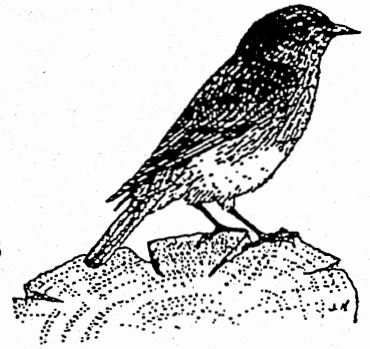


**Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society**  
**1997 Fall Newsletter**  
**Editor: Bill Read**  
**2-165 Green Valley Drive Kitchener, ON N2P 1K3**



Welcome to the 1997 Fall Newsletter!

The 1998 AGM will be Saturday March 21 at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington, Ontario. Early reports indicate the number of returning pairs in 1997 was the same or slightly lower than 1996, but breeding success was not as good as the previous year. The spring was much colder than last year but with less precipitation (see chart).

	Temperature (30 yr)		Precipitation (mm)	
	Normal	Actual	Normal	Actual
Sept. 96	14.3	15.0	89.6	154.6
Oct. 96	2.9	3.3	70.4	59.2
Nov. 96	2.5	-0.3	83.1	40.2
Dec. 96	-4.0	-1.2	79.2	104.7
Jan. 97	-7.3	-7.1	54.3	89.2
Feb. 97	-6.8	-4.0	55.6	87.5
Mar. 97	-1.5	-2.0	72.7	111.7
Apr. 97	5.8	4.9	72.6	25.5
May 97	12.5	8.7	76.3	88.6
June 97	17.0	18.7	79.5	71.7
July 97	19.9	19.2	90.4	47.8

Weather data collected at the Waterloo Wellington Regional Airport.

May was almost 4 C lower than the 30 year normal (see chart). In my field book I did not record a warm day until May 23rd when it finally started to warm up. Above average rainfall was recorded in May to further hamper bluebird activity. Most nestling mortality occurred from May 25 to about June 2. Bluebird nestings were delayed because of this cold wet weather which resulted in most mortality occurring in very late May and early June. On my CWS trail June 1-2 were the days that caused the most nestling mortality. I expect when I analyze the 1997 total both fledged young and fledged young per EABL pair will be down somewhat from the 1995 and 1996 totals. It is hard to believe that 10 years have passed since I sent out the original survey sheets in 1987. Since that time I have written the newsletter and organized the speakers at every conference including the 1996 North American Bluebird Society Conference in Burlington Ontario. We are looking for members to serve as directors and if anyone would like to write the newsletter or organize speakers at our AGM, please contact me at 1-519-748-4853.

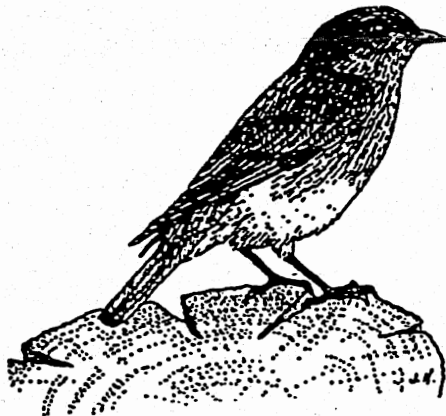
## Newsletter

**Note:** The 1996 nestbox report is included in this newsletter. Survey data is received throughout the year and it is just not possible to send it out earlier without missing many surveys.

The nestbox survey information that members send in is put on a large spreadsheet, tabulated and then transferred to a smaller sheet for typing. The report is then written and sent to be typed. Finally, after editing a final copy it is ready to be sent to the printer.

After this is completed I start writing the newsletter. The letters and comments that you send to me are much appreciated and whenever possible, are included in the newsletter. Since our society deals with all cavity nesting species, I try to include articles which are up-to-date, informative and provide the reader or trail operator with information which will make him or her a better bluebird landlord.

Speakers for our annual conference (March 21, 1998) are contacted at least 6-7 months in advance. It becomes difficult to choose new speakers year after year that we have not had before. Lately our society has expanded its outlook to include other cavity nesters with the main emphasis always being EABL's. This year's feature speakers are from Ohio. Dan Best and two of his friends will speak on Prothonotary Warblers and talk about their nestbox trail.



## American Kestrel ecology & behaviour by Ron Rohrbaugh

*Question: What is the best location for a kestrel nestbox in relationship to my bluebird trail?*

I'm no expert on bluebirds, but I've conducted quite a bit of research on kestrel nesting ecology and behaviour.

