



# Chirp Chirp



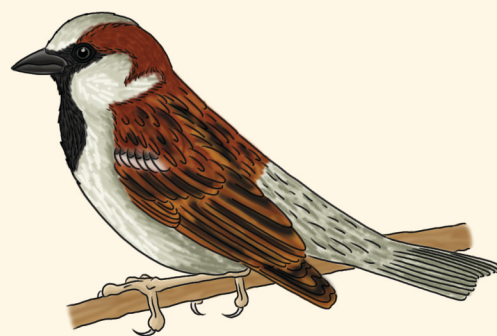
## An Old Friend

House sparrows have been hopping in and around our homes for centuries; nesting in street lights, under roof tiles and on ceiling fans, looking for food in our kitchens, our backyards, by the roads and in our fields.

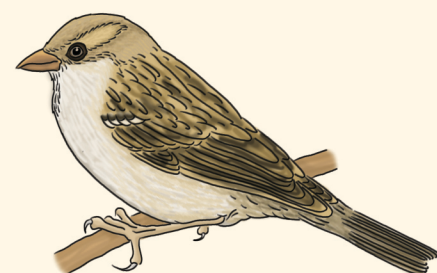
When they are not building nests and taking care of young ones, house sparrows live in groups. They are noisy birds and talk to each other using a variety of calls. They cheep, chirrup and chatter. They also let out shrill calls when they detect danger or when in distress.



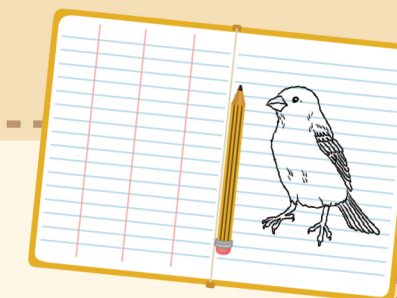
Male and female sparrows are of different colour patterns. The males have a grey head (crown), black bib, white cheeks and are a dark brown with streaks of black on their back.



Females are a paler brown all over without the grey crown, black bib and white cheeks.



## For the Field Diary



**Get outside** Note the time in your diary when you set out from home.

**Spot them** If you see one or more sparrows, note where you found them - out on the road, in a garden, on a compound wall, feeding at a garbage pile - where did you see them first?

**Count them** How many in the group? If you find a group of house sparrows, watch them for a while. How many males and females do you see? Can you see black bibs on the males?

**Other details** It's important to also note the location, date, start time and end time of your walk, and the rough distance you covered.



Alert, with its head up



Feeding



Two males being aggressive

## What if I can't find any?



If you can't find sparrows, only other birds, this too is important information. Sparrows are on the decline in many places and it's good to know not just where they are seen, but also where they are not. This decline may be for a variety of reasons - fewer nesting places, less grain for the adults and fewer insects for the chicks than there used to be.

## Write to us!



According to a superstition, a sparrow flying into your home denotes good luck (especially if it then builds a nest in your home). Ask an elder in your family if they know of any such beliefs about sparrows.

Have you observed sparrows around you? Send us your field notes, drawings and stories about sparrows at [edu@ncf-india.org](mailto:edu@ncf-india.org)!