

## Monitoring Your Bluebird Box

Nesting begins in early March and ends in August and you should monitor weekly.

Do not monitor in cold, wet, windy conditions

Observe box for mother to leave before opening. Talk as you approach the box and/or gently tap the side of the box, and slowly open. If mother does not leave the nest, close the door and check again next week.

Minimize the amount of time the box is open (should be less than 1 minute)

Click [here](#) for *Weekly Bluebird Spreadsheet* and record the following data:

Date of monitoring

Indicate whether the box is empty or has a partial or complete nest  
*(nest building takes a week or two)*

Number of eggs & chicks & species (bluebird, Carolina chickadee, titmouse, other)  
*(Bluebirds lay one egg a day until they have 3 – 5 and then begin incubating).*

Once the first egg is laid, sprinkle ant bait such as **Amdro** at base of wooden or metal post and repeat weekly until chicks fledge (this protects the chicks from fire ants)  
*(Chicks hatch in 16 – 18 days)*

Observe chicks for vigor, parasite, injuries (make notation in comment section)

Do not inspect box if chicks are more than 12 days old (they will try to jump out of the box when you open the door and you will never catch them)  
*(Chicks fledge after 16 – 18 days)*

Record the number of fledglings and species.

Clean out empty nests after birds fledge. Discard away from nestbox (to keep predators away).  
*(Bluebirds build a new nest for each brood and may have 3 broods per season)*

Keep cats indoors (at very least, collar with bells)

Consider relocating unused boxes:

At least 100 yards from other bluebird boxes

In a more open area, away from, but facing trees and shrubs

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