

She launched herself straight out from the tree, made a 6G left turn and accelerated. Unfortunately, a panicked goldfinch flew up and straight into the flight path of the Coop. The goldfinch tried evasive maneuvers but the speed and maneuverability of the Coop was too much. Cooper's Hawks (like all accipiter's) have short, thick wings which allow for powerful strokes and tucking in between tight spaces like tree branches. They have a long narrow tail that gives instantaneous flight control. Accipiters also have "long" legs so they may reach out to catch their prey. The goldfinch and the Coop quickly disappeared toward the neighbor's yard.

All was quiet for about ten minutes, then "life" resumed. The Downy Woodpecker that had "frozen" onto the suet feeder came alive. The juncos under the bushes started to peck at fallen seeds. Later I went out to the sight of the ambush, and found not goldfinch feathers but the remains of an unfortunate starling; a much better meal for a Coop. The starling must have flushed ahead of the finch, and the Coop recognizing a much better target, ignored the goldfinch. Now it will be a longer time before she will need another feeding. And now the "little" birds can feed for a while before a death threat comes in the form of another Cooper's Hawk.

I just can't wait for the next natural event at Walton's bird feeders.