



Join The Sparrow Swap Project

Happy Spring to all of the bird lovers out there! We need excited volunteers like you to help with the Sparrow Swap citizen science project. A common sentiment among bluebird monitors is that house sparrows are good for nothing. Make them good-for-something by gathering their eggs and donating them to the egg collection at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. We'll investigate how to use these eggs for monitoring and mapping environmental contaminants. We'll also help you figure out the best management strategies for minimizing damage by house sparrows.

The Sparrow Swap asks for your help in pursuing two long-term research areas. The first area relates to the use of egg contents for mapping the distribution of a variety of hazardous compounds that bioaccumulate into house sparrow eggs, with this commensal species reflecting potential exposures we may encounter. We will investigate eggshell characteristics and their potential to make bio-monitoring affordable to communities. The second area is to improve public stewardship of native bird species. By having some participants remove and donate eggs and other participants remove, donate, and swap replicas of eggs into nests, we can compare and test the effectiveness of these two management options. We ask you to record details of nest visits over two weeks after egg removal or swapping. The shared observations will help to collectively figure out the most effective management regarding house sparrows.

If you'd like to join and make house sparrows good-for-something, visit bit.do/sparrowswap, register to get started with our project, download the datasheets and instructions, and watch the instructional video. If you have any questions, post to the Sparrow Swap forum or contact us at nc.museum.collection@gmail.com. You can also ask questions and share your experiences with us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/sparrowswap>.