



Nestbox Monitoring:

Bring Back the Bluebirds Project

Our primary goal is to support the return of Western Bluebirds to the region by providing as much suitable habitat as we can. Several other birds, both native and exotic, are likely to use your boxes. Nestbox monitors conduct monthly monitoring each spring to observe and record the presence of any birds. **If you see bluebirds, notify us immediately and we will help with more detailed monitoring protocols.**

Roles of bluebird nestbox monitors:

1. Checking nestboxes at least monthly during bluebird season (early March- September)
2. Recording observations (on your data form) and notifying GOERT if bluebirds are seen
3. Cleaning out nestboxes at the end of the season
4. Communicating with GOERT about findings (May and October)

Questions? Ask the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team:

email: bluebird@goert.ca

phone: 250-383-3427

fax: 250-590-3410

Monitoring your nestboxes:

1. Observe and listen for at least 10 minutes, from a distance of 10 metres, to note whether birds are entering or leaving the box in each of March, April, and May. Approach carefully to make closer observations if necessary. **If you see a House Sparrow using the box or a Western Bluebird anywhere on your property, please notify us right away.**
2. Please record the **dates** you checked your box and its **ID number** on the data form (included) and note what **species** is using the box (see identification sheet). Record your observations: are parents feeding young? Did you observe fledglings? Has the nest been abandoned? Are there signs of predators (smashed eggs, carcasses)? Report empty boxes. Please feel free to take photos and send them to us, to help with ID or just to share your observations.

Reporting your data:

We track your findings and map them for research purposes. At the end of May, and after cleaning out your boxes in the fall, please report your observations using the form provided. If you prefer, you are welcome to report your findings each time you monitor. You can mail or fax them to us, or submit your data in an email.

Cleaning the boxes:

Nestboxes should be cleaned out between September and November. If nesting materials remain, they may attract colonies of insects or prevent birds from nesting. Try to remove all twigs, feathers, and mud. We recommend that you wear gloves and a dust mask. If the box is damaged or the hole has been enlarged, let us know. Please note what kind of nest is in the box using the pictures on the identification sheet, or take photos and e-mail them to us.