# Contents

From the President - *Sherry Linn* ........................................................................................................................................... 2
From the Managing Editor - *Scott W. Gillihan* .......................................................................................................................... 3
NABS 2012 - *Sherry Linn* ......................................................................................................................................................... 4
NABS Notices ............................................................................................................................................................................... 4
NABS Awards 2012 - *Sherry Linn* .............................................................................................................................................. 6
A Summer Miracle - *Marion Ball* ........................................................................................................................................... 9
Clean Your Feeders this Winter - *Scott W. Gillihan* .................................................................................................................. 11
Bluebirds of Antietam - *Mark Raabe* ...................................................................................................................................... 12
A Roosting Box for Bluebirds - *Kurt Hagemeister* .................................................................................................................. 15
Tree Swallows Raise Eastern Bluebird - *Walt Sivertsen* ............................................................................................................ 17
Eastern Bluebird with a Beak Deformity - *Mary Roen* ............................................................................................................. 18
Raccoon Nation ........................................................................................................................................................................... 19
Mice and Rats in Nestboxes - *Bet Zimmerman* ...................................................................................................................... 20
In Remembrance of Barbara Chambers ..................................................................................................................................... 22
Mr Bluebird Blue - *Tommy Outerbridge* .................................................................................................................................. 23
BluesNews ...................................................................................................................................................................................... 24
Bluebirds Everywhere .................................................................................................................................................................... 24
A Bluebird Fledgling's Collision with a Window - *Mary Roen* .............................................................................................. 26
One Pole, Two Very Different Views ........................................................................................................................................ 27
Research Review - *Scott W. Gillihan* ........................................................................................................................................ 28
Affiliates of the North American Bluebird Society .................................................................................................................. 30

*Table of Contents photo:* Alan Wilson braved the winter cold near Montreal to capture this dramatic image of a hunting Northern Hawk Owl, a cavity-nesting species of North America’s boreal forest.
Winter Message To Our Affiliate Organizations
Phil Berry

Well, it’s winter. What do we do now? The bluebirds have left for the northern areas and are scarce in most of the south.

If you are anything like me, you have a lot of repairs to do on your trail, and time is running short to get those repairs done in time for the nesting season. It will soon be here.

I would like to thank those of you who participated in the annual convention in Newport Beach, California. For those who could not make it, you missed a wonderful party. And the plans are all in place for NABS 2013 in Aiken, South Carolina in October. Go to the NABS website for all the information you need to get prepared for another wonderful convention this fall. Jim Burke and his associates have put a lot of work into this meeting and you will be sorry if you miss it.

Which brings me to the point of my article: We need help for planning the annual meeting in the Fall of 2014. This year was California, next is South Carolina, and I think for proper balance, someone should step up to the plate to host NABS 2014. We have talked it over and decided it would be great if one of the NABS affiliates in the central part of the country (including Canada) would host us for that meeting. NABS provides a stipend to assure that hotel rooms, etc., are covered and just to assure you that you are not alone when planning. I will offer any help I can do for you, and I feel sure the previous hosts will also do whatever they can for you. Of course, if we can’t get a centralized meeting place, we are certainly open to any Affiliate Organization’s offer to host our meeting.

I would also like to encourage those of you who belong to local bluebird clubs that are not affiliated with NABS to join us. NABS will pay dues to your club as any other member would, you reciprocate by paying dues to NABS.

Now get busy with your plans for nesting season. It is not that far away.

Phil Berry
NABS VP for Affiliate Relations

The North American Bluebird Society, Inc. is a non-profit education, conservation and research organization that promotes the recovery of bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting bird species in North America.
In life there are always peaks and valleys and recently we have experienced both within a brief two-week period. We had a wonderful NABS conference hosted by the Southern California Bluebird Club (SCBC) only to suffer the sudden loss of our dear friend and Board member Barbara Chambers on October 15th shortly after we returned home. To Charlie Chambers, his family, and all bluebird friends—we share not only your heartache but also the fond remembrance of Barbara’s laughter and enthusiasm for life. She left us all too soon.

I would like to thank the members of the SCBC and their conference committee for hosting a great conference in Newport Beach. We had the opportunity to really see what can be done to entice bluebirds back into urban areas where they once flourished before we usurped their territory. Through the tireless efforts of folks like Dick Purvis, Western Bluebirds are now a common sight in Orange County. The planning and execution of our 35th annual conference went off without a hitch and the two hours set aside to socialize prior to dinner each evening allowed for renewing of friendships and the forging of many new relationships. You can be proud of your accomplishments and congratulations on recently receiving 501(c)(3) status.

With a recognized quorum at our Annual General Meeting, we were able to complete the election process and pass the proposed Bylaw revisions. The results are posted on our website and appear elsewhere in this Journal; the new Bylaws in effect are also posted online. We received a total of 480 ballots and I thank all the members who took the time to cast a vote. As per the Bylaws, within 90 days of the election the Board of Directors must vote for the Executive Committee. That was completed on November 14th and for the next year I remain as your President, Phil Berry is 1st VP Affiliate Relations, Jim Burke steps into 2nd VP Community Relations as Farrell Roe stepped down, Kathy Kremnitzer agreed to stay on as Secretary, and we welcome Gwen Tietz into the Treasurer position as Greg Beavers has left the Board. We are fortunate to have Board members who stepped into the vacancies left by our loss of Barbara. Please check out the Officials box in this edition for the recent changes.

