

## UNUSUAL WESTERN BLUEBIRD EGGS

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Usually bluebirds (*Sialia* spp.) lay unmarked light blue eggs (Bent 1949). Albinistic eggs have been reported for all three North American species (Musselman 1935, Laskey 1939, Power 1966, Eltzroth 1983), but are considered unusual. The fertility of albinistic eggs has been confirmed for the Eastern Bluebird (*S. sialis*; Musselman 1935, Laskey 1939) and the Mountain Bluebird (*S. currucoides*; Power 1966, Munro et al. 1981) but not the Western Bluebird (*S. mexicana*).

During the 1984 nesting season, a Western Bluebird laid 16 white eggs in three separate clutches (6, 5 and 5 eggs) in the same nest box near Golden, Jefferson Co., Colorado. All 16 eggs were fertile and of normal weight (pers. obs.). Their average dimensions were 20.1 x 15.6 mm, which according to Bent (1949) is typical for the Colorado race *bairdi*. This high fertility rate is similar to that for albinistic eggs of the Mountain Bluebird (96.1%; Munro et al. 1981) and in the Eastern Bluebird (96.1%; Laskey 1939). The second clutch of 5 eggs was destroyed by a House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*), which I determined using criteria described by Pinkowski (1975). Fertility was determined by finding the 5 partially developed eggs shortly after they were destroyed. Those clutches that hatched did so within the usual 2-week incubation period (Eltzroth 1983). The nestlings appeared to be typical and grew in a characteristic manner (McCluskey et al. 1977), were banded at about 10 days of age and fledged 19 to 21 days after hatching.

The female did not manifest any abnormal coloration. She was captured and banded during the fifth day of incubation of the first clutch and weighed a normal 31.0 g. Both adults cared for the nestlings.

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