

Eastern Bluebird Nest Box Project Report 2020



Recaptured male bluebird first banded in 2018 is molting in new feathers (left). A recently banded young Tree Swallow (center left). Banded bluebird nestlings (center right). A just-hatched bluebird nestling—its 3 siblings hatched soon after this photo was taken (right).

- Warner Park Bluebird Nest Box Project was established in 1936 by nationally-known ornithologist Amelia Laskey. This project is one of the oldest, continuously monitored bluebird projects in the country.
- Eastern Bluebird Nest Box Project is coordinated by Diana McLusky with volunteer bluebird team members John Kell, Sue Shallow, Sandy Bivens, Cathy Barker, Kim Bailey, & the Cook family (Terry, Laura, Cody, & Elizabeth).
- 50 nest boxes, located throughout the park, are monitored weekly from March—September to assess box occupancy rate & nest success. Because of Covid, we monitored briefly in March & then again from 25 May through September.
- The first Eastern Bluebird egg of 2020 in Warner Park was laid on 21 March—nine days earlier than 2019.
- 145 Eastern Bluebirds hatched from 220 eggs & 114 nestlings fledged successfully—a success rate of 52% from 220 eggs laid to fledge despite 18 of the boxes predated upon. Of those, we banded 79 nestlings.
- Banded 2 & recaptured 13 adult Eastern Bluebirds at the nest boxes.
- Nest boxes used by other species this year included Carolina Wren with 1 nest & 5 young and 3 Tree Swallows nests with 18 eggs, 16 fledged, and 13 banded. Tree Swallows were first recorded nesting in Warner Park in 2008. Despite the increase in nesting Tree Swallows, Eastern Bluebirds continue to thrive in the park.
- As members of the North American Bluebird Association & the Tennessee Bluebird Society, we annually report our results. Across TN, a total of 3,435 bluebirds fledged from 1053 monitored boxes, a fledge/box success rate of 4.27, which is lower than last years rate of 4.63—possibly due to some boxes not monitored in April & May. This year, our Warner Park boxes had the 6th highest number of monitored bluebirds to fledge in the state.



Cody Cook gets some help installing a nest box at the Steeplechase (left). A seed-eating mouse was a surprise nest occupant (center left). The Warner Park Eastern Bluebird team early in 2020, pre-Covid (center). Bob Parrish assists Sandy Bivens with banding bluebird nestlings (middle right). A Gray Ratsnake, a common predator of nest boxes, displays impressive climbing skills (right).

Thank you for your continued support of the BIRD Program which is fully funded by Friends of Warner Parks. If you are not already, please consider becoming a member at <https://www.warnerparks.org/>

