

Song Sparrow

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



The Song Sparrow is a very common wild bird throughout North America. Although the Song Sparrow is common, many people are unaware that birds within this species vary greatly by geographical location. Song Sparrows in the southwest are slightly smaller and more pale in color, while Song Sparrows in the northwest are slightly larger and darker in coloration. This species is usually recognized by its frequent song and streaked body, which helps distinguish it from the Lincoln Sparrow. You may be able to distinguish this species from other sparrows because the Song Sparrow has a habit of pumping its tail up and down during flight.

Interesting Facts:

Family: Emberizidae

Scientific Name: *Melospiza melodia*

Location: The Song Sparrow can be found in a variety of locations including urban and suburban areas and backyards, to dense shrubs, fields, beside streams or other water sources such as lakes, marshes, or bogs.

Migration: The Song Sparrow can be found from the Aleutians and mainland Alaska, throughout Canada and the United States in the north, and south all the way to central Mexico during the winters.

Nesting: This species has a cuplike nest made of grasses, weed stems and sometimes leaves. The nest is usually located low in shrubs or on the ground (1-4 feet high). The Song Sparrow usually has 3-5 greenish white eggs marked with brown/dark spots.

Diet: The Song Sparrow feeds from the ground and eats [seeds](#), insects, and [fruit](#).

Size and Color:	A medium sized wild bird, the Song Sparrow is approximately 5-7" in size. Both sexes look similar with a white breast with heavy brown streaks and a dark spot on the center of the breast. The crown is dark brown with a light gray central stripe. The throat is white with thick brown marks on the sides. The wings are a rusty brown color and the tail is long and rounded. This species size and color varies by geographical location. Typically Song Sparrows in the southwest are slightly smaller and more pale in color while Song Sparrows in the northwest are slightly larger and darker in coloration.
Song:	The Song Sparrow call includes several trills or a repeated "chimp" notes. Calls may vary slightly by geographical location.
Attracting:	You can attract Song Sparrows to your yard if you offer mixed seed or mealworms in a ground , platform , or tube feeder . This species may also visit fruit feeders . Place feeders near shrubs or bushes so that there is a safe place to retreat if this species becomes frightened.