



By Peggy

BLUEBIRDS FLY!

California Bluebird Recovery Program Newsletter

—Assisted by Mount Diablo Audubon Society —
An affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

\$2.50 Per Issue
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Donation

www.cbrp.org

“For the encouragement and conservation of cavity-nesters — especially bluebirds — anywhere in the West”

TOP PRODUCERS FOR 2010

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This year 192 trail monitors reported results for 295 trails in 24 counties. There were 5274 boxes (25% increase from 2009) on these trails producing a total of 20,737 fledglings (33% increase) of which 12,852 were Western Bluebirds. See the 15 year results article elsewhere in this issue for overall data and the Annual Report for all of the details.

Steve Simmons reported again after a lapse of several years. He monitors two trails in Merced County and fledged 3556 of which 2043 were Wood Ducks and 182 were Western bluebirds.

Dick Purvis monitored ten trails in two counties for a total of 2207 fledglings all of which were Western Bluebirds. Congratulations to him. Note that of the top ten producers, seven are Orange county monitors.

Top Producers 2010

MonitorName	County	#Trails	# Boxes	#WEBL Fldg	#Total Fledged
Simmons, Steve	Merced	2	772	182	3556
Purvis, Dick	Orange	10	429	2207	2207
Tiessen, Irvin	Alameda	1	259	586	1068
Franz, Bob	Orange	2	203	656	698
Violett, Linda	Orange	5	128	455	684
Pauser, Lee & Janna	Santa Clara	9	207	230	516
Bulger, Susan	Orange	2	134	504	504
Tischer, Christine	Orange	2	80	78	327
Croom, Tom	Orange	1	55	175	293
Coller, Jo-Ann	Orange	1	54	254	274



The Director's Chair

Another nesting season ... another year! Happy New Year to all of you.

The major accomplishments for the California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) in 2010 were:

- Grants to individual trail monitors Audubon California chapters for nestboxes
- Additions of educational and presentation material to CBRP Web site

And, of course, over 20,000 fledglings, an increase of 33% over 2009

Thanks to all of you who entered your 2010 nestbox results into the on-line data base. There is entirely too much data for me to do so. The 2010 Annual Report is included in this issue along with several articles summarizing that data. The results are 25-33% higher as a result of growth and Merced County. A brief summary of results is: reports for 295 trails in 23 counties with 5274 nestboxes were reported by 192 trail monitors. 12,852 of the fledgling were Bluebirds (some Mountain but mostly Western) with a total of 20737 fledglings. See the articles and annual report elsewhere in this issue for details. Also note that this and previous newsletters and annual reports are available for viewing and/or download from <http://cbrp.org>.

If any of you is interested in looking at or analyzing the information for this or the previous four seasons, look at the online database, <http://www.eichlerrealtor.com/birds3>. Log on (or access the database as 'guest' and go the REPORTS section. You will be able to see numerous reports by trail, species, county, etc. In addition any report and/or the entire database can be downloaded into an Excel workbook and further analyzed.

Some goals for CBRP which I brought up in previous newsletters, such as a closer relationship with Audubon chapters and finding additional trail monitors/county coordinators have turned out to be more elusive than I expected and little progress has been made. If any of you have suggestions, please contact me or any of the board members. I want to express my thanks to **Bob Franz**, Orange Co., for contacting all of the county coordinators to verify their continued involvement.

(Continued on page 3)

California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) Board Members

Dick Blaine, Program Director — dick@theblaines.net

Dave Cook, Board Member — justdave50@earthlink.net

Georgette Howington, Asst Program Director—
georgette@birdscape.net

Michael Spohn, — mspohn@socialbluebirds.org

Dick Purvis, Recruiting — dickersly@aol.com

Jim Semelroth, Editor,— jimsemweed@cox.net

(Continued from page 2) Special thanks to the 37 of you who made donations to CBRP in 2010 (amounting to \$1625) - see the contributor list elsewhere in this issue.. The cost for printing and mailing two issues to 350 people was approximately \$1500. Neither **Don Yoder** before me, nor I want to charge annual dues for participating in CBRP. The policy I have been following is that if a trail monitor submits a report or interested parties contribute there should be no dues. Consequently, I encourage you to donate at least \$5-10 per year to cover the cost of the newsletter. If you would like to contribute more, many, many thanks! See the form on the last page of this issue.

