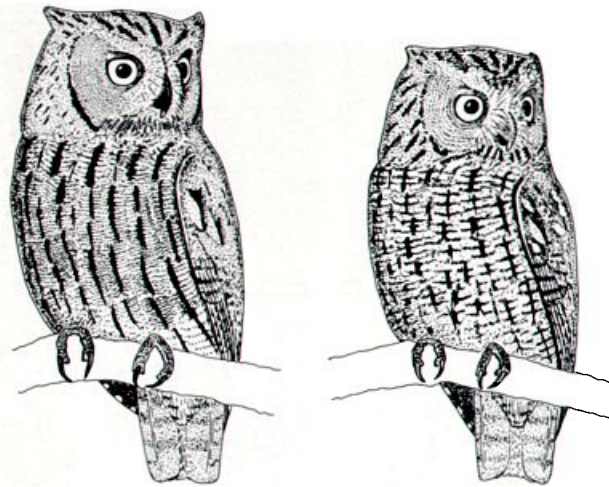
The book is structured to take maximum advantage of the black-and-white line drawings, executed by the accomplished author, strategically placed throughout.

This compendium has the blessing of Roger Tory Peterson, who obviously feels (see his Introduction) that it has the credibility essential to a pioneering effort of this nature. There is no higher praise. After all, it was Dr. Peterson's own clear perspective and marvelous field guides that literally transformed birding from the academic pursuit of a few to the avocation of millions.

*A Field Guide to Advanced Birding* is impeccably comprehensive, remarkably ambitious, vital, useful, and therefore absolutely indispensable.

With extraordinary pride, *American Birds* here presents nine sample pages from the new Kaufman book. Get it. Use it. It's great.

—Susan Roney Drennan



WESTERN

WHISKERED

**Fig. 60. Western and Whiskered screech-owls;** southern Arizona forms are shown for both. Compare size of the feet, darkness of the bill, and pattern of the underparts.

A character sometimes mentioned for separating Western and Whiskered involves the pattern of the inner web of the outermost primary, which is crossed by light bars in the Western but unmarked in the Whiskered. Unfortunately, this character is practically useless, even in the hand. The light bars on the Western are variable in their intensity; besides, many Whiskered show at least a trace of light barring on these feathers, sometimes quite a noticeable amount.

### Quick Summary

Be sure to refer to the text for further explanations.

**EASTERN SCREECH-OWL:** Voice, descending whinny and long, low trill; bill yellow-green; underparts with strong horizontal bars and vertical stripes; back with fine horizontal and vertical markings; red, brown, and gray morphs all possible in most areas.

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in color, but the appearance of the rear part of the supercilium can be a clue. In Northern, this section varies from yellow to buff to white, and it tends to taper toward a narrow point rearward. In Louisianas, not only is this section clear white, it also tends to *broaden* toward the rear, which makes it quite conspicuous.

**Throat pattern and color:** The throat is spotted in Northern and often immaculate in Louisianas. However, many Louisianas show a few spots here, and some even have more throat spotting than some sparsely marked Northern. The ground color of the throat is always bright white in Louisianas, and varies from yellow to buff to white in Northern.

**Facial contrast:** In the Louisiana, the combination of the broad white end of the supercilium and the bright white throat creates a first impression of a striking face pattern. Northern rarely approach this degree of facial contrast (Fig. 87).

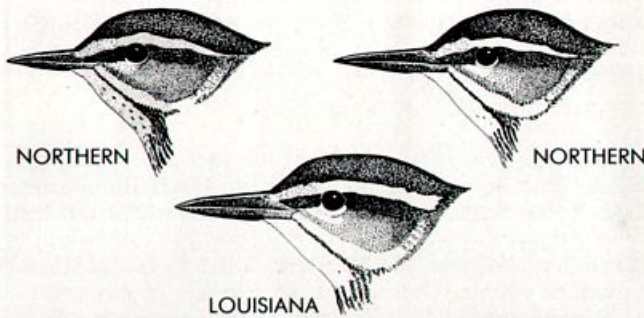
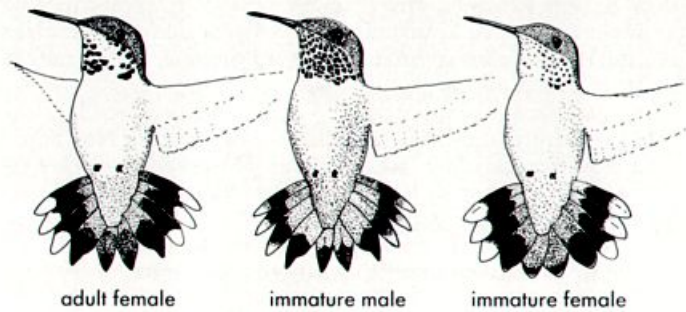


Fig. 87. Face patterns of waterthrushes. Upper left, "typical" Northern Waterthrush, easily identified by its small bill, noticeable throat spotting, and strong yellow or buff cast to the throat and supercilium. Upper right, a potentially confusing Northern Waterthrush with a longer bill, reduced throat spotting, and whitish throat and supercilium. Bottom, a typical Louisiana Waterthrush; notice the heavy bill and the broad white rear section of the supercilium. Some individuals have smaller bills and more extensive throat spotting than the one shown. The flanks should always be checked for the distinctive patch of cinnamon-buff in this species.

