

Winter Wren

Troglodytes troglodytes

General Information:

-One of the smallest songbirds in North America, this short-tailed wren nests primarily in the coniferous forest of Canada and the northern US, but it also resides along the Pacific Coast from Central California to the Aleutians, and in the Appalachians south to northern Georgia. It usually hides in thick undergrowth, but when excited it will fly up, perch, bob its head up and down, and deliver an alarm call or a rapid, cascading song that may last six to seven seconds and contain more than 100 notes. This is the only member of the wren family found in Europe.

Song:

-The male sings a warbling melody of varied up-and-down notes with rapid trills; some notes high, thick and silvery. Also has a whisper song.

Behavior:

-Often solitary, but in pairs during the breeding season. It scampers on the ground and in low trees while foraging, ducking in and out of root wads, in and around logs, into brush piles, and any opening or cranny large enough. Gleans food from surfaces, mostly insects, caterpillars, and berries. Sometimes will approach humans for breadcrumbs. Bobs head and body and flicks tail, which is often cocked over its back. It is a common bird of shoreland environments.



Breeding:

-Polyandrous.

Nesting:

-Incubation 12-16 days by female. The 1-2 broods per year of altricial young stay in the nest for 16-19 more days and are fed by both sexes.

Conservation:

-The Winter Wren is vulnerable to habitat loss caused by logging operations.

Shoreline Restoration Issues:

-To create an environment friendly to the Winter Wren, put up a wren birdhouse, plant a mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees, an under canopy of berry producing shrubs of various sizes, and when you plant wildflowers, plant them in dense clumps.