I also want to acknowledge and thank **Cynthia Berg**, CBRP database programmer, fellow birder and bicyclist for her continued support and **Jim Semelroth**, BBF Newsletter Editor, for his great newsletters. Finally to all of you for helping to increase the cavity nester population.

My contact list is missing mailing addresses or email addresses for some of you. If you receive this mailing I have your mailing address. If you receive occasional email (4-6 times per year) I also have your email address. Otherwise, I am missing one or both and would appreciate an update. See the list of missing email addresses elsewhere in this issue.

Dick Blaine - dick@theblaines.net

<http://cbrp.org> - CBRP Web site

<http://www.eichlerrealtor.com/birds3/> - CBRP On-line database

About the California Bluebird Recovery Program

Founder - Don Yoder; Emeritus - Hatch Graham

Our Mission

Enlist current bluebirders and recruit others who will help reestablish bluebirds to their normal habitat

- ◆ Locate preferred habitat for the placement of nest-boxes suitable for bluebirds
- ◆ Secure monitors to care for the boxes and keep systematic records of the development of young birds during the nesting season
- ◆ Record and analyze all annual summaries of nest-box records
- ◆ Provide a forum (newsletter) through which fellow trail monitors can exchange information and secure help in solving problems encountered in the field.

Learn More

To learn more about the California Bluebird Recovery Program and other cavity nester conservation programs, visit the below web sites:

<http://www.cbrp.org>

<http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org>

<http://www.socalbluebirds.org>

<http://www.sialis.org>

If you are looking for a mentor, start by contacting the county coordinator in your county listed on page 12. You can also contact **Dick Blaine** (dick@theblaines.net) or **Dick Purvis** (dickersly@aol.com).

Please consider supporting our efforts. There is a donation form on the back page of this newsletter. Your contribution is tax-deductible and goes a long way in helping us

CALIFORNIA BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM
2010 CONTRIBUTORS
CONTRIBUTIONS FOR YEAR: \$1625

Contributor	County	Contributor	County
Andy & Katty Aldrich	Tuolumne	Amy Kernes	Orange
Jim Aldrich	Tuolumne	Sharon Kramer	Orange
Doris Allison	Amador	Carol Langford	Ventura
N Arbuckle & C Crocker	San Mateo	Clark Leonard	Orange
Beatrice Bland*	KY	Toni Link	Contra Costa
Suzanne Bohan*	Marin	Cynthia M. Lockhart	San Mateo
Bob Brittain	Contra Costa	Chuck & Karin Lowrie*	Amador
Mike Clayton	Orange	John Lowrie*	VA
Gilbert Collins	Orange	Katherine Lowrie*	WA
Tom Croom	Orange	Ken & Lucille Morrison	Amador
Evie & Kurt Davis	El Dorado	Richard & Sharon Nevins	Sonoma
Sandra Dempewolf	San Diego	Philip Persons	Sonoma
Feridun Doslu	Orange	Sheryn Scherer	San Diego
Earl Garrison	Orange	Bill & Francie Singley	El Dorado
Ken Head	Sacramento	Roberta Smith	Sacramento
Susan Henderson	San Mateo	North American Bluebird Society	IN
Nancy Hobert	Contra Costa	Samuel Sperry	Contra Costa
Margot & Robert Jensen*	San Joaquin	Andy Truban	San Diego
Linda Johnson	San Diego	Peter Wetzel	Orange
		Steve Wright	Santa Clara

