



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reward Offered in Bluebird Killings in Montgomery County, Md.

(June 2, 2010) — The Humane Society of the United States and The Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust are offering a reward of up to \$2,500 for information leading to the identification, arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for illegally killing bluebirds in Little Seneca Creek Park in Montgomery County, Md.

The Case:

According to the Maryland-National Capital Park Police, on May 18, a park visitor found three dead bluebird chicks in a bluebird box in Little Seneca Creek Park in Boyds. The bluebird carcasses showed evidence of tampering. In a similar incident, bluebird boxes in Green Farm Conservation Park in Gaithersburg were vandalized between April 25 and May 2. Tools such as nail guns, staple guns and tire irons may have been used to destroy the boxes. In July 2009, similar vandalism and killings occurred in Little Bennett Regional Park in Clarksburg.

“The person or persons responsible for this crime display a callous disregard for these beautiful birds and the laws intended to protect them,” said John Hadidian, urban wildlife director for The HSUS and an avid Montgomery County birder. “We are extremely grateful to the Maryland-National Capital Park Police for their diligent work to solve this crime.”

Park Police Chief Darien L. Manley stated, “This is an uncommon and desirable species in our parks. Destroying the boxes and killing the baby birds are criminal acts. We will continue to investigate and we will prosecute those responsible.”

Bluebirds are protected by state cruelty laws. If convicted, the person or persons could face up to 90 days in jail and/or a fine up to \$1,000. Additionally, under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act it is illegal to kill bluebirds or disturb the eggs or nests of birds.

Each spring, Hadidian leads HSUS staff on bird-watching walks around the organization’s property in Montgomery County to view resident and migrating birds. The property includes bluebird boxes that host multiple bluebird families each spring, and staff who participate in the HSUS’ dogs in the workplace program take special care to avoid walking their dogs near their young bluebird neighbors.

Poaching:

- Wildlife officials estimate that for every wild animal killed legally — tens of millions of animals per year — another is killed illegally.
- Every year, thousands of poachers are arrested nationwide; however, it is estimated that only 1 percent to 5 percent of poachers are caught.

- Poachers injure or kill wildlife anytime, anywhere and sometimes do so in particularly cruel ways. Wildlife officials report that poachers often commit other crimes as well.
- The HSUS works with state and federal wildlife agencies to offer rewards of \$2,500 for information leading to arrest and conviction of suspected poachers.

The Investigators:

Anyone with information about this case is asked to call Maryland National Capital Park Police at 301-949-3010. Callers may remain anonymous.

The HSUS Media Contact:

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The HSUS works to stop wildlife abuse across the country. Visit humanesociety.org/wildlifeabuse for more information.

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The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 11 million Americans, or one of every 28. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the Web at humanesociety.org.

Follow The HSUS on [Twitter](#). See our work for animals on your iPhone by searching “HumaneTV” in the App Store.

*Since 1993 the Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust, alone or in partnership with other conservation groups, has participated in the protection of more than 1.8 million acres of wildlife habitat in 37 states, including 186 acres in Maryland, and **eight** foreign countries. On all properties owned by the Trust or protected by the Trust's conservation easement, both here and abroad, we prohibit recreational and commercial hunting and trapping and restrict logging and development. The Trust's commitment to these principles will never change as we continue to assist caring landowners to make their property permanent, safe homes for wildlife. Join our online community at wildlifelandtrust.org.*

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