First off, let's talk about the diet of kestrels. During the winter months kestrels mainly prey on small mammals and birds. For the most part, males specialize on birds in dense habitats such as old fields, whereas females hunt mammals in more open habitats such as pastures, hayfields and median strips. Males are smaller, faster and more maneuverable than females, thus giving them the edge on birds. In the summer months, however, both males and females shift their diet to insects. This is not to say that they don't also eat a few birds and mammals during the breeding season. Of the bird remains I've found in kestrels' nests, most have been from house sparrows. I never remember finding bluebird remains, although I'm sure they eat a few. **My point is, kestrels rarely eat bluebirds and may benefit bluebirds by reducing the number of House Sparrows competing for nestboxes in a given area.**

In the eastern U.S., the radius of kestrel nesting territories is approximately 0.3 mi (528 yards). However I've found they only aggressively defend the area within 100 yds of a nest. To reduce the frequency of stressful and energy-sapping interactions for both kestrels and bluebirds, I suggest keeping bluebird boxes at least 150 yds from kestrel boxes. In general, try to locate kestrel boxes in large open areas, such as pastures or hay fields. Single large trees standing in the middle of a field are excellent choices. In addition, ideal locations for kestrel boxes are at least 100 yards from forests, row crop fields (e.g. corn, soybeans), and houses. Orient the entrance hole of the box eastward and hang it 10-20 ft above the ground. Clearing foliage from around the box so that it is clearly visible will also help attract kestrels. Hope this helps.

*Ron Rohrbaugh is Assistant Director of Education at Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.*

### **Editor's Note:**

Kestrels are very easy to attract to boxes. On the 40 box CWS trail I monitor, 11 of 12 boxes with kestrels produced fledged young. Boxes are placed on hydro support poles (with special permission from Ontario Hydro). It is illegal to put boxes on hydro poles or any private property, without permission. All poles with kestrels are wrapped with a piece of sheet metal to prevent raccoons from climbing. I have never encountered any problems with kestrels killing or harassing bluebirds and since they will hunt house sparrows, I encourage them around parts of my bluebirds trail. Kestrels are also fully protected by law and are a beautiful bird to observe.

## The Status of the Red-headed Woodpecker in Canada

Annette Page

Volunteer-based bird monitoring projects provide a wealth of reliable information for determining a species' population trend, status, important geographical areas and habitat types. Such broad-ranging data collected using standardized methods can provide a general picture of the species' status, and facilitate region to region comparisons. The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is one of the best ways to determine trends in Red-headed Woodpecker numbers because the species tends to frequent predominantly open areas adjacent to roads. Trends calculated using BBS data were the primary source of information used by the Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in assigning a status of Vulnerable to the Red-headed Woodpecker in Canada.

Trends calculated using BBS data indicate that the Red-headed Woodpecker has undergone a decline in numbers throughout its range in North America, particularly in the last 15 years. Specifically, the species declined significantly in North America between 1966 and 1994 (at an average rate of 1.9% per year;  $P < 0.01$ ), while between 1980 and 1994 the decline was much greater (4.4% per year;  $P < 0.05$ ). In the United States, the species declined significantly between 1966 and 1994 and between 1980 and 1994, and declines were noted in all states bordering its Canadian breeding range. The Canadian population experienced a decline at an average rate of 2.2% per year between 1967 and 1994, and between 1980 and 1994 at a rate of 4.2% per year; however, these trends were not significant and were based on fewer than 50 routes. The species declined significantly in Ontario between 1967 and 1994 (5.9% per year;  $P < 0.01$ ), and between 1980 and 1994 (11.3% per year;  $P < 0.01$ ).

Breeding Bird Survey data were also used in estimating the current Red-headed Woodpecker population in Ontario, where a large proportion of the Canadian population is found. Based on the estimated population size during the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas period (2,000 to 10,000 pairs), and the BBS' 11.3% annual decline, which indicates a 66% decline in the last 10 years, the 1995 population in the province can be estimated between 679 and 3,400 pairs.

The Red-headed Woodpecker was assigned a status of Vulnerable in Canada, based on the following facts: it has declined significantly throughout its range in North America, particularly in the last few decades, as well as in all Canadian provinces in which it breeds; the Canadian population is small and susceptible to problems such as habitat loss due to forest destruction, removal of dead trees and branches, and intensive agricultural practices; and, the population is under pressure from European Starling competition and increased road traffic.

