

THE FOREST REPORTER

HISD Outdoor Education Center @ Forest Glen Newsletter

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A bluebird box located near Lake Grace.

Building a Future for Bluebirds

One of our most exciting projects to end the 2014—2015 school year was the construction and installation of bluebird boxes around the Forest Glen property. Bluebirds are cavity nesters, which means they use holes in trees and other available places to build their nests. Human development has played a role in the reduction of crucial nesting habitat, so these boxes are a great help for bluebirds looking for a place to raise their young.

After installation, it is very important to monitor the boxes to ensure they are available for the bluebirds to nest. Other birds, wasps, and mice will use these boxes to create their own nesting sites which eliminates a critical location for the bluebirds. Below are our observations from the six boxes on site.

Observations from May 18—May 29, 2015



Three of our six boxes are active! These nestlings have grown fast and have already left one nest. The other two nests have 9 total eggs that we anticipate will be hatching soon.

Eastern Bluebird

Sialia sialis



- Males (pictured above) are distinctly blue in color with a rusty throat and breast. Females are gray above, with an orange-brown breast.
- Primarily ground foragers, they hunt for insects such as caterpillars, beetles, and crickets to eat. During the fall and winter, bluebirds often turn their attention to fruits such as wild holly berries.
- Bluebirds usually have more than one nest of young per year. This is why it is important to continue monitoring those boxes!
- The eastern bluebird likes to live in open areas with available trees but little ground cover. This makes many public areas a good place for observations.

This information, and much more comes from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology found at:

www.allaboutbirds.org.

For even more bluebird specific information, including how you can build and monitor your own bluebird boxes visit:

[The North American Bluebird Society](http://TheNorthAmericanBluebirdSociety)

For more information about how you can help birds in Houston, visit:

[The Houston Audubon Society](http://TheHoustonAudubonSociety)