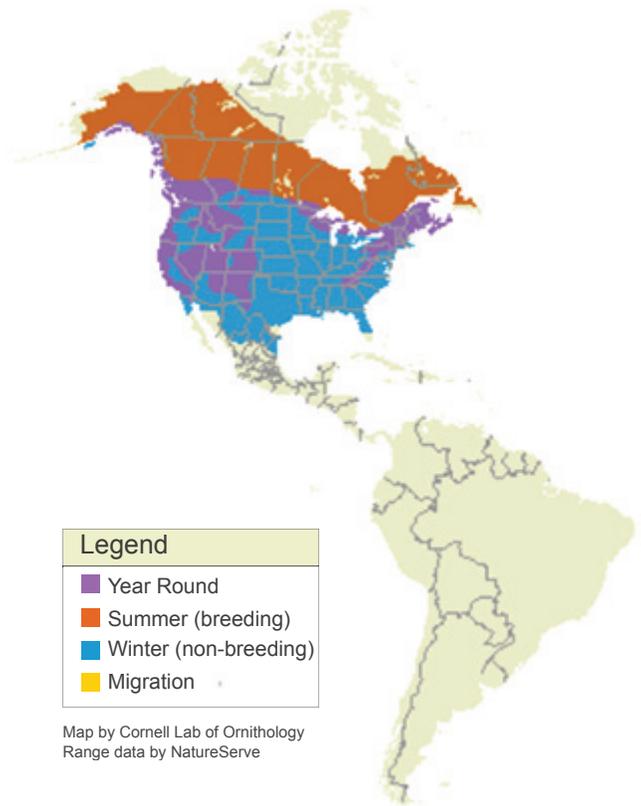


Dark-eyed Junco

Junco hyemalis

Dark-eyed Juncos are neat, even flashy little sparrows that flit about forest floors of the western mountains and Canada, then flood the rest of North America for winter. They're easy to recognize by their crisp (though extremely variable) markings and the bright white tail feathers they habitually flash in flight. One of the most abundant forest birds of North America, you'll see juncos on woodland walks as well as in flocks at your feeders or on the ground beneath them.



Keys to Identification

Size and Shape

The Dark-eyed Junco is a medium-sized sparrow with a rounded head, a short, stout bill and a fairly long, conspicuous tail.

Color Pattern

Juncos vary across the country, but in general they're dark gray or brown birds brightened up by a pink bill and white outer tail feathers that periodically flash open, particularly in flight.

Behavior

Dark-eyed Juncos are birds of the ground. They hop around the bases of trees and shrubs in forests or venture out onto lawns looking for fallen seeds. You'll often hear their high chip notes, given almost absent-mindedly while foraging, or intensifying as they take short, low flights through cover.

Habitat

Dark-eyed Juncos breed in coniferous or mixed-coniferous forests across Canada, the western U.S., and in the Appalachians. During winter you'll find them in open woodlands, fields, parks, roadsides, and backyards.

Cool Facts

- The Dark-eyed Junco is one of the most common birds in North America and can be found across the continent, from Alaska to Mexico, from California to New York. A recent estimate set the junco's total population at approximately 630 million individuals.

Measurements

Both Sexes

- Length - 5.5 - 6.3 inches
- Wingspan - 7.1 - 9.8 inches
- Weight - 0.6 - 1.1 ounces