

# Mountain Chickadee

*Poecile gambeli*

The tiny Mountain Chickadee is a busy presence overhead in the dry evergreen forests of the mountainous West. Often the nucleus in mixed flocks of small birds, Mountain Chickadees flit through high branches, hang upside down to pluck insects or seeds from cones, and give their scolding chick-a-dee call seemingly to anyone who will listen.

## Keys to Identification

### Size and Shape

Tiny, large-headed but small-billed, with a long, narrow tail and full, rounded wings.

### Color Pattern

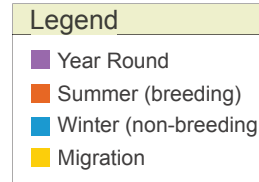
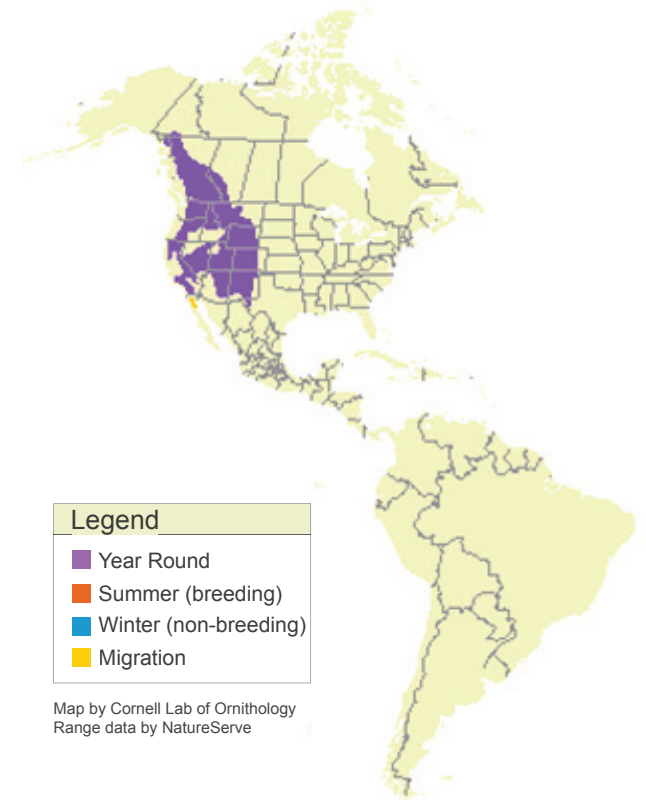
Like all chickadees, strikingly black-and-white on the head, gray elsewhere. The white stripe over the eye identifies Mountain Chickadees from all other chickadees.

### Behavior

Active and acrobatic, clinging to small limbs and twigs or hanging upside down from pine cones. In winter, Mountain Chickadees flock with kinglets and nuthatches, with birds following each other one by one from tree to tree.

### Habitat

Dry, mountainous forests of the West. The similar Black-capped Chickadee often occurs along streams and in broad-leaved trees, while Mountain Chickadees stick to the evergreens on higher slopes.



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology  
Range data by NatureServe

## Measurements

### Both Sexes

- Length - 4.3 - 5.5 inches
- Weight - 0.4 ounces