

## The Wren



Images courtesy of Robbie Murphy

The Wren's habit of holding its tail straight up in the air, helps us to identify it.

**Scientific Name:** *Troglodytes troglodytes* **Irish Name:** Dreolín

The wren is one of the smallest birds in Ireland and can be found in most parts of the country. It is a very common visitor to gardens but you might not notice it as it creeps in and around bushes and trees, searching for food. It is a small, dumpy bird—almost mouse-like—and has a small tail, which it sticks up in the air. Its song is loud and powerful, which means it is more often heard than seen. The Wren's nest is dome-shaped and made by the male out of grass, moss and leaves. He will make a few nests and the female will pick the one she wants. Many wrens can often be found huddled together in a nest box to keep each other warm in winter.

## The King of the Birds

Despite its size - and yet because of it - the Wren is known as the King of the Birds. According to fable, the birds had a contest to see who could fly the highest and so be crowned King of the Birds. Unbeknownst to the Eagle, the tiny Wren rested on the Eagle's back. Naturally the powerful Eagle flew high up into the sky. However, when the Eagle tired, the Wren chose that moment to fly higher still and claimed the crown!



## The Wren in Winter

As Wrens are so small, very cold winters can be very hard on them and many can die. Thankfully however, within a few years their population can return to normal.



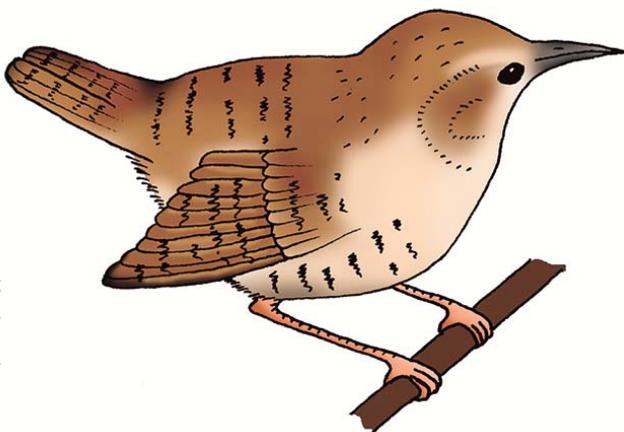
## FACT FILE

**Colour:** Brown/reddish brown. Paler underneath. Dark bars on tail and its small wings.

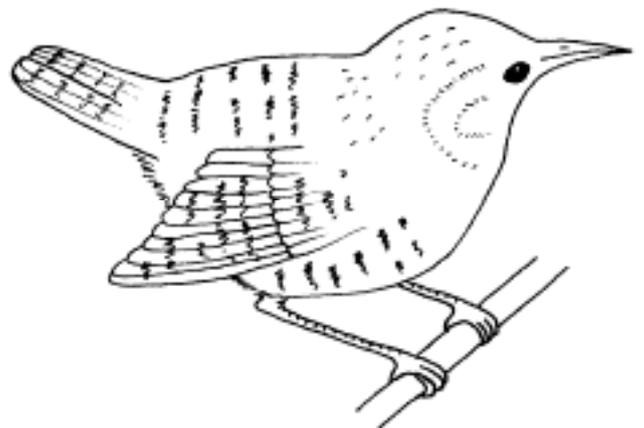
**Length:** 9-10½cm

**Diet:** Insects, spiders, larvae and seeds.

**Habitat:** Gardens, woodlands, hedges, reed beds, walls and farms.



Sketches courtesy of Audrey Murphy/Sherkin Island Marine Station



## Colour the Wren