

Making a Difference for Wildlife

Hundreds of local conservation projects are undertaken annually by SCI Chapters. They are reinforced by many notable conservation initiatives funded by the SCI Foundation.



Bluebird Conservation Western New York, USA

COMPETITION with non-native European starlings and sparrows has depleted native bluebird numbers. These exotic species nest in the same holes as the New York state bird and kill bluebird hatchlings. This, and the loss of habitat due to continued urbanization, has resulted in a dramatic decline in places for nest building.



For its efforts, SCI Western and Central New York has received a special commendation from the Bluebird Society and a photo session with NY Gov. George Pataki. The Chapter also has received many thank-you letters from people who now have bluebirds nesting in their back yards. The project was covered by *People* magazine, which wrote, "in the Oneida area, the eastern bluebird is at the top of the pecking order."



Fortunately, the bluebird adapts well to man-made nests. Enter SCI's Western and Central New York Chapter.

With lumber donations from Roy Emerling, fellow SCI member Don Wagner kiln-dried enough wood for 15,000 bluebird houses. Also, Chapter member Bill Nye donated 78,000 screws. SCI next enlisted the help of the Collins Correctional Facility, seven school systems as well as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.



SCI is now providing the materials as kits, and many Scouts are earning merit badges in addition to a sense of conservation accomplishment.

Bluebird houses are now found along interstates and on golf courses. New Yorkers are seeing bluebirds where there were none before. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has even been banding the bluebirds for monitoring.