



**Advanced Practice Week 1**  
**March 7 – March 11, 2016**  
**Low- and mid-high elevation species**

**Goal:** Familiarize yourself with the **visual** and **auditory** characteristics of the following **nine** species:

- American Robin
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Belted Kingfisher
- Northern Flicker
- Song Sparrow
- American Goldfinch
- Lesser Goldfinch
- Mourning Dove
- Eurasian Collared-Dove

**NOTE:** As a member of the advanced group, you should be concentrating on the songs/calls for the practices (we are assuming you know many of the birds visually already). However, for these first couple of practices (and whenever I feel that it would be helpful in future practices), I'll included some notes on visual ID as well.

**Visual ID:** Many of these species are common birds in urban areas, and it is possible that you will see any or all of them in your own neighborhood. Try to go outside and look for these birds to get a better understanding of their shape, size, movement patterns, and behavior. Look up each of these species in a field guide (I've provided a link to the allaboutbirds field guide in the table below) to become more familiar with their visual characteristics. Click the link to watch a video of the bird, which may also help you observe the bird's size, shape, movement, and how they might look out in the field. Some pairs of species (the two goldfinches and the two doves) can look similar, so we'll walk through how to differentiate the pairs in the field.

| Species                | Code | Characteristics to look for   | Video/Field Guide Links  |
|------------------------|------|---|--|
| American Robin         | AMRO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairly large thrush with round bodies, long legs, and fairly long tail</li> <li>• Flies with smooth, flicking wingbeats and short glides with wings held close to body</li> <li>• Red-orange breast, grayish back</li> </ul>   | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Robin/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Robin/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/463778">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/463778</a>                 |
| Black-capped Chickadee | BCCH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small, round bird with oversized round head</li> <li>• Bouncy flight, very active and curious</li> <li>• Black cap and bib with white cheeks</li> </ul>  | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-capped_Chickadee/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-capped_Chickadee/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/471330">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/471330</a> |
| Belted Kingfisher      | BEKI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large-headed with long, heavy bill and short tail</li> </ul>   | <a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/431844">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/431844</a>  |
| Northern Flicker       | NOFL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large woodpecker with fairly long, flared tail that tapers to a point, broad wings, large bill</li> <li>• Flies in an up-and-down path with heavy wing flaps interspersed with glides</li> <li>• Conspicuous white rump very visible when flying, black bib on upper breast</li> </ul> | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern_Flicker/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern_Flicker/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/460088">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/460088</a>             |
| Song Sparrow           | SOSP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stocky, coarsely marked sparrow with a fairly long tail, round head, and stout bill</li> <li>• Broad brown streaks on chest converge into central breast spot</li> </ul>   | <a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/483680">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/483680</a>  |

| Species                | Code | Characteristics to look for   | Video/Field Guide Links   |
|------------------------|------|---|---|
| American Goldfinch     | AMGO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small finch, conical bill, short, notched tail</li> <li>• Fly with a bouncy, undulating pattern and often call in flight</li> </ul> <p><i>To differentiate from Lesser Goldfinch:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slightly larger</li> <li>• Breeding adult: pinkish bill (not gray), black forehead (rather than black cap)</li> <li>• Bright yellow back (rather than olive-y yellow back), white undertail coverts (area directly underneath the tail) (rather than yellow)</li> </ul>     | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Goldfinch/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Goldfinch/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/435192">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/435192</a>  |
| Lesser Goldfinch       | LEGO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very small goldfinch, stocky, short-tailed, with short, rounded wings and a large bill</li> <li>• Also fly in a bouncy, undulating pattern</li> </ul> <p><i>To differentiate from American Goldfinch:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Darker, olive, or greenish-yellow back (rather than bright yellow)</li> <li>• Dark, gray bill (rather than pinkish)</li> <li>• Yellow undertail coverts (rather than white)</li> </ul>  | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Lesser_Goldfinch/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Lesser_Goldfinch/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/448330">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/448330</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/481734">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/481734</a> |
| Mourning Dove          | MODO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plump body, small head and bill, long-tail</li> <li>• Wings make an airy whinny, or whistle as they take off, and their flight is very straight</li> </ul> <p><i>To differentiate from Eurasian Collared-Dove:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tail is long and tapered in flight (rather than broad and squared)</li> <li>• Black spots on lower wings and rump (rather than uniformly gray/brown)</li> <li>• Dark smudge or dot on cheek (rather than dark ring on back of neck)</li> </ul> | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Mourning_Dove/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Mourning_Dove/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/479700">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/479700</a>  |
| Eurasian Collared-Dove | EUCD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large dove with squared tail.</li> </ul> <p><i>To differentiate from Mourning Dove:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger and heavier</li> <li>• Paler overall</li> </ul>  | <a href="https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eurasian_Collared-Dove/id">https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eurasian_Collared-Dove/id</a><br><br><a href="http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/483137">http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/483137</a>  |