The designation of Vulnerable indicates that the Red-headed Woodpecker is of special concern because it is particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. Under the proposed federal *Endangered Species Act*, a management plan for each Vulnerable species will be required by law within five years of a species' designation. Without BBS data, the declines listed above could not have been documented, and the current population size would have been essentially unknown. Information obtained through monitoring programs was instrumental in determining the status of the Red-headed Woodpecker in Canada, and therefore providing an important step in conservation and management efforts.

**Definition of COSEWIC "Risk" Categories**

**Extinct:** A species that no longer exists.

**Extirpated:** A species no longer existing in the wild in Canada, but occurring elsewhere.

**Endangered:** A species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

**Threatened:** A species likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

**Vulnerable:** A species of special concern because of characteristics that make it particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events.

**Not at Risk:** A species that has been evaluated and found to be not at risk.

**Indeterminate:** A species for which there is insufficient scientific information to support status designation.

Article extracted from *Wildlife Watchers - Report on Monitoring - Supplement to Seasons, Spring 1997*

# The Canadian Breeding Bird Survey 1996-1994

C.M. Downes and B.T. Collins

## Introduction

The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is a major data source for information on population changes in terrestrial birds in North America. The BBS began in 1966 in the eastern United States and maritime Canada and has since expanded through the U.S. and Canada, including Alaska, Yukon, and a few routes in the Northwest Territories (Fig 1). In 1992, several routes were established in northern Mexico on a trial basis. For most landbirds, the BBS is the only source of long-term data on population change that extends throughout the continent. In 1994, 377 BBS routes were run in Canada by approximately 292 volunteers. The BBS is jointly coordinated by the U.S. National Biological Service (USNBS) and the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS).

This Progress Note presents the Canadian population trends from 1966 to 1994 for cavity nesting birds recorded on the BBS for which sample sizes are sufficient. Trend estimates are summarized by seven biogeographical regions, or ecozones (Ecological Stratification Working Group 1996), and for Canada as a whole.

## Methods

The BBS is run each year between May 28 and July 7. In Canada, volunteers are encouraged to run their routes after June 1st or for the boreal regions, after June 5. Routes are located along all-weather secondary roads. The starting point and starting direction of routes are selected randomly in order to sample a range of habitats representative of the region. Because the BBS is designed to monitor long-term changes in bird populations, volunteers are encouraged to continue to run routes in areas where the habitat conditions have changed over time. The path of a route is changed only in cases where the road system has been altered or when traffic has increased to the point that the noise interferes with bird identification and detection or creates conditions where it is dangerous for participants to stop their car. Participants are encouraged to run their routes for as many consecutive years as possible in order to reduce the effects of observer variability on data analysis (Collins and Wendt 1989; Sauer et al. 1994).

Routes consist of 50 stops spaced 0.8 km along a 39.4 km route. Participants record the total number of individual birds heard or seen within 0.4 km of each stop during a 3-minute observation period. Data on starting and finishing times and weather conditions are also recorded. Canadian volunteers submit data forms to the National Wildlife Research Centre, CWS, where data are checked for errors, trends are analyzed, and the database is maintained. Canadian data are also forwarded to the USNBS for inclusion in the North American BBS database. Raw data are available on request to the first author.

## Data Analysis

Analyses of short and long term trends are calculated by CWS. Trends are summarized for seven ecozones (Boreal Shields, Atlantic Maritime, Mixedwood Plains, Boreal Plains, Prairies, Pacific Maritime and Montane Cordillera) and for Canada overall (see Fig 1). Previous analyses of Canadian BBS data were divided into seven regions: Newfoundland and the Maritime provinces, southern Ontario and Quebec, central Ontario and Quebec, the southern Prairie provinces, central Prairie provinces, and southern B.C. (see for example Erskine et al. 1992). The Boreal Shield ecozone used in this analysis takes in most of what used to be the "central Ontario and Quebec" region (except for the Gaspé Peninsula); it also includes boreal regions north of "central Ontario and Quebec"; boreal regions in Labrador, Manitoba and Saskatchewan; and all of the island of Newfoundland. The Atlantic Maritime ecozone includes the previous "Maritime provinces" region and the Gaspé Peninsula. The Mixedwood Plains ecozone corresponds quite closely to the previous "southern Ontario and Quebec" region. The Boreal Plains ecozone corresponds quite closely to the previous "central Prairies" BBS region. The Prairies ecozone includes the grassland areas of southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta and comprises approximately the same area as the previous "southern Prairie provinces" BBS region. The Pacific Maritime ecozone includes the B.C. coastal area, the Queen Charlotte Islands, and Vancouver Island. The Montane Cordillera ecozone includes most of the previous "southern British Columbia" BBS region excluding the coastal area. In previous BBS analyses one "southern British Columbia" region that included both coastal and interior areas in B.C. was used. In this report, bird population trends are calculated for four time periods: 1966-1994, 1966-1979, 1980-1994, and 1993-94.

