

# Attracting Eastern Bluebirds to our Parks and Gardens

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Natural Resources

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Mary Gillespie

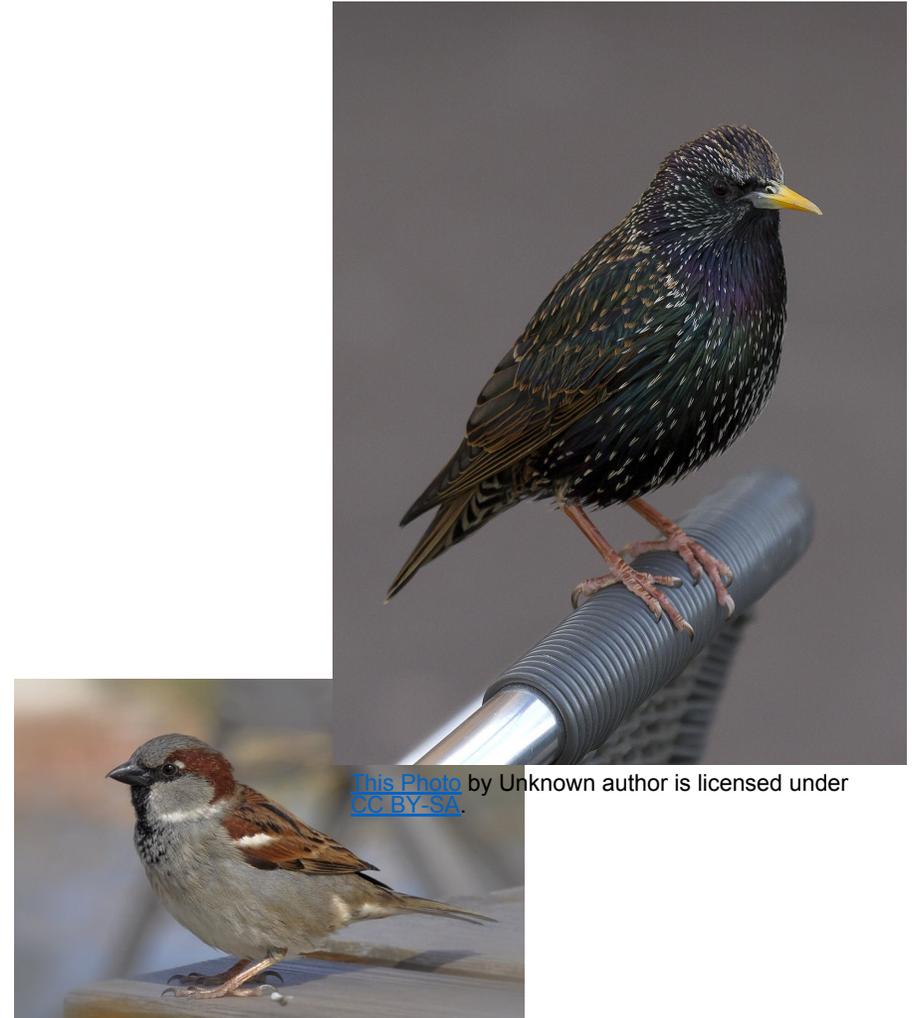
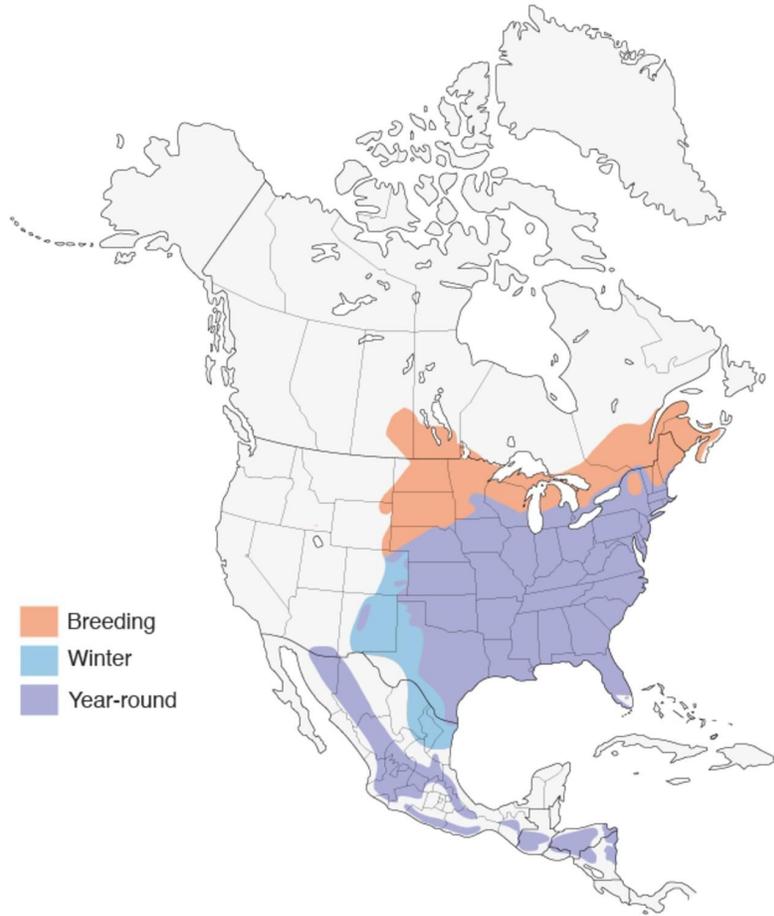
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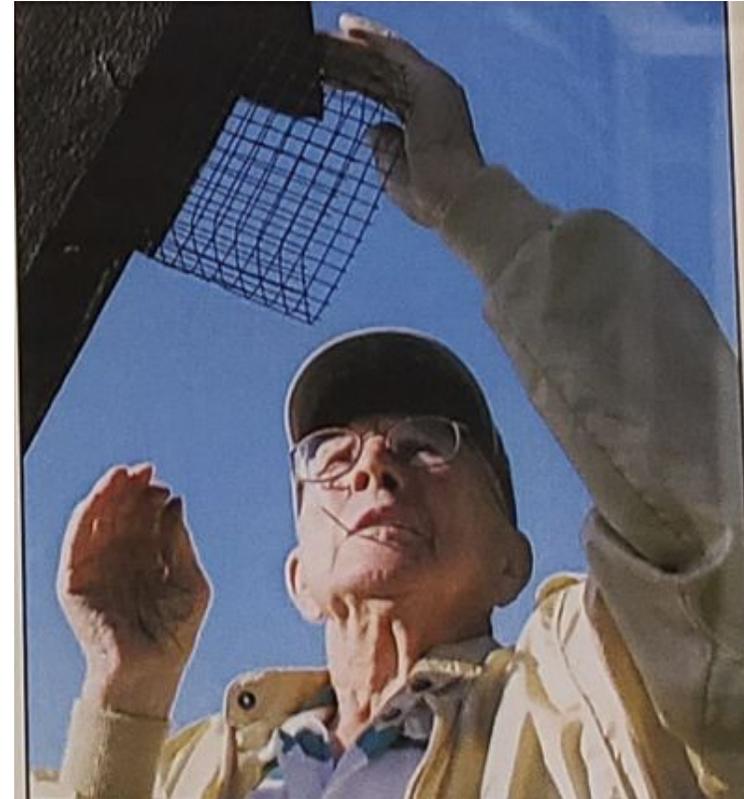
# Bluebird Story