I would like to thank Tena Taylor for her 7+ years as a “temporary” volunteer handling the membership database and being our frontline person with our members and supporters. Your hard work and dedication to NABS is commendable and we are pleased that you have agreed to remain on the Membership Committee offering your valuable knowledge. Our new recruit for Membership is Marion Ball from Nebraska. Marion has a background in computers and is already striving to learn the database program so that our changeover may be seamless to the membership at large. Please have patience during this transition as there are many facets to the job! Marion is a member of our affiliate Bluebirds Across Nebraska, monitors a nestbox trail, and loves photography. She may be welcomed and contacted at mb.bluebird@abbnebraska.com or through membership@nabluebirdsociety.org.

As I write this, we have transitions going on in most of our committees and the Board is working hard to complete the conversion of our financials to QuickBooks, preparing the draft 2013 budget, and setting our goals for next year.

You will receive this after the holiday season so here’s hoping you had a wonderful celebration with family and friends—and I wish everyone all the best for a great bluebird year in 2013!

Warmest regards,
Sherry
250-495-7891 or email goldstrm@vip.net
From the Managing Editor
Scott W. Gillihan

Here we are in the middle of winter—cold blue days and long dark nights, the time when native peoples traditionally shared stories and gained wisdom in the process. It’s still a good time for sharing stories and gaining wisdom—invite friends over for an evening of conversation and games, pick up that book you’ve been meaning to read, take time to reflect on your life while the icy winds blow and snowflakes tap at your window.

And yet, even now, the earth is tilting on its axis, shifting the northern hemisphere back toward the sun. Cavity-nesting Eastern and Western Screech-Owls can sense it, and have started courtship. It won’t be long before you’ll have bluebirds courting and building nests in your nestboxes. Spring!

Many thanks to all who contributed to this issue; to Sherry Linn (for guidance and for proofreading it); Lauren Kane (for providing ongoing access to scientific papers on BioOne for the Research Review section); and Kurt Hagemeister (Michigan Bluebird Society), Kathy Kremnitzer (Maryland Bluebird Society), Vicki May (East Central Illinois Bluebird Society), and Bet Zimmerman for sharing articles from their newsletters or for providing article ideas. And thanks to NABS member Diane Allison for pointing me toward a top-notch pie shop here in New Mexico!

If you’d like to contact one of the authors or photographers, just drop me a line and I’ll forward your message.

As always, please send any photos, articles, or ideas to me at NABSeditor@gmail.com or 5405 Villa View Dr., Farmington, NM 87402.

Officials of North American Bluebird Society, Inc.

Executive Committee
Sherry Linn - President
Phil Berry - First VP for Affiliate Relations
Jim Burke - Second VP for Community Relations
Kathy Kremnitzer - Secretary
Gwen Tietz - Treasurer

Board of Directors
Bob Benson
Tom Comfort
David Cook
Bernie Daniel
Jim Engelbrecht
Jim McLochlin
Farrell Roe
John Schuster
Dan Sparks
Anne Sturm
Bet Zimmerman

Bluebird Managing Editor
Scott W. Gillihan

Education Committee
Bernie Daniel, PhD - Chair
Kevin Berner
Terry Neumyer
John Schuster
Julie Zickefoose
Bet Zimmerman

Finance Committee
Gwen Tietz - Chair
Greg Beavers
Bernie Daniel
Jim Engelbrecht
Dan Sparks

Facebook Administrator
Linda Schamberger

Grant & Awards Committee
Anne Sturm - Chair
Greg Beavers
Kimberly Corwin
Stan Fisher
Sherry Linn

Hotline Committee
Bob Benson - Chair

Journal Advisory Committee
Tom Comfort - Chair
Vicki Butler
Bernie Daniel
Benjamin Leese
Dick Tuttle

Membership Committee
Sherry Linn - Chair
Marion Ball - Database Admin.
Jackie Berry
Phil Berry
Tena Taylor

Nestbox Committee
Bob Benson - Chair
Kevin Berner
Bernie Daniel
Kathy Kremnitzer
Myrna Pearman
John Schuster
Bet Zimmerman
Steve Eno (ex officio)

Nominating Committee
Bob Benson - Chair
Phil Berry
David Cook

Speakers Bureau
David Cook - Chair
Dan Sparks

Website Committee
Jim McLochlin - Chair
Dan Sparks

Webmaster
Jim McLochlin
I cannot say it any better than the Southern California Bluebird Club has: “Under the theme, A Better world for bluebirds is a better world for all, over 120 bird and conservation enthusiasts from three nations met October 4–7 in Newport Beach, CA. Attendees were treated to outstanding presentations by experts on woodpeckers, owls, raptors, Western Bluebirds, chickadees and other cavity-nesting birds. Field trips were made to Bolsa Chica wetlands to observe migrating birds, Mason Park to observe Western Bluebirds and a Great Horned Owl, and Upper Newport Bay to observe birds from pontoon boats.” For a wonderful sense of the fun we all had, go to http://bluebirdssc.wordpress.com/ and enjoy the slide show.

Our hats are off to the Southern California Bluebird Club for planning and executing a great conference. The sun shone and so did their group of busy volunteers as they went about their business in those now-famous red vests! If there were any “uh-oh” moments, they hid them well. We cannot thank you enough as you showcased what can be accomplished in an urban landscape to bring back the bluebirds.

Both the Affiliate and Annual Membership meetings were well attended with good questions and participation. We have come back to our respective homes with lots of ideas and suggestions that will be incorporated into our planning for 2013.

To both new friends and long-standing ones, thank you for all you do for bluebirds and I hope to see you all again next year when we meet in Aiken, South Carolina.

