



It's Bird House Season By Rhys Samuel

Now is the time to put up any bird houses you have been thinking about during the winter months. Different types of birds prefer different types of boxes. If you want to attract only certain types of birds and reject unwanted species, you must make different types of boxes and make sure they are placed in a location suitable to the birds you want to attract.



Today's subject is blue birds. Not too many years ago the American blue bird was bordering on the endangered species list, but bird lovers throughout the country rallied to build the special type of house they preferred and to locate them where the blue bird lived. That location was in an area of broad fields or at the edge of woodlands or brush that bordered open fields because the blue bird is a creature of sunny, wide open spaces.

The ideal location for a blue bird house is at the edge of a wide field with the front of the house facing south. Blue birds also do not need a perch in front of the entrance hole, which should be 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Anything larger will only encourage other birds, including grackles and starlings. Unfortunately, sparrows can also occupy your blue bird house unless you discourage them. They are bullies in the bird world, and will drive timid blue birds away if they are fighting for the same house.

Blue birds also prefer a house located four to five feet above ground. This makes it easy to mount the house on a fence post or bordering tree. But the low elevation also makes it attractive to invasion by the ever-present blacksnake, which can clean out a blue bird nest in short order – whether it be eggs or chicks. If you find a black snake half in and half out of your blue bird house you can have some fun by yanking him out by his tail.

But do not be upset by the presence of a black snake on your property. If you have a resident black snake, you are fortunate because these critters are the best eradicators of undesirable rodents, such as mice, rats, and moles. If you have one around for some time and he disappears it probably means he has gone to more rewarding food pastures or has been done in on the highway.

Whatever the problems, there are few moments so memorable as seeing the brilliant and iridescent blue of your very own bluebirds as they flash in the sunlight near your home.

If you want to build an authentic blue bird house, the plan below is from the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service.

For more details on the blue bird and more house plans check out this [Alabama Cooperative Extension System publication on "Eastern Bluebirds"](#). (file requires [PDF reader](#))