## Data Screening

Several factors contribute to variation in BBS counts in addition to changes in bird populations; these include changes in weather, data of the survey, starting and finishing time, and differences among observers. To help control these sources of variation, data are screened to determine which surveys are included in analyses and how they are subdivided. Individual routes that were run under similar conditions are grouped into "subroutes" for analytical purposes. The set of conditions used to define a subroute is as follows:

- 1) All surveys were run by the same observer;
- 2) All surveys were run within a span of 19 or fewer calendar days;
- 3) All surveys were run under acceptable weather conditions; surveys with winds of force 4 (Beaufort scale) at both the beginning and end or force 5 at either point are excluded; surveys where rain combined with winds equal to force 4 or greater are excluded; on the prairies (where high winds are frequent) surveys are excluded only if winds are force 5 at the beginning and end of a route.

Only data from surveys run by the same observer for two or more years are used. Surveys run outside the allowable dates (May 28 through July 7) and those that started more than one hour after the prescribed time or finished after 11:00 (local time) are excluded from the analyses. Routes on which a species has never been recorded are excluded for the analysis of that species' trend. Analyses are calculated for all species with sample sizes of more than 15 routes in all years combined and with more than 40 individuals recorded per year.

Summary of trends for the Canadian Breeding Bird Survey. "Trend" is the mean annual percent change in bird population. "N" is the total number of routes used to calculate the trend.

Species Area	1966 - 1994		1966 - 1979		1980 - 1997		1993 - 1994	
	Trend	P	Trend	P	Trend	P	Trend	P
Mountain Bluebird								
Canada	0.4	125	-0.7	63	5.3	*	11.6	47
Boreal Plains	-7.5	25			8.9			
Prairies	5.8	n	-2.2	15	10.3	*	24.7	16
Montane Cordillera	-5.0	44	4.0	30	-0.3			
Eastern Bluebird								
Canada	2.0	n	-1.2	46	4.5	*	-34.4	n
Boreal Shields	2.7	n	7.6	21	3.6		-22.2	17
Mixedwood Plains	1.2	35	-10.7	n	4.1	n	-50.0	*
Purple Martin								
Canada	2.0	130	1.3	83	1.5		-5.0	39
Boreal Shield	1.4	n	9.9	16	0.0			
Atlantic Maritime	2.5	15						
Mixedwood Plains	2.2	34	1.7	26	-8.2	*		
Boreal Plains	1.3	21			2.0			
Prairies	4.9	32	-6.7	15	10.9	*		
Tree Swallow								
Canada	0.7	499	2.2	294	-0.9		-1.9	205
Boreal Shield	-1.9	123	3.9	64	-4.1	*	-16.7	36
Atlantic Maritime	-0.3	67	-1.7	63	-0.6		-2.3	23
Mixedwood Plains	6.0	*	1.2	33	5.0		-0.7	29
Boreal Plains	0.0	62	1.0	27	0.8		9.3	31
Prairies	3.5	*	5.7	41	3.6	*	-21.3	32
Pacific Maritime	-2.7	22	11.3	16	-5.9			
Montane Cordillera	0.9	57	6.2	37	-0.8		22.1	26
American Kestrel								
Canada	1.1	n	6.5	236	-1.4		7.6	144
Boreal Shield	2.3	*	6.4	56	-1.2		6.7	30
Atlantic Maritime	0.6	57	-0.1	48	2.7			
Mixedwood Plains	-0.2	42	2.8	31	-5.2	*	8.1	20
Boreal Plains	0.5	68	9.2	28	-0.4		-8.8	25
Prairies	1.7	*	6.4	32	-0.4		-23.2	19
Montane Cordillera	0.3	48	13.1	33	-3.6	*	24.9	20
Wood Duck								
Canada	2.7	*	2.4	45	3.9	*	-33.5	29
Boreal Shield	3.9	*			6.3	*		
Atlantic Maritime	2.2	n						
Mixedwood Plains	2.3	29	4.3	n	4.9			
Red-headed Woodpecker								
Canada	-1.1	48	-2.5	22	-0.3			
Mixedwood Plains	-3.1	23			-2.6			
Hooded Merganser								
Canada	1.8	n	-4.3	15	2.0			
Boreal Shield	1.3	20			3.2			

