

Rube Johnston Bluebird Trail 2024 – Final Report

Maintained by Robert B. Hughes for The Vegreville Wildlife Federation

Fledged Birds: Mountain Bluebirds 21 in four boxes, Tree Swallows 285 in 53 boxes

Nest Boxes Disturbed by Other Species: House Wren 5, House Sparrow 2, Mouse nests 2.

I made the Fall assessment of nest boxes on Aug. 24 to 26, 2024. Laura Wenzel was interested to help and assisted on the Buck for Wildlife area nest boxes.

Mountain Bluebirds (MB) nested in four boxes this year, with one clutch each in 3 boxes, and 2 clutches in the fourth box, for a total of 21 fledglings. Two of the boxes had one unhatched egg each.

Tree Swallows (TS) nested in 53 boxes. TS observed at most boxes by April 24. Box R9 had a very rare two clutches of 4 fledglings each. There were 8 dead hatchlings and 10 non-viable eggs. One box was taken over by House Sparrows. All House Wren disturbance consisted of piles of twigs, well after TS had finished.

Roeben Test Boxes (horizontal design): TS nested in all three boxes. Box SR3 at the VWF shooting range had 6 TS fledged, many feathers and later mouse disturbance. The Box R10 nest consisted of only cut hay stems and had 3 fledged. The Box R19 nest was full of feathers had 4 TS fledged only at the back, and one dead adult. As in previous years, the TS parents cover the full floor with nest grass, not only at the back. But I saw no evidence of two females nesting.

Maintenance:

As I worked along the trail, I re-marked all box identifiers, tightened fence post screws, and made repairs.

Robert B. Hughes, 2025.02.25