Online membership form at: virginiabluebirds.org/join-vbs
OR
Mail this form and your check to:
Make check payable to VBS, do not send cash.
The Virginia Bluebird Society
726 William Street
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Name:______________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: ________________________________________________
County: ____________________________________________
State:_____________ Zip:_____________________________
Phone:______________________________________________
Email:_______________________________________________
Please be sure to include your email address, all newsletters are electronic.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE:

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Membership: ☐ 1yr - $25 ☐ 3yr - $70
Sustaining: ☐ 1yr - $60
Endowment: ☐ 1yr - $100
$____Additional Tax Deductible Contribution
$____TOTAL

Virginia Bluebird Society is an affiliate member of the North American Bluebird Society. On behalf of NABS, we invite you to become a member.
www.nabluebirdsociety.org

www.virginiabluebirds.org
vbs@virginiabluebirds.org

Follow us on Facebook @VirginiaBluebirdSociety

*Some text was borrowed, with permission, from the North American Bluebird Society
The Bluebird in North America

Bluebirds were once a common “country bird” in the United States. These birds flourish in open grassland spaces, and thus had benefited from clearing of the vast forest expanses during the settlement of the late 1700s. However, human activities subsequently began to have a negative impact on Bluebirds. One devastating change was the introduction of two nonnative cavity-nesting species – the House (or English) Sparrow and the European Starling – in the 1800s. These aggressive birds out-compete for cavities and even kill Bluebirds. Changes in farming practices, including mechanization, land consolidation, and the conversion of grasslands into row crops also contributed to a loss of nesting sites for Bluebirds.

Recovery of the Bluebird

Fortunately, in the 1960s-70s, individuals such as Dr. Lawrence Zeleny recognized the increasing rarity of Bluebirds and endeavored to save the species by providing fabricated nesting boxes designed just for the species. In 1978 Zeleny founded the North American Bluebird Society and was installed as its first president.

Inspired by the work of Dr. Zeleny, the Virginia Bluebird Society was formed by Anne Little, Julie Kuttruff and others in 1996. Since then, hundreds of Bluebirders have joined VBS to help the species thrive once again. More and more people started putting up nest boxes designed specifically for Bluebirds. The Bluebirding movement and provision of nest boxes also benefited other native cavity nesters like Chickadees, Tree Swallows, House Wrens, and Titmice. Bluebird populations have rebounded in many areas. But House Sparrow and European Starling threats remain. Bluebirds will always be heavily dependent upon man-made nest boxes and reliant upon your help!

Please help the Bluebird conservation effort by joining VBS and learning how to acquire, install and monitor your own Bluebird nest boxes. Become a valued team member that preserves these beautiful and charismatic birds.

How to Become a “Bluebird Landlord”

Getting started with Bluebirding is not hard but does require understanding best practices which prevent unintended harm. There are three elements to successful Bluebirding. First locate proper habitat. There is little point in putting up a nest box in places where Bluebirds do not frequent. Bluebirds are primarily insectivores and thus prefer open areas with low-cut grass and a few trees interspersed. Typical examples of good Bluebird habitat are mowed grasslands, pastures, rural roadsides, open areas in parks, golf courses, orchards, vineyards, and cemeteries. This habitat provides Bluebirds with a ready supply of insects, spiders, larvae, and other invertebrates to feed their young.

The second element for success is to buy or build proper nest boxes and mount them in a manner that will assure safety from predators. This will permit the Bluebirds to successfully complete a reproduction cycle. The VBS website provides plans for constructing a good nest box, including predator guards and appropriate mounting instructions.

Proper (i.e., safe) mounting is just as important as the correct nest box design. A proper mount is the most important element for keeping predators such as raccoons, snakes, and cats from getting to the box and preying on the eggs or the nestlings within. Mounting nest boxes on wooden poles, fence posts or trees is not recommended. If your area contains these types of predators, then a snake baffle and Noel guard are necessary regardless of what kind of pole is employed.

The third important element for successful Bluebirding is learning how to properly monitor your nest box(es). From the time a Bluebird pair “claims” a nest box and builds a nest, eggs are laid and then hatched, and the nestlings are finally fledged, many things can go wrong. Some hazards, such as very cold, dry, or hot weather cannot be avoided. But there are other challenges where you can deflect the amount