

Slater -

Page one of two

My report is late and I apologize. There is not a great deal to be gained by it but it does bring constancy into play and that is important in any study of behavior looking at cause and effect.

The cause in the nesting season of 2006 was the weather of April and ~~early~~ May. It was notably and notoriously wet and cool, bringing about a noticeable lack of flying insects. Their scarcity was very difficult for Tree Swallows which feed from 10-300 feet in the air above marshes and grassy areas, on flying insects. This delayed Swallow nesting until mid and even late May. This delay of 10-14 days in starting their spring nesting produced a lower rate of success and for the first time, since my records began in 1994, the Swallows fledged were behind other birds, notably Bluebirds (Eastern species) on the Club property.

There were no nesting Bluebirds in 1994 but they have prospered since and in '06 outnumbered the Swallows in nesting and fledging success. Bluebirds are insectivorous like the Swallows but their "prey" consists of beetles, larvae, grubs, spiders and such. These are ground-dwellers and not brought into short supply by wet and cold weather hence nesting Bluebird ^{can} start their broods (some of them) in mid-April.

Having said that here are the figures for the nesting boxes that I monitor for the Club and the Cornell Laboratory of Cornell University.

| | <u>Fledged</u> | <u>Failed</u> | (egg(s) laid but nest deserted, or young died in nest) |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Eastern Bluebird | 15 (3 were 2 nd broods) | 2 | |
| Tree Swallow | 13 | 2 | |
| House Wren | 2 | 1 | |
| Black-capped Chickadee | 0 | 2 | |
| House Sparrow | 0 | 26* | |

(The birds of the bird-world)

* "Failed by human activity" (as I report in such manner to the Cornell Lab.) and I threw out the nests and 103 eggs (I'm allowed to by law!).

My thanks to Michael and his good men who tolerate my presence nicely. Thanks also to persons in the golf shop who allow me use of a Golf Cart at times to speed up my monitoring; my mature age appreciates that. The birds and I thank Warren for his houses. That does it for '06 - Sue