

Results for 2010. Many thanks to all who persevered in their monitoring efforts this past season, your hard work has yielded some very positive results. For the first time since 1982 bluebird nest starts (both species combined) outnumbered those of Tree Swallows! 48 teams monitored 60 lines, for a total of 1,961 boxes. A complete list of all who submitted reports this year can be found on the next page.

Sadly, 13 teams did not submit reports nor respond to enquiries, accounting for 218+ boxes whose fate remains unknown.

Mountain Bluebirds continue to hold their own and better, while Easterns increased both their range and production of fledges. Although overall success rate for both species was down, total number of fledges rose. Please refer to the chart on the next page for details. Thanks as well to all reporters who used the Summary Form for their annual report, makes our work much easier when you do this! Commonest misunderstanding encountered? Determining the correct number of nests in a given box if there has been a re-nesting: each new clutch of eggs in the same box in the same season count as a separate and new nest.

One troublesome note seems to be the continued high number of House Wren nests. Although we can't, under the law, disturb these nests, it is well worthwhile considering moving nest boxes used by wrens in the past to locations farther away from shrub cover. It may also help to position the boxes so that the openings aren't visible from the cover used by the wrens.

New Members. Five new teams joined our cause this year, and we welcome **Bonnie Hill** (Glenboro), **Len Neufeld** (Brandon), **Liz Shewchuck** (Brandon), **Gerry & Lorna Short** (Rivers) and **Harold Stewart** (Brandon). Thank you to all of them for sharing our passion for cavity-nesting birds conservation.

A Special Thanks to all who donated game/fishing licenses (including **Herb Goulden**, **Ellen Blain**, the **Hammells** and **Sangsters**) to our fund raising effort, your acts of kindness netted us \$121 this past year. As well, thanks to **Herb Goulden**, **Marg Hammell**, **Hazel Skinner**, **Bob Andrews**, **Sharon North**, **Brian Burrows** and **Diane Chatwin** and the **North American Bluebird Society (NABS)** for their donations of door prizes in the past. Thank you as well to **Lyall Franck** for his generous donation to our box building fund.

Notes from the Lines. **Ray & Barb Pettinger** were once again very busy banding birds on their three lines south of Riding Mountain. They banded, in total, 7 adult and 96 nestling MOBL as well as 7 adult and 30 nestling EABL.

Both they and **Jack Bryer** (on his Russell line) noted the destruction/damage of nest boxes by black bears! As if that weren't enough of a threat to the unwary monitor, **Linda Boys** noted a Tree Swallow nest with added porcupine quills. The **Danards** had their first record of Starling nests. The Danards survived the experience, the nests didn't. Flying Squirrels showed up in a nest box for both **Brian Burrows & Diane Chatwin** and **Ellen Blain**. Brian and Diane also spent time in August spreading the word about bluebirds by giving a talk to a large group of campers at Stephenfield Park. Thanks for acting as bluebird ambassadors! Red squirrels nested in boxes on the lines of the **Danards** and the **Hammells**. **Harold Stewart** and **Margaret Yorke & Amelia Reid** had Black-capped Chickadees bless them with a nest apiece. **Ellen Blain** can boast of 2 chickadee nests on her line this past season. A number of cross-nesting between both species of bluebird showed up this year. The **Danards**, **Bob & Evelyn Andrews** and **Margaret Yorke & Amelia Reid** all recorded at least one such nesting. Margaret & Amelia's 2 nests had an EABL male, in the nest observed by Danards the male bird was a MOBL. The nests were successful with the exception of one nest lost to predation.

2011 NABS Annual Convention. Jackson, Tennessee will be home to the 33rd Annual Convention, details will be available on the NABS website : www.nabluebirdsociety.org While you are checking out the site, don't forget to consider joining or renewing your membership in NABS. Remember that, as a member of a NABS affiliate, you get 50% off the membership fee. The Bluebird journal (4 /year) is better and more informative than ever before, and well worth the membership fee. While you are at the NABS web site be sure to check out the Publications (free downloadable copies of lots of past issues of *Bluebird*), Catalog (great bluebird resources for purchase) and Fact Sheets links. The latter is an especially important resource for new monitors, or anybody mentoring new bluebirders. The key to success in our endeavors is knowledge, and the NABS web site goes out of its way to provide the information so essential to nest box monitoring.