## TIPS FOR IDENTIFYING FALL WARBLERS

The aut phrase "comparing fall warblers" coined by Roger Tory Peterson years ago, serves to confuse by describing ma-  
 ges for the bird. The area of drab warblers, including some  
 in fall, would compare to the bright patterns of spring males.  
 But fall warblers can be made for less confusing by recogni-  
 tion of a few basic. Many birds even beyond fall warblers is  
 fun, a challenge renewed for  
 One encouraging fact is  
 plumage in fall migration.  
 before they leave the breed-  
 just fledged are in their ju-  
 fusingly dull and streak  
 they leave the nest, and  
 plumage before they m-  
 plete molt immediately.  
 Fall warblers may be  
 fresh — we do not have  
 or faded plumage a-  
 Another reason  
 look virtually the  
 son's, Blue-win-  
 Black-throated  
 otary, American  
 some species  
 Northern Par-  
 show only  
 adults look  
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 The au-  
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## HUMMINGBIRDS 167



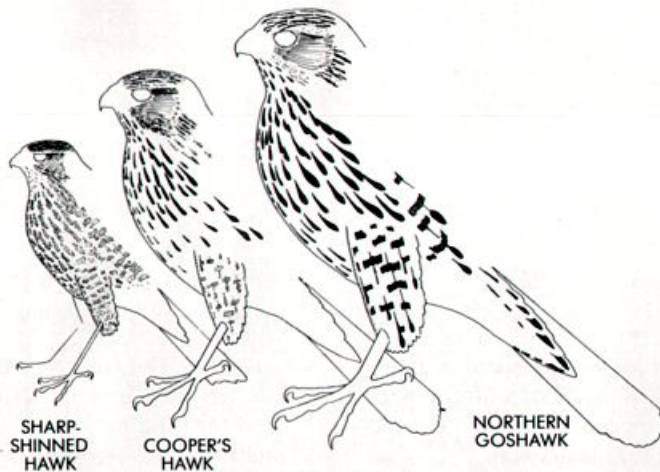
**Fig. 64. Variation within Rufous Hummingbirds.** The hordes of "female-plumaged" hummingbirds seen in late summer show a great amount of variation within species; much of this is owing to age and sex differences. Here, for example, are typical late-summer plumages of Rufous Hummingbirds: adult female, immature male, and immature female. Notice the striking differences in throat pattern and in shape and pattern of the tail feathers; shading of the underparts also differs somewhat.

sex and age (Fig. 64). Of the three categories considered here — adult females, immature males, and immature females — the immature males have the narrowest tail feathers and the greatest amount of rufous in the tail, while immature females have the broadest tail feathers and smallest amount of rufous. The central tail feathers of immature females often appear all-green in the field (because the limited rufous at the base may be hidden by the uppertail coverts). When hovering, Rufous/Allen's moves its tail very little and often holds the tail up almost horizontally; it shares this behavior with Broad-tailed and Calliope. A rusty wash on the sides, flanks, and undertail coverts is variable in darkness and extent but is usually more obvious and more contrasty than in Broad-tailed or Calliope. The throat may be lightly spotted with dusky (immature females), more heavily spotted with bronze and a little red (immature males), or blotched with red toward the center (adult females). The back and rump have variable amounts of rufous edging on the feathers. The call note of Rufous/Allen's is a musical *chip*.

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the typical Cooper's. The streaks of the juvenile Goshawk are heavy and sharply defined like those of the typical Cooper's; they usually extend well down onto the belly and show up as heavy spots on the flanks and thighs.

**Undertail coverts:** On all three species the undertail coverts are basically white. On Sharp-shinneds they are always unmarked; on Cooper's they are usually unmarked but sometimes lightly streaked; and on Goshawk juveniles they almost always show *heavy streaks or spots*, at least near the tips of the feathers.



**Fig. 25. Juvenile accipiters, to compare patterns of the underparts.** The extreme pattern shown here for Sharp-shinned (with broad reddish brown streaks and some crossbars on a buffy white background) is diagnostic, but many Sharp-shinneds have an intermediate pattern grading toward that shown for Cooper's (with more sharply defined streaks on a whiter background). Notice that the streaking tends to end higher on the underparts on Cooper's than on the other two. Heavy markings on the undertail coverts are diagnostic for the Goshawk, but many Cooper's are lightly streaked in this area. Notice also the shape of the legs and feet: the tarsus appears very long and thin in Sharp-shinned Hawks (of all ages), proportionately shorter and thicker in the other two species.