

This resource is based on the following source:

Kale, H. W., II, B. Pranty, B. M. Stith, and C. W. Biggs. 1992. The atlas of the breeding birds of Florida. Final Report. Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.

This resource can be cited as:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. 2003, January 6. Florida's breeding bird atlas: A collaborative study of Florida's birdlife. <http://www.myfwc.com/bba/> (Date accessed mm/dd/yyyy).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

The House Sparrow may be more appropriately called the Store Sparrow, because this exotic species from Eurasia and Africa is a familiar fixture at shopping centers throughout most of Florida. It reached Florida at Lake City by 1882, and by 1930 had spread as far south as Homestead (Howell 1932). Colonies of this species are easily located by its active, noisy behavior and its relative tolerance of human activity as it forages for grain and other seeds, scraps of garbage, and some insects.

Habitat. The House Sparrow is primarily a cavity nester and will use vacant Purple Martin houses, crevices or ledges in buildings, or tree cavities. It will also weave nests in thick vegetation such as stands of bamboo, where it can hide from predators. When placed in vegetation, the nest is usually a globular structure constructed of grass, straw, feathers, string and other materials. It contains 3 to 7 white, pale blue, or pale green eggs speckled with brown and black, which are incubated primarily by the female. Incubation lasts 11 to 14 days. The young leave the nest, fully capable of flight, after 15 to 17 days (Terres 1980).

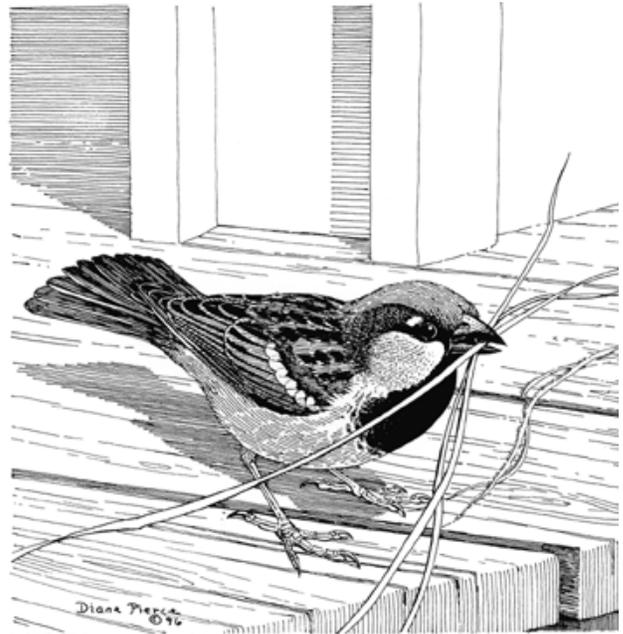


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Seasonal Occurrence. Egg dates recorded for Florida range between 7 March and 27 July (Stevenson and Anderson 1994). However, egg dates elsewhere in North America extend to early September (Lowther and Cin 1992).

Status. The House Sparrow has been found to be breeding or suspected of breeding all over Florida in all but the most remote rural areas, forests, the Everglades, and portions of the Florida Keys. However, a successful nest in Garden Key in the Dry Tortugas in 1974 (Woolfenden and Robertson 1975) has to be considered the most remote site.

Tom Palmer

House Sparrow

