

Stephen Joly

Supervisor: Dr. Matt Reudink

Committee: Dr. Tom Dickinson, Dr. Nancy Flood and Dr. Jonathan Van Hamme

Home-wreckers or helpers? Do conspecific and heterospecific neighbors influence extra-pair paternity in mountain bluebirds?

Mountain Bluebirds (*Sialia currucoides*) are migratory songbirds living in grassland/forest edge habitats of western North America. Bluebirds are secondary cavity nesters and readily use artificial nest boxes. Both male and female bluebirds work together to raise their offspring but the resident male may not be the father of all of the nestlings in his nest. Using genetic analysis, the paternity of nestlings can be determined and an extra-pair paternity event identified. I will investigate the occurrence of extra-pair paternity in mountain bluebirds and examine both mountain bluebird and tree swallow neighbours as potential influences.