---

**NABS Notices**

**NABS 2012 Election Results from the Annual Membership Meeting**

October 5th, 2012 in Newport Beach, California

Ballots cast: 480

Bylaw Amendments: **For 468, Against 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-Year Terms</th>
<th>2-Year Terms</th>
<th>3-Year Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Benson</td>
<td>Phil Berry</td>
<td>Tom Comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Chambers</td>
<td>Jim Burke</td>
<td>Bernie Daniel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Cook</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jim Engelbrecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Linn</td>
<td></td>
<td>John Schuster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Sparks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gwen Tietz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Sturm</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bet Zimmerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>442</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>446</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>439</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>447</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Congratulations to all!_

**Like us on Facebook!** Great friends, great photos, great videos, and great information are all waiting for you on the NABS Facebook page. Stay connected with NABS members and other bluebird enthusiasts at [www.facebook.com/NorthAmericanBluebirdSociety](http://www.facebook.com/NorthAmericanBluebirdSociety)
The South Carolina Bluebird Society cordially invites you to the 36th Annual North American Bluebird Society Conference “The Art of Bluebirding” October 3-5, 2013 in friendly, beautiful and historic

Speakers

Vicky Bertagnolli, Extension Agent, Clemson University, The Spread of Fire Ants & Their Control

Dr. Whit Gibbons, Professor Emeritus, University Of Georgia, Savannah River Ecology Lab, Bluebirds, Reptiles & Amphibians Have a Lot in Common

Tracy Grazia, Wildlife Biologist, USDA Forest Service - Savannah River The Red-cockaded Woodpecker (an endangered species)

Robert Kenname, Research Professional, University Of Georgia, Savannah River Ecology Lab, Breeding Biology of Wood Ducks

Elliott Levy, Executive Director, Aiken County Historical Museum, Historical Perspective of Aiken and the Central Savannah River Area

Rudy Mancke, Naturalist-in-Residence, University of South Carolina, Connectivity in Nature

Dr. T. David Pitts, Professor of Biology, University of Tennessee - Martin, The Night Life of Bluebirds

Dr. Harry Shealy, Professor of Biology, University of South Carolina - Aiken, How Nonprofits Can Help Conserve Wildlife Habitat

Mark Vukovich, Biological Technician, USDA Forest Service - Savannah River, The Red-headed Woodpecker in South Carolina

Bet Zimmerman, Certified Environmental Professional, Managing Challenges: House Sparrows, House Wrens & Paper Wasps

Tours & Field Trips

Aiken Historic District by Trolley
Equine Rescue of Aiken
Hitchcock Woods
Phinizy Swamp (Important Bird Area)
Red-cockaded Woodpecker Habitat
National Wild Turkey Center Wincheester Museum
Silver Bluff Audubon Center & Sanctuary (Important Bird Area)

Golf
Do you or your spouse play golf? Bring clubs!

Information & Registration

More information and Registration Forms will be in the spring issue of Bluebird in March 2013 and on these websites after January 31, 2013:
www.nabluebirdsociety.org
www.southcarolinabluebirds.org
Contact: Jim Burke, President, South Carolina Bluebird Society, P.O. Box 5151, Aiken, SC 29804-5151; (803) 644-0235; jburke@southcarolinabluebirds.org
Once again, NABS is pleased to honor the dedicated work of bluebird and native cavity-nesting bird conservationists. Each year the Awards Committee welcomes you to submit nominations for those who have worked tirelessly through the years for our cause. The following individuals received national recognition at the 35th Annual NABS Conference hosted by the Southern California Bluebird Club in Newport Beach, California, in October.

Dick Purvis – Lifetime Achievement Award for his Outstanding Contribution in all facets of Bluebird Conservation

Dick Purvis began installing bluebird boxes in Orange County, CA in 1984 when it was estimated there were only eight pairs of Western Bluebirds in the county. He worked hard to entice the bluebirds to come down from the distant hill areas and back into the urban landscape. While doing so, he encouraged and educated untold numbers of future bluebird enthusiasts. He invented a lifter basket, the “Purvis Lifter,” to install hanging boxes in trees in cemeteries, golf courses, and parks.

Dick has made presentations to thousands of residents from school kids to seniors in nursing homes and continues to mentor young folks in hands-on proper bluebird trail management. One of the conference highlights was the introduction of Alex Krebs by Dick. Alex is an Eagle Scout and Hornaday Awardee (the Scouting equivalent to an Olympic Gold Medal). Under Dick’s tutelage Alex quickly learned about the life cycle of bluebirds, their plight due to habitat loss, and how they could be encouraged to nest in artificial cavities. He went on to conduct his own studies and worked to create habitat and safe nesting sites within the county. He engaged his fellow scouts and it was a pleasure to listen to this young man’s ardent desire to do more. Alex’s presentation was a wonderful way to segue into the surprise presentation of the NABS Lifetime Achievement Award to Dick Purvis.

Fledging tens of thousands of Western Bluebirds since those early years, Dick currently monitors more than 400 bluebird nestboxes. In 2011 he fledged 2,317 Western Bluebirds from 430 nestboxes on 10 trails over a 2-county area. His “production” of Western Bluebirds is unsurpassed by any other trail monitor in the entire state of California.

Dick has been active in both the California Bluebird Recovery Program and NABS for decades. He was a founding member of the Southern California Bluebird Club in 2006 (SCBC now has a contact list of over 350 bluebird enthusiasts) and is one of three members who were guests on a California television show California’s Gold that aired on PBS.

Thank you Dick for being such a positive influence in our lives as we continue to learn more each year about our beautiful bluebirds!

Steve Simmons – Lifetime Achievement Award for his Outstanding Contribution to Native Cavity Nesting Bird Conservation

The accomplishments that brought Steve to where he is today began over 40 years ago while he was a high school woodshop teacher in Merced, California. To many he has been called a hero of conservation. His tireless, self-funded efforts have added well over 84,000 birds to our skies.