# History of Bluebird Trails in Johnson County, KS

We owe a debt of gratitude to Frank Rollf

- First Bluebird Trail  
1989—16 boxes along Mill  
Creek Streamway Park.
- By 2004, over 250 boxes in  
6 parks.



# History of Shawnee Bluebird Stewards

- 2018: EMNs officially start monitoring in 7 JCPRD parks, about 20 stewards monitoring 290 boxes.
- 2020: City of Shawnee starts monitoring boxes in Gamblin, Garrett, and Stump with 12 volunteers and 42 fledglings.



Carolina Wren eggs at Gamblin Park

# History of Shawnee Bluebird Stewards

- 2021: Blackfish and Clear Creek Trail added. 105 fledglings of multiple species. Success for bluebirds despite the Arctic Blast.



Bluebirds at Blackfish Park (East)



Black Capped Chickadees at Blackfish Park (West)

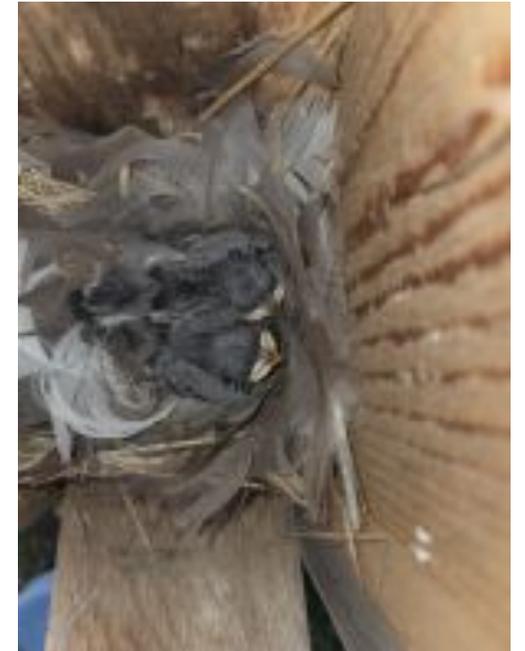




House Wrens at Clear Creek Trail (West)

# History of Shawnee Bluebird Stewards

- 2023: Wilder Bluff added. 159 fledglings!



# History of Shawnee Bluebird Stewards

- 2024: Swarner, Listowel, Fire Station 74 and the Police Dept. Campus added. New species: Tree Swallow!
- 2026: Adding Erfurt Park.



Tree Swallows at Police Dept. Campus



Bluebird Mama at Listowel

# Bluebird Ecology



- Insects
- Berries
- Cavities
- Open area
- Short grass



## Bluebird House Checklist

### Food and water:

- Open space for hunting insects, prefer mowed or low grass
- Berries nearby during season
- Water source nearby

### Position and Condition:

- Space at least 50 ft. around box
- Boxes should be 100 yards apart or not within sight of each other as bluebirds are territorial.
- Height: position the nesting box at a height that is comfortable for monitoring
- Direction:
  - Entrance should face away from prevailing weather and away from direct sunlight (can raise temperature 5°)
  - Entrance should face a tree within 100 ft. for a perch for the fledglings' first flight.
- Boxes should be light in color. Dark color can drastically raise the inside temperature.

### Predators:

- Predator guard is a must. A Noel guard around the hole is a vital addition.
- No ants! No wasps!
- Sparrows like the box close to buildings.

# Why are Predator Guards Important?



# What Can We Do in Our Yards?

- Food
- Water
- Shelter
- Space
- Dangers



# Need A Speaker to Talk About Natural Resources or the Environment?



Johnson County Kansas Extension Master Naturalists (EMNs) are knowledgeable and experienced presenters able to provide fact-based presentations on topics related to natural resource conservation and the environment. Presentations are available at no cost to adult and youth groups consisting of ten or more persons. Using the camera app on your phone, scan the **QR code** below for a list of available topics and the link for requesting a speaker.

## Don't see the topic you are looking for?

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