

Guide to Eastern Bluebird Hatchlings



Day 1 - Chicks hatch after 12-14 days of incubation. Hatching often occurs in early morning. Eastern Bluebirds take 1-6 hours to pip through the shell. It can take 24-48 hours for all eggs to hatch. Hatchlings have bright coral-pink skin. Eyes are sealed shut.



Day 2 - All eggs hatched. Parents (both male and female) feed the nestlings at least twice an hour.



Day 3 - Contour feathers start to develop. Soft gray down along the edges of wings, the head and spine. Skin looks blue-black as feathers begin to develop beneath it.



Day 4 - Babies weigh about 1/3 of an ounce.



Day 5 - Feather sheaths on wings begin to emerge. Wings are darker. Eyes still closed.



Day 6 - Cheeping is louder. Eyes may begin to open as slits.



Day 7 - The female no longer broods, because the young can maintain their body temperature by Day 7-9.



Day 8 - Eyes open on Day 8-11, and feathers continue to come out of sheaths.



Day 9 - Nestlings may cease gaping when nest is monitored. Instead they hunker down, eyes closed.



Day 10 - Nestlings can crawl.



Day 11 - Feather sheaths start to disintegrate; wing feathers begin to emerge.



Day 12 - Nestlings almost completely feathered.



Day 13 - babies are strong enough to cling to the entrance of the nestbox to look out.



Day 14 - Narrow ring of white feathers around each eye, breasts are speckled with gray. Males have bright blue feathers; females have white edging on outer tail feathers.

