

2024 Trails Festival
June 1st
Save the date!

The Trail Times

Oxford County Trails Council

Winter 2023/2024

Nest boxes

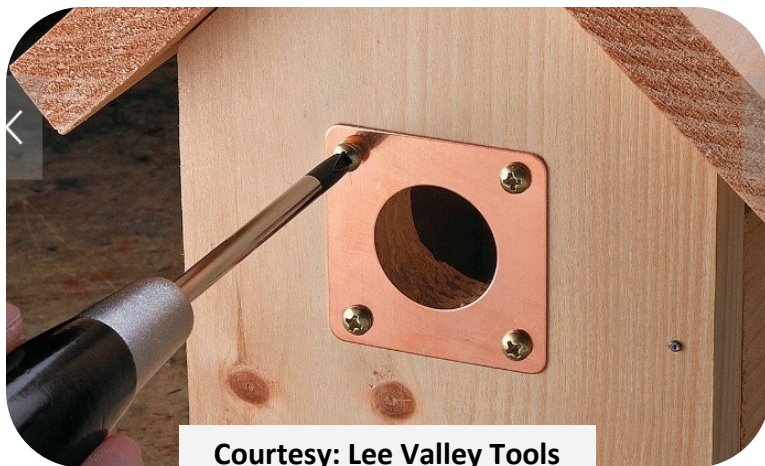
As you walk the Oxford Thames River Trail you will notice strategically located bird nesting boxes. Volunteers are building and installing more because they are vital to the success of our migratory bird populations. Various bird species use these boxes from April to September as a safe place to build a nest and raise one or two broods of chicks.

The trail provides a near perfect environment as the surrounding wetlands and woodlands produce large volumes of flying insects during the breeding season and the adult birds and their chicks thrive on these. It's also a relatively quiet place and the boxes are sufficiently distant from the trail to minimize disturbance from humans and animals.

Although designed primarily to attract Eastern Blue Birds they are favoured by Tree Swallows and other migratory insect eaters.



Although trail-side nest boxes are relatively crude structures you will note that those installed at the east end of the Oxford Thames River Trail have copper rings surrounding the entrance hole. They prevent rodents gnawing the hole to make it bigger and either take up residence or predate on the resident bird's eggs or live chicks.



Courtesy: Lee Valley Tools

A 1.5" dia. hole suits the Eastern Blue Bird.

Essential nest box housekeeping.

Prior to each nesting season the nesting boxes require a thorough clean out to remove old nesting materials and any accumulated floor muck. After inspecting and repairing any damage the interior bottom of the box should have about a teaspoonful of diatomaceous earth sprinkled over it before the box is closed up. Diatomaceous earth is a non-toxic, natural compound that reduces or eliminates the possibility of mites and other biting insects infecting the box bottom and potentially harming or killing the chicks. Diatomaceous earth is available at most farm stores.



Winter trails footwear.

Walking trails in winter, especially when the sun is shining, can be a truly uplifting experience. For maximum enjoyment and safety proper footwear is needed. Insulated, waterproof boots with crampons or strap-on studs can provide extra comfort and minimize the risk of slipping and falling.

Visit us at the Woodstock Rec and Leisure Fair

March 3rd, 1pm to 4pm at the Reeves Community Complex, Finkle St., Woodstock

Oxford County Trails Council

www.oxfordcountyltrailsCouncil.ca