* These donations are in memory of **Karin Lowrie**, who loved her Bluebirds

Orange County leads in fledglings and nestboxes

With 1969 active nestboxes and 8496 (7554 are WEBL) fledglings, Orange County once more is the top cavity nesting county in the state and produced the most Western Bluebirds in the state. The number of fledgling jumped 10% from 2009 thanks to the dedicated efforts of Orange County trail monitors in general and in particular the Southern California Bluebird Club. This feat is primarily because of the nearly vandal free hanging boxes developed by Dick Purvis, Orange County CBRP Coordinator, and placed in parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and urban gardens. Very few of their locations could be considered native habitat but, rather, man-made habitat that would never see a bluebird except for the artificial cavities provided by dedicated bluebirders. Merced County reported again after a lapse of several years reporting 3556 fledges; this is a remarkable feat considering that **Steve Simmons** monitored all of these nestboxes reported for Merced County. Summary by county follows (data represent boxes, trails and counties which reported results; i.e. non-reporting trails and boxes are not included in the counts:

County	#Trails	#Boxes	#Fledged	#WEBL
Orange	112	1969	8496	7554
Merced	2	772	3556	182
Santa Clara	61	807	2380	861
Los Angeles	25	373	1888	1865
Alameda	2	273	1097	601
Contra Costa	14	202	547	283
San Diego	27	188	536	179
San Mateo	19	236	496	134
Riverside	6	79	395	338
Santa Barbara	3	62	212	176
El Dorado	1	54	208	176
Amador	1	44	198	164
Shasta	3	21	115	52
Placer	2	27	110	0
Butte	2	45	92	71
Sierra	1	12	55	
Nevada	4	23	49	26
Sonoma	2	26	46	13

PREDATOR TREE SWALLOWS?

In 2008, Western Bluebirds nested in Box 11, near the pond. Four nestlings hatched, but all were later found dead beneath a new nest containing Violet-green Swallow eggs. In the same box in 2009, one first-day bluebird chick was found pecked in the head and two hatching eggs had been broken. I removed the corpses and left the old nest, but a new nest was not added, perhaps because it was by then mid-July, late in the season for coastal Sonoma County. I relocated the jinxed Box 11 to a site well away from the pond, but the story continued in 2010, when Tree Swallows built a nest atop an Ash-throated Flycatcher nest with five eggs in Box 10, which is also in the pond area and about 100 feet from the former site of Box 11. To date, I have not observed nest usurpation on portions of the trail away from the pond.

So, is this a story of swallows adventitiously making use of nestboxes abandoned after the demise of eggs and nestlings from other causes? Or is it a story of aggressive swallows out-competing wimpier species? “The Birds of North America” accounts of these species seem conflicting in this regard. The Tree Swallow account states: “Eastern and Mountain Bluebirds often successfully defend their cavities against Tree Swallows, although swallows can kill bluebird nestlings if they gain access to the nest.” The Violet-green Swallow account states “little information” regarding nest usurpation, while the Western Bluebird account describes frequent usurpation by Violet-greens, and the Ash-throated Flycatcher account records this species as both displacing and being displaced by the other three species.

I think it likely that nest usurpation in the stockpond area is triggered by the abundance of swallows attracted to the pond followed by increased inter- (and intra-?) competition for nestboxes. At the request of the property manager, I will remove one or two boxes from the pond area before the 2011 nesting season begins. Will this affect the frequency of nest usurpation?

I will enjoy hearing from trail monitors who have had similar or conflicting experiences.

Phil Persons ppersons@sonic.net

CBRP DATA AND ANALYSIS

CBRP has been collecting trail-level data since 1999 and since 2006, with the advent of the on-line data base, has been collecting nest box-level data. These data are available for viewing and analysis. See the section on PROGRAM RESULTS in the CBRP web site, <http://cbrp.org>. In addition there is an comprehensive article discussing these data and methods for their analysis.

PAYOFFS

A few weeks ago I was walking in a nearby park and suddenly two beautiful bluebirds dropped down to the grass in front of me and helped themselves to a snack they had spotted from a tree limb above. This is not an unusual occurrence at this park because it contains two nestboxes that I monitor during the nesting season. As soon as they appeared with the brilliant blue of their feathers flashing in the sunlight, the word "payoff" came to mind, and I wish to expand on that thought.

Although the word "payoff" usually makes us think of a financial transaction, according to the dictionary, it also means "reward" - and that is the context in which I will continue.

