

# NEST DATA FORM

Neighborhood Nestwatch  
National Zoological Park  
PO Box 37012 MRC 5503  
Washington, DC 20013-7012

Participant Sitecode: \_\_\_\_\_ Species: \_\_\_\_\_

Nest Location (circle one): Nestbox   Shrub   Tree   Other \_\_\_\_\_

Nest Height (feet): \_\_\_\_\_ Nest tree or shrub species (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you maintain a feeder? \_\_\_\_\_ Average # of outdoor cats seen per week: \_\_\_\_\_

Which months of the year? \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach additional paper if needed – see reverse for helpful hints)

## Nest Visits:

Date	# of Eggs	#of Nestlings

## Fate:

Successful	
Successful but parasitized	
Failed – predated	
Failed – weather-related	
Failed – human activity related	
Failed – parasitized	
Failed – unknown	

## Nest Visit Summary:

Number of eggs	
Number of nestlings	
Number of fledglings	
Estimated date clutch complete	
Estimated hatching date	
Estimated fledging date	

## Stage of Failure:

Didn't fail	
Building	
Laying	
Incubation	
Hatching	
Nestling	
Unknown	

## **Helpful Hints to Successful Nest Monitoring:**

### **Nest finding:**

Carefully watch adult birds to see if they pick up nesting material such as dead leaves, spider webbing, plastic strips, moss, or small twigs. If a bird does pick up nesting material, put down your binoculars and observe it with your eyes until it flies. Note the direction and exactly where it flies. Does it fly into a bush, under the eave, into the grill? You may be able to follow it to the nest site. If a nest is already active, watch for adult birds carrying food material such insects or worms or even the sound of peeping of nestlings.

If you are able to distinguish between the male and female (e.g. Northern Cardinals), following the female can lead to finding a nest location more quickly. Sometimes the male will follow along or even actively chase the female to the nest area. Again, look for where adults apparently disappear then make a quick perusal of the area after they leave. If you can't find the nest, back off and try tracking them again. Be patient!

### **Nest-monitoring:**

Visitation frequency: The most sensitive periods during a nest attempt are nest-building and incubation. During these periods limit visits to the nest site to **once every three days**. During the nestling stage visit **once every two days**.

Duration of visit: Make visits as brief as possible, preferably when adults are off the nest, using different routes for approaching and leaving the nest site. This guards against leaving human scent trails which nest predators might utilize. Spend as little time as possible once you arrive at the nest.

How long to monitor: Try as much as possible to follow a nesting attempt through to its fate. If a nest has made it to the late nestling stage try at least to make visits at or as close to the estimated fledge date as possible. We want enough recorded information to determine if a nest has definitely failed or successfully fledged young.

A nest is considered successful if it produces at least one young which fledged the nest. Parasitized nests are those in which Brown-headed cowbirds have laid eggs. Nestlings and fledglings from these eggs are reared by the host parents and can result in the death of some or all of the host nestlings.

### **Online data entry:**

In addition to entering data for re-sightings of color-banded birds, you can enter nest data online (address on bottom of page). As always, we accept paper forms mailed to us.