**Auditory ID:** Below you will find recordings of some typical calls and songs for this week's species. Listen through the tracks and pay attention to the characteristic tone, patterns, call notes and phrasing that I have noted. I've also described how the songs and calls for each pair can be differentiated from one another. After getting familiar with the recordings, go outside and see if you can hear any of these songs or calls. It will be easier for you to become familiar with and remember the songs if you hear them straight from a bird's mouth (especially if you can see the bird who is singing)! Remember- bird songs vary between individuals, and even within individual birds- try to listen to as many different songs as possible for each species to help you learn the songs!

| Track # | Species            | Code | Characteristics to listen for  |
|---------|--------------------|------|--|
| 1       | American Goldfinch | AMGO | Listen for the characteristic call note with 4-5 sweet notes. It is sometimes thought of as "potato chip" or "per-chick-o-ree." The AMGO song is a long is a long series of twitters and warbles. Because this song can be so varied, pay special attention to the interspersed call notes. Another call-note to listen for interspersed into the song is the squeaky, or whiny "swee-ee-ee" which oscillates and goes upward in tone. |

|   |                        |      |   |
|---|------------------------|------|---|
| 2 | Lesser Goldfinch       | LEGO | The LEGO also sings a long series of twitters and warblers. Their song can be more disjointed than the AMGO, and it often has rough, raspy phrases. There is little note repetition and often lots of imitations of call notes from other species. They also have whiny calls interspersed into the song. Listen especially to the downward “tear” which is specific to the LEGO. |
| 3 | Mourning Dove          | MODO | The MODO song is a mournful hooting, 5-syllable: “ooAAHH-hoo-hoo-hoo.” Listen also to the light, airy whistle of the wings when they fly.   |
| 4 | Eurasian Collared-Dove | EUCD | EUCD have a rhythmic, repeated, three-syllable hooting “coo-COO-coo!” The song is rhythmically different from the mourning dove, and also tends to be lower-pitched. When you are out, also listen for a very harsh and nasal sound made during flights. Unlike the MODO, EUCD do not wing whistle in flight.   |
| 5 | Northern Flicker       | NOFL | The recording starts with a common Flicker call note, the high and piercing “Clear!” or “Kyeer!” It then plays a call common when birds are close together and displaying: a quieter, rhythmic and repeated “woik-a, woik-a, woik-a”. The recording ends with the territorial call, a loud, rolling rattle that lasts for 7 or 8 seconds: “wik-wik-wik-wik-wik-wik”               |
| 6 | Belted Kingfisher      | BEKI | The BEKI call is a long, uneven, clattering rattle  |
| 7 | Black-capped Chickadee | BCCH | First listen to the sweet, two-note “Fee-bee” song. Next, hear the harsher and quick “chick-a-dee-dee-dee-dee” call   |
| 8 | Song Sparrow           | SOSP | SOSP often have 3 very bouncy introductory syllables which are followed by a complex series of notes and trills.  |
| 9 | American Robin         | AMRO | The American Robin’s song is a musical string of 10 or so repeated syllables which rise and fall in pitch, but are delivered at a steady rhythm. Sometimes described as “Cheerily, cheer up, cheerily”  |