

**Recovery Program** 

# **BLUEBIRDS FLY!**

California Bluebird Recovery Program Newsletter

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

### NestWatch's 2023 Top Contributors Globally are Our Own Lee Pauser and His Santa Clara County Team

By Georgette Howington, Alameda & Contra Costa counties and Sylvia Wright, Nevada County

Lee Pauser of Santa Clara County, who began caring for nesting birds in 2002 with 12 boxes, was recently named the 2023 top contributor to the global Cornell NestWatch project.

Lee filed reports on 601 nest boxes – more than any other NestWatcher in the world.

In June, Lee reached another milestone, when the 21,000th baby bird fledged from one of his boxes.

Twenty-two years, 16 species, 21,000 birds, and still going strong – Lee is a devoted citizen-scientist who has made tremendous contributions to wild bird conservation in California.

"We congratulate Lee Pauser for his incredible contribution to the nest-box programs he has supported through 23 seasons," said Dick Blaine, director of the California Bluebird Recovery Project,

"and especially for the amazing way he's fledged thousands of cavity-nesting birds! Bravo!"

Of the 601 nests boxes that Lee reported to NestWatch in 2023, a whopping 528 were his own observations. That's 528 individual bird boxes documented for



bird boxes Lee Pauser with a baby Barn Owl being renested. documented for Photo by Valerie Baldwin months, from nest-building to egg-laying to hatching to fledging.

### When Bluebirds Become Goo Birds, Here's How a Trail Monitor Can Help

By Rita Robinson, Orange County

I stuck my nose up to the hole. The nest box stank, and they say if the box stinks, there's trouble inside.

I thought the worst: They're dead.

I opened the door. Five sets of beady little Western Bluebird eyes above down-turned yellow beaks stared back at me. "Help," I could hear them saying.

They were gooey. Some even had bald spots. The nest was full of berry seeds, sweet and sticky. Luckily, voracious ants had not yet found the syrupy nestlings.

When bird parents can't find enough insects for their offspring, they resort to feeding them berries. These last-choice berries are hard for baby birds to digest, which leads to a predictable mess in the nest. (You can build insect and bird habitat by leaving fallen leaves in place to decompose, and by planting native plants.)

I gently lifted each of the five bluebird babies out of their nest box and put them in a canvas bag on the ground. This wasn't easy because, one, they were sticky, and two, their sharp little claws clung onto the sides of their nest as if their lives depended on it. I didn't want to hurt their twiggy little legs.

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#### NestWatch 2023... continued from page 1

The remaining observations Lee submitted to NestWatch were made by three fellow nest-box monitors in Santa Clara County: Sandy Derby cared for 34 boxes; Kristen Vehling for 26; and Larry Sasscer for 13.

According to NestWatch's 2023 roundup, there were 3,679 nests recorded in the Southwest Region of the United States, and 36,035 total nests recorded globally. Thus, Lee's submissions accounted for about 16 percent of the Southwest Region data, and about 1.7 percent of global data.

How long ago did Lee Pauser start keeping data on bird boxes? Well, he kept his records on a Blackberry.

After those first 12 nest boxes, Lee built and cared for dozens more, and then hundreds more, always improving reproduction chances for local native birds. Bluebirds, swallows, woodpeckers, kestrels, flycatchers and owls – if a bird needed a box, Lee supplied it.

Meanwhile, his record-keeping moved from the handheld Blackberry to PC-based Excel spreadsheets to cloud-based Google Sheets.

At the same time, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology was refining techniques for collecting nest records from citizen-scientists so ornithologists could better understand the lives of birds.

The lab's North American Nest Record Card Program, started in the 1960s, had amassed more than 300,000 4x6 paper cards by 1999. As computer technology advanced, the paper-based system gave way to online 'NestWatch has been tracking impacts to nesting biology for more than five decades, an effort that would not be possible without the data contributions of volunteer nest box monitors like Lee Pauser. Lee's impressive level of participation goes above and beyond what's expected, but we at NestWatch so appreciate his dedication to cavity-nesting birds. While benefiting birds and people (through his education efforts) locally in his community, Lee is also leaving a lasting legacy with NestWatch as one of our top data contributors.'

> Robyn Bailey NestWatch Project Leader

data entry and the current NestWatch program.

Entering data online is easy for most NestWatch participants, who have at most a few dozen nests to report. But a special effort was needed to get Lee's voluminous records into the NestWatch system.

