

**JUNE 1 - 14, 2019 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES**

**By Dick Harlow**

## **NORTHERN GOSHAWK**



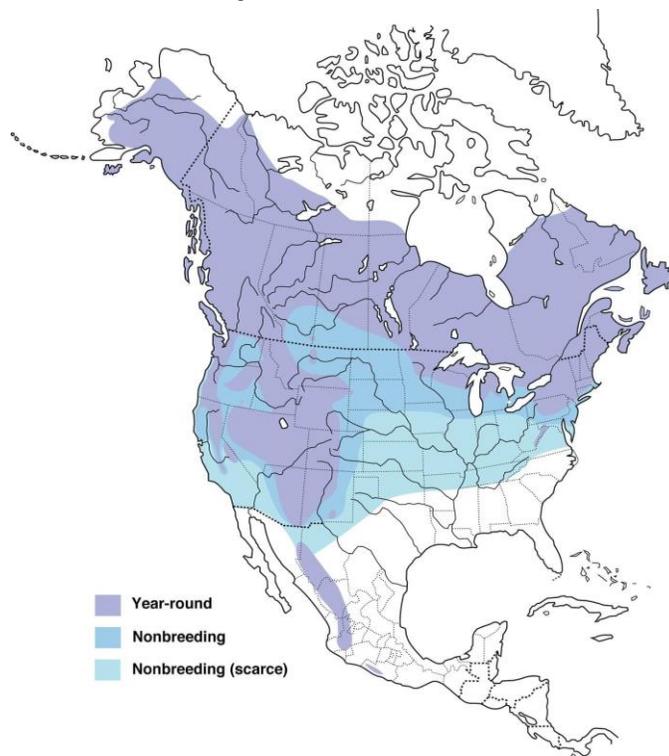
**Northern Goshawk**, *Accipiter gentilis*, adult female  
© Arno van Zon

The Northern Goshawk, otherwise known as a bird hawk, is the largest Accipiter in North America. Along with its size and its fearsome it becomes a fierce aggressor against a human if it happens to walk near its nest! As in a past note I called the Cooper's Hawk fearless, an arrogant bird with an attitude. Well, the Northern Goshawk during nesting season is double that attitude in spades. If you come near a Goshawk nest during nesting season, as I did, you WILL be attacked! When I was attacked many years ago, I had to crawl from tree to tree to move away from the hawk's nesting tree. Other than a hard hat nothing else will help. Their talons will either go right through a soft hat or whisk the hat off of your head, and/or its mate will double "whammy" you with her talons. A friend of mine had a hard hat, and instead of the top of his head they went for his neck! A fearsome bird of prey especially during nesting season!

During other seasons of the year they tolerate humans, but they will stay clear and will leave the immediate area if humans come too close.

The Northern Goshawk is found throughout most of Canada, Alaska and Northern United States.

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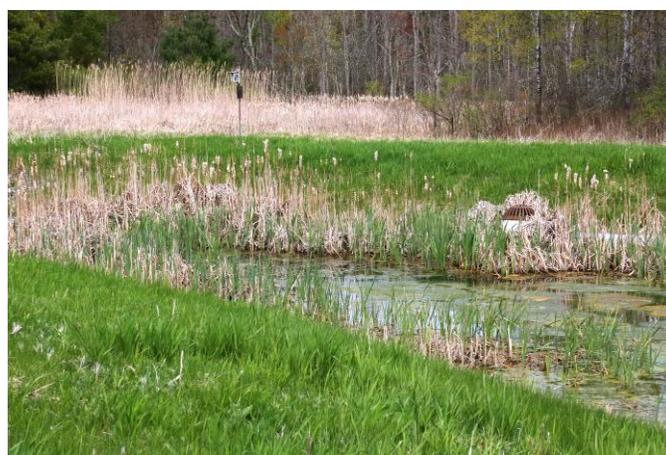
© The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

The Northern Goshawk is found where old-growth forests abound with greater than 55% canopy cover. We have had Goshawks in mixed hardwoods both here in Vermont and where I was attacked in Massachusetts.

