

Sparrowhawk



I am a sparrowhawk.

I have a small head, yellow eyes and a sharp beak for tearing meat.

I have a long tail and long thin legs.



Can you see my staring yellow eyes in the picture?

Female sparrowhawks are much bigger than males.

I fly very fast and enjoy swooping and changing direction quickly.

I like to eat small birds.

Females can eat bigger birds such as wood pigeon and blackbirds, whilst males eat smaller birds such as blue tits and great tits.

My mother laid four eggs in her nest, one every two days.

How many days did it take to lay the eggs?

She would sit on the eggs to keep them warm and to protect them.

She would sit for a long time and had to be careful she did not damage the eggs.

My father brought food to my mother for her to eat.

Why do you think the mother did not hunt for her own food?

After a month she could hear us chicks calling from inside our eggs and chipping away at the shells.

Finally we came out of our eggs.

Hunting

My parents taught me how to fly and catch small birds.

When I was young I would practise chasing small birds.

I would hide in trees so that my prey could not see me.

I would fly from perch to perch looking for my prey.

When I saw some small birds I would fly quickly towards them, hoping to catch them by surprise.

There is usually a lot of noise as the birds sound the alarm to warn each other of my coming.

Some will try to hide and others fly away.

Why do you think some birds prefer to hide instead of flying away?

Sometimes I will have to chase a bird, but if possible I will try to capture it just as it takes off.

Why is it easier to capture a bird when it is taking off?

When I catch a bird I will grab it with my feet and squeeze to make sure it does not escape.

I will then eat it quickly to make sure that other predators do not steal it from me.

See if you can find the following words:
Sparrowhawk, eyes, catch, chase, hunt

S	P	A	R	R	O	W
X	L	C	H	A	T	H
H	A	A	A	E	R	A
U	Y	T	I	Y	E	W
N	Z	C	R	E	E	K
T	C	H	A	S	E	D

How many points can you get?

Task	Tick	Points
Have you seen a sparrowhawk?		7
Did you see it flying?		2
Did you see other birds fly away?		3
Total points		

Please try to answer these questions:

Why does a sparrowhawk need a sharp beak?

What do sparrowhawks eat?

Why do they fly quickly?

Why does a sparrowhawk hide in a tree?

If you were a young song bird and heard alarm calls from other birds, what would you do?