



Wrens

Food~ Wrens eat mostly tiny insects, They hunt spiders and insects, such as beetles, bugs and various caterpillars. They stuff their nestlings with a similar diet, along with grasshoppers and crickets. They will eat mealworms, tiny pieces of suet, peanut & sunflower pieces.

Behavior~ Around mid-May, a distinctive bubbly song announces that house wrens are back. Many people rejoice at the return of these small (less than 5 inches long), active birds with their turned-up tails. House wrens are little dynamos, hopping quickly through shrubs and vines and, in woodlands, across toppled trees and branches. They're very tolerant of humans and will nest just about anywhere with the right overgrown habitat. For many people, this is their favorite bird; they like the wren's confident nature, jaunty cocked tail and loud, burbling song.

Wrens search out tree holes, crevices in stone piles or even hollow logs. Their ready use of nest boxes endears them to many people. Sticks aren't the true nest, but form a platform for holding a small cup nest deep inside. This construction keeps the nestlings above rainwater or other seepage. A finished nest might rest on hundreds of twigs. Wrens are also known to nest in old boots and shoes, flowerpots and items left out on a clothesline.

male house wrens start building several nests at once in hopes of persuading a female to mate with him. Pairs usually split up by the end of each nesting season and choose new partners the next year. Single males sometimes compete for a female even after a pair has begun nesting. In about half of the contests the outsider succeeds in displacing his rival, at this point he usually discards any existing eggs or nestlings and begins a new family with the female.

Sources:

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/House Wren/lifehistory](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/House_Wren/lifehistory)
<http://www.startribune.com/house-wren-has-two-faces/96388564/>

Do wrens migrate?

Yes! The majority of house wrens migrate to the southern United States or Mexico in winter. They usually return north from late March to early May. Male wrens are known to return to the same breeding ground year after year, generally in the spring. Less is known about female wren migration habits in relation to breeding, although, like males, they move to warmer locales in the winter.



House Wren
Troglodytes aedon



Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

What habitats do wrens live in?

They are very adaptable and can live just about anywhere. As you can see on the migration map, they fly all around the Americas. I'm sure you know that the Americas have very different habitats and wrens live in pretty much all of them.

Wrens don't need a very big nesting box because they can nest just about anywhere. They are relatively small birds and can fit into small places. They usually live in trees or other cozy, hollowed out objects. If you're thinking about putting a nesting box up for them, make the entrance hole smaller. It will make the box more appealing to the wrens. To wrens, a small entrance hole makes the nest seem safer; a smaller hole means less predators.

Source: House Wren. [allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org).
Cornell University, 2015



Predators and Prey

House wrens or their scientific name, *Troglodytes aedon*, have many predators. House wrens have predators that include cats, rats, opossums, woodpeckers, foxes, raccoons, squirrels snakes and owls.

Adults attack predators when they strike and chase them away causing a screeching call. Some wrens can be docile, others are aggressive. Depending on what their instincts tell them what to do and how threatening the situation is to them.

Why should we protect these birds you ask? House wrens are gentle and passive creatures. They are jolly little creatures and sometimes you can hear them sing fun little songs! Wrens are great at insect control for gardens. They help out the environment and keep the food chain in check!

Sources:

http://www.biokids.umich.edu/critters/Troglodytes_aedon/

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/House_Wren/id%5C



Abby, Rilie and Lexie created this brochure as part of their Silver award project. They are from Cadette Girl Scout Troop 10250 from St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School.

Bird boxes for house wrens were built by the girls and placed in Swan Creek Preserve and Middlegrounds Metropark. The specific bird for which the houses were built was chosen by the Metroparks as this specific bird is common in this area. Wrens are in need for a safe nesting havens to protect their eggs. We put this brochure together to give more information about wrens and the nesting boxes we built for them. Wrens are experiencing habitat loss. Trees, where they usually make their homes, are dying and are being cut down giving them less places to nest causing a decrease in population.