

# Eastern Bluebird

Merlebleu de l'Est

*Sialia sialis*

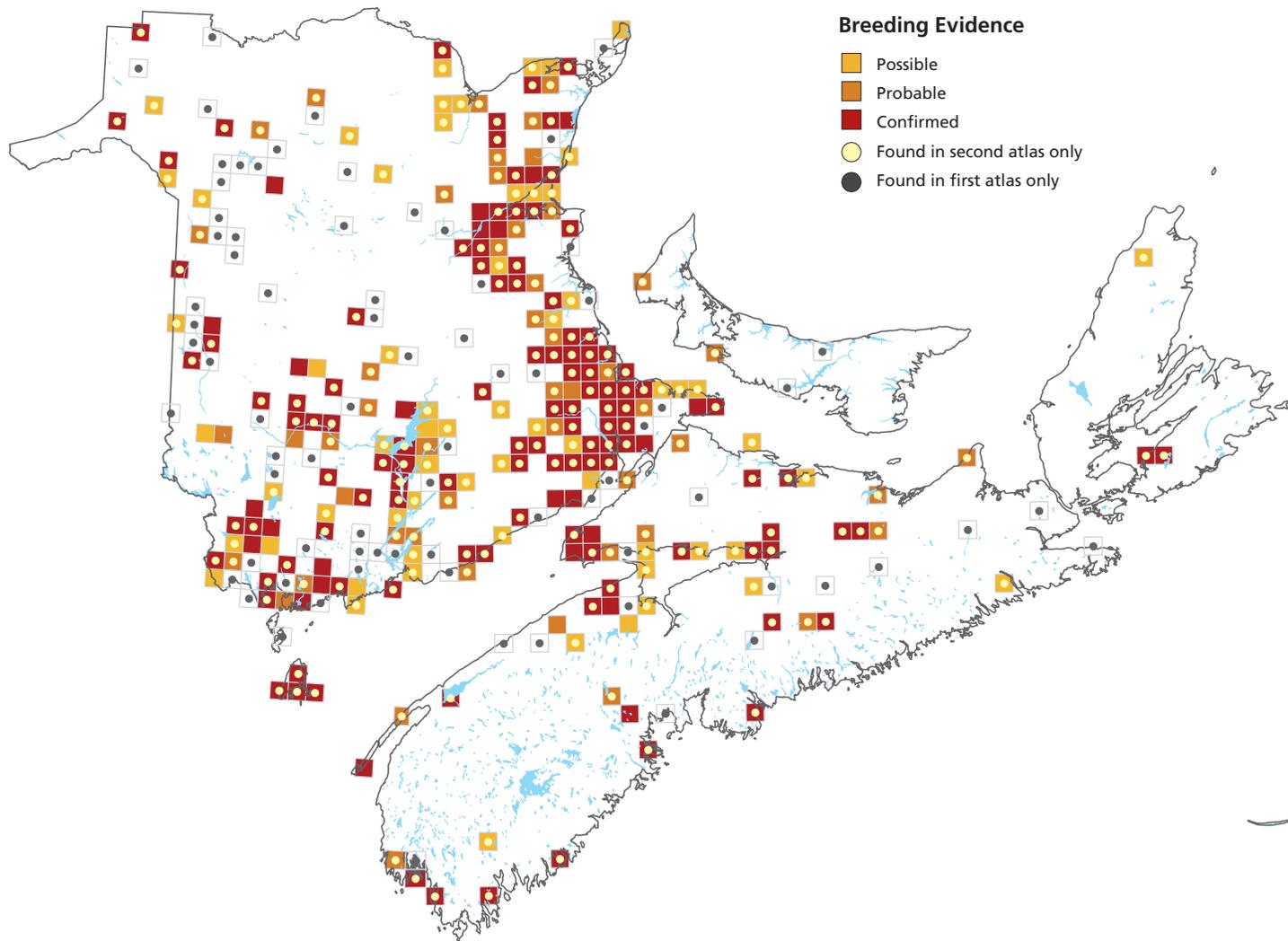


Glen Fox

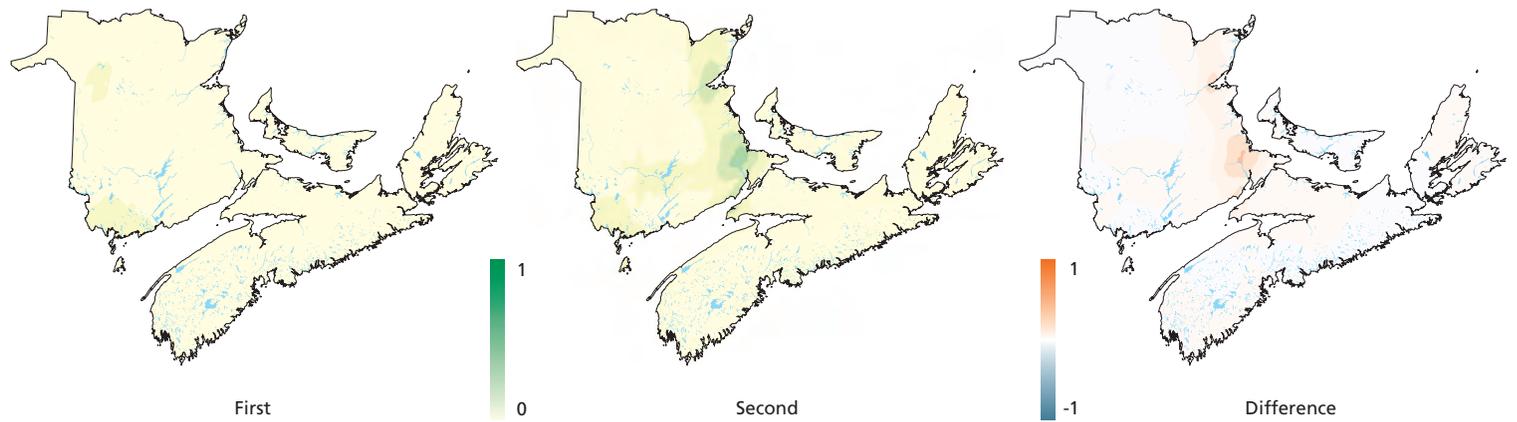
It's said that the bluebird carries the sky on its back and the earth on its breast, and this is certainly true in the Maritimes: the land of rich, red soil. Although the Eastern Bluebird has never been common here, many people nevertheless recognize it by its distinct appearance and cheerful song. The species breeds throughout the Eastern Temperate Forests, and the Maritimes are at the extreme northeastern edge of its breeding range.

Here, the Eastern Bluebird prefers open habitats typical of rural and agricultural areas, often where residents have erected bluebird boxes. In NB it is also loosely associated with bogs and fens, and the species is most readily detected in the Eastern Lowlands, particularly where its preferred combination of habitats is most prevalent.

Although the probability of observing this species increased in NB's Eastern Lowlands, little change was detected elsewhere. At the same time, the species underwent a distribution shift in NB: from a relatively even scattering of records across the province to a near blanket of occurrence in the rural parts of the



## Probability of Observation



Eastern Lowlands. The bluebird also expanded its distribution into Cape Breton and southwestern NS.

Previously designated by COSEWIC as Special Concern in 1984, the Eastern Bluebird population has recovered such that it was redesignated as Not at Risk in 1996. Its recovery is widely attributed to the success of man-made bluebird trails and to warmer weather patterns across its range, although the increase here may result from birds dispersing from increasing populations elsewhere in the range.

—Cindy E. J. Cartwright



Sean Blaney