



## Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin

Patrick Ready, President

815 Sky Ridge Dr. • Madison, WI 53719

Laura-

Here is my reply to the question regarding putting in nest boxes for Eastern Bluebirds & Wood Ducks.

• **What is the purpose of the project, as well as history (when did you last install houses and where)?**

Re: Eastern Bluebird boxes. The Bluebird Restoration Association of Wis. (BRAW) was started 30 years ago and is a statewide non-profit dedicated to increasing bluebird numbers by nest box trails placed in proper habitat and monitored by volunteers. Last year our members reported fledging over 23,000 bluebirds in Wis. This is about 1/3 of what bluebird populations were 100 years ago. Large city parks and golf courses make perfect habitat for attracting nesting bluebirds. Weekly monitoring assures we are getting bluebirds or another native cavity nester, Tree Swallow, Chickadee or House Wren. Non-native House Sparrows are not allowed and nest are removed. My only trail at present is at Elver Park, put in 3 years ago with Parks approval. Each year I get 2 Bluebird pair and they managed to fledge 6-9 chicks per season. Currently I manage 9 trails in Dane County and personally monitor 2 of them.

Wood Ducks need a large cavity to raise large broods. More & more suitable habitat in woodlands throughout the state are lacking natural nesting cavities for this species. Lumbering and tree removal for fire wood has made it hard for Wood Ducks to find a natural sites for nesting. Putting up nest boxes on or near ponds and lakes etc. give Wood Ducks a safe place to nest and raise young. I have seen Wood Ducks on the retention ponds at Elver the past 2 Springs. I have 5 boxes at Lake Kegonsa State Park and have fledged over 100 ducklings in the past 5 years.

• **What is the timeline?**

Get boxes in by early spring when nesting season begins for Bluebirds & Wood Ducks.

• **Where does you plan to install these? Please include map.**

Bluebird boxes at Blackhawk City Park on Bear Claw Way, far west side of Madison.

Wood Duck boxes, 2 in the retention ponds at Elver Park.

• **What will the design be for each of them? Materials, size, pictures - any details that can be shared will be helpful.**

Bluebirds: North American Bluebird Soc box (NABS). 10x 6x8 approx. Wood Duck: American Wood Duck Soc design. 26" high, by 12" wide and 16" deep.

• **How will you install them (digging the holes by hand?)**

Bluebird boxes go on 3/4" aluminum conduit poles about 6" high and are secured with clamps. Wood

Duck boxes go on 1-1'4" galvanized pipe and secured with clamps. Boxes will be approx 7 feet high. All boxes are made with cedar and fade to a weathered grey. Poles are set using a post hole pounder.

• **What is your maintenance plan?**

At the end of each nesting season bluebird boxes are cleaned out and checked again in early March to be ready for upcoming nesting season. Wood Duck boxes are checked in dead of winter and "chipped" with fresh wood chips for the upcoming nest season.

This report should also formally acknowledge:

• You will do a site visit with me and abide by me recommendations

No problem. We can arrange a time to meet at the park(s).

• you will contact Diggers Hotline 10 days in advance of install

For Blackhawk no problem. At Elver park I already had this done when I put in the small Bluebird trail there. No lines ran near the ponds plus the poles will actually be set in water at the pond edge. I don't think they put wires under retention ponds.

• If you are unable to maintain the houses they will be removed

The Vice-president of the BRAW would remove or take over monitoring the boxes if something happened to me. Or if I decide not to care for the trails anymore I would remove them in the non-nesting season.

Items for consideration by the Board of Park Commissioners are due to the Parks Office by the 17th of April, if you wish to be on the agenda for the April 25th meeting. Even if approved by Parks, you would also need approval from Engineering for placement in either storm-water retention pond.

Patrick Ready'

