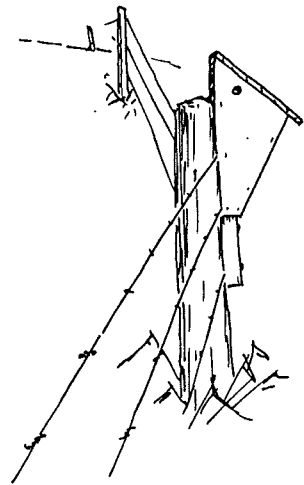
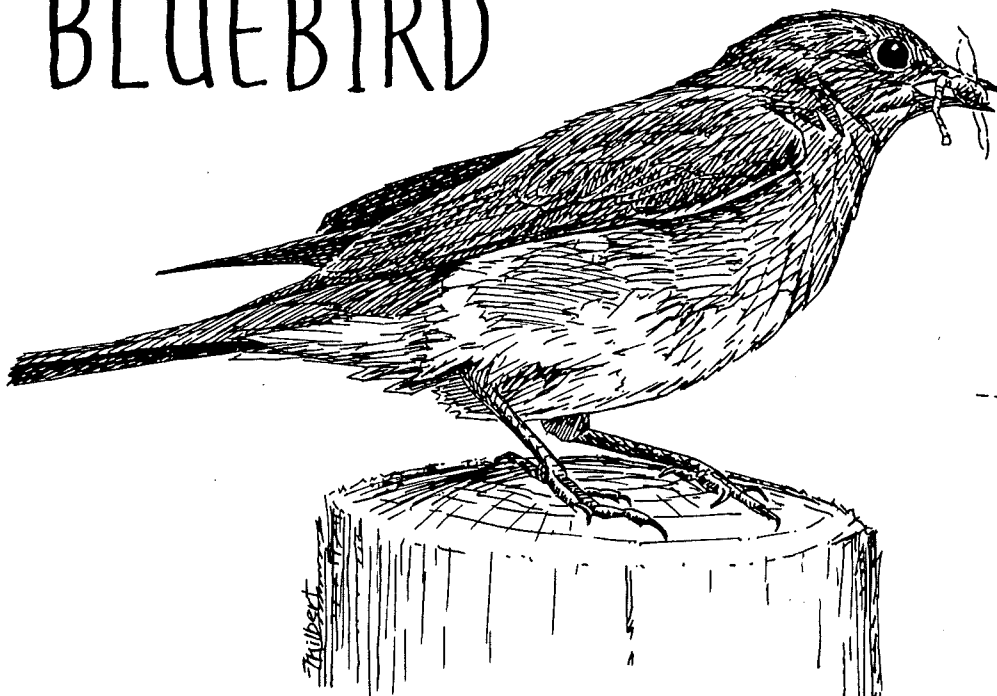


River Bend Naturalists Notebook

Presented by: RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER, Faribault, MN 55021

EASTERN BLUEBIRD



Bluebirds are found only in North America, with one of three species being found in every state. The Eastern Bluebird is common to states east of the Rocky Mountains including Minnesota, and winters mostly in the southern two-thirds of the United States. The Western Bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*) is found in the western states. The Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) is entirely blue in color except for its white belly, and is found in the western mountain region.

The Eastern Bluebird population has been on the decline for a number of years, but with an intensive program of erecting bluebird nesting boxes, called bluebird trails, by many volunteer individuals and groups, a remarkable comeback of this species is occurring. Two broods are usually raised

with the first nesting in April. Usually from 3-5 eggs are laid, but sometimes there are six, and on rare occasions seven. The eggs are usually blue but sometimes they are white. Incubation starts as soon as the last egg is laid and requires about 14 days. The young grow rapidly and stay in the nest about 17 or 18 days. After the first brood has left the nest, a second brood may be started almost immediately. Usually a new nesting site is selected for the second nest, but on occasion the same nest box is used.

—text by Orwin A. Rustad