



Eastern Bluebird

Bluebirds are beautiful song birds found throughout North America. The Eastern Bluebird is common in Wisconsin. They are a member of the Thrush family, and have a beautiful warbling song. On Conservancy lands, look for Bluebirds at woods edges and in shrubby areas, where insects congregate.

They are omnivorous, meaning they eat worms, insects, and fruits. To attract Bluebirds, you'll need to put out dried or live mealworms in an open feeder. Most people welcome them because they are great at insect control, and because they are fun to watch. In early times, farmers depended upon Bluebirds and other insect-eaters; that was before pesticide chemicals became popular; but Bluebirds are very sensitive to pesticides.

Bluebirds are cavity nesters, but will gladly use a nesting box or small birdhouse. They cannot make their own holes in trees, so they use abandoned holes. They nest from March through August. The male will bring grasses, hairs, feathers, and pine needles to build the nest, and will then stand guard while the female does the building, to prevent her from mating with other males. The female lays 4-6 pale blue eggs in the neatly made nest, and she incubates them. Chicks hatch in 2 weeks, and spend another 20 days in the nest. Males will then take over care and feeding of the young while the female begins to build another nest, often over the first nest. (Note: if you have bluebird boxes, try to clean out each abandoned nest before the next bird uses it.) Young from the first brood will occasionally help raise their brothers and sisters from the second brood.

Bluebirds are migratory, flying in flocks to the southern U.S. for the winter. Adult Bluebirds tend to return to the same breeding territory; but only a small percentage of their young will return to exactly the same territory where they were hatched.

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