His interest was first awakened by Wood Ducks and their breathtaking beauty and an awareness that they...
were in dire need of nestboxes. He started in 1974 building and putting up 60 Wood Duck nestboxes. Since that time he expanded into many different species of cavity nesters including bluebirds. It has been said that he has broken all known North American records for nestbox data collection. At one time he monitored as many as 1100 nestboxes. The California 2011 statistics show Steve monitoring 723 nestboxes and fledging 3,629 cavity-nesting bird species of which 230 were Western Bluebirds. In recent years Steve has become intrigued with Burrowing Owls and assists in creating artificial burrows to ensure these small ground cavity nesting birds will continue to have safe nesting habitat. He is passionate about his unpaid volunteer work.

Steve was interested in the scientific side of his monitoring activities so he started banding birds. He has now banded over 35,000 birds which include waterfowl, raptors, and passerines.

In addition to providing nestboxes, Steve often speaks to nature groups and young people about his activities. He has brought scores of people into an interest in nature. How many new conservationists has he introduced into a lifelong love of nature?

Lee Pauser – Award for Outstanding Contribution to Bluebird Conservation

As a retired systems engineer/programmer for IBM’s Research Lab, Lee was introduced to bluebirds and nestbox monitoring in Santa Clara County in 2002. Shortly after his first outing he decided he’d like to pursue this new volunteer activity but probably never envisioned that it would be the start of a new career, but this is exactly what occurred.

Starting with a single trail, Lee’s interest has grown into monitoring 344 nestboxes that are occupied by 13 different species and include nestboxes for Western Screech-Owl and Barn Owl. His nestboxes have now fledged 1000+ bluebirds and nearly 2500 other cavity-nesting bird species. In 2001, Lee was among the top ten producers of nestbox fledglings in California.

Santa Clara County has morphed from an agricultural area of world importance into Silicon Valley, a highly urbanized area where land is at a premium of sometimes millions of dollars an acre for development. As a result, habitat for resident bird species has taken a real hit. The Western Bluebird, commonly known as the Orchard Bird, had not nested in Central San Jose for decades. Important raptors such as the Barn Owl, American Kestrel, and Western Burrowing Owl were becoming increasingly rare. Borrowing from the playbook of Dick Purvis and his Orange County group, the Cavity Nesters Group was formed to coax the Western Bluebirds down from the foothills where they had retreated due to development by gradually moving the location of new nestboxes down into the valley floor. Lee Pauser has been a very important part of the WEBL “coaxing” team. By setting up extensive box trails in the southern part of Santa Clara County he pushed the population down slope and North toward San Jose. About three years ago, Lee and his wife Janna noticed a Western Bluebird in a downtown San Jose Park and immediately set up boxes there. The result was the Western Bluebird nesting in downtown San Jose for the first time in recent memory. The effort took 13 years to accomplish.

Dave Cook (NABS Board member and San Jose resident) stated that “their Cavity Nesters Group is generally divided into monitors and box builders, but Lee decided to build his own nestboxes. As a carpenter, I was really pleased and surprised at the quality and innovation of Lee’s boxes. Our box builders manage a group of volunteers with little or no carpentry experience who mass produce the nestboxes for our trails and other uses. Lee used his talents to help set up box production at a whole new level of consistent quality. Lee also manufactures high quality owl, kestrel, and Wood Duck boxes. He has also designed video cameras to be used in these boxes for the purpose of remote monitoring. IBM and the City of San Jose use his boxes and cameras for monitoring at sites in Santa Clara County.”
Lee has been active in partnering with local companies and organizations so that he could obtain permission and cooperation for his extensive nestbox monitoring projects. These include the City of San Jose and Santa Clara Parks Departments, Cinnabar Hills Golf Club, and the IBM Research Facility. Lee has shared his nestbox knowledge to train volunteers. He has also partnered with other knowledgeable monitors statewide to widen his own base of information and share his expertise.

Lee’s background in computer engineering has been put to good use in the collection and interpretation of nestbox data. For example, he has been able to use temperature, weather, and rainfall data to chart nestbox failures/successes. This type of information has been very helpful for understanding nesting trends.

Nomination information for the various categories is available on the NABS website.
Nominations are now being accepted for next year and must be submitted by June 30th, 2013.

**President’s Awards** were given to two very deserving men who have served on the NABS Board of Directors for many years and who have always actively participated in more than one facet of the organization at all times.

**Dan Sparks** was acknowledged for his years of exceptional dedicated service to NABS as Director, StoreFront Manager, and vital “Frontline Office” voice of NABS. (Greg Beavers accepted in Dan’s absence.)

Dan has continuously served on our Board since 2005 and was again re-elected for another one-year term at the recent election. When we underwent some major changes in 2006, Dan stepped in and has taken on a very heavy load for NABS ever since. Dan handles our StoreFront filling orders that come in by mail, phone, or PayPal. He makes himself available by phone for three hours a day (and often more) from Monday through Friday and handles all the queries that come in from our “info@” mail address off the website. He is our interface for Membership and Facebook, and serves on the Finance, Speaker’s Bureau, and Website Committees. I do not know of any person who is more dedicated to bluebirds and NABS than Dan Sparks. His hard work continues to be essential to NABS’s success and it is with gratitude we thank him for his staunch support of all things bluebird.

**Greg Beavers** was acknowledged for his years of dedicated service to NABS on the Board of Directors and his exceptional performance as Treasurer and head of Finance.

