

## White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*)



### **Resident breeder**

**Status in Quebec:** Range: stable      Population: increasing

**Habitat:** primarily deciduous woodland, also mixed stands, occasionally coniferous forest, prefers large mature trees

**Ecological importance:** consumes nuts (beechnuts, acorns), harmful insects, disperses seeds, enjoyed by bird watchers

### **Why should the White-breasted Nuthatch be an emblem of Morin-Heights?**

They are non-migratory, staying in the territory all year round like a true Morinheighter! Their preference for forest living is shared by many in our municipality. At home in parks, gardens and cemeteries, people easily get to know them. Their delightful nasal vocalizations animate the woodland soundscape. They help us by eating pest insect species, including pine weevils and other scale insects. They have appealing social habits, travelling with small mixed flocks in winter. They are distinctive in their ability to forage on tree trunks and branches upside down. They are resourceful: to protect their nests, they clean around the cavity entrance with a piece of fur or vegetation, making it difficult for a predator to smell the nest. They may also deter squirrels by smearing unpleasant-smelling blister beetles around the cavity entrance. This delightful, common little bird embodies qualities we value in Morin-Heights: life in the forest, community ties and sociability, originality and resourcefulness.