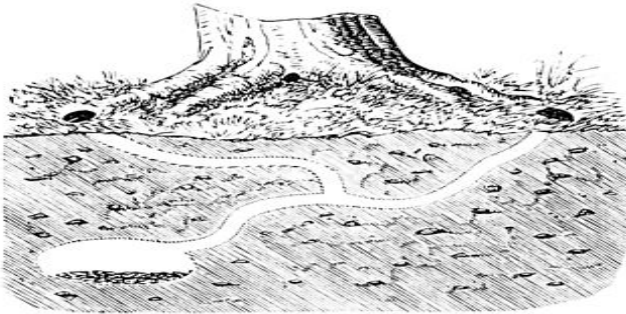


Let's Learn About Chipmunks!

Types of Chipmunks

There are more than 20 different types of Chipmunks that live in the forests, open woodlands, and brushy areas in North American and Asia. The type of Chipmunk that we see here in Connecticut is the Eastern Chipmunk They can be very active during the early morning and late afternoon looking for food and bringing it back to their burrows. Sit outside and listen to how they communicate with each other. You will notice that when they are running around, they will make a high-pitched chip-chip noise that sounds like a bird to warn the others about danger from ground predators, such as cats, dogs, foxes and even people. But Chipmunks make a completely different sound when there are flying predators around such as hawks and birds around. This sounds is a much lower tone that sounds like cuk-cuk-cuk like the sound that is made when you strike a hollow log.



The name Chipmunk originally came from the Ojibwe word ajidamoo, that translates as "one who descends trees headlong."



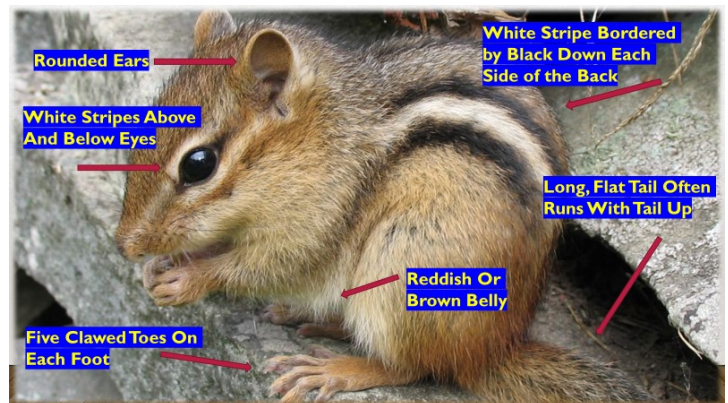
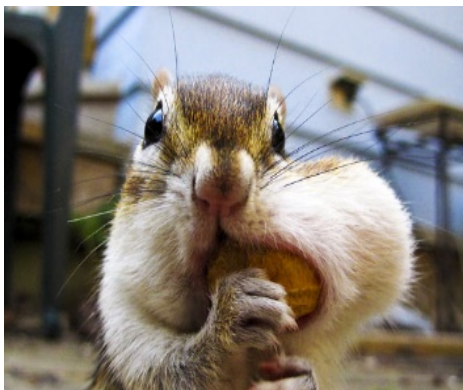
Habitat and Diet

Most Chipmunks dig elaborate burrows that can be over 20 feet long and have more than one entrance. In the main tunnel they rest and give birth to their young, the rest of the tunnels are for storing food. A Chipmunk may store up to 8 pounds of food in the burrow. They often place leaves and grasses in the main burrow so that they can rest comfortably with their babies for 6 weeks until they are old enough to go out on their own. Eastern Chipmunks are omnivorous and usually eat seeds, fruits, eggs, grains and bulbs. They also occasionally eat insects. Each Chipmunk has its own territory or area of land that it lives in alone with its babies. They are highly territorial especially around the entrances of their burrows.

Courtesy of: Popular Science Monthly volume 7, 1875

Physical Characteristics

Chipmunks are reddish-brown in color and have 5 black stripes down their backs. These stripes are separated by brown, white, or grey. They are only 4 to 7 inches long with a tail that is 3 to 5 inches long and they weight only 1 to 5 ounces. Chipmunks have cheek pouches in their mouth that help them carry food to their burrows. These small mammals have a life span of 2 to 3 years and may have on average 4 to 5 young ones twice a year. Chipmunks hibernate in the winter but wake up regularly to leave the burrow in search of more food. A chipmunk takes a breath 75 times in a minute and his heart beats 350 times per minute.



Courtesy of: pawnation.com

