

## The Missouri Bluebird Society

In 1927, Missouri officially adopted the Eastern Bluebird as its State Bird. On March 12, 2006, the **Missouri Bluebird Society** was founded in an effort to enhance the many endeavors made by groups and individuals across the state to help preserve our Eastern Bluebird and other native cavity-nesting birds. The purpose of the organization is to provide information concerning bluebirds and native cavity-nesters to all interested parties across Missouri, encouraging them to provide proper housing and care for our bluebirds/native cavity nesters and to do this in association with the North American Bluebird Society.

A state-wide quarterly newsletter, ***The Fledgling***, is one of the benefits of your membership.

**The promotion of managed bluebird trails in a variety of adequate environments is a major focus of the Missouri Bluebird Society.**

Because of this focus, the Society sponsors the “**Nest Box Grant Program**” to encourage the placement and monitoring of nest boxes on public properties in Missouri. A Grant Application Form and details are available on the Missouri Bluebird Society (MOBS) website:

**[www.missouribluebird.org](http://www.missouribluebird.org)**

The Missouri Bluebird Society is a 501 (c) (3) Not-for-Profit organization

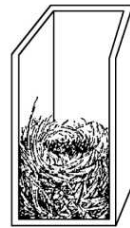


The MOBS Logo was designed and generously donated by  
Jim Rathert Photography

## Who's Nesting in your Box?

Many desirable native songbirds will use your “Bluebird Box”. The non native “House Sparrow” will also attempt to use your nest box and it is important for the safety of our native songbirds that House Sparrows not be permitted to nest in Bluebird Boxes. To assist you in nest identification, we provide you with the information and sketches below!

### CUT-AWAY VIEWS OF NESTING BOXES



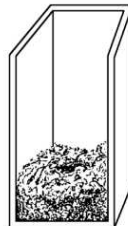
Eastern Bluebird Nest



House Wren Nest



Tree Swallow Nest



Carolina Chickadee Nest



House Sparrow Nest

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY, INC.

**Eastern Bluebird Nest:** cup shaped nest of woven grass , pine needles can be used. 4-6 light blue eggs, small percentage can be all white.

**House Wren Nest:** made up of small twigs . The nest cup itself is very fine twigs and grass woven together. The male often builds many “false” nests in nearby cavities.

**Tree Swallow Nest:** cup shaped nest with grass and feathers ( usually all white feathers) All white eggs, often 6-8 .

**Chickadee Nest:** starts with moss and finishes with fur or hair type material. They will cover bean-sized eggs with hair when away from the nest— making it difficult to see when the first egg was laid.

**House Sparrow Nest:** loose grass, feathers, small wild flowers, trash. Weaves a nest that completely fills the cavity and has a tunnel to the bottom. **DO NOT ALLOW** House Sparrows to nest.

**Tufted Titmouse Nest :** ( Not Pictured) similar to the Chickadee's nest with moss & fur, but perhaps more leaves.

**Carolina Wren nest:** ( not pictured) This wren uses moss, many dried leaves, and a “roof” made of the nest material on top.

## The Eastern Bluebird: Missouri's State Bird!



**P.O. BOX 105830  
Jefferson City, MO 65110**

*The Missouri Bluebird Society (MOBS)  
is an Affiliate of the  
North American Bluebird Society*



**[www.missouribluebird.org](http://www.missouribluebird.org)**

# How you can Help the Bluebirds!

Loss of habitat (due to introduction of non-native birds species and to land being cleared for development) has certainly been the greatest challenge for all of our native cavity nesting songbirds– including Bluebirds. You can help these lovely birds prosper and enjoy their “company” by providing man-made cavities for them to raise their young. Following are a few tips on attracting Bluebirds plus important information on proper care & habitat.

## A Proper Bluebird Box

- Well Ventilated, has drainage holes, easy to monitor, easy to clean, and has adequate roof overhang.
- Cedar, Cypress, and Redwood, are ideal although Pine, plywood and other types of wood can be used. If you decide to paint the box, only paint the outside a light color.
- Treated Lumber should not be used for nest boxes because of the birds exposure to toxic material in an enclosed area.
- Should not have a perch– sparrows and wrens are attracted to perches. Most native cavity-nesters do not need the perch and placing one on the box only gives the aggressive bird on the outside an advantage over the nesting bird inside the box.
- Entrance holes for Eastern Bluebirds, can have a variety of shapes. A round entrance hole should be 1- 1/2” in diameter. An oval hole should measure 1- 3/8” x 2 -1/4”. “Slot” boxes entrances should measure 1- 1/8”. The box should measure at least 6” from the bottom of the entrance hole to the inside floor. This depth, along with the proper size entrance hole, helps to protect the birds/eggs from predators reaching in.

[www.missouribluebird.org](http://www.missouribluebird.org)

## NEST BOX PLACEMENT

- Please place boxes on a metal pole. Most predators are accustomed to going up a tree ( or wood) to look for food. Of course, Bluebirds will successfully raise young in boxes on trees, but the Bluebird landlord is setting himself up for much heartache when the box cannot be adequately protected from predators. Also, ants are a serious problem with boxes on trees.
- Mount the box so the entrance hole is at least five feet above the ground and try to face the box away from any prevailing winds. This height helps to protect the birds from many predators, yet is low enough for easy monitoring. **Facing the nest box towards an overhang or perch area 20 to 100 feet away (such as a tree branch, power line, Shepherds Hook, or house eave) can be a real advantage to attracting the bluebirds.** Many studies have shown that the male bluebird likes to perch where he can watch the entrance hole to the nest box. Also, the fledglings will have a safe place to fly to when they are ready to leave the box.



(nest box). We often say, “ If you have enough open area that you need to mow your grass, you could have enough open area to get Bluebirds”! You may wish to avoid brushy /woody areas to avoid drawing House wrens to the nest box.



## Nest Box Monitoring:

***We recommend putting up a Bluebird Box only if you intend to Monitor it.***

- Check your Bluebird Box a minimum of once per week during the nesting season until the chicks are close to fledging.
- It is often recommended that you do not open the nest box once the babies are 13 or 14 days old . Bluebirds will generally fledge in 18-21 days from the time they hatch and you do not want them to be startled into fledging too soon. In many areas of Missouri, Bluebirds will nest three times during the season, and during the second and third nesting they will frequently fledge in 16-18 days.
- Bluebirds usually lay 4-6 light blue eggs. (a small percentage of bluebird nests will contain all white eggs)
- Incubation of the eggs usually lasts 12-14 days.
- Remove the nests after each nesting as soon as the young have fledged. Do not discard old nest material directly below the house, or you will attract predators.
- Keep records!! We have **Monitoring Forms** for you on the MOBS website and we urge you to turn your nest box data into MOBS at the end of each season.
- Good Stewardship dictates that you do not allow the non-native house sparrows to nest in your nest boxes.

## Missouri Bluebird Society (MOBS)

*Download a membership application at:*

**[www.missouribluebird.org](http://www.missouribluebird.org)**

Individual memberships start at only \$9.00!