



CAROLINA & BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE NESTING GUIDE

CHICKADEE NESTS

- Carolina Chickadees occur throughout the Commonwealth, with Black-Capped Chickadees overlapping their territory in the North and Northwest regions of the State.
- Chickadees generally have only one brood per season, but in the event of egg failure a few new eggs may be laid in the same nest. Do not remove seemingly abandoned nests too soon as nest building is a long, painstaking process.
- Egg laying starts 1-2 days after nest completion, with 1 egg laid per day in March - end of May/early June depending on availability of natural or artificial cavities. Average clutch is usually 6 eggs, though can be 3-10.
- Female begins to brood eggs when the last, or sometimes next to last, egg is laid – count this as the first day of brooding. The male brings food to the female during brooding and for a few days following hatching.
- Eggs may be hidden under a plug or blanket of animal fur until incubation begins. Tampering with this covering may cause damage to the eggs. Monitoring will become easier once incubation has started and the eggs are exposed.
- Female broods eggs on average 12 - 13 days. Hatching may occur over a 2 to 3-day period. Eyes fully open at Day 12.
- Nestlings fledge on or around the 16th day after hatching. Do not open box after 11th day of hatching.

COUNT GUIDE

DATE

1 EGG	DAY 1	
2 EGGS	DAY 2	
3 EGGS	DAY 3	
4 EGGS	DAY 4	
5 EGGS	DAY 5	
6 EGGS	DAY 6	
1 st Day of brooding	DAY 7	
2 nd Day of brooding	DAY 8	
3 rd Day of brooding	DAY 9	
4 th Day of brooding	DAY 10	
5 th Day of brooding	DAY 11 DO NOT OPEN BOX FROM THIS DAY FORWARD	
6 th Day of brooding	DAY 12	
7 th Day of brooding	DAY 13	
8 th Day of brooding	DAY 14	
9 th Day of brooding	DAY 15	
10 th Day of brooding	DAY 16	
11 th Day of brooding	DAY 17	
12 th Day of brooding	DAY 18	
13 th Day of brooding	DAY 19	
Babies hatch between 12th & 13th day of brooding – Start count all over again after hatching.		
Hatch Day	DAY 0	
1 st Day of hatching	DAY 1	
2 nd Day of hatching	DAY 2	
3 rd Day of hatching	DAY 3	
4 th Day of hatching	DAY 4	
5 th Day of hatching	DAY 5	
6 th Day of hatching	DAY 6	
7 th Day of hatching	DAY 7	
8 th Day of hatching	DAY 8	
9 th Day of hatching	DAY 9	
10 th Day of hatching	DAY 10 DO NOT OPEN BOX FROM THIS DAY FORWARD	
11 th Day of hatching	DAY 11	
12 th Day of hatching	DAY 12	
13 th Day of hatching	DAY 13	
14 th Day of hatching	DAY 14	
15 th Day of hatching	DAY 15	
16 th Day of hatching	DAY 16 Nestlings fledge sometime after this day.	