Enter CBRP Director Dick Blaine, who worked painstakingly with NestWatch project leader Robyn Bailey to create a process for uploading bulk data.

"Dick gets a lot of credit for our NestWatch achievement," Lee Pauser said. "We couldn't have submitted all that information without his uploading innovations."

### Your data can help global bird studies! See story on page 10.

#### CBRP Donors January - June 2024 (\$1145.00)

Phyllis Anderson, Santa Clara • Ohlone Audubon Society, alameda Redbud Audubon Society (Howington & Azevedo), Lake • Wild Birds Unlimited, Contra Costa Dyann Blaine, Santa Clara • Eric Fromer, Contra Costa • Susan Gearhart, Sacramento Susan Koop, San Mateo • Safari West / Georgette Howington, Sonoma

#### Goo Birds... continued from page 1

All five babies were still alive, at least, although two were teetering. They had bare patches on their skin, presumably because of the berry glue.

Once the baby birds were secure, I took the saturated nest out of the box while the bluebird parents made clucking noises and buzzed my head. I scraped out the remaining muck with a nearby stick, washed out the nest box with water from my water bottle, and set it in the sun for a few minutes, reassuring Mom and Dad that all will be well.

As I was taught by my mentor from the Southern California Bluebird Club, I always carry a back-up clean and dry nest from the previous season. I store a stash of them in the garage freezer, which kills any leftover mites, spiders, ants, etc., just in case something like this happens. I put the fresh nest in the box.

Next: Back to the babies. Fruit makes for loose bowels. Inside my canvas bag, poop was everywhere. I gently picked each little bird up and placed them in their clean home. I swear those smiles-are-just-a-frown-turned-upside-down righted themselves.

I lifted the nest box with my handy-dandy lifter (a converted pool-cleaning pole) and hooked it back onto the high tree limb.

Now to give the family a better food supply... I also carry mealworms (darkling beetle larvae) on my trail rounds. I placed a handful of mealworms on the ground beneath the nest box and backed away slightly.

Instantly, the parents were on it! Another cobalt-blue male bird, possibly one of their grown sons, flew in to assist. I kept tossing out the worms and they kept jamming them into their beaks in bulk and racing to the nest. They went in and out of the box faster than any baby bird could possibly choke down the emergency rations. I must've tossed out close to 100 worms.

The frenzy finally began to fizzle. Returning from the edge of doom, the adults took a break, perching on nearby branches. All seemed relieved from a crisis abated.

I returned the next day. All five babies were fanned around their nest, yellow beaks in the center like a flower, just as they should be. Dry and happy. More mealworms were provided but, this time, feeding flowed at a normal pace.

A few days later, I again returned. The nest was empty. And that's always a good sign.

But, even though the kids were gone, the job wasn't done, which, again, seems to parallel the human condition. But that's where it ends. Bluebird parents will feed their offspring for two more weeks in the nearby trees as the young steady their wings and learn to feed themselves. After that, they're on their own. We human parents can only dream...



The nestlings had bare patches on their skin, presumably because of the berry glue. Photo by Rita Robinson



The parents hustled to get the nutritious mealworms into the box.





A second male helped carry mealworms to the chicks in the box. Photo by Rita Robinson

### From the Director's Chair

CBRP has made several monetary grants

this year to help create nest-box trails. Orange County and San Diego County both received grants. We also continue to participate in garden club and Audubon Society events, as well as work with Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. In addition, we gave informational talks about the project to a variety of community groups.



**This and previous newsletters and annual reports**, as well as updated state results (28-year-history, box-by-box and trail-by-trail data) are available on our web site. Link to <u>http://www.cbrp.org</u> and click on the "Results" tab.

**Special thanks to those of you who made donations** to CBRP in the first half of 2024 (see list elsewhere in this issue). Your gifts totaled \$1,145. Donations can be made on our website or by mail. These funds help buy nest-box materials for new and updated trails as part of our grant program.

I want to encourage monitors to contribute to and participate in Cornell University's NestWatch Program to preserve the nesting data you collect and to make that data available to researchers around the world.

It is not too late to contribute your data to NestWatch. Simply download the template, complete it, and send it to me. I will get your data to NestWatch.

