

## House Wren Profile

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



This common songbird does not have any special colors or markings to make it stand out. But it does have a lot of energy and some interesting behaviors that make it fun to watch. It was named a "house" wren due to its habit of nesting close to human houses, often in man-made birdhouses.



A single male House Wren may try to defend several birdhouses. He does this by creating a partial nest in each one, which stops other birds from using the houses. Once he finds a mate, she can choose which nest she likes most.

The House Wren also defends its small territory with loud song and scolding calls. It may even visit the nests of other songbirds nearby, to peck holes in their eggs with its sharp beak.

### Interesting Facts:

**Family:** Troglodytidae

**Scientific Name:** *Troglodytes aedon*

**Location:** The House Wren's nesting territory is very large; it ranges from Canada to the southern regions of South America. It prefers habitat of semi-open areas and bushes in suburban farmyards, gardens, orchards, and parks.

**Migration:** North American House Wrens migrate to the southern United States or Mexico and Central America in winter.

**Nesting:** The male arrives to his nesting site in early spring. He makes his territory by singing loudly from tree perches. He also places stick foundations in several nest cavities or birdhouses.

After females arrive and choose a mate, they select one of the nest sites the male has started. They finish the nest by adding a soft lining. They lay 5-7 eggs, cream colored with brown-red marks, and incubate the eggs for about 14 days. Fledglings leave the nest in 16-17 days. House Wrens usually produce two broods each season.

**Diet:** The House Wren hunts for food mainly on the ground or low-level plants and shrubs. It eats a variety of insects.

<b>Size and Color:</b>	The House Wren is a reddish-brown to gray-brown bird, with few special markings. Its bill is dark brown above, yellowish below. Its wings and tail are banded, and its under parts are a buff brown. It measures 4-1/2 - 5" in length and has a wingspan of 6" - 7". The male and female are alike.
<b>Song:</b>	Its song consists of 2-3 seconds of whistled notes and trills. When cats or other predators are near, it delivers a sharp "chek" or "churr" scolding call.
<b>Attract Them:</b>	They will use man-made birdhouses. Use a predator guard to keep out larger species. They are shy about using feeders, but if they feel safe they will come to your feeder to enjoy an offering of sunflower nutmeats or other nuts.