People like me who monitor bluebird nestboxes, and there are hundreds of us in southern California, do not become a bluebird monitor in order to get some kind of "payoff" or "reward", but it is present nonetheless. And it exists, I suspect, in many different ways.

First, let's examine what being a bluebird monitor entails. It requires a sincere interest in our feathered friends, and more particularly, an interest in the western bluebird. Why the western bluebird? Because they need our help in order to survive and thrive. The reason is because they are cavity-nesters which means that they will not build a nest and lay eggs in an exposed nest; they must find a cavity of some kind either a natural one like an abandoned woodpecker hole or a man-made one like a nestbox.

Next, we must find sites for their homes at locations where we know they will be - and that part is easy - since bluebirds eat primarily insects that live in grassy areas, we place nestboxes in golf courses, parks, cemeteries and green belts. In order to place them above sprinkler systems and prying eyes, bluebird nestboxes have a large hook on top and we hang them from tree limbs from 10' to 15' above the ground. We use a swiveling basket device inserted in the end of a pool pole to emplace them and retrieve them.

During the nesting season - April thru July - we retrieve nestboxes once each week and look inside. We are able to do that because the front panel is movable and hinged at the top so as to expose the nest inside. All observances - complete nest, number of eggs and nestlings - are recorded for each brood.

Sound like a lot of work? Yes, some effort is involved, but the payoffs/rewards far exceed the work involved.

Like the flash of an adult bluebird in the sunlight as it flies past.

Like the perfectly-formed nest caressing a clutch of light-blue eggs.

Like a group of small nestlings with their yellow beaks opening each time I look inside their home.

Like the joy of seeing 3-week-old nestlings take their first flight and land far up in a tree.

Yes, all of the above and more are the "payoffs" - and they don't cost me a dime.

Bob Franz

DON'T BEE FOOLED

I just read a column in the Santa Ana Register regarding bees. It didn't mention any of the negatives and there are many.

I am a former beekeeper and am very familiar with bees. I realize the good they do, but they also have a bad side. Honey bees are not a species native to the Western Hemisphere. They are an alien introduced species which many natives can not compete with successfully. They caused the extinction of the Carolina Parakeet by usurping all of the parakeets' nesting cavities. They caused the near extinction of the Wood Duck for the same reason. The Wood Duck was barely saved by people providing artificial nest boxes even until the present time, or the Wood Duck would become extinct. Bees very nearly wiped out Chimney Swifts which only survived by adapting to man supplied chimneys as an alternate nest cavity. There are about 25 cavity nesting birds in North America which are being negatively affected by honey bees.

I am very familiar with the impact bees have on bluebirds. I am associated with a group of more than 100 people who supply nesting boxes for bluebirds. In my own limited work, I must take down and replace over 20 colonies of bees in bluebird nestboxes each year. This is a lot of work and expense. Without this activity, there would be no bluebirds in this area.

Many native insects are also subject to honey bee competition and even extinction. The population of native Solitary Bees is greatly reduced in part because of the proliferation of introduced plants replacing natives. This process is enhanced by honey bees aiding the spread of alien plants and competing for food and pollen.

The impact of honey bees on people has a number of negative effects. One of the more annoying is economic and personal. Often a colony of bees moves into a private home in the attic or sidewalls or into the garage or outbuildings. These must be removed eventually, and the longer it is put off the more expensive it gets. It costs into the hundreds of dollars just for removal. Extensive roof and other repairs will be even more costly. Removal from masonry, block walls, chimney, and concrete construction is difficult and expensive. It happens to nearly everyone eventually. It has happened to me twice. We have all seen in the news the results of a bee swarm at a sports event.

I realize that honey bee sting effects have been overblown, but it happens. Many people claim that they are allergic, but very few really are. What many people claim as allergies are just normal pain, swelling and and short breath due to fear. Recovery is short and easy. True allergy is rare, very dangerous, and could result in death. The truly allergic should get medical help immediately.

