



From the Desk of:
Steven Sample
President, BRAW
PO Box 628492
Middleton, WI 53562

April 19, 2022

AVIAN FLU & BLUEBIRDS

April 19, 2022

Dear BRAW Member,

A number of people have contacted BRAW asking if the Avian Flu is affecting bluebirds in Wisconsin. I write share information my thoughts on this topic

To date so far there is no evidence that the Avian Flu affects songbirds. The birds affected are larger birds such as food birds (chickens and turkeys), waterfowl, raptors, and others.

Eastern Bluebirds don't use feeders as a rule unless mealworms are offered and only if the feeders are near their territories. During nesting, bluebirds rarely associate with other birds outside their breeding territory. Even if the flu was an issue, bluebirds are least likely to contract it due to their insect feeding and territorial behaviors.

Nesting boxes are unlikely to be a vector to distribute any disease as a rule. To close up the boxes will just force the adults to seek out natural nesting locations with the same possibilities of contracting any disease. Boxes are more likely to be placed in isolated areas which actually may actually help keep diseases from spreading.

If you still want to take precautions, eliminate mealworms, and bird baths commonly used by bluebirds.

Below is an excerpt from a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Avian Flu Knowledge Article.

" Most wildlife agencies advise against feeding wildlife. Among other things, central feeding points cause animals to gather in one place where pathogens can be shared. However, removing backyard feeders is not something USDA specifically recommends to prevent avian influenza unless you also take care of poultry. People who care for poultry should prevent contact between wild birds and poultry by removing sources of food, water, and shelter that attract wild birds. "

For additional USDA Avian Flu Information please click [HERE](#).

BRAW will continue to follow Avian Flu developments and will post information on our website - <https://braw.org>.

Sincerely,

Steve Sample, President
Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin