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Nest Box Residents

About 80 species of North American birds nest in cavities and could use a nest box. Nest boxes can also be used by mice, squirrels, and aggressive nonnative bird species.



Preferred Nest Box Users

Native cavity nesters such as the Eastern Bluebird, Black-capped Chickadee, Tree Swallow, and House Wren are desirable residents for a Michigan nest box. Native bird species naturally occur in your area and are adapted to the conditions there.

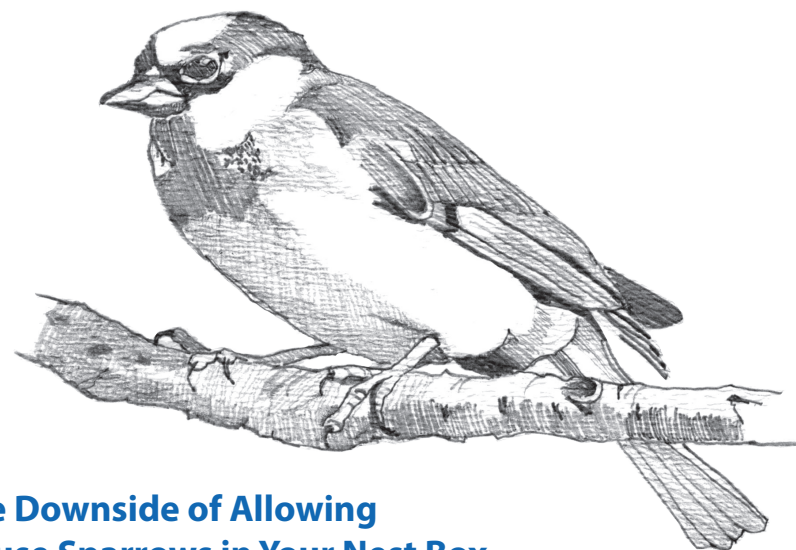
Successful Nest Boxes

Successful nest boxes provide supplemental shelter in the appropriate habitat and are monitored regularly by landowners to deter nonnative species and to measure the birds' success at nesting.

Nonnative Species

Nonnative bird species are species that have not historically, prior to European settlement, occurred in an ecosystem. They are native to Europe, Asia, or areas west of the Rocky Mountains. Nonnative birds have been introduced, either deliberately or accidentally, by humans. Examples of nonnative songbirds to Michigan are European Starlings, House Sparrows and House Finches.

Nonnative species can become a problem. They are able to adapt to a broad range of conditions and climates, and eat a variety of different foods. They often live a long time and are able to reproduce quickly. The ecosystem suffers as native species do not compete as well for resources and are reduced in number.



The Downside of Allowing House Sparrows in Your Nest Box

House Sparrows are very aggressive competitors. They begin nesting before native species and are territorial about their nest site. They will destroy the eggs of native species and kill chicks and adults. House Sparrows can also raise 2-4 clutches of up to 8 babies every year.