

Bluebird Trails

- Eastern Bluebirds are a species of Thrush found only in the eastern half of North America.



Central Texas is on their western habitat border. When English House Sparrows were introduced to America in the 1850s, Bluebirds across North America began to suffer decline due to competition for increasingly rare nest cavities. This coincided with the removal of old fence posts where cavities had provided abundant nesting sites. People mobilized by establishing Bluebird trails across the Continent. The trails consist of mounted Bluebird nest boxes spaced at least 100 yds apart over an open area. With these trails, Bluebirds have made a dramatic comeback.

The Hays County Master Naturalists have a project to install nest boxes on available habitat. We currently have boxes at Jacob's Well, Dripping Springs Ranch, the Driftwood Fire Station, Charro Ranch and in some neighborhoods. People visiting these parks inevitably find the Bluebird activity to be charming. Often, when they see us monitoring the boxes, they will comment about how excited they were to have seen Bluebirds.

The PVC nest boxes we maintain are virtually indestructible. They provide the Master Naturalists an opportunity to spread the interest and joy in Bluebirds to a wider audience. They will never become rotting eyesores as are seen in some areas. Wood peckers and animals cannot harm them.

Charro Ranch currently has two nest boxes but could support as many as 4 more. They would be installed in open areas at least 100 yds apart. During the nesting season which typically lasts from February through July they are monitored about once a week. As the leader of Bluebird Project 702, I am requesting permission to install up to 4 additional nest boxes at Charro Ranch.

These are recently completed nest PVC nest boxes looking for homes.



Sample nest box at Driftwood Fire Station



This illustrates how the boxes are mounted using t-posts driven into the ground with stovepipe baffles against predators. The t-posts can be easily moved. There are two of these at the Driftwood Fire Station currently.

Interior of nest box with
Eastern Bluebirds hatching

