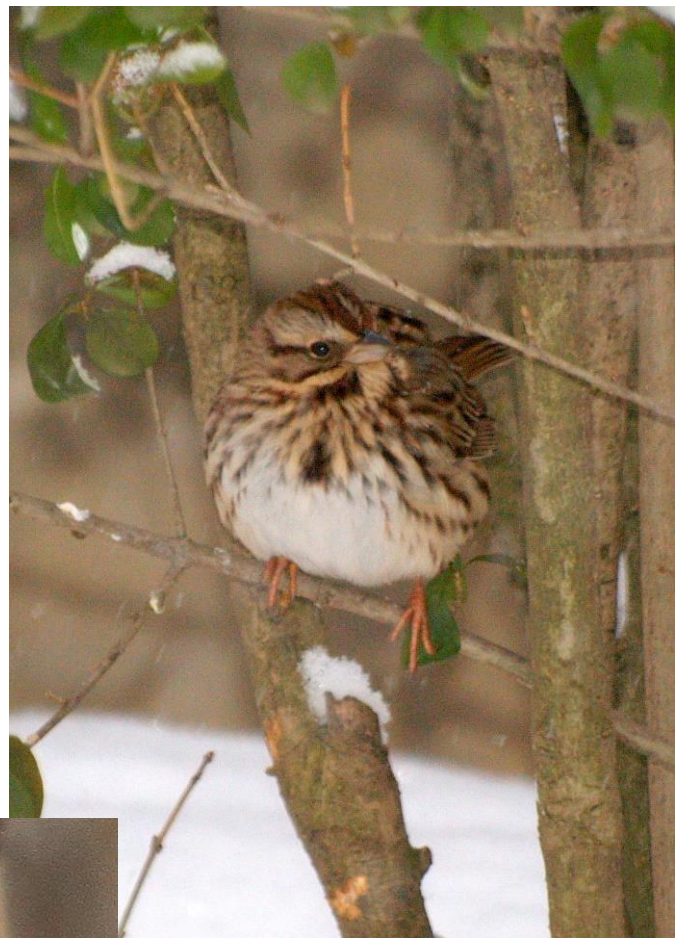




A male Song Sparrow is doing what it is named for – singing! Taken in early March 2017 at Boyce Park, this bird was establishing a territory.



One January day this sparrow was not singing, just trying to keep warm.



A portrait of a Song Sparrow shows its chestnut crest and lines in its plumage along with its gray stripe above the eye, black “mustache” and light color variations between its upper and lower beak.

PLUMAGE



In April a Song Sparrow still seems fresh and only a bit worn as it begins the mating season.



By mid-August, the bird looks worn; its tail is molting and missing feathers, with many other feathers needing replacement.

Near the end of October, the sparrow has fully molted and looks fresh and clean again.





RANGE

Song Sparrows can be found throughout the U.S.A. A spring Song Sparrow posed on a rock for me in Connecticut.

Here a Song Sparrow explored the blooms on the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina.



I found a darker subspecies of the Song Sparrow (*M. m. montana/merrilli*) in Glacier National Park, Montana. The dark breast was merely due to being wet.

Male and female Song Sparrows meet and tolerate each other as they form a pair-bond.



This established pair of sparrows hops through the lawn gleaning seeds from grass seedheads.

Soon after fledging, the juveniles become the father's responsibility. Note plumage differences.





PARENTING

A younger fledgling almost looks like it is being force-fed by its parent.

This fledgling received a nice, big morsel from its parent.



Things can get hectic when there are two youngsters demanding food from their harried father.

Unfortunately, Brown-headed Cowbirds leave their eggs in many Song Sparrow nests, resulting in a little “parent” feeding its oversized fledgling.



Water is important to Song Sparrows for drinking and bathing, both in summer and winter.

A plucky little Song Sparrow was not going to share a feeder with a larger cardinal, driving the bigger bird off.





Yet, a Song Sparrow can get along with other species, like a White-crowned Sparrow.

Maybe these two denizens of Duck Hollow were sharing a respite on a cold March day.



As winter comes on, be sure to help out the ground feeders with seeds on the ground after clearing some snow.

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