

Bird Box Subcommittee of the Wyomissing Park & Shade Tree Commission –

Summary of Zoom meeting on Friday, February 28, 2025.

Lucy's walkaround with Duane on February 26

- 4 boxes are to be removed and not replaced at this time, for a variety of reasons: These are #4, 9, 19, and 28 on the 2024 map
- 1 box in poor condition in 2024 and removed due to the sewer project will not be replaced until all work in that area is concluded: Box #17
- 6 boxes are to be replaced, along with the posts: #3, 5, 7, 14, 25, and 27.
- Duane carefully marked the exact locations for new boxes, with an arrow to indicate to the crew which direction entrance holes are to face (east). Since his crew's work load is about to explode, they will need to get this done next week (week of March 3)
- Lucy wrapped orange electrician's tape around Bo 29 to obstruct the entrance hole. This box AND nearby Box #1 were claimed by the same male House Sparrow last year, who trapped and killed a Tree Swallow in Box #29. Limiting him to one box this spring should make it easier to trap him. Then Box #29 can be made available.
- When I told Duane that I suspect snakes repeatedly took bluebird eggs or hatchlings from Box #14 (in the middle of the small, level meadow behind the Sherk Bench) he told me that he has seen more snakes in that section of the park than anywhere else. I asked him to remove the present box, with its wooden post, and install a T-post without a box at this time. An effort will be made to install a stovepipe baffle on this post to deter the snakes, and when we obtain boxes from Ken Leister we should not need help from the park crew to install the box.

These changes will leave 12 boxes in the section of the park between Ruth's Bridge and Old Mill Rd, and 13 boxes between Ruth's Bridge and the Quarry.

We reviewed the most recent message from Ken Leister, in which he shared that both he and his wife have been ill. He hopes to have boxes for us by March 8.

The 5 boxes built by Art Zdancewic were painted white by Jean Seelig, to help protect nesting birds during heat waves. Water-based, exterior latex paint with a high Light Reflectance Value was used.

On February 27, during a work session involving Lucy, Jean, and Helen, entrance hole protectors were installed on the 5 white boxes and 5 Noel guards were made. We will keep the Noel guards in reserve, installing them only on boxes with evidence of predation.

New number medallions will be attached to boxes only after the park maintenance crew has installed the new boxes.

The same field data sheets used last year will be used again, with training of the new monitors in their use. Helen is going to attempt to create a Google Document all the

monitors are able to edit, in order to enter their weekly observations. We will adjust the system as needed.

Lucy will act as a trainer, trouble-shooter, and ‘float’ monitor this year – leaving the 25 boxes to be divided among 5 monitors in this way:

Helen Davis:	Boxes #1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Quindi Franco:	Boxes # 5, 8, 10, 18, 29
Margaret Cosbey:	Boxes # 11, 12, 25, 26, 27
Jean Seelig:	Boxes # 16, 20, 21, 24, 30
Chris Hennessy (and Annabelle)	Boxes #13, 14, 15, 31, 32

Each monitor is responsible for doing a pre-season check of their boxes, so that any cleaning or minor repairs can be accomplished prior to the 3rd week of March. The monitoring season will begin the week of March 16.

PUBLIC EDUCATION: Lucy and Jean will work together to create 2 8½ x 11” notices for the park kiosk near Old Mill Rd. One notice will explain the appearance of the white boxes, and the other will urge park-goers to avoid approaching close to the boxes and inform them that anyone who wishes to commit regular time and effort to managing the nest box trail can contact our borough manager. We talked about posting photos of the cavity-nesting birds that typically use our boxes.