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## **Ridgefield Cub Scouts, Residents Lend a Hand to NJMC Conservation Efforts**



The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission held a tree swallow nest box building workshop on March 24 for the Ridgefield Environmental Commission, Cub Scout Park 96, and residents. The nest boxes will be placed throughout the Meadowlands marshes this spring to enhance habitats for tree swallow mating pairs.

The tree swallow is a 5 ½ inch metallic blue bird indigenous to marshes, lakeshores and streams. A secondary cavity nester, the tree swallow lives in holes of dead trees hollowed out by other birds and animals. In response to a decline in natural habitat, the NJMC has constructed nest boxes for this species for the past 10 years.

Over 500 nest boxes, many built by volunteers, are currently being installed by the NJMC at DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst, Harrier Meadow in North Arlington, the Mill Creek Marsh in Secaucus, and the Skeetkill Creek Wetlands Enhancement Site in Ridgefield. In addition to being a natural insecticide against mosquito-like midges, the tree swallow is a favorite subject of photographers exploring trails and onboard NJMC pontoon boat cruises and canoe tours in the summer.

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