

BLUEBIRD NESTING BOX INFORMATION



COMPLIMENTS OF
DUTCHESS COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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MOUNTING:

- Mount box in early spring. Males arrive in early March. They also have a second nest in late June.
- Mount on a 6 foot length of 3/4 inch round pipe or larger. You may use a U-bolt for mounting. If a wooden post or dead tree is used install a predator guard (1 1/2 inch hole and 3/4 to 1 inch thick, do not change hole size)
- **Bottom** of box should be **4 to 5** feet above ground. To deter predators and other birds.
- **DO NOT MOUNT ON A LIVE TREE.**

LOCATION:

- Locate in an open area (large lawn) with a sparse scattering of shrubs, tree's or fences.
- Opening should face AWAY from prevailing winds (usually face opening S, E or SE). If possible face opening toward a shrub or bush 25 feet to 100 feet away for fledglings to land.
- Area should be mowed or hayed at least a few times throu the season. They prefer low vegetation for its easier to see the insects on which they feed.
- Livestock can damage nesting boxes. The box should be located where it is out of reach or reinforced to prevent damage.

SPACING:

- Mounting in pairs will alleviate competition with other species.
- Space 100 yards or more apart.

BREEDING:

- Early to mid March - Males return
- End March mid April - females build nest
- Mid April to early May - Female lays eggs and incubates them
- Early May - Young hatch
- End of May - Young leave nest - Clean out nesting material (parents continue to feed young)
- End of May early June - Build new nest and repeat the process.



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MAINTENANCE:

- Clean out all old nesting material from previous year each spring.
- Smooth the pipe every so often with fine grained sandpaper to prevent predators from Climbing the pipe.
- Check the nesting box periodically and remove nest after each brood leaves the nest.

DO'S AND DON'TS:

- Do **NOT** stain the inside of box or 2 inches around the opening.
- Do **NOT** change the size of the opening.
- Do **NOT** install a perch on the outside of box. (this will invite other competition)
- Do **NOT** mount near high traffic roads, walkways.

- If staining Use a light colored stain, see note above.

OTHER TIPS:

- **To PREVENT TREE SWALLOWS:** the best way is to locate a box for the Swallows 12-15 feet away from your Blue bird box. If too far apart Swallows will occupy both.
- **To PREVENT SPARROWS:** Never allow them to use the box for a full season. Remove their nest each morning until they leave.
- **To PREVENT WRENS:** Keep box well away from woods and brushy areas. If doesn't work set up an additional nesting box for the Wrens.
- **Brown fly larvae** were a problem in 1985. You may sprinkle **1 teaspoon** of garden vegetable powder **OR** flea powder on the nest **Before** the eggs hatch. These products include Rotonone powder 1%, CHECK LABEL and don't use if stronger than. After fledglings are hatched, check every few days for fly larvae. Lift the nest and check the floor of the box. If larvae (white, 1/4 inch long) are present remove the nest, clean the box and build a new nest of dead grass and return the fledglings. Songbirds have a poor sense of smell so they won't mind or notice your scent.
- **Mice** will sometimes build nests in the box for the winter and they must be removed each spring. To control mice, smooth the pipe with a fine-grained sandpaper.
- **Remove wasps** just as they begin their nests. BE VERY CAREFUL in doing this.
- **House cats** can be a vicious predator of bluebirds. If your cat wears a collar, attach a small bell to their collar. If the box is located too near the ground cats can sometimes leap up to the Entrance. If this is a problem try moving the box to slightly over 6 feet.

