

WELCOME BACK WINSOME BLUE BIRDS.

Snow still lingers in patches and the sounds of soft sweet whistles herald the coming season. With their sky-blue coats and warm red-brown breasts, the charming Eastern bluebirds are flocking to our open spaces in Naugatuck. The meadows of the Gunntown Passive Park and Nature Preserve are a perfect home for these harbingers of spring.

Mark Dandeneau, Naugatuck resident and Gunntown steward, makes sure homes are available. Coordinating with the Gunntown Group and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's nest watcher program, he has set up three new wooden blue birdhouses with entrances facing towards open habitat. It is just right for bluebirds to go in and out in comfort and find the insects they depend on for energy.

The male Eastern bluebird brings nesting materials and the female makes the nest inside the wooden box. They weave together grasses, pine needles, and occasionally lining it with horsehair or turkey feathers.

These bluebird houses sit atop poles with guard covers preventing predators from invading the nests. Mark already observed Mr. and Mrs. Bluebird atop a nest box as they inspected their soon-to-be new home. Anyone wishing to join Mark and the Gunntown bluebird brigade of nest watchers can contact the Park and Recreation Department at (203) 720-7043.

Submitted by Christine Yannielli
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The Gunntown Group