

Bird of the Month: The House Sparrow

Love them or overlook them, House Sparrows are everywhere in Lower Makefield Township—and they have one of the most remarkable stories of any bird you'll see here. Though native to Europe, the House Sparrow was introduced to North America in the 1850s and quickly adapted to life alongside people. Today, it's one of the most widespread birds in the world, thriving in towns, cities, farms, and neighborhoods.

House Sparrows are true community birds. They rarely venture far from people and often nest in building crevices, porch roofs, streetlights, and even traffic signals. Unlike many birds that migrate, House Sparrows stay with us all year long, facing Pennsylvania's cold winters right alongside us.

Take a closer look and you'll notice that males and females are easy to tell apart. Males wear a handsome gray cap, chestnut neck, black bib, and crisp markings, while females are soft brown with subtle streaking that provides excellent camouflage.

Although they often gather in noisy flocks, House Sparrows are devoted family birds. Both parents help build the nest, incubate the eggs, and feed their hungry chicks. A pair may raise three or even four broods in a single breeding season!

Their cheerful chirping may sound simple, but House Sparrows use a surprising variety of calls to communicate with mates, defend territory, and keep their flock together.

While House Sparrows remain abundant worldwide, their numbers have declined in many parts of Europe and North America over the past several decades, likely due to changing building styles, fewer nesting sites, and reduced insect populations needed to feed their young.

 Have you spotted a House Sparrow in Lower Makefield Township? Share your photos in the comments—we'd love to see them!