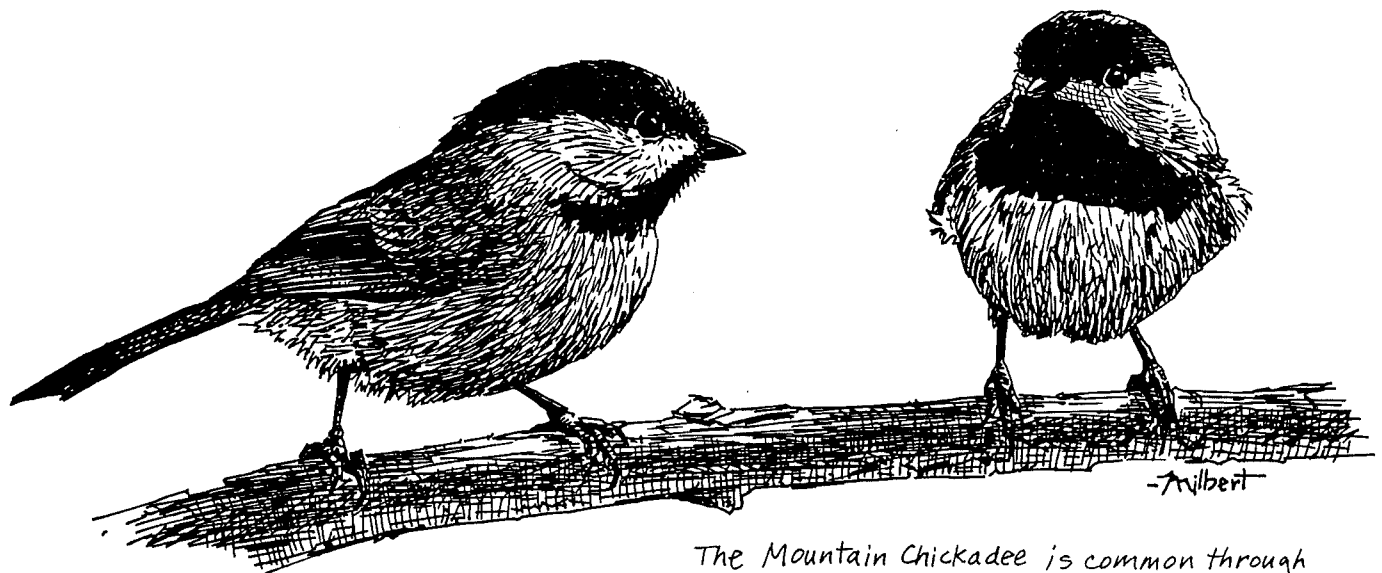


River Bend Naturalists Notebook

Presented by: RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER, Faribault, MN 55021

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

Parus atricapillus



There are several kinds of chickadees in North America north of the Mexican border. However, only two are common to Minnesota. The most widespread is the Black-capped Chickadee which is found locally as well as from the Atlantic to the Pacific across the northern United States and Canada. The Boreal Chickadee is common to the boreal forests of Alaska, and Canada, and is considered a permanent resident in Northeastern Minnesota. It is a casual winter visitant outside the regular range.

The Carolina Chickadee of the southern states closely resembles the Black-capped Chickadee shown in your bird guides.

The Mountain Chickadee is common through many of the mountain sections of western United States and can be told by a white eye-brow line that extends into the black cap above the eye. Along the Pacific coast is the Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a type with a rusty-red back. All chickadees have the cap and bib. Also, all of them have the call "chick-a-dee-dee-dee", although with different accents.

The nest is usually located in the hole of a tree, a stump or a branch. They also use wren houses and Bluebird houses. Their nests, constructed of plant fibers, hairs, rootlets and feathers, are very substantial in structure and built at the bottom of the cavity. There are 5 to 10, commonly 6 to 8, eggs.

-text by Orwin A. Rustad