Much has been publicized about African Bees. Some of it is true, but much has been exaggerated. I have observed that in Southern California bees are generally more aggressive than they were thirty or forty years ago. Then one could actually work with them without protective equipment. Now bee-proof covering is a necessity. (Continued on next page) Most bees now are more aggressive but truly African Bees are rare. I remember reading in

the news that bees killed a dog in Santa Ana a year or so ago. I personally encountered a colony of African Bees in one of my bluebird nestboxes a couple of years ago. Normal honey bees warn you by a few buzzing around your face. Africanized bees most often sting without warning and many of them at once. I had to get rid of the African Bees immediately. They were in a busy park and were after people who just walked past.

We do not need honey bees in the wild. Our native bees will do all the pollination necessary for native plants. We do not need the honey made by imported honey bees. It is much more economical to buy imported honey. We do need pollination for some non-native food crops. This must be provided by honey bees. Beekeepers do have methods to prevent uncontrolled swarming, but they don't employ them exhaustively as they should. It is even to their own economic advantage to prevent the reduction of their bee populations by eliminating swarming.

In conclusion, let us not continue to publicize how great honey bees are without recognizing the problems also. We need to manage the honey bee situation so that the agricultural need is satisfied without the sacrifice of a number of our native species or impacting our homes or health. **Dick Purvis**

EMAIL ADDRESSES REQUESTED

I am missing email addresses for the following people. Please send me your email addresses. **Dick Blaine**, dick@theblaines.net.

Adler, Judy
Aldrich, Jim
Allen, Jr, Glenn L
Anderson, Jeanie
Arsan, Dorothy
Bain, F. Nora
Benedict, Joanne H.
Berge, Kent
Burch, Walter
Campbell, Colin
Cassani, James
Compos, Karlene
Cunningham, Ken
& Judie
Davis, Evie & Kurt
Donnelly, Joyce
Driggers, Joann
Fitzer, Tim

Flower, Pete
Freyy, Rosemary
Gordin, Raylene L.
Hayashi, Lena Yee
Head, Ken
Herron, Linda
Hickey, Patricia &
Michael,
Ingle, Barbara.
Jackson, Dusty
Johnson, Melvin C
Jones, Suzanne
Kent, Jack & Bobbi
Konwinski, Ann
Lowrie, Chuck &
Karin
Martin, Doug
Masck, Roberta

Mindling, Tony
Morrison, Peter
Nevins, Richard & Sharon
Patscheck, Angie
Pels, Paul
Righ, William
Roberts, Verna
Rogers, Nancy & Don
Rogers, Pamela A.
Salmon, Mildred
Silvey, Leslie & Bruce
Triem, Peter D.



California Bluebird Recovery Program Eleven-Year Results

All Species

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Counties	33	26	28	30	25	25	19	22	23	19	24
Reporters	178	175	193	163	176	148	152	128	163	174	192
Species	20	18	18	18	18	19	20	20	18	17	23
Boxes (N)	4167	4209	4027	4055	4129	5139	3942	4032	3739	4189	5274
Tries (T)	3783	4023	3937	3514	4026	4177	4142	2789	3704	2937	3939
T/N	91%	96%	98%	87%	98%	81%	105%	69%	99%	70%	75%
Eggs (E)	20315	23470	23981	17816	19109	22879	24093	20729	20162	21762	28751
E/N	5.5	5.6	5.9	4.4	4.6	4.5	6.1	5.1	5.4	5.2	5.5
E/T	6.1	5.8	6.1	5.1	4.7	4.5	5.8	7.4	5.4	7.4	7.3
Chicks (H)	17204	18501	19250	14429	15500	17888	18707	15889	16475	17967	23014
H/N	4.1	4.4	4.8	3.6	3.8	3.5	4.7	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.4
H/T	4.5	4.6	4.9	4.1	3.8	4.3	4.5	5.7	4.4	6.1	5.8
H/E	75%	79%	80%	81%	81%	78%	78%	77%	82%	82%	83%
Fledged (F)	15703	17399	16201	12720	13700	18414	17330	14188	14222	15781	20737
F/N	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.1	3.3	3.6	4.4	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.9
F/T	4.2	4.3	4.1	3.6	3.4	4.4	4.2	5.1	3.8	5.4	5.3
F/E	68%	72%	68%	71%	72%	80%	72%	68%	71%	73%	72%
F/H	91%	92%	84%	88%	88%	103%	93%	89%	86%	88%	90%

2005 No data on T,E, H from Ventura or Merced Cos.in 2005

2006 Six counties which reported in 2005 did not report in 2006 & no data on T, E, H from Merced Co. in 2006

2007 172 trails reported. Few major producers reported results

2008 228 trails reported but several major producers did not report

2009 265 trails reported - nest tries down but fledges up? Major producers from 2008 did not report

2010 Nest Tries underestimated as many large producers did not provide box-by-box detail; each species was reported as 1 box in these cases.

