

Rube Johnston Bluebird Trail 2024 – Spring Report

Maintained by Robert B. Hughes for The Vegreville Wildlife Federation

I was fortunate this year to have much appreciated help from Vegreville resident, Jessica Melsted. This saves me from getting in and out of the car so many times. Jessica happens to be a Canada Wildlife biologist. And Jessica has started a Vegreville and Area Nature Club Facebook page.

Snow or water filled ditches was not a problem this Spring, due to not much snow overwinter. We prepared 42 of 61 nest boxes on March 17, I did a few more on March 23, then I finished the rest after returning from my trip to see the spectacular total solar eclipse. We inspected and performed any required maintenance on all boxes. Fortunately, there was no vandalism detected this Spring.

First Mountain Bluebirds (MB) were seen on April 13 on RR 141, north of Twp 500. So far there are 3 boxes with MB. First Tree Swallows arrived on April 19, then many more on April 25. TS presence at boxes, in early May, fluctuated depending on cool temperature and rainfall. Once again, the nest boxes are utilized mainly by TS.

I am not seeing many hawks, such as Red-tailed or Swainson's, so far this year on my travels along the nest box trail.

I attended the Tofield Snow Goose Festival this year on April 27. The trade show and wildlife talks were very interesting and instructive. See the attached photos of Burrowing Owl and Red-tailed Hawk. By the way, I saw 42 bird species on the way to Tofield.

That's about it for now.

Rob Hughes

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