On the subject of web sites, one which offers a great opportunity to participate in a continent-wide "citizen science" project is Cornell University's

<http://watch.birds.cornell.edu/nest/home/index>

Looking forward. Some issues with the potential to impact the future of our organization will be discussed at the Spring

Meeting (April 17). The Organizing Committee would greatly appreciate your input on these matters at this time, hope to see you there.

Weather experts are predicting a cool, wet and late spring for 2011. Good idea to get your boxes cleaned out and lids on early this year to give the birds places to shelter in bad weather. As well, with rivers expected to be running high for some time, raccoons will probably be straying from their normal feeding areas and looking for food well out into the countryside. If you've had raccoon predation on your line before, it may well be higher this season. Might be wise to start making some/more Noel predator guards for later installation on your boxes.

This fall will mark 35 years of work by the Friends of the Bluebirds, do join us for cake at the Fall Meeting.(Oct. 16)

2010 Monitors. The following teams submitted reports this past year. A few other teams were unable, for a variety of reasons, to summarize their results but were kind enough to report that fact. They are not listed here.

Bob & Evelyn Andrews, Ken & Colleen Barclay, Ellen Blain, Linda Boys, Jack Bryer, Jack Bryer, Brian Burrows & Diane Chatwin, Hugh Cowan, Judy & Barry Danard, Bev Dunlop, Edie Evans & Roy Gwiazda, Deb Foster, Lyall Franck, Vern Gilbertson, Herb Goulden, Janet Gross, Gord Hammell & George Curry, Rick Hayward, Bonnie Hill, Brian Johnston, Bob & Bianca Keffen, Tamara Kemp & Miguel Boulet, Dan & Michie McIntyre, Amy McLay, Phil Macmillan, Lynne & Brian Manns, Bridget & Arnold McPhaden, Mary-Anne Maendal, Lorie Mitchell & Piet Van Dijken, Len Neufeld, Sharon North, Edith Parsons, Bert Perey, Ray & Barb Pettinger, Rick Potter, Ashley, Dave & Pat Randall, Dale & Joan Robinson, Ross Robinson, Bill Sandercock, Carole & Murray Sangster, Liz Shewchuck, Hazel Skinner, Gerry &

Lorna Short, Joe & Grace Slawinsky, Lloyd Stankey, Harold Stewart, Cindy Wright, Margaret Yorke and Amelia Reid.

Odds 'n' ends.(courtesy of *Bluebird*, the official journal of NABS).

While House Sparrows are a serious threat to a number of native bird species throughout North America, the species is in serious decline in its native Europe. Amongst possible reasons (loss of nesting sites due to changes in architectural styles, decline in available food sources because of pesticide use) is another, more natural cause: a dramatic increase in populations of the Eurasian Sparrowhawk. Unlike our "sparrowhawk"(Kestrel) which is a falcon, the European bird is an accipiter, related to the North American Sharp-shinned and Copper's Hawk. These hawks prey upon other bird species.

Extensive studies (including tag & release) of raccoons in Ontario recently revealed that in southern Ontario the average density of raccoons reached 3.4-14.6/sq. km. (8.8-35.2/sq.mile). Populations are densest in urban areas as the supremely adaptable animals take advantage of the ample food supply available in cities and towns.

Do bluebirds lay their eggs at any particular time of day?

Yes, in the early morning hours (usually 2-3 hours after sunrise) on successive days, the last egg being laid slightly later than the other eggs in the clutch. Another good reason for sleeping in and doing your nest box checks later in the day!

Contacts. Do you have questions, concerns or suggestions? We always welcome new ideas for the newsletter as well as meeting agendas. Feel free to contact any of the following: Bob/Evelyn Andrews (727-8985, andy208@mts.net) or Barry/Judy Danard (523-8258, jbdanard@mts.net)

2010 NESTING DATA SUMMARY

(numbers in brackets reflect changes from 2009 data)

	Mountain Bluebirds	Eastern Bluebirds	Unidentified Bluebirds	X-breeding Bluebirds	TOTAL	Tree Swallows	House Wrens	House Sparrows	Black-capped Chickadees	European Starlings
Total Nests	245 (+3)	618(+104)	143(+44)	7(+4)	1013(+155)	975(-159)	69	30-50+	4	2
Successful Nests *	185	459	53	6						
Fledglings *	804 (+111)	1879 (+348)	194 (-231)	24 (+8)	2905 (+240)					
Fledges per nesting attempt*	3.28	3.04	1.66	3.43						
success rate of nests (as a %) *	75.5	74.3	45.3	85.7						

(* = based on 889 monitored nests)