

Quick Guide to Nest Box Challenges

Predator	Deterrence	Removal
Wasps	Rub soap on inside of roof and/or sides of box, keep boxes away from pine trees.	Scrape out nest. Morning when its cooler is the best time to do this since the wasps are slower then.
Snakes	Indication: eggs or young disappear but nest is in tact. Mount boxes on pole and use stovepipe raccoon/snake guard.	N/A
Raccoons, Squirrels, Opossums, Cats	Indication: nest is destroyed, eggs and young are gone. Keep nest box mounted on pole with stovepipe guard as well as Noel guard to prevent animals from reaching in.	N/A
House Sparrows	Indication: Adult and/or young have heads pecked in and are dead or sparrow nest may be present.	Use sparrow trap. Ask for further details on removal.
Blowflies	N/A	Check under the nest and nest materials for signs of larvae. Collect blowflies by seeping them into a bag. Use a brush to sweep out the nest and a screwdriver to clean out the vent holes in the floor. If the number of larvae is large (over 50), make a new nest, carefully place young in new nest, and discard the old one sealed in a plastic bag.
Other Bird Friends	Deterrence	Removal
Wrens, Swallows, Chickadees, Titmice, other native cavity nesters	<p>Not predators/pests but are competitors to the nest boxes. They are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty. Treat them just as you do the bluebirds. We celebrate all of our native birds.</p> <p>If wrens dominate the boxes it means you have placed them too close to the tree line or shrubby areas. Move boxes at least 20 ft from brush/forest edges.</p> <p>If swallows are competing with Bluebirds, put another box close to Bluebird box (10ft). We call this “box pairing”</p>	N/A – Never remove active nests of our native birds. Only “dummy” nests made by wrens (be certain it’s a “dummy” nest) and nests of house sparrows may be removed.