

2023 Report

2023 report to VWF by Rob H.

Rube Johnston Bluebird Trail 2023 – Spring Report

Maintained by Robert B. Hughes for The Vegreville Wildlife Federation

There was still some snow accumulation to contend with when I started the Spring setup of the nest boxes by the Buck for Wildlife area, west side of Vegreville, on March 30, 2023. When I worked on the nest boxes south of town on April 4, I had 6 feet of snow to climb over in some places. I finished the last few boxes on April 14 and April 26.

I noticed the first male **Mountain Bluebird (MB)** on April 4 along Twp 500 which is the southern edge of this nest box trail. The first **Tree Swallows (TS)** showed up on April 29 at the Buck for Wildlife Property (B for W).

In late April and early May I started to see shorebirds in wetland areas around Vegreville. One of these shorebirds is a wader called Black-necked Stilt. I spotted ten of these elegant birds on May 4. **Please check the attached Spring photos.**

Three nature watchers new to town, that I recently met, expressed an interest in having a guided tour to birding spots around Vegreville. So, on April 29, I showed them the Buck for Wildlife property on RR 151, west side of town by Hwy 16. We viewed many ducks, geese, blackbirds, and Tree Swallows while there. We also had time to check for birds at St. Mary's slough along Maple Street by the soccer fields.

On May 26, I had a look inside nest box R-19 (B for W), one of the horizontal designed boxes. TS had made what looked like two nest areas, with feathers in both. There were no eggs laid yet. I shall have a look later to see if two females are laying eggs in this longer box.

Tree Swallows have claimed most of the nest boxes now on this trail. But there should be a few Mountain Bluebird pairs in a few boxes around RR 141 and Twp 500.

Rob Hughes

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