Greg left the Board this fall after serving seven years. Although his work meant travelling and being away a fair amount, Greg always kept records up-to-date and found time to not only Chair the Finance Committee, but also to participate in the monthly Board conference calls and on the Grants and Awards Committees.

Not having been trained as an accountant nor working in that field, Greg took on the Treasurer position as a “trial” in 2006 to see if he liked it and could handle the job. He has served NABS well over those years and leaves us with a very good fiscal standing. Greg has seen us through an audit, kept us current in financial reporting with both federal and state (Indiana) revenue offices, and annually ensured our filing was done with the State of Maryland where we are incorporated. His prudent oversight of our books and “watching the pennies” has helped us remain strong as we continue to endure tough economic times in both Canada and the US.

Greg continues to work within the Finance Committee to ensure a smooth transition and will remain an active member for Grants and Awards. Please join me in wishing Greg all the best as he leaves to follow other pursuits both bluebird and otherwise. Thank you for your dedicated years of service Greg, it has been a pleasure to serve NABS with you.
My husband, Dennis, and I are avid birders. Our property is located on a wooded hill right above Nebraska’s Elkhorn River, which attracts a wide variety of local and migrating birds throughout the year. We are blessed, to say the least. Nestboxes adorn our backyard along with a shepherd’s crook, assorted feeders, and a large birdbath that is easily accessible to birds and various other critters throughout the year. We also maintain a series of nestboxes along a mini-trail, out in the country.

With the arrival of summer, we began our weekend mornings with coffee on the patio while watching the assortment of birds that inhabit the property. July 7th was an exceptionally lovely Saturday morning, and, as I waited for my husband, a familiar sound trilled through the air. A male bluebird had lighted upon the shepherd’s crook, which was about 10 feet from a nestbox! I held my breath. Was it possible the nestbox would have bluebird occupants this summer? Was the drought over? Bluebirds had raised offspring in that box in 2009 and 2010, but it stayed vacant in 2011. The nestboxes along the trail already had eggs in them by April 8th of this year. This was a record since we had put up the boxes on March 27th. Only pesky wrens seemed interested in the backyard boxes and had started to claim them one by one. To discourage them, we removed the nestboxes, except for the one near the patio. Once, in June, a bluebird camped out on the shepherd’s crook for several days, calling and calling, but no female accepted his proposal. The poor fellow finally gave up and flew away. Now we had another potential tenant.

Dennis was just about to step out onto the patio when I diverted his attention toward the shepherd’s crook. We eased back into the house and continued watching the male bluebird from the sunroom (which offers a great view of the nestbox). Before too long, a female joined him and the “house inspection” began. First, they checked out the roof, then the inside of the box and lastly, the shepherd’s crook. Meanwhile, the other birds in residence decided to investigate the newcomers. The welcoming committee had arrived! First came the House Finches, who landed upon the roof; chickadees tried to look inside the nest box, much to the consternation of the bluebirds; even the White-breasted Nuthatch joined in. It was quite a spectacle. And later that evening, I noticed that a nest had been started.

The bluebird couple spent the next two days (July 7th and 8th) building the nest. More and more material was brought into the box. They appeared relaxed, unafraid, and friendly, taking brief breaks by perching atop the roof or shepherd’s crook. As I watched their progress from the sunroom window, I was amazed to see the female “declare” a certain type of grass “unsuitable”—then watched the male carry it away!

Monday morning brought a change in the bluebirds’ routine. They arrived early, checked the nestbox and made a few last-minute changes (rearranging the “furniture”?). Breakfast came next, with the male feeding the female. (Wasn’t that something only done while the female sat on her clutch?) Another change was in attitude: whenever the pair saw me or noticed some movement elsewhere, they flew off. Perhaps they didn’t want to draw attention to the nestbox for fear of attracting predator birds. Later, however, the pair returned in the early evening to check the box and its contents, and Tuesday was a repeat of Monday’s routine.

Four days passed. Every morning, between 6:00 and 6:30, the pair checked the nestbox, and returned for the 7:00 PM “bed check.” Meanwhile, a nosy sparrow and curious wren added tension with their antics. I installed a wren guard, but the process upset the female bluebird to the point that she left the nest. “Maybe she won’t come back,” I worried, as I removed the wren guard. Hopefully, the wren had satisfied its curiosity and would steer clear of the bluebird house.

In spite of the annoying curiosity seekers, the male remained faithful as ever, feeding his mate as she “puttered” around the nest. He seemed at ease with my occasional presence on the patio, whereas the female was much more timid. Sunday morning, she flew to the shepherd’s crook, where she sat for quite some time. Her longing to return to the nextbox was evident, but eventually she flew to the bluebird house and fidgeted at its entrance. Several times she made as if to enter the box, but finally lost her nerve and flew away as her mate settled on the shepherd’s crook. I returned to our house in hopes of giving the female bluebird some “space,” and later observed her at the bird bath. Before she could get a drink or bathe,
a rowdy bunch of House Finches joined her and, no

doubt put off by the unwelcome company, she flew

back to the relative calm of the trees. Finally, Friday

afternoon we had the first white egg. To my surprise

we didn’t have an egg on Saturday. Sunday afternoon

we had the second, and a third egg Monday early

afternoon. That completed the clutch.

Tuesday morning, around 9:30, I spied the male

bluebird through the window, sitting at the opening

of the bluebird house. He took a peek inside, only
to discover his mate was not at home. Off he flew to
the shepherd’s crook, with a worm he had evidently
brought for the missing female. Next he flew into a

nearby tree and ate the hapless worm himself. “Smart

fellow,” I thought. We were experiencing the hottest,
driest summer since the 1980s, and the news media
was likening this summer to the dust bowl days:
brown grass, no sign of the usual gnats or mosquitoes
. . . very unusual. It would take some effort to feed
two adult birds, plus the clutch.