Large increases in boxes, eggs, hatchlings and fledglings are primarily the result of Merced county reporting after a lapse of several years



TRAIL TALES

This was my first year tending to BB boxes. I saw **Gillian Martin** at the golf course one day and asked her what she was doing. I was interested, I made 34 boxes, got a lifter and was hooked. I walk the trails with my toy poodle who loves her walks in the parks. I pestered Gillian into mentoring me, and also got advice from **Sully Reallon and Earl Garrison**.

Sully had said you could lift up a nesting mom and count the eggs. I thought that would be too scary for the little mom, but after seeing sitting moms on the nest and not being able to count eggs, I decided to try it. What a thrill when she let me pick her up, she gently grasped my finger with her talons, then let me put her back on the nest. I was so thrilled at the trust and vulnerability of the little moms.

I asked Gillian if I could borrow her Cornell Blue Bird Monitors Guide and read it, but she said, No, that I had to buy my own to have as a reference. She uses Tough Love. One day I opened a box with 4 chicks ready to fledge, and one jumped out of the box. I set the box down and chased after him, and when I brought him back, I saw that the other three had made a jail break and were fluttering off in the other direction, and mom and dad were encouraging them. Luckily I remembered what the Cornell book had suggested. I used my shirt to toss over each chick, one at a time, put him back in the box, then stuffed a paper napkin in the hole. I got all four of the little rascals back. I felt like I had bonded completely with them during this experience. And I was glad that Gillian had made me buy the book.

I went away to check some other boxes and 15 minutes later returned to the box and removed the napkin, just like it said in the Cornell book. Mom and dad were watching nearby. The kids stayed put in the box.

The next week I went to check on the box and found the remains of one of the chicks that had been predated. I felt so sad. That experience of them escaping and me catching them had made them very important to me. I like to think that the other three made it, I surely hope that they did.

Steve Perry



Photo by Steve Simmons, Champion birder and photographer

TRAIL TALES

After 13 seasons of monitoring my 45-55-box western bluebird trail in Yorba Regional Park there is very little of the unexpected. Late last season I was down to just three remaining boxes that, for one reason or another, I had not checked the week before. Each had a second brood that should have fledged, as it was late July. I checked the first two boxes and all nestlings were gone. I took down the third one and noticed the adults still close by and quite agitated. I presumed the nestlings were probably dead but to my surprise there were two fully developed birds (about 28-days old) still in the nest thrashing around wildly. They were both tangled in fishing line. I untangled them and sent them on their way with their parents chasing after them. I scraped out the box and rehung it and as I was walking away noticed some movement in the grass. It was one of the nestlings flopping around and clearly distressed. I picked it up and saw the problem immediately; it was missing its right foot. Apparently during its struggle to free itself it severed its leg on the fine line. What do I do now? The parents were still around so I decided to put parts of the old nest back in the box and return the bird to it. I rehung it and left.

Being bothered by this, the following day I returned to the park and checked the box again. Parents were still nearby and the one-footed bluebird was still in the box. I took it out and gave it the heave ho to see what would happen. This time it flew a distance and landed safely on a branch in a low tree where it was immediately joined by the parents. I got my binoculars out and watched for quite some time, as it practiced flying and landing with its good foot sometime successfully, sometime not so good. I had agonized and worried about that bird all night. However, on that day, I walked away

believing I did the right thing by letting nature take its course. **Tom Croom**

Bluebirds have preferred trees

A nest box in Marguerite O'Neil Park in Mission Viejo has produced multiple Bluebird broods every year for the past four years at the same Pine tree. This year a nest with 5 eggs appeared but the eggs disappeared. On a subsequent visit I noticed the male flying back and forth between the Pine and a Sycamore tree across the park. Thinking he was trying to convey a message to me, I moved the box from the pine to the Sycamore. On the next visit there was a full nest with 5 eggs. At this writing there are 5 healthy chicks about ready to fledge.

