

# Western Bluebirds: Sapphires in the sky!



## Western Bluebirds

They are small blue birds that delight us with their sweeping, and gliding flight. They can often be seen perching, and then diving down to the ground or swooping out into the air, hovering and returning to a perch with their catch. Insectivorous, Western Bluebirds are a healthy part of our oak woodlands and farms, and help control insect populations.

### Characteristics

The males have a rusty brown chest and the boldest, brightest blue back and wings. The female is a dusky beige and a paler blue, but pretty in her own right. They form pair bonds each spring, and usually begin nesting around late April. After their eggs are laid, the female will incubate her clutch for about 13-14 days, and then raise the chicks for around three weeks. The male and the female will both feed the nestlings, and the fledged young will often stay with their parents as assistants to a second brood of nestlings. They are social, and family-oriented birds!

### The Facts

- Western Bluebird populations were once steeply declining due to habitat loss, however they are now doing much better thanks to the efforts of dedicated nestbox trail volunteers.
- Once the female begins incubating her eggs, she must keep them at a nearly constant 95 degrees F, in order for them to develop properly.
- The female Western Bluebird is such a conscientious parent, that she will periodically rotate the eggs in the nest to keep them evenly warm.
- Western Bluebirds like to keep their nestboxes tidy! The male and female will remove the fecal sacs of their growing nestlings, and carry them away from the nestbox.



Want More Information?  
[www.napasolanoaudubon.com](http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com)

# Western Bluebirds Need Your Help

Do you love wildlife and birds? Are you someone that can't help but to stop and watch when a flock of birds flies over? Does the sound of songbirds lighten your spirits? You may be the right fit for this fun volunteer opportunity. The Napa-Solano Audubon Society is looking for spring volunteers to help with our Bluebird Trails throughout Napa County.



What do Bluebird Trails volunteers do? Volunteers are needed to visit nestboxes from early April until late June, weekly, and check up on nesting bluebirds. Training will be provided on how to carefully check on the nesting birds. Recording the results can be done on paper or directly into the Nestwatch App if you are "App-savvy"! What else do volunteers do? Many volunteers enjoy a little handywork, and may sometimes straighten leaning poles, build or make minor repairs to nestboxes, and clean out old nests.

## Bluebird Trails Community Scientists: Spring VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

### How can you get involved?

Contact Napa-Solano Audubon Society:  
Crystal DeMarco  
Environmental Education Coordinator  
[crystal.napasolanoaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:crystal.napasolanoaudubon@gmail.com)  
[napasolanoaudubon.com](http://napasolanoaudubon.com)