BRAW President

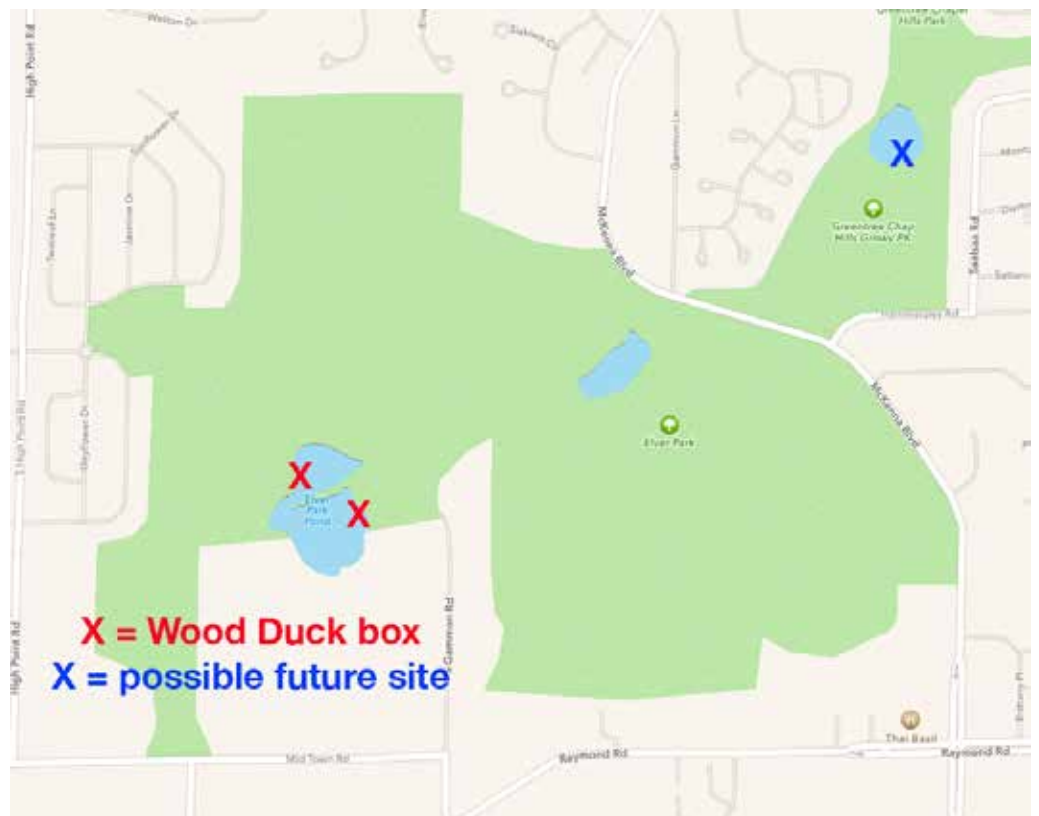
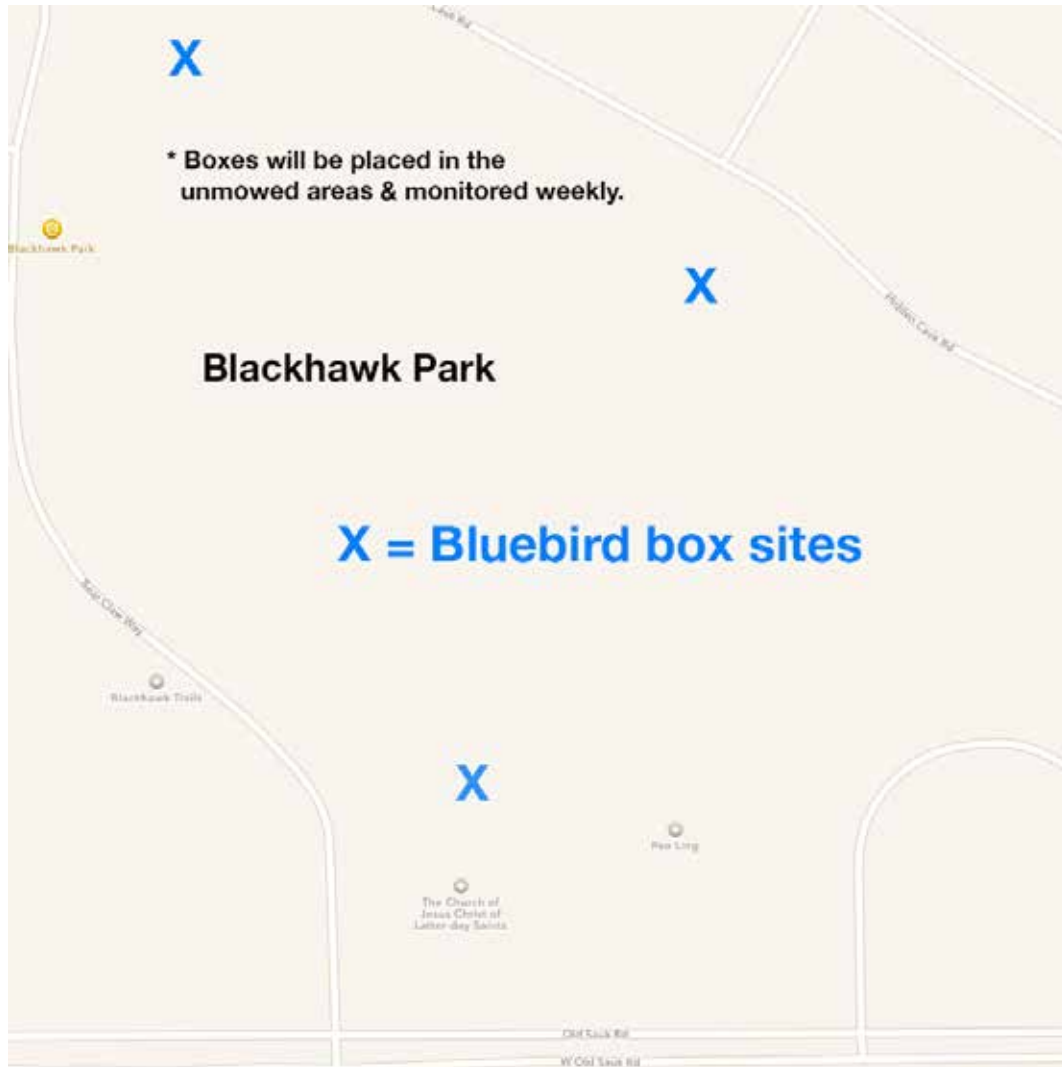
Madison Audubon Society Volunteer