At Rimgate Park in Lake Forest a nest box has produced multiple broods for the past three years at the same Jacaranda tree. This year the nest had 5 eggs. On one visit I noticed a Flycatcher flitting about so I hung another box in a nearby Jacaranda hoping the flycatcher would nest in it. On a subsequent visit I noticed the male Bluebird flying back and forth between the two boxes. Upon checking the first box I found the five eggs cold and had apparently been abandoned. Upon checking the second box I found a full nest with 5 Bluebird eggs. I can only assume the Bluebird preferred the second location. **Earl Garrison**

Although I have seen an occasional WEBL in the neighborhood for several years, these are the first to ever nest. **Dick Blaine**

TRAIL TALES

This was one of my best years ever; I don't know if it was the fact we had ample rain or what but I had few deaths and an unusual rate of successful hatches and fledges on this trail! Excellent year for the Lafayette Reservoir Trail. **Georgette Howington**

Rat predation in some hanging nest boxes. Mayhem. Adults and eggs destroyed. **Nancy Arbuckle**

First year monitoring has been a resounding success. Expecting a higher occupancy rate next season as bluebirds occupy more of these nesting boxes built by **Bill Jones**. **Dennis Huckabay**

This year the trail was poor in producing, perhaps due to inclimate summer weather. **Faith Allen**

Thistle has been getting worse each year. Fewer WEBL, fewer eggs per brood. No second broods of any species. Many HOWR for the first time - some with dummy nests. **Dick Blaine**

Box #2 Brood #2: On 7-12-10 my back yard seemed very quite, that morning and no bluebirds begging for mealworms, so I checked the nesting box. To my dismay, I found the female bluebird dead with her breast partially eaten. The 4 week-old chicks, which were healthy the night before, were all dead, although showed no signs of any trauma. One unhatched egg was underneath the 4 dead chicks. There was signs of rat droppings and much disarray in the nesting box. **Walter Burch**

Thought you might like to know that the banded male is nesting again at the same box (San Antonio Park) this year. This is the ninth consecutive year a banded male has used that box and most likely is one of the birds banded from my trail in 2001. If so, he should be about nine years old in a few months and I can't find any records of WEBL living to nine years. Although there was an EABL that lived to ten years. **Linda Violet**

Again this year, just one of our 3 boxes was used. The nest was so high in the box that we were never able to see inside once the nest was built. We could feel 4 eggs, though, and we got to see the VGSW fledge (so we're pretty sure there were 4). In past years, our VGSW nests were mostly made of grass, with feathers on top. This year, however, the nest was mainly composed of mosses, and topped with very little grass and some feathers. After the VGSW had fledged, we noticed a CBCH hanging around. **Michael & Marybeth Arago**

No bee problems this year for the first time. Fewer nests with 6 eggs this year.

Kneeland, Roger & Joan

Two boxes at the Casta del Sol Golf Course were not used in 2010. High shooting springlers were a problem. **John Lange**

The cold and wet Spring made for a lot of abandoned Bluebird nests in April. **Susan Henderson**

WESTERN BLUEBIRD NESTING RESULTS 2010, Irv. Tiessen, Alameda Co.

Irv Tiessen is one of the most active trail monitors in the state. For the past 15 years he has prepared a report for various ranchers, San Francisco Water and the East Bay Regional Park District. The majority of the 257 (2 boxes missing) nest boxes in this report represent a rough rectangle of approximately 16 square miles in South Eastern Alameda County. These are box to box reports, which give some detail to all activity associated with a particular box. The report also shows the comparison of the previous year, by category of egg, chicks and fledged birds, as well as mortality charts per specie. The comments section will give range conditions, rainfall statistics and percentages of loss, or gain on particular trails. To date he has reported 9321 fledglings. Following is a summary of his 2010 report; box-by-box detail by trail is omitted.

