

## **Bird Behavior at Nestbox**

(general behavior of bluebirds; in many instances, applies to other species)

*Along with actively monitoring a nestbox by opening it and recording observations, enjoy "passive monitoring"*

### **Nestbox selection**

- Birds perching on nestbox
- Male singing on top or near nestbox
- Both birds going in and out, sometimes with nesting material

### **Nest Building**

- Female entering nestbox frequently, usually for a few days, with nest material
- Female gathering nest material from ground in general area
- Male around but does not normally take nest material into nestbox

### **Egg Laying**

- Not much activity around nestbox
- Sometimes mating can be observed near nestbox.
- Female will enter nestbox for short time to lay one egg each day - usually in morning
- Male rarely seen near or entering the nestbox

### **Incubating**

- Female in nestbox quite a lot (how much depends on weather)
- Female sometimes pokes head out
- Female may leave nest to feed or mate may bring her food
- Male is not seen much, but is usually nearby
- Female will spend night in nestbox

### **Hatching and first few days**

- Female in nestbox a lot brooding the very young chicks
- Male seen around and at nestbox
- Both parents go right inside the nestbox to feed tiny chicks with small insects

### **Older chicks**

- Parents visit nestbox frequently with larger insects
- Often don't go all the way into the nestbox to feed
- Parents remove little white blobs (fecal sacs)

### **Fledging time approaching**

- Nestlings will usually be seen looking out for a day or two

### **Fledging**

- Parents fly to and from nestbox, calling from perches nearby
- Nestlings look out for long periods
- Eventually chicks make great leap and take maiden flight to nearby tree or other object.

### **Fledgling phase**

- Parents carry food to fledglings that are hidden in trees for about two weeks

### **"Alarm" behavior *check nestbox to determine cause of alarm***

- Excitement around nestbox; erratic movements by parent(s)
- Birds going to nestbox but not entering
- Parents nowhere to be seen