Information in this article from progress notes. Canadian Wildlife Service. The Canadian Breeding Bird Survey, 1966 - 1994. C.M. Downes and B.T. Collins

## Editor's Discussion

Southern Ontario is composed mostly of Mixedwood Plains while Northern Ontario is mostly Boreal Shield. Refer to these two areas when reading the discussion that follows. The BBS provides an important source with respect to population changes over time for most of Ontario's breeding birds.

I have included some of our most prominent cavity nesting birds for comparison along with the house sparrow and European starling - both prominent competitors for cavities.

The Eastern Bluebird figure of 2.0 for Canada tells us that from 1966 - 1994 the EABL has increased 2% per year over its entire Canadian range. Most of this increase occurred from 1980 - 1994. (A period of relatively warm winters). The period 1993 - 1994 shows a decrease of -34.4. This corresponds very well to our nestbox survey results (see OEBS 1996 nestbox report) that also shows a significant decline in both years. Most species showed declines during these years (mostly because of unseasonably cold weather). I am always amazed at how well population data information that is collected all show similar trends (i.e. Christmas bird counts, OEBS nestbox surveys, breeding bird surveys and migration monitoring counts).

**Table 2 - Fledged Young Per Monitored Nestbox  
As Reported on OEBS Surveys 1987 - 1996**

Year	Boxes Monitored	Number of Surveys	Fledged Young	EABL's Fledged Per Monitored Nestbox
1987	1 7503	101	4910	0.65
1988	8809	153	6352	0.72
1989	11426	175	8260	0.72
1990	9209	148	7307	0.79
1991	8784	134	8138	0.93
1992	7605	133	5770	0.76
1993	6561	119	3677	0.56
1994	4999	102	3681	0.74
1995	5653	89	4980	0.88
1996	5718	92	4611	0.81

The Tree Swallow showed an increase of 6% per year in the Mixedwood Plains area from 1966 - 1994. This may be attributed to increased use of nestboxes by Tres's during this period.

The Red-headed Woodpecker showed a decline of 1.1% per year but the decline in Southern Ontario (Mixedwood Plains) was much greater at -3.1%. (see article in this newsletter about the RHWP).

My own observations in the Kitchener area from 1986 - 1997 indicate a marked decline in sightings and nesting pairs of RHWP's. Over those years I have found several adults presumably hit by cars laying dead along the side of gravel roads and this year I found an immature dead beside the road. My own personal feeling is that the real culprit in their decline may be the automobile. They prefer to nest alongside roads that have large tree canopies that cover the road interspersed with some dead standing trees that they use for nest cavities. Since they spent a lot of time on the ground foraging for insects, they are vulnerable to collisions with cars.

It is interesting to note that the starling (-1.5) and the house sparrow (-0.7) both show statistically significant declines in the Mixedwood Plains area (southern Ontario) of Canada.

This continuing decline also shows up in the feeder watch survey results tabulated by the Long Point bird observatory and Cornell University. In the case of the house sparrow, the number of unmonitored boxes put up by well meaning individuals may be helping to reverse this trend as they allow HOSP's to nest successfully. 1997 was my worst year with HOSP's killing two adult female EABL's and two broods of young along with at least 15 adult Tres's. I trap and humanly destroy as many HOSP's as possible from my nestbox trails. If you are not able to monitor boxes and house sparrows are fledging then remove the boxes.

### **California Bluebird Recovery Program Western Bluebird decline continues in California**

The following summary is taken from the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS).

During the breeding season, Western Bluebirds normally occupy open woodlands in the foothills and lower mountains. In California, they are regularly found in both oak and coniferous woods. Unlike other bluebirds, this species usually avoids large open fields.

The breeding distribution of Western Bluebirds has not markedly changed during this century.