Grand Total by Species all locations 2010 Year 2009

	NA	Eggs	Hat	Fled	NA	Eggs	Hat	Fled
Webl	134	644	614	584	122	580	541	520
Howr	9	57	56	55	7	45	44	43
Oati	10	53	49	49	8	46	39	38
Wbnu	8	43	43	42	4	24	23	20
Atfl	8	33	23	16	9	40	39	27
Cbch	8	48	46	46	14	81	81	77
Trsw	67	321	280	252	63	298	246	218
Nuwo	2	7	7	7	3	9	9	9
Baow	3	17	16	13	6	36	36	36
Amke	1	3	2	2	1	4	4	4
	250	1226	1136	1066	241	1175	1072	1002

CONCLUSIONS:

The nesting year of 2010 began with strong nesting activity by the Oati's, Cbch's and Webl's in early April this year, but was interrupted by rain and cool brooding weather through the remainder of the month. The hot temperatures did not really affect the birds this year, as the weather for the most part, was fair with abundant moisture and a good growing season for the ground cover. Generally in the area I monitor, the Trsw's follow the Webl's as secondary nesters in the boxes. My monitoring area enjoyed a mild spring with 29.96 inches of rain. The rain carried through March and into April, with over an inch in May.

The nesting birds of 2010 followed the dictates of the prevailing weather, much as my personal fruit trees May through June and into July (my) birds got into a frenzy of activity and with the aide of good ground cover and abundant insect hatches, the fledged numbers soared. Over all, this has been a terrific year for the cavity nesters.

My report incorporates some 12 (owl boxes included) separate trails. It is interesting to note, that 5 properties increased bird production and 1 decreased significantly and 5 stayed pretty much the same. Of those properties, the major producers represented large unrestricted pasture and open meadow land, while the others offered small inconsistent forage areas. **Irv Tiessen**

Grand Total by Location 2010

Year 2009

	NA	Eggs	Hat	Fled	NA	Eggs	Hat	Fled
Koopman	90	431	395	378	91	424	373	342
Pleas. Ridge	23	112	112	96	29	143	137	132
SFWD 76	385	351	331	60	296	271	258	
Balch	6	25	25	22	6	29	24	24
James	7	35	29	29	6	28	23	22
Ohlone 13	66	65	55	13	65	59	55	
Tiessen 5	28	28	27	4	26	26	25	
Frillman	4	18	18	18	4	21	21	18
Johnson4	21	18	18	2	11	10	9	
EBRPH 13	60	52	52	15	72	69	59	
Rogers 5	25	25	25	5	23	22	18	

Mortality Chart All Species (2010) (2009)

Abandoned Eggs	50	62
Infertile Eggs	42	40
Chicks	<u>69</u>	<u>69</u>
	161	171

Brood Information / Secondary Box Nesting

Webl / Webl	14 boxes
Webl / Trsw	15 boxes
Trsw / Trsw	6 boxes
Other combinations	<u>13 boxes</u>
	48 boxes

California Bluebird Recovery Program County Coordinators

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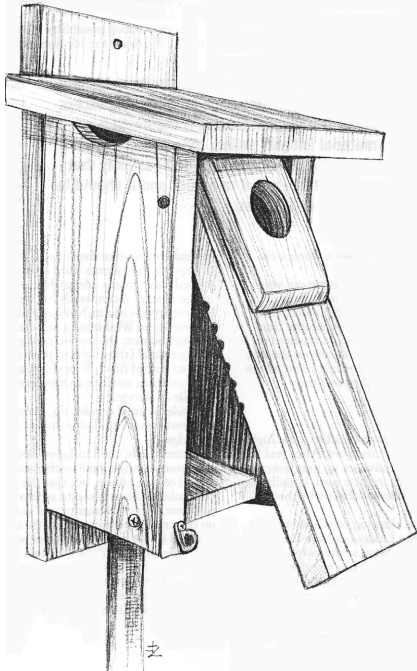
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California Bluebird Recovery Program's
 Newsletter
 Vol. 17, No. 1, Winter 2011

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