The female bluebird started to incubate the eggs, and
we tried to stay out of her way. We still enjoyed our
weekend mornings of coffee, though, and as Dennis
and I sat quietly on the patio the morning of July
21st, the skittish female left the nest and would not
return to it. Instead, she perched upon the shepherd’s
crook, flew back to the bluebird house, but remained
outside. Not long after, the male made his appearance
and entered the nest, where he stayed for a while.
Dennis and I took that moment to quietly make our
departure back into the house. The flightiness of the
female had me wondering if this was her first year
of being a “mom,” as well as her first exposure to
humans.

The first baby bluebird hatched

on Sunday, July 29th, and a

second egg was cracked. I was

surprised to see that still

only one egg had hatched

by Monday morning.
The second egg did have

a slightly larger crack,

but that was all. By mid-

afternoon, there was a large

hole in the shell and the

baby was visible; by evening
it had finally hatched. It must
have been quite an ordeal for
the little fellow, and I could not help but
feel helpless pity for it.

I peeked in the nest box Tuesday morning to discover
the first hatchling, looking like a giant compared
to its sibling. All I could see of it was its head. And
the third egg was missing from the nest. Odd. Then,
Wednesday morning, I spotted something hanging
from the opening of the nest box. Sadly, it was the
body of the second hatching, which the bluebirds
had attempted to remove from the nest. Apparently it
didn’t survived the ordeal because it was so little and
fragile. After removing the remains, I took a seat on
the patio to ponder and observe the parents as they
fed the last of their offspring. “Nature is cruel, no
doubt about it,” I mused.

By mid-afternoon, the outside temperature had
soared, breaking all records. Concerned over the
welfare of the remaining baby, Dennis and I did a
quick check of the nest. The 100-degree heat was
taking its toll, and he looked totally exhausted; we
felt frustrated and helpless, not knowing what to do
to help the little one. We conjectured if the parents
knew if anyone had a chance of survival it would be
the firstborn. By Thursday morning, the lone baby
appeared barely alive, and Friday morning brought
more record-breaking temperatures. There were times
when we thought it, too, had not survived, but then
a small movement would give us hope. The little
bluebird boy did appear to be growing. Too bad he
doesn’t know what a fan club he has, both here and
abroad, worrying and rooting for his survival.

Early Saturday morning a cold front rolled
in, bringing high winds and much cooler
temperatures—a welcome relief for everyone. I
checked the nest mid-morning and saw the little
bluebird’s eyes were open and pinfeathers breaking
through the skin on his wings and back.

Sunday morning brought another
cold front, with 60-degree
temperatures and, best of all,
the baby bluebird seemed
hungry. He even made
small noises when his
parents appeared.

Our little bluebird baby
is a true miracle, and he
is growing and chirping in
the nestbox. It’s odd seeing
only him in the nest. I have
a difficult time understanding
how four to six little baby birds can
share one nest. I guess such a small nest

Nine days old and facing

100-degree temperatures.
encourages them to leave as soon as possible. But right now, this little guy has no interest in leaving . . . yet.

“Flight school” began the morning of Monday, August 13th. The bluebird parents sat on the neighbor’s chimney and called and called, but to no avail. Baby was not ready, so the parents finally gave it up and fed him, which naturally attracted several young House Finches and chippers. Ever since the bluebirds started to feed their baby, those hungry House Finches and chippers were looking for a free meal. The bluebird parents seemed to take these “groupies” in stride.

Tuesday morning I spotted mama bluebird on the shepherd’s crook. The baby was still in the nest when I checked at 9 AM, but the afternoon check found the nest empty! I spotted mama bluebird in the old oak tree when she flew to a top branch. Then the leaves moved a bit, and I saw the fledgling being fed.

With every birding season, I gain more insight into the bluebird’s life and behavior. This year I have a new appreciation of their incredible instinct for survival and family responsibility. Even though this experience was bittersweet, we had a happy ending. And I am an empty-nester again . . . hopefully only until next year.

For the last 26 years, Marion Ball and her husband Dennis have been commodity brokers. Currently they own and operate R.L. & D. Commodities in Arlington, Nebraska. Marion became a member of Bluebirds Across Nebraska in 2006. Since 2008, she has been the Washington County Coordinator for BAN. Marion also volunteers as the Membership Manager for NABS. Marion enjoys all forms of outdoor activities, especially wildlife photography.

Clean Your Feeders this Winter
Scott W. Gillihan

A devastating disease is attacking birds in Great Britain. The disease, a new form of avian pox, causes abnormal, tumor-like growths on the beaks and eyes. These grotesque growths can become quite large, and can interfere with a bird’s ability to find food or escape predators. Several species have been affected, but populations of the Great Tit (a close relative of our cavity-nesting chickadees and titmice) has apparently been hit the hardest.

Believed to have been brought from Africa by insects, the disease is spread by insect bites or direct contact with infected birds or contaminated bird feeders. The disease cannot be transmitted to humans.

Fortunately, the disease has not been found in North America. Still, its spread serves as a reminder that responsible bird lovers need to take precautions when feeding birds to prevent the spread of avian pox, aspergillosis, salmonellosis, conjunctivitis, or other diseases that can afflict North American birds. If you follow these few reasonable steps, you will protect your birds from the misery of disease:

• **Wash your feeders** every one to two weeks with a mild bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water); scrub thoroughly; rinse thoroughly; and let air dry thoroughly before filling with seed or other feed.
• **Move your feeders** around your property so that spilled seed or hulls do not accumulate in one spot. The spilled feed can be a breeding ground for disease organisms.
• **Remove your feeders** at the first sign of disease in birds visiting your property. Discard the seed that was in the feeders, wash the feeders, and store them for a couple of weeks. This gives the diseased birds time to disperse to other areas, recover from their affliction, or perish.