NestWatch website: http://www.nestwatch.org

Link to the bulk upload documentation: <u>https://docs.google.com/</u> <u>document/d/14lrq7cS02GrClgj-q5ENVZ6Q14M3LpkWFRe4Fh24Y-</u> <u>cM/edit</u>

Link to the bulk upload template: <u>https://drive.google.com/</u> file/d/0B8OLjlvu4wKlZm5NcDhHUFNKX2s/edit?resourcekey=0-fQxDVWptX-Acs90Mnd9Mlw

Please also enter your 2024 season nesting results in the CBRP online data collection spreadsheet. <u>https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17traV6l88edpQcTBMvSRBm1HFxAa9H7-7fGKZTbB1f4/</u> edit?usp=drive\_link

Brief instructions are on the first few rows of the spreadsheet and detailed instructions are available at: <u>https://www.cbrp.org/da-ta-collection-end-of-season/.</u>

Forms for recording your weekly visits: <u>https://www.cbrp.org/re-sources/.</u>

Dick Blaine – <u>dick@theblaines.net</u> California Bluebird Recovery Project www.cbrp.org

#### About the California Bluebird Recovery Program

#### Our Mission

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

• Locate preferred habitat for the placement of nestboxes 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 nestbox records.
Provide a forum (newsletter) through which fellow trail monitors can exchange information and secure help with problems.

#### <u>Learn More</u>

To learn more about the California Bluebird Recovery Program and other cavity-nester conservation programs, visit these websites: www.CBRP.org

www.nabluebirdsociety.org

www.socalbluebirds.org

#### <u>www.sialis.org</u>

If you are looking for a mentor, contact any board member at info@cbrp.org.

Please consider supporting our efforts. Donate via newsletter form or visit <u>www.cbrp.org</u>. Your contribution is tax-deductible and goes a long way in helping us conserve the bluebird population in California.

### The Houses That Love Built: Hundreds of Bird Boxes in Southern California

By Mike Isaacson, Orange County

My name is Mike Isaacson and I'm a member of the Southern California Bluebird Club. About three years ago, I unknowingly became the manufacturing department of the club. With a \$500 grant for materials from the California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP), I've built over 600 nest boxes and several hundred nest-box lifters.

During the off seasons, I've also repaired and upgraded approximately 100 nest boxes. Some of those have been in the field for decades, and repairs extend their lifespan for many years.

Over time, using my ideas and those of other box builders, I've made several design modifications and upgrades to the boxes and box lifters. The latest version of the nest box has a bottom hinge. (Earlier boxes had top hinges.) This change makes the front of the box open from the top, resulting in a better view of the contents of the box with little chance of birds fledging prematurely.

The improved Purvis lifters I'm making use <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inchwide aluminum strap material, replacing the wire-mesh basket. These lifters are a few ounces lighter, for monitor convenience. And they have no obstruction in front of the box entrance that would block a parent bird from flying out while the box was being lowered.



*Mike Isaacson's redesigned box lifter doesn't block the exit.* **Photo by Deb Isaacson** 



These new boxes are headed for San Diego and Riverside. Photo by Mike Isaacson

All the boxes I build have ventilation holes on both sides and above the entrance hole.

When I started making so many boxes, I ended up with a lot of scrap wood. I gave away as much as I could, but still threw some in the trash. This bothered me, so I decided to glue the pieces together and then use that new piece for the back of the nest box. I now have very little to no waste.

It's clear that I love this work, because I have just agreed to build several hundred boxes and lifters for the San Diego and Riverside areas! The CBRP will provide material funds for this project, too.

I feel proud that these boxes will be providing shelter, safety and a nesting place for our bluebird friends for many years to come.

### There Goes the Neighborhood! Goats & Construction Crews Move In on a Bluebird Box

By Cindy Lockhart and Patricia Jordan, San Mateo County

On a quiet day in April, a Western Bluebird couple were searching for a good, protected place to create a nest for a new family. They chose a rather secluded spot at The Sequoias retirement community in Portola Valley, up on the highest elevation on the property. Few people walked in this area, which made the location desirable.

These parents had grown up on this same hill. Nest construction began. Indeed, it became a perfect nest of dried grass. Upon completion, the female bluebird laid one egg a day for five days. Then she settled down to incubate.

However, changes were about to take place. Early one morning, a large truck motored up next to her box. Her partner, no doubt, became furious, but there was nothing he could do. As the days passed, more and more trucks appeared. Many workers set up their materials for construction. One truck parked only 6 feet from the nesting box.

