

# White-breasted Nuthatch

*Sitta carolinensis*

A common feeder bird with clean black, gray, and white markings, White-breasted Nuthatches are active, agile little birds with an appetite for insects and large, meaty seeds. They get their common name from their habit of jamming large nuts and acorns into tree bark, then whacking them with their sharp bill to “hatch” out the seed from the inside. White-breasted Nuthatches may be small but their voices are loud, and often their insistent nasal yammering will lead you right to them.

## Keys to Identification

### Size and Shape

The largest nuthatch, this is still a small bird with a large head and almost no neck. The tail is very short, and the long, narrow bill is straight or slightly upturned.

### Color Pattern

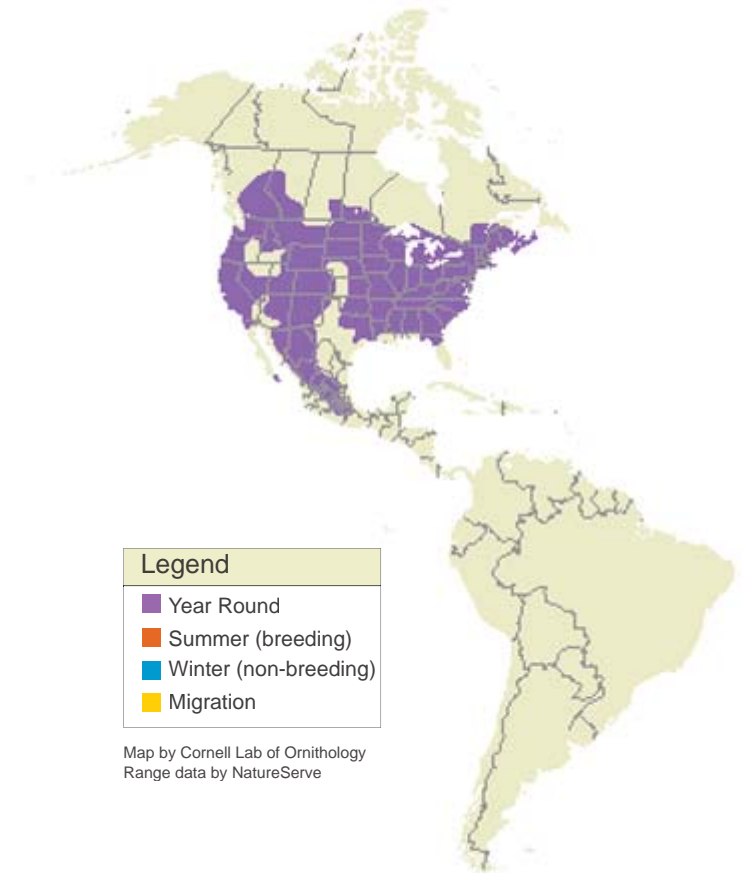
White-breasted Nuthatches are gray-blue on the back, with a frosty white face and underparts. The black or gray cap and neck frame the face and make it look like this bird is wearing a hood. The lower belly and under the tail are often chestnut.

### Behavior

White-breasted Nuthatches are agile birds that creep along trunks and large branches, probing into bark furrows with their straight, pointed bills. Like other nuthatches, they often turn sideways and upside down on vertical surfaces as they forage. They don't lean against their tails the way woodpeckers do.

### Habitat

White-breasted Nuthatches are birds of mature woods and woodland edges. They're particularly associated with deciduous stands, including maple, hickory, basswood, and oak, though they can be found in some coniferous forests.



## Measurements

### Both Sexes

- Length - 5.1 - 5.5 inches
- Wingspan - 7.9 - 10.6 inches
- Weight - 0.6 - 1.1 ounces