Your birds will thank you!
In November, my wife, Jean, and I submitted our 2012 Eastern Bluebird nesting box report to Antietam National Battlefield, as we have done for 34 years. We reported a record-breaking 574 bluebird fledglings, bringing our total to 8,819 since we began this recovery effort in 1979.

We have been asked how we first got involved in bluebird conservation and how we came to establish the nest box trail on this beautiful national parkland near Sharpsburg, Maryland.

It all began in 1970, when we purchased a small weekend cabin located along Antietam Creek across from Antietam National Battlefield. At that time, we lived in an apartment in Alexandria, Virginia, and this mostly wooded property with a small meadow and creek frontage provided us with an opportunity to enjoy our interests in nature and gardening. We both grew up in rural Minnesota, among its lakes and prairies, and we shared the Common Loon and the Western Meadowlark as our favorite birds.

Up to that time, neither of us had seen a bluebird. Then, one cold wintry morning in February of 1973, Jean looked out the cabin window and observed (and immediately identified) a bluebird perched on a nearby bare branch. It was an unforgettable experience—a male bluebird reflecting intense coloring in the clear bright sunshine of a brilliant blue sky. Sometime later, when learning of Thoreau’s description of “the bluebird carrying the sky on its back,” and reflecting back on our first sighting, we agreed wholeheartedly.

We were aware that bluebirds were uncommon but we needed to know more. Some quick research led us to Dr. Larry Zeleny, a retired government scientist, living in College Park, Maryland. He spent years studying and writing about declining bluebird populations and we found him through an article he had written about the plight of the bluebird in what was then Purple Martin News.

When I reached Larry, I discovered a gentle, patient, and unassuming individual who delighted in listening to our questions and providing feedback and guidance on any issue relating to bluebirds. He quickly became our bluebird mentor.

I built a couple of nesting boxes according to Larry’s specifications and placed them in the small meadow near our cabin. In our first nesting season, we had two broods and fledged five bluebirds. We sought advice from Larry periodically and reported on our results. We added nest boxes over the next five years and before we knew it we had more than 100 fledglings in our own neighborhood.

Meanwhile, Dr. Zeleny was busy sounding the alarm.
By some estimates, Eastern Bluebird populations were down 90% or more. In 1976, he authored the definitive treatise, *The Bluebird: How You Can Help Its Fight for Survival*, published by Indiana Press. Then, the June 1977 issue of *National Geographic Magazine* carried his article, “Song of Hope for the Bluebirds,” and it stimulated such widespread interest that a group of colleagues gathered around Larry, as the Founder, and The North American Bluebird Society (NABS) was formed.

The charter meeting of NABS was held in Silver Spring, Maryland in the fall of 1978. Bluebird pioneers, like Dr. Zeleny, who had also chronicled bluebird declines, and others who had become aware of the problem and wanted to be involved, came from across the United States and Canada. Chan Robbins of *Birds of North America* was the featured speaker. We attended the meeting and met the early leaders, including Mary Janetatos, longtime Executive Director, who housed NABS in her Silver Spring home for many years, Chuck Dupree, longtime Treasurer, and Anne Sturm, all Marylanders. Anne has continued to be a force in bluebird recovery both in Maryland and in NABS.

We came away from the interesting presentations and discussions of that day with a discovery that had a profound and lasting impact on our lives. We realized that within a couple of miles of our cabin lay a proverbial “gold mine” of prime bluebird habitat—Antietam National Battlefield—a seemingly advantageous place for locating nestboxes.

Soon after the charter meeting, we approached the US Park Service at Antietam and they were receptive to our proposal to establish a nesting box trail. Antietam National Battlefield is a beautifully preserved battlefield park and our mostly cedar boxes weather inconspicuously on the rail fences. We started with forty-some boxes and fledged 136 bluebirds in 1979, the first year on the battlefield.

In November 1979, *Parade Magazine* carried an article by Joan Rattner Heilman, “How You can Hear the Bluebird’s Song Again,” written in consultation with Larry Zeleny. Readers were asked to send a self-addressed envelope and 25 cents in return for nestbox plans and the full-color brochure, *Where Have All the Bluebirds Gone?* Approximately 60 mailbags of responses to the article were delivered to bluebird headquarters in Mary’s home and about 80,000 return responses were sent out from NABS. Bluebird recovery of all three species was underway.

Our battlefield trail grew quickly to approximately 100 nestboxes, 20 of which are paired to accommodate Tree Swallows. In recent years, Antietam neighbors Judy and John Lilga have provided wonderful assistance in monitoring the nestboxes. We report trail results to the Park Service at Antietam annually.

We are grateful to the Park Service for its longstanding support and encouragement in this conservation effort. As we care for the nestbox trail, we are ever mindful of the high privilege we have of carrying on this work on these beautiful and hallowed grounds, seemingly even more special in this 150th Anniversary Year of the Battle at Antietam.