This was going to be a huge adjustment. It was too late to move to a different area. Not long after that intrusion, another adjustment had to be reckoned with: A herd of goats arrived! Yes, goats had been hired to eat grass and brush to reduce the risk of a wildfire.

As the weeks passed, the constant human and livestock traffic, the goats' chomping and crunching of weeds, and the construction crew's banging of hammers, made an unpleasant atmosphere for the newborns and parents.

But the bluebird parents did not give up. They endured, raising a brood of healthy nestlings to continue the future of WEBLs. They fledged to a nearby location, no doubt to healthier surroundings.



Construction workers arrived, parking a mere 6 feet from the nest box. Photo by Cindy Lockhart



A goat herd was released to eat wildfire-prone grasses and brush. Photo by Cindy Lockhart

#### California Bluebird Recovery Program Board Members

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Georgette Howington Assistant Program Director

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Tricia Jordan Web Designer / Webmaster

> Sylvia Wright Cat Raymond Newsletter Editors

Contact us at info@cbrp.org



The bluebird babies grew up in an unusually busy environment. Photo by Cindy Lockhart

### Now You See It, Now You Don't: A Puzzling Nuttall's Woodpecker Nest

By Lee Pauser, Santa Clara County

For me, and likely many others, it is rare to find a Nuttall's Woodpecker nesting in a nest box rather than a natural cavity.

But that's what I discovered in one of my boxes on April 18: One Nuttall's Woodpecker (NUWO) egg in a nest box on a nearly bare floor. When I returned on May 3, one egg and one adult NUWO were in the nest box.

Since the egg was unsecured on the bare floor of a hanging nest box, I decided not to check it weekly, but hoped to find a nestling after the incubation period of 14 days.

A check of the box on May 17 found a female Nuttall's Woodpecker with three eggs. I wondered, was one of them the single egg found on April 18? Or were all three eggs new?

In the thousands of nests I've seen in bird boxes, I have found Nuttall's nests just 17 times. The number of eggs in them has ranged from one to four. Only one egg hatched and one nestling fledged.

The first time it happened I found four eggs. But in the same box, on the following weeks, I found zero eggs, three eggs, and lastly zero eggs again. This suspicious behavior led me to think that the woodpecker was moving its eggs around and possibly losing an egg or more in the process.

When I related these odd events in 2012 to Steve Shunk, the author of "Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America," he remarked, "They move their eggs around." I wish now that I had had more time to discuss his comment. <image>

April 18: A single Nuttall's Woodpecker egg. Photo by Lee Pauser



May 17: A female Nuttall's with three eggs. Photo by Lee Pauser

Female Acorn Woodpeckers are known to destroy

the eggs of other Acorn Woodpecker females, so destruction of the Nuttall's eggs seems to be another possibility.

When I last checked the box, it was empty.

### A Sad Ending for Teen Monitor's Oak Titmouse Family

By Katherina Koriabine, Contra Costa County

For a whole year, my family had been looking forward to the bird-nesting season. Though some people wouldn't find it as exciting as we do, we awaited the birds that signaled the start of the springtime and the nesting season.

Since last summer, we had caught some moments where we had seen a family of Oak Titmouse birds checking out our cozy nest boxes. Since building and installing several nest boxes on our property for my Girl Scout Silver Award project, we had successfully housed and monitored five Chestnut-backed Chickadee fledglings. You can probably imagine our joy when the titmice started building their nest in one of our nest boxes this year!

Titmice use nest boxes as a last resort, only when they are unable to find a home they prefer. They usually build their nests in holes in oak trees made by woodpeckers. Having titmice in our yard was truly special.

On March 21, we discovered eight eggs among the fuzz of the nest. The mother titmouse was very dedicated to her offspring, not leaving even when we opened the box to monitor.

Then, one day, House Sparrows attacked the nest and tried to sabotage the family. The titmouse parents defended it vigorously, with the father bird fighting the House Sparrows away whenever he had the chance. After witnessing the two bird species tussling around with each other, we tried to shoo the sparrows away, too. We removed the second nest box we had nearby, in case it was attracting the sparrows to our yard. Eventually, we saw less and less of the intruders.

After a week of sitting on her precious and delicate eggs, the female titmouse went missing. The male seemed heartbroken and kept calling for his mate, while constantly checking and guarding the nest. This continued for about three weeks. We hoped the mother bird would return, but we had no such luck.

