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EASTERN BLUEBIRD NESTBOX REPORT

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The season of 1983 was disappointing. Doubly so since we dug in 140 new posts, wrapped metal around these posts to keep out raccoons and other pests and made new boxes and re-worked and cleaned the older boxes. The figure of 114 good nestings is the same as 1982. We can take consolation from the fact that we are not going backwards!

However we are puzzled by the unknown factors which prevented an increase in successful nests. Cold

weather in May, the aggressive behaviour of 400 pairs of Tree Swallows, wrens puncturing or removing eggs, poisonous sprays along country roads ... all might be factors keeping bluebirds rare. If we did expand into arable land and cities a trap to kill weaver finches (House Sparrows) would become necessary. These pests are the main reason for the poor showing of the bluebird of happiness.

Bill Read banded a total of 107 birds in the nestboxes. This is the highest number banded so far.

Table 1. YOUNG EASTERN BLUEBIRDS IN NESTBOXES, 1983*

<i>Location</i>	<i>Brood</i>	<i>No. Nests</i>	<i>No. Young</i>
Adjala	1	6	23
Adjala	2	2	8
Caledon/Albion	1	14	57
Caledon/Albion	2	3	10
Great Pine Ridge	1	8	39
Great Pine Ridge	2	6	25
Mono	1	28	121
Mono	2	20	70
Mulmur	1	14	60
Mulmur	2	6	18
Tosorontio	1	6	27
Tosorontio	2	1	4
Totals		114	462

*Average clutch size of fertile eggs 4.05.