



Lucy's Warbler

(*Oreothlypis luciae*)

Just four inches long and very active, Lucy's Warbler has been known in the past as the Desert Warbler and the Mesquite Warbler. Few birds are as intimately tied to a single plant species, as Lucy's is to mesquite. Primarily gray with a rusty cap, rusty rump, and white eye-ring, Lucy's warbler can be seen in early spring as it sings from the tops of mesquite trees: *whee-tee, whee-tee, whee-tee, wheet-tee, wheet*. Like many species, Lucy's has suffered from the enormous and continuing destruction of Arizona's riparian habitats. As mesquites are cut, rivers are developed, and groundwater is pumped to

supply drinking water to urban areas and for agricultural use, life zones along waterways face drastic changes. Some populations of Lucy's Warbler have disappeared entirely. Surveys reveal that populations have decreased across most of Lucy's range, though population increases have been documented in stands of tamarisk along the Colorado River.

Nest Box Specs

HOLE 1 1/4" diameter
DEPTH 6 1/2"
FLOOR 4" x 4"
OTHER swinging side door for easy monitoring

HABITAT Lucy's Warbler breeds primarily in dense stands of mesquite trees found in riparian habitats, though it also nests in cottonwood-willow galleries and sycamore-ash-live oak ecosystems. Even in suburban settings, Lucy's likely seeks out dense stands of mesquites.

BOX MOUNTING The average height of Lucy's warbler nests is 8.7 feet, though nests are found from 3 to 36 feet high. Nests are usually well concealed and sheltered in some fashion. Boxes might best be mounted in dense foliage with plenty of shade.

NESTING FACTS Lucy's warbler is highly adaptable to a variety of nest sites: in woodpecker holes, behind loose bark, among river bank roots, and in abandoned nests of other species including thrashers, verdins, and cliff swallows. Although Lucy's does not have a documented history of readily using nest boxes, at least two reports have been gathered in Tucson of Lucy's nesting in human-crafted cavities. One of these was a gourd. Lucy's likely raises two broods a year with nests built and eggs laid from mid-March through early July.

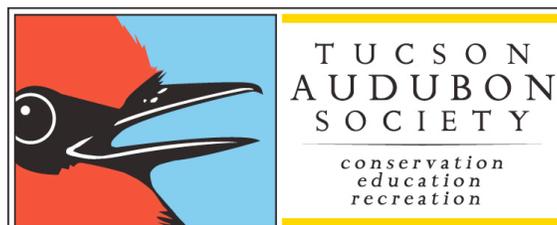


PHOTO: John Kennedy