

## Note from Pauline Tom:

Thanks, Everyone, for your interest in bluebirds.

Please feel free to contact me, 512 517 5678, [ptom5678@gmail.com](mailto:ptom5678@gmail.com). Too, you can ask questions on the Texas Bluebird Society Facebook.

I did not mention this. I invite you to join Texas Bluebird Society to support the work of this organization that's spreading "Bluebirds Across Texas ... one nestbox at a time."

If you join Texas Bluebird Society for first time through a Nestbox Distributor (I'm in in Mountain City) for \$20, you will receive a free nestbox and new member materials in exchange for your payment and Membership Form.

In fact (this is not advertised) if you join online, your new member materials by mail will include a voucher for a free nestbox, redeemable through a Nestbox Distributor.

## Q&As:

Q: What does EMT (pole, straps) mean?

A: 3/4-inch EMT is found in 10-foot lengths in electrical department of hardware store. It is not necessary to cut to 6-foot length. The extra 4-foot can become a "perch" for the birds.

Bluebirds use a perch to protect their nest and look for insects.

Birds of the World: *Individuals identify appropriate prey from distances of 15–20 m, sometimes as far away as 40 m, and "drop forage".*

Q: For bluebirds, how "open" does habitat have to be? Would open woodland with some clearings with native grasses and brush work? Or do you really need more of a lawn?

A: It never hurts to try :-). If you don't get bluebirds, you could be providing a cavity for some of the other native cavity-nesting birds. Some have waited with hope 20 years before bluebirds selected their nestbox. Good luck.

Q: What was the fire ant protector you mentioned?

A: Tree Tanglefoot Insect Barrier. Available on Amazon. And, sometimes it's at Callahan's. It's a natural product more sticky than honey. With a disposable stick, dip into the tub. Apply a ring of the substance around the pole about 1/2-inch in diameter. This should be placed under the baffle so nothing comes in contact with the substance. For instance, birds can land on the pole. And, you don't want to come in contact with sticky Tanglefoot. If no baffle is used, the top portion of a soft drink bottle can be affixed around the pole so only fire ants come in contact with the substance. Refresh Tanglefoot periodically.

Q: Do bluebirds migrate? And if so, where?

A: Bluebirds are partially migratory. Bluebirds only move as far as need be to have food (berries) and water and shelter. Usually in Texas, that's less than 5 miles. Many winter observations in Texas are in river bottoms. They'll be in family groups or flocks in winter before establishing a territory (defending that territory from other bluebirds) when nesting season comes. (Nesting season can start in January /February in Texas.

Some bluebirds from far north, where the range map showed they do not winter, fly through Texas on their way to wintering grounds in Mexico /Central America. Some of ours will migrate southward.

Because of the influx of migrating birds flying through Texas along with the birds that nested nearby, October is the best month to have a nestbox up in preparation for nesting season. The highest quantity of bluebirds will see the nestbox HOLE and know of possible nest site. Bluebirds LOVE holes. They are on the lookout for holes. That's why some nestboxes in presentation had "faux holes" stenciled to give the appearance of a hole from overhead. I've used 1.5 inch round stick-on floor protectors for legs of furniture.