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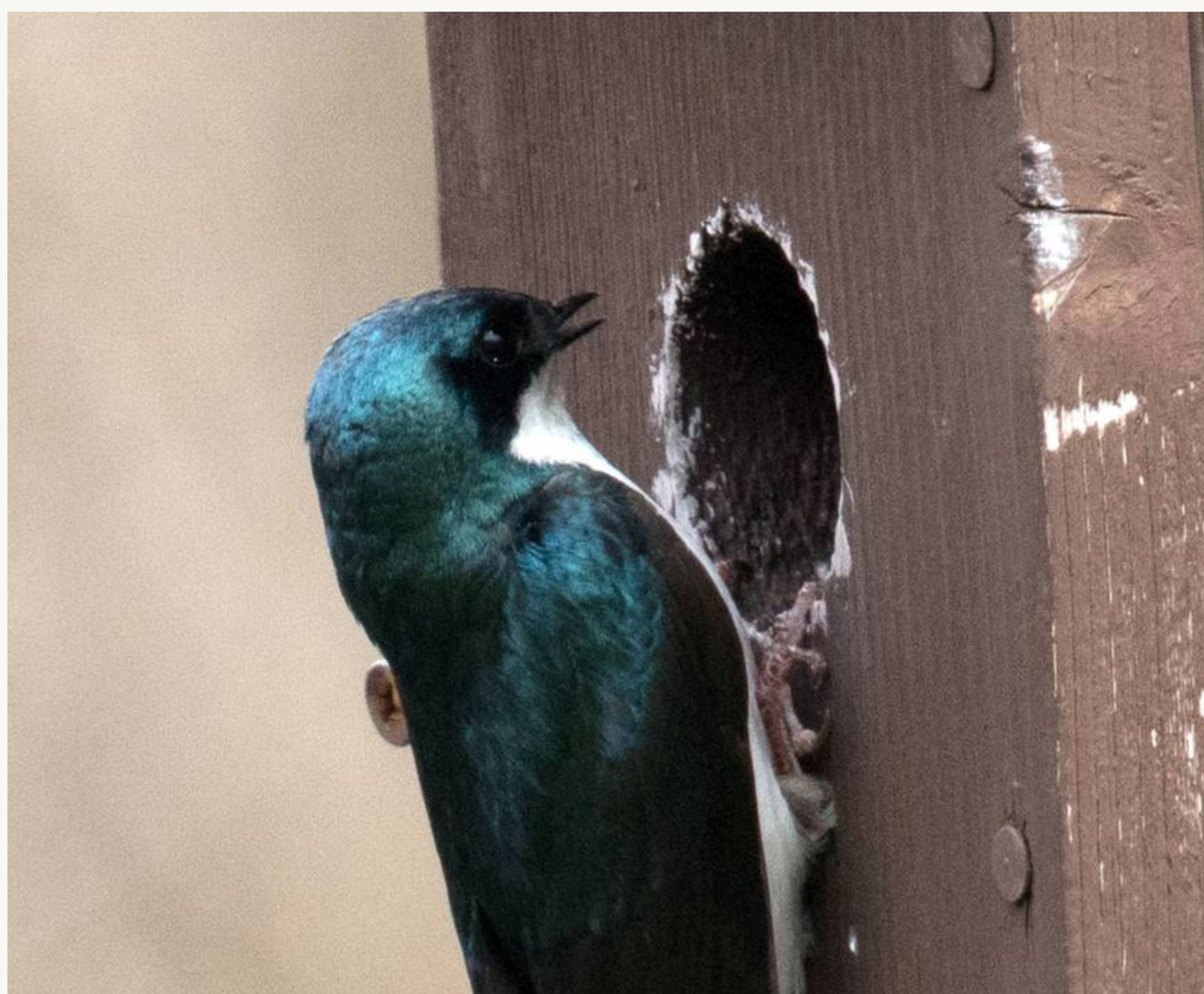
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# Smart! Cornell engages kids with nest box building workshops



Sustainable Forestry Initiative  
December 4, 2018



CC BY 1.0 Tree Swallow at a Nest Box

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a world leader in the study, appreciation, and conservation of birds. But the vast educational opportunities it offers aren't reserved only for Ivy League students. They include programs for youth, families, and local communities to participate in hands-on learning that benefits birds and the environment.

Cornell's [NestWatch citizen-science project](#) recently hosted a series of 18 workshops that engaged afterschool and 4-H groups in building local nest box trails for birds in need of habitat. The project provided nest box materials certified to Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards along with activities aligned with Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core Standards. Lessons topics include biology, ecology, habitat, mapping and data exploration.



NestWatch and SFI are inviting educators all around the country to create nest box trails for birds on school grounds in order to provide habitat and project-based learning. To help this process, NestWatch has just released its new free resource for middle school educators, called [Thinking Outside the \(Nest\) Box](#), which includes a series of five STEM-based activities including:

- Right bird, right habitat—bird biology and biodiversity
- Nest box construction and installation
- From nest to eggs to fledge—the bird life cycle and nesting stages
- Nest checks and egg data collection
- Nesting data analysis

The NestWatch curriculum was made possible by an [SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant](#), and makes a great companion piece to Project Learning Tree's [PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide](#). Project Learning Tree (PLT) is an initiative of SFI, and PLT's Activity Guide has a wide variety of activities including lessons around the importance of habitat.

SFI is an independent, non-profit organization that provides supply chain assurances, delivers conservation leadership, and supports environmental education and community engagement. For more NestWatch resources, including videos, visit <http://www.birdsleuth.org/nestwatch/>. To learn more about sustainable forestry and why it's critical for birds and other wildlife, visit <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>.



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