

Massachusetts Animals – Carolina Wren

Facts at a Glance

TYPE OF ANIMAL

Avian/Bird

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Thryothorus ludovicianus

FOUND WHERE

All across the Eastern U.S.;
Parts of Canada & Mexico

HEIGHT/LENGTH

4.7 – 5.5 in. (12 – 14 cm)

WEIGHT

Averages 20 g

CONSERVATION STATUS

Least Concern



The Carolina wren is a small songbird that is often more brightly colored than most common wren species. Although they are small birds, they are larger than most other wrens. These birds typically have deeper, rusty brown feathers on their backs, with a lighter, warm cinnamon underside and patches of white on the throat and chin. Additionally, they can easily be spotted by the almost striped, black and white barring along their wings, tail, and undertail.

HABITAT

Like many other songbirds, Carolina wrens have adapted to a wide variety of habitats, including many urban settings. They prefer shrubland, wooded swamps, and forest areas such as moist woodlands or mildly forested farmyards. If conditions are right, look out for this bird in urban gardens or near isolated patches of forest or trees on edge ecosystems.

DIET

Wrens are primarily insectivores, meaning they feed mostly on insects. These birds may eat many kinds of insects including caterpillars, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, and various other small pest species. They will also occasionally eat small snails or lizards and are known to partake in berries, small fruits, and seeds. Growing wild berries, such as native raspberries (*Rubus idaeus* var. *strigosus*) or service berry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), may attract them to backyards.

LIFE & BEHAVIOUR

Carolina wrens are monogamous. The bonded pairs will often remain together for life and can be seen together at all times of the year, defending a permanent home and often singing in a tell-tale duet. Males will occasionally bring an offering of food to the female. When breeding, these birds share parental care, while the female does all the incubating, the male will supply food to the female and the young. These wrens are generally more terrestrial and are often observed dust bathing and sunbathing.

ATTRACTING BIRDS

While many birds are fairly picky with their nesting sites, Carolina wrens will nest in a variety of locations - even windowsills and coffee pots. If you are building a nest for this bird, birdhouse openings should be about 1 1/4 inch to 1 1/2 inches.