

Hi Everyone,

This is a reminder that fall nest box clean up is no doubt uppermost in your minds and with this fantastic weather it's a great excuse to be out there on the trails cleaning and checking your boxes for a few important things.

First, please check the size of the box hole. I have plugs here at the house that you can pick up that will push easily into the hole IF the hole is the correct size. I'm worried that some boxes in the past have been made with slightly smaller holes that a Mt. Bluebird will be able to enter. This is really important. Our Mt. Bluebird numbers are down this year and I spoke with Sherry Linn who she said it was the same with her in the South Okanagan so it may be that the warm weather pushed Mt Bluebirds further north. But, we should make sure we are offering the correct hole size. Mt Bluebirds require a slightly larger hole than Western Bluebirds, so our box holes need to be 1 9/16inches, the exact size of the plug. PLEASE PICK ONE UP.

Second, please check the inside of the front door for notched lines for toe holds to allow young birds to climb out of the hole when fledging so they aren't trapped inside. I can't imagine how terrible that would be for the young to be trapped inside and die because we hadn't noticed that little detail.

Unfortunately our boxes aren't standardized. This is

because of the varying age difference of all of them and because we try and rejuvenate and innovate to keep boxes out in the field. Perhaps this is a goal we should aim for.

Third, I'm not sure if it is necessary to 'soap' the inside of the box now but it would help to keep them out overwinter. However, you may want to soap them again in spring to keep the wasps out while the birds are looking for nest sites. The birds will stay away from boxes with wasps.

Lastly, I've become concerned about some trails which have increasing numbers of House Wrens in boxes. Since House Wrens are Native birds and entitled to their lives regardless of their morals in taking over other nests, we have to deal with them in non-violent ways. The best advice I've read is to keep nest boxes as far away from shrubbery as possible. If you add more boxes in an attempt to keep them occupied, they just increase in population and move further and further out from the shrubbery. The advice is to keep boxes sparse (100 meters apart or 300 feet) even if this reduces your trail significantly. Studies show fewer HOWR in boxes 300 feet apart **(and more Bluebirds)**. **REMEMBER, WRENS AND HOUSE SPARROWS MAY LIKE HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS. BLUEBIRDS DON'T. THEY PREFER BOX SPACIOUSNESS SO KEEP BOXES SPACED.**

SIBTS meeting:

Harold and Linda Sellers, Claude Rioux and myself

attended the SIBTS AGM in Logan Lake last Saturday, Sept 26. Membership in this organization that NONC belong to costs \$10.00 a year. SIBTS keeps all of the collected data sent to them from all the Bluebird groups in BC affiliated with them. It also supports some Bluebird research and recently donated monies to help the Duncan Bluebird group import Bluebirds in an attempt to bring back Bluebirds to their area. If you are interested in your own membership you can look on line : - bcbluebirds.org. It's a great way to participate in SIBTS.

Finally, Thank you for getting your completed year end forms back to me in time to take to the AGM. Your detailed Reports helped me to discuss how our trails and birds did over the summer months as compared to past years. You can use your detailed Reports to help your decision making as to how birds did in their locations and also use the data over the years to see how numbers are doing. If you consistently see an empty box think about moving it to a different angle or position on a post or to a better location.

HERE ARE OUR YEAR END TOTALS OF ALL 16 TRAILS REPORTING. Results were overall good except for Mountain Bluebirds. Two of our trails were not reporting this year. The Armstrong Commonage Trail was off limits due to bomb salvage operations and Vernon Hill had no monitor this summer.

N.O.N.C. Nestbox Report Form

Year: 2015

Trail or Area: North Okanagan Vernon # trails = 16

Total # of Nestboxes Available: 382

Total # of Nestboxes Used: 309

Cavity Nesting Species	# of Boxes Used	# of Eggs Laid	# of Eggs Hatched	# of Chicks Fledged	# of 2nd Nestings in same box
Western Bluebird	<u>48</u>	<u>337</u>	<u>287</u>	<u>261</u>	<u>22</u>
Mountain Bluebird	<u>8</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>5</u>
Tree Swallow	<u>192</u>	<u>1046</u>	<u>909</u>	<u>814</u>	<u>13</u>
Violet-Green Swallow	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>-</u>
House Wren	<u>48</u>	<u>313</u>	<u>288</u>	<u>276</u>	<u>22</u>
Black-capped Chickadee	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>-</u>
Mountain Chickadee	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
White-breasted Nuthatch	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Other <u>HDSP</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>

Nestbox Monitor Information

Name: Margaret Mackenzie

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Vernon BC V1T1Z6

E-mail: m.hubble@telus.net

Please draw a map of your trail on the reverse side or attach a separate page. Comments and other observations may be attached as well.

Return completed forms by August 30th to :
Margaret Mackenzie, 1101 30th Ave., Vernon, BC V1T 1Z6 m.hubble@telus.net