We sought the advice of our Silver Award mentor, Georgette Howington. Facing the sad truth, we cleared the nest from the birdhouse on April 22. We hoped the father bird would move on, realizing his life partner wasn't going to return. After we removed the nest, the father bird was gone in a couple of days. We had hoped that we could keep the eggs and hatch them ourselves in an incubator, but Georgette said that it would not be a good idea. Even if we had hatched the eggs and managed to feed hatchlings, they would not survive in the wild without their parents.

So, what could have happened to the mother bird? After some research, we learned that domestic cats kill 1.3 billion to 4 billion birds per year. We have a lot of cats in our neighborhood, so one may have eaten her. Another possibility is that the House Sparrows killed her. As Georgette explained, House Sparrows often start conflicts with other birds and steal their nests.

What happened to our titmouse family was very disheartening, but hopefully the male titmouse was able to move on and start a new family.



Katherina Koriabine checks nest box. Photo by Katherina Koriabine



Oak Titmouse at nest box door. Photo by Katherina Koriabine



Abandoned nest and eggs. Photo by Katherina Koriabine

### Give your nest-box data its best life! Report it to both CBRP and NestWatch

By Georgette Howington, Contra Costa County and Sylvia Wright, Nevada County

The data that California nest monitors collect can lead to valuable insights into breeding bird populations and how they may be changing over time.

The California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) has a terrific volunteer corps! In the 2023 nesting season, we received reports from 27 counties, 170 monitors, 290 trails and 4,972 nest boxes. Our boxes produced 15,993 fledglings (nearly 9,000 Western Bluebirds and seven other species).

#### But some important information is not getting from California to Cornell's global NestWatch program. The California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) leadership hopes to change that, with your help.

Because the two organizations have different end uses for the data, they have different reporting systems.

The CBRP wants to know how well it is performing overall as a nest-box program. We ask monitors to report aggregate data for every group, or "trail," of boxes. Data include the number of boxes monitored, what species used the boxes, how many eggs were laid and hatched, and how many chicks fledged. The monitor enters their numbers into a spreadsheet online. CBRP Director Dick Blaine tallies the results and reports them in the winter issue of this newsletter.

Anyone, anywhere, who finds a nest is welcome to join NestWatch. You will help studies of nesting birds globally while you support bird conservation right at home.

Cornell's NestWatch database is intended to be used to study the current condition of breeding bird populations and how they may be changing over time as a result of climate change, habitat degradation and loss, expansion of urban areas, and the introduction of non-native plants and animals. NestWatch asks monitors for data for each individual box. Data are entered via the NestWatch website or phone app.

## This year, we hope you will report your nest-box results to both CBRP and NestWatch.

If you monitor fewer than 50 boxes, you might find it convenient to submit your observations in real time, in the field, via the NestWatch phone app.

Because the app's response slows as the number of boxes increases, a monitor with 50 or more boxes might prefer to report on the

NestWatch website.

Monitors who have 100 or more nests will want to use the bulkupload tool created by Dick Blaine and NestWatch. (The minimum 100 number was needed because it is time-consuming and costly for Cornell database administrators to process bulk uploads.) Note that several monitors can combine their nesting records to reach the 100-nest threshold.

You can even report data from past years' observations to Nest-Watch.

The CBRP is grateful to each one of you for keeping data while you monitor and for submitting your aggregate numbers at the end of the nesting season. As we approach the end of this one for 2024, we wish you well and hope that you know you've made a tremendous difference.

#### More information:

How to report to CBRP: <u>www.cbrp.org/data-collec-</u> <u>tion-end-of-season/</u>
How to report to NestWatch: <u>nestwatch.org/</u>

How to do bulk uploads to
 NestWatch: <u>http://bit.ly/3yXh8N3</u>

• NestWatch 2023 report, with season totals and research reports based on NestWatch data: <u>NestWatch.org/wp-content/</u> <u>uploads/2024/03/NestWatchDigest2024\_final2.pdf</u>

• How to report past years' observations to NestWatch: <u>https://</u> <u>nestwatch.org/learn/how-to-nest-</u> <u>watch/faqs/i-have-a-lot-of-old-</u> <u>nest-records-is-there-any-way-to-</u> <u>upload-them-to-nestwatch/</u>

### What's in Your Nest Box? Send Us Your Stories

Story and photo by Sylvia Wright, Nevada County

In mid-July, as the nesting season in Nevada County was winding down, I found this large black widow spider in an empty nest box.

