

How to Monitor a Bluebird Nesting Box

1. Approach the box from the side.
2. Tap on the box gently. This lets the bird know that you are there, and if it wants to leave, it will.
3. Unlatch and open the door SLOWLY. Observe what is in the box – close the box and leave the area.
4. Keep a record (e.g. chart or personal field journal) of observations that includes the date the nest was observed, and what you observed in the box. EXAMPLE: 06/04/2021 – Nest Box # --: Nesting materials including sticks, grass, and trash.
 - *From the material in the box you can tell what species is nesting in the box. The chart below can help you determine what type of nest(s) you are observing.*
5. If you see red ants, wasps, bees, or little white worms in the bottom of the nest, contact the Trust at land@wctrust.org and we will explain how to deal with the problem.
6. **Do not touch the eggs in the nest.** Doing so could kill the developing chick.
7. The boxes are to be checked at least once a week, on the same day if possible.
8. If you see chicks in the box for two weeks, do not open the box on the third week. Check the box after the third week and you should find an empty nest. This nest should be cleaned out of the box and left to decompose in the surrounding environment. MAKE SURE THE BIRD HAS NOT STARTED A NEW NEST BEFORE CLEARING OUT THE BOX.

BIRD	NEST MATERIAL	EGGS	INCUBATION	FLEDGE (approx.)
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	Grass; pine needles	2 to 7 light blue or white	12 to 14 days	15 to 20 days
TREE SWALLOW	Dried grass; feathers	4 to 6 white eggs; oval to long oval	13 to 16 days	16 to 24 days
TUFTED TITMOUSE	Bark; leaves; soft grass; snakeskin	4 to 8 white to cream; white speckled with brown	13 to 14 days	15 to 18 days
BLACK CAPPED CHICKADEE	Vegetation; moss; feathers; hair; insect cocoons	5 to 10 white eggs with fine reddish-brown marks; oval to short oval	11 to 13 days	14 to 18 days
HOUSE WREN	Box filled to top with small twigs-sticks; lined with hair; cocoons; fine grass	5 to 9 white eggs with brown flecks; short rounded to oval	12 to 14 days	14 days
HOUSE SPARROW *	Grass; straw; cotton; trash; twigs; feathers	3 to 7 light green or blue eggs, dotted with grays and browns. Oval to long oval.	10 to 14 days	14 to 17 days

Ken Leister (home) 610-696-5271 (cell) 610-724-3488

*House sparrows are a non-native invasive species. Their nests should be removed if identified, regardless of presence of eggs or chicks.