Being the largest accipiter, the goshawk doesn't feed on birds alone. It is known as the ambush hawk and will feed on a varied diet of birds, reptiles, insects and mammals. For mammals, they tend to prefer squirrels and rabbits primarily giving Red-tail Hawks competition. Their bird diet can include many large birds such as woodpeckers, grouse, as well as crows and jays.

Northern Goshawk is a forest hawk, therefore we are unlikely to see one here at EastView.

**RETENTION PONDS**



**South Pond** at EastView showing the white drainage piping far right, in case the water level comes up too high. © Dick Harlow

This note is generally about the function of Retention Ponds and specifically about EastView's South Pond.

Retention ponds are built primarily to remove storm water from areas around buildings/communities and direct it to an area that can hold the water along with any additional amount that might fall and thus release it slowly into a surrounding area. Its

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function is to divert water so that there is minimal water damage from fierce rain storms, runoff, hurricanes or any facsimile thereof. Another advantage is that the water runoff also removes pollutants from streets, parking lots and lawns, e.g. oil, gas, fertilizers, etc. Retention ponds can also control erosion.

What happens to the pollutants that end up in the pond? They settle into the sediment of the pond and those chemicals can bond with the chemistry of the sediment and will end up locked there until they are physically removed.

That is all well and good. Are there any other benefits to the community? Yes!

Small ponds provide habitat for many creatures large and small, as well as a myriad of plants both that we can see and those that are microscopic. Besides the habitat, these ponds provide drinking water for animals that live near or around the pond during the spring, summer and fall.

A family of muskrats used the pond for two years. Turtles, frogs, snakes, rabbits, mice, voles, salamanders, ducks, geese, shore and land birds, deer, raccoons, foxes, and coywolves are some of the general users of the pond.

This habitat microcosm that we are able to enjoy provides esthetically a great amount of satisfaction to many at EastView. The pond is close enough that one doesn't have to walk to its edge but can stand on the lawns next to the pond to view this natural system.

However, the one salient point that we all have to keep in mind is that a pond in actuality is constantly evolving. Water plants are always looking for places to grow and pass on their seed. Algae are looking to reproduce and expand, overtaking space. Cat-o-nine tails are expanding along the shore, reaching out into the middle of the pond if they can.



**South Pond**, at EastView, showing the mats of filamentous green algae overtaking the surface of the pond. © Dick Harlow

Because a retention pond is formed by man it is artificial in nature and needs to be taken care of by man. If it is not periodically cared for, the pond will evolve into a marshy swamp that will effectively lose its function. Because of this it will not be able to handle the continuing call for water drainage and slow disbursement.

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**Filamentous Green Algae** overtaking pond space.  
© John Martin, Alamy Stock Photo

**OBSERVATIONS**

**BUTTERFLIES**



**Silvery Blue**, *Glaucopsyche lygdamus*,  
© Dick Harlow

**Silvery Blue** – several  
**Black Swallowtail** - flying  
**Monarch** – flying  
**Canadian Tiger Swallowtail** – on lilac



**Canadian Tiger Swallowtail**, *Papilio canadensis*,  
First tiger at EastView – June 2019 © Dick Harlow

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**MOTHS**



**Cecropia Moth, *Hyalophora cecropia***, ventral side of the hindwing and a slight view of the forewing. © Dick Harlow



**Cecropia Moth, *Hyalophora cecropia***, a top down view of part of the dorsal side of the forewing and hindwing. © Dick Harlow

This moth was identified on Dottie and Terry Kline's lawn - 6/6/19. It was released in our garden same date.

**Weather Tidbits**

**Month of JUNE 1-14, 2019**

*All Measurements taken at solar noon (1230 EST).*

**PRECIPITATION**

**Total Precipitation: 47.4 mm or 1.9 inches**

**Overcast Days: 7**