Male Eastern Bluebird on NABS box.



Wood Duck pair on wood duck box.



# NABS style Bluebird Box

Cedar, 7/8" lumber preferred.

8" wide for top

6" wide for back, front, sides & bottom

All angle cuts are 10 degrees

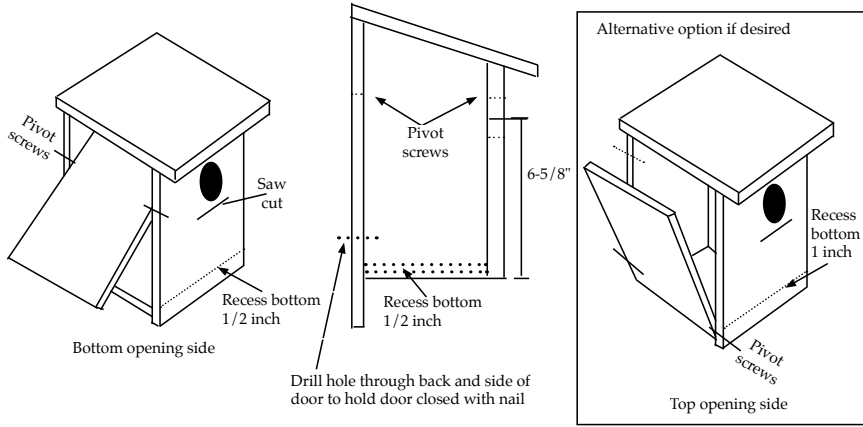
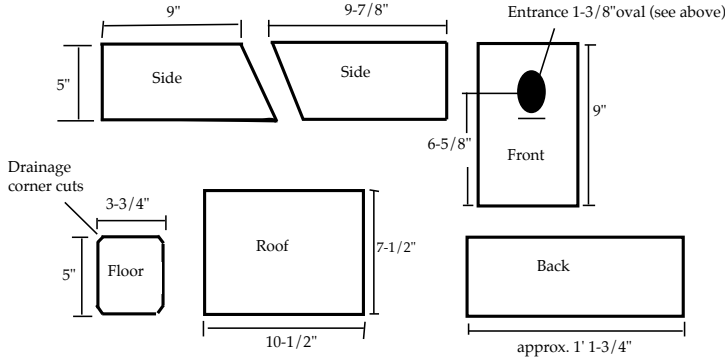
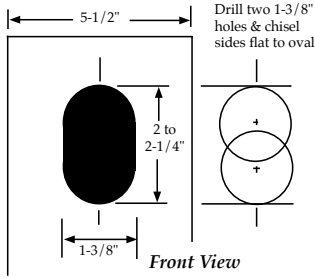
Roof is 7-1/2" wide x 10-1/2" long

Sides 9-7/8" long x 5" wide

Floor is 5" x 3-3/4"

Back & front 5-1/2" wide

## Recommended Oval Hole Plan



15