I decided to leave her and her egg sac alone, because all those spiders will be great bird food! And this Western Gateway Regional Park trail has 14 other boxes, if a late avian nester needs one.

What interesting, non-bird things have you found

in nest boxes? Send us your short stories and photographs for publication in the Winter 2025 newsletter. Simply write the text in the body of an email and attach the photos as JPG files. Email me with the subject line "What's in Your Nest Box?" at sciencewrighter@gmail.com by October 31.



## **FIELD REPORTS**

#### **Nest Competition**

Story and photo by Lee Pauser, Santa Clara County

This box holds a Western Bluebird nestling that is about 18 days old and an adult female Violet-green Swallow. It's an interesting example of competition for a nesting cavity: The swallow wants to nest in the nest box, but can't because it is occupied by a bluebird that is days away from fledging.

It is not unusual for swallows (Tree or Violet-green) to immediately begin building a nest on top of a recently vacated bluebird nest. If they want to start a second brood, the previous residents will have to find a new cavity.



## FIELD REPORTS (contd.)

#### Many Swallows, Few Bluebirds

By Donna Mackiewicz, Lake County

The Western Bluebird song of a string of various call notes, particularly the kew note along with other whistling notes, is a song this bluebird trail monitor longs to hear.

The 17-box trail at the Lake County Land Trust's Rodman Preserve had only one successful bluebird nest this year. Bluebirds occupied one box; 14 nest boxes had Tree Swallows; and for the third year in a row, the Ash-throated Flycatcher returned.

One mystery nester had filled a nest box three-quarters full of animal fur. In an interesting plot twist, another Ash-throated flycatcher took over the box and built on top of the furs. Five youngsters fledged in early July and are still being seen on the property two weeks later!

As summer wanes, we will be listening for the clapping of bill

mandibles together in aggressive situations, or the harsher, double-noted che-check, and of course looking for the striking beauty of bluebirds.

Also, we want to send special thanks to Boy Scout Stanton Anderson and friends for the donation of nest boxes for two other Lake County Land Trust properties.



A flycatcher fledged five chicks from this fur nest. Photo by Donna Mackiewicz

## 4 Hatched, 1 To Go

Story and photos by Nancy V. Powell, San Mateo County

Nesting was a little slow this spring, but my timing was perfect for finding this Western Bluebird brood mid-hatch at The Horse Park at Woodside.



#### **Mom Gone Missing**

Story and photos by Henry Santiago, Placer County

At our home nest box in Lincoln, the Western Bluebird couple had been caring for a clutch of five eggs when the female disappeared. We don't know what happened to her. The male stayed nearby for a while. We finally removed the eggs.





Stanton Anderson, and his Boy Scout troop

shields for Lake County bluebirds.

leaders and friends, built nest boxes with sun

## FIELD REPORTS (contd.)

#### A Look Inside the Box

Story and photos by Polly & Gordon Krauter, Alameda County

The Western Bluebird box project we tend is thriving in a meadow adjacent to commercial vineyards in southern Livermore. I use a small borescope inspection camera to avoid perturbing the birds and to obtain a photographic record of the nesting success.

So far this year, five to 6 eggs have been produced in each of several well-established boxes in the chain. The newly placed boxes have been used for roosting, but not yet used for nesting.

We have been treated to some wonderful sights while monitoring our Western Bluebird box chains.



An early morning drink from the local creek.

#### **Healthy Bluebirds**

Photos by Tracy Ngo, Riverside County



Female Western Bluebird incubating her eggs.



These five healthy Western Bluebirds fledged a couple of days after this photo was taken.



*This nestling's parents are calling from nearby, urging it to fledge.* 



Here's what happens when the family dog decides he wants to chew on his tree branch too close to the nest of a protective male bluebird.



When we find the female bluebird in the box, we always leave and check back later.



*The careful egg placement in one of the boxes was a visual treat.* 



I was hoping for second bluebird clutch in this box, but a Tree Swallow moved in.

YOU Can Help California Bluebirds!				
Yes, I want to help support Bluebirds in California. Please enroll me in the California Bluebird Recovery Program. Here is my donation of:				
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CBRP is a nonprofit project of the North American Bluebird Society, National Audubon Society - California, and Mount Diablo Audubon Society.				