

Bluebird Nest Box Monitoring Species and Nest/Egg Guide

Eastern Bluebird



Nest is built with fine grasses with a fairly deep nest cup	Eggs are powder blue, though may occasionally be white. Clutch size 4 – 5 eggs	Incubation 12 – 14 days Nestling 16 – 22 days Normally fledge 17 – 19 days	Eggs may not be incubated immediately after laying and may still be viable. Allow at least 1 week after expected hatch date before removal. 1-2 broods per year.
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Tree Swallow



Nest is built with grass or pine needles; cup is usually more shallow than the bluebird's; cup is lined with feathers, usually white	Eggs are white and slightly glossy. Clutch size 4 – 7 eggs	Incubation 14 - 15 days Nestling for 16 – 30 days, normally fledge after 17 – 19 days	One brood per year, but will nest a second time if the first nest fails. Adults are aggressive in defending the nest and will “dive bomb” monitors.
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Carolina Chickadee



Nest is of moss and fine plant material; cup lined with hair or fur	Eggs are white and covered with brown to reddish brown spots, concentrated at the larger end of the egg. Clutch size 5-7 eggs	Incubation 11 - 14 days Nestling 13 – 17 days; normally fledge around 16 days	Usually only one brood per year, but will produce a replacement brood if nest fails.
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House Wren



Nest cavity is filled with small twigs; cup is lined with softer material such as feathers, hair, wool, rootlets, moss and trash.	Eggs are white to pinkish or buff, marked with blotches or reddish brown or lavender pigment. Clutch size 4 – 6	Incubation 13 – 15 days after last egg is laid. Nestling 12 – 18 days Normally fledge 16 – 17 days	Male will build several nests of twigs and sticks, of which the female selects one and lines the cup with soft material. Remove “false” nests so that other species can use the nest box. Known to be aggressive towards other species, however are
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	eggs		protected under state law.
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Tufted Titmouse



Coarser materials such as damp leaves (sometimes balled up or shredded), green moss, dried grass, and strips of bark make up the foundation. The nest cup is lined with insulating material like down, wool, hair, fibers, cotton or fur.	3-9 eggs (5-6 most common), Eggs are white with rose/mauve speckles, little or no gloss, more evenly distributed than chickadee.	12 to 14 days, Nestling 16 – 18 days; normally fledge after 17 days	Tend to have one brood per year in their northern range, two in other areas. Titmice tend to be less tolerant of monitoring and manipulation than bluebirds are. They are more likely to abandon a nest if disturbed, especially before young have hatched. Monitor their nestboxes (quickly and quietly) weekly after egg laying.
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White Breasted Nuthatch



Nest base may be about 1/2" of bark (flakes and strips) and pellets of dried earth or lumps of mud. Matted nest of bark shreds, small twigs, grasses, rootlets, with a little fur, hair, feathers, cellophane, cigarette butts. Cup may be saucer shaped.	3-9 eggs (5-6 most common), Shell smooth, very little gloss, white (can be creamy or pinkish-white), usually heavily marked with light cinnamon brown/red/ lavender/gray speckles and spots, often denser at larger end	12 to 14 days, Nestling 16 – 18 days; normally fledge after 17 days	They are not known to abandon nests due to weekly monitoring. If one is inside the box when it is opened, they may remain, moving up underneath the roof.
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House Sparrow



Tall nest of coarse grasses, often with pieces of scrap paper, cellophane or other litter; forms canopy over cup with tunnel-like entrance. Usually very "messy" looking	Eggs are cream colored with brown markings, shell smooth with slight gloss. Clutch size 3 – 6 eggs.	Incubation 10 – 13 days. Fledge after 14 – 17 days	Will reproduce 2-3 times per year. Aggressive non-native species that will destroy nests and kill adults and young of native species. House Sparrows are not protected under US law and may legally be evicted from nesting boxes.
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*Please excuse my dirty house
I know it is a mess
I don't have time to clean right now
I have a bluebird nest*
- Cherie Layton, The Bluebird Nut, 2005