Based on data from BBS routes, Western Bluebirds are most numerous in California and portions of Arizona and New Mexico. The long-term (1966 - 1994) trends show declines in California and Arizona. Small sample sizes preclude detailed analyses of the trends during 1966 - 1979. The 1980 - 1994 trends are similar to the long term results, but include a decline in the survey-wide population. The trend map indicates that declines are centered in California and Arizona, but also occur throughout most of its range. Increasing populations are most prevalent in portions of Colorado, New Mexico and Utah. The survey-wide indices show periodic increases followed by declines, generally in 4-5 year cycles. Whether or not these cyclical fluctuations are real or an artifact of the BBS coverage in the western states is unknown. However, the overall trends are fairly stable. The California

population has declined throughout the survey period. Data from this state comprises nearly one-half of all BBS data for Western Bluebirds, and has a large influence on the regional population trend estimates.

### **Disaster in Amador County: Nestboxes become Lunchboxes** by Hatch Graham

Rains poured in late December and early January then flowed out over saturated soils. The Mokelumne and Cosumnes Rivers were in flood stage. Gophers, mice and rabbits couldn't find high ground and were lost. Frogs and other amphibians were washed away. By March, the raccoon population was near starving. Then the bluebirds arrived. Since 1980, when Don Jenkins placed 50 nestboxes on the Highway 124 right-of-way fence, the Western blues have prospered. When the swallows began to use the boxes, Don paired many of them to accommodate both species. Later in the season, the Ash-throated Flycatchers often take over one of the box pairs.

Since we began monitoring the trail in 1994, there's always been some raccoon predation. After two years of losing birds in one section of the trail, we installed hanging boxes a la Dick Purvis in Orange County. Seven boxes 4 ft high on the fence were replaced by seven hanging in the blue oaks from 10 to 20 ft high early this year. It was a good thing. Otherwise our total output for the year would have been negative. As it was, here is the sad record of our highway 124 trail: We fledged 21 bluebirds from 66 boxes but lost 17 adults to raccoons. Only 4 swallows were fledged while 11 adults succumbed. Seven fly-catchers fledged while 5 adults were taken. In addition to 34 adults massacred, we had 9 chicks who's grown to the size where their wings were spit on the ground.

Raccoons grab the birds from the nest and bite off the wings leaving them on the ground in front of the box. Wings and feathers at the box are almost a sure sign of a raccoon. A feral cat will kill or wound the bird by biting it in the back of the neck but then will carry the bird away. As I said, It's good we had the hanging boxes. Of the 21 blues fledged, 10 were from the hangers; all 4 swallows were from the trees; and 4 of the 7 flycatchers were also. In addition, we had two clutches of House Wrens amounting to 15 fledged from the hanging boxes.

I've been doing some real soul-searching to determine what to do. Don Yoder swears by the Noel Coon Guard. I know the hanging boxes work and on other trails I've erected elevator poles for people with house cats with relatively good success. The elevator pole or post was written up a couple of years ago by Paul Chance in *Sialia*. It consists of a 4.5 to 5 ft length of 2" PVC pipe into which is inserted a 5ft length of 1-1/2" PVC. The box is mounted to the top of the 1-1/2" pipe. When telescoped down, the side-opening box is easily monitored. Then the inner pipe is elevated up about 4-1/2 feet and the pipe secured in its elevated position with a nail slide through holes drilled through the set of pipes. Now the box is approximately 9 ft high.

I've recently been advised that the electrical metallic tubing (EMT) or thinwall pipe is an excellent mount for raccoons. It is usually placed about 7-1/2 ft high. This requires a ladder or stool to monitor. This would be okay in a level area but not in the rough terrain along Hwy 124.

Then I tried adapting Chance's Elevator Post to the EMT. A 1/2" section slips easily into a 3/4" section. It's a little harder drilling holes but I'm building 46 boxes on elevator posts and upping my hangers to 20. CalTrans is issuing us an encroachment permit for the right-of-way so our investment will be protected.

By the way, the cost of the EMT or thinwall pipe is nominal. It comes in 10 ft lengths. Pipe enough for two boxes costs about \$5.50. I find them easier to construct than to retrofit with Noel guards, and there remains the concern that the boxes with the guards on may be less acceptable. We'll see.

### Editor's Note

I have included this article to show bluebirders what can happen when your boxes are not protected against predators. Fence posts, trees, etc. provide easy access to predators. It is up to bluebirders to provide fully protected boxes on your trail. The OEBS will not endorse nestbox trails that do not meet these standards. Unprotected, unmonitored nestboxes do more harm than good and should be removed.

**Don't let your trail become a lunch counter for raccoons or other predators.**