Mark and Jean Raabe live in Alexandria, Virginia. Jean is a retired high school teacher and Mark is a self-employed lawyer/consultant. They are Charter members of NABS and Zeleny Life Members. Mark was an officer/board member for several of the early years. The Raabes received the NABS award for Bluebird Conservation in 1989 at the Missoula convention.
Free Brochure on Request
1-800-318-2611 • FAX (513) 738-4667
info@thenaturesway.com
P.O. Box 188, Ross, OH 45061-0188
www.thenaturesway.com

"Feeding live insects to the wild birds in my yard has helped me build a special bond with individual birds."
– Julie Zickefoose
A Roosting Box for Bluebirds
Kurt Hagemeister

Last year I decided to build a dedicated roosting box for “my” bluebirds—which in previous years I have seen spending nights in nesting boxes I was too lazy to bring inside. Figuring that “bigger is better,” I built a large roosting box that a small flock of bluebirds could potentially roost in. My plan was loosely based on a design I saw in the excellent Woodworking For Wildlife book put out by the Minnesota DNR.

Unlike a regular nesting box, a roosting box must be very tight to keep out cold air and moisture. So, there are no ventilation gaps or holes and the roof has caulking between it and the walls. Further, there is 1” of Styrofoam insulation under the roof and floor. And the other obvious difference is that the entrance hole is at the bottom to reduce heat loss.

In order to make it easier for birds to climb up to the six perch rods (made of 3/8” wood dowel), I put grooves on the inside of the front and back panels. And a final touch was to put a layer of wood shavings in the bottom of the box.

The entrance hole is 1 3/4” to make it a little easier for birds to come and go. Ideally, it should be about 1 1/2” above the box floor. The overall dimensions of the box are: 19” high with a 9 1/4” X 7 1/2” floor. Due to the weight of the box, it should be mounted on a sturdy pole with a solid-topped baffle to keep rodents and larger mammals out of it. I stuffed some steel wool into all gaps where the pole comes through the baffle as an extra measure.

The roosting box was out all last winter and did get several bluebirds using it. And this fall early on, I have seen a pair of bluebirds sitting on it from time to time. If anyone wants more information on this box, feel free to contact me at khagemeister@michiganbluebirds.org.

Kurt Hagemeister has been a bluebird landlord in Ann Arbor, Michigan for over 14 years. He is a co-founding member and current president of the Michigan Bluebird Society.

This article originally appeared in The Bluebird Flyer, newsletter of the Michigan Bluebird Society. It is reprinted here with permission.

Vehicle/Property Donation Program

If you have a car, truck, motorcycle, RV, boat, or even an airplane that you no longer need, NABS would like to receive it as a tax-deductible charitable donation.

To donate, simply call this toll-free number: 866-244-8464. Our agents will have your vehicle, boat, RV, etc. picked up and taken to a facility where it will be evaluated by experts. A determination will be made regarding what should be done to maximize its selling price, thereby resulting in significantly higher value than it might otherwise generate so you will receive the maximum tax benefit allowable by U.S. law. For tax purposes you, the donor, will receive a formal Certificate of Donation complying with all State and Federal requirements for authenticating your donation to NABS, an IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity.

Thank you for supporting the conservation of bluebirds and other native cavity nesters!
Grubco
PO Box 15001
Hamilton, OH 45015

Discount for all NABS members!

Discount for licensed wildlife rehabilitators!

Great selection, low price, and unbeatable quality.

Phone orders please call 800-222-3563.
Fax orders to 888-222-3563.
We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.

For additional information or to place an order through our website, please visit www.grubco.com. Buy from us with confidence!

Grubco’s bluebird feeders are available in two versions; cedar and recycled plastic. The recycled feeder is made from recycled milk jugs. Keep any unwanted birds out. The holes are sized and located specifically for bluebirds. Whichever feeder you decide to use, you will join thousands of happy bluebird feeder users.
Tree Swallows Raise Eastern Bluebird
Walt Sivertsen

As I approached box number 17 on my Waukegan Park District Trail (Waukegan, Illinois) on June 14, 2011, there appeared to be a problem. An Eastern Bluebird was perched on a Frisbee golf course basket nearby, and it was very upset. This was ideal habitat for the bluebird with the nice perch close to the nestbox; yet, those pesky Tree Swallows were flying around the nest box. The problem became obvious when the box was opened. Inside there was a Tree Swallow nest with one bluebird egg. The Tree Swallows were usurping the bluebird’s nest, and the bluebird was upset. I wanted to interfere on the side of the bluebird, but the nature “mandate” is to NOT interfere in the contest between protected species. Therefore, I could only close the box and let nature take its course.

The following week the adult bluebird was gone, and I was disappointed that it had not successfully defended its nest. When I opened the box, I was delightfully surprised. There in the Tree Swallow nest was one bluebird egg and one Tree Swallow egg. In the whole week the Tree Swallow had laid only one egg. That suggested that the female had started incubating the two eggs. This could turn out to be rather interesting! In 14 years of collecting data for Lake County, there have been no reports of one species rearing another species’ babies, not even cowbirds.

The monitoring continued on a weekly basis, and the two eggs hatched. I wasn’t there on hatch day, so I couldn’t verify a synchronous hatch. However, it was close enough so that the babies were similar in size and grew together. When the babies were about 12 days old, my wife came with me and we obtained a picture of the two birds side-by-side in the nestbox to document the event. A week later the two birds were successfully fledged.

This situation presents a few unanswerable questions, like... How old were the adult Tree Swallows involved in this event? (I failed to observe the depth of the blue vs. brown on the Tree Swallows to get an estimate of their age.) Did the swallows know how to handle the fecal sacs from the bluebird? (I forgot to check the nest for fecal sacs after fledging.) Did the swallows recognize a difference between the two babies? How will being reared in a Tree Swallow nest impact the future nest-building activity of the bluebird? (This is an old question of nature vs. nurture.) Other birders probably have questions that come to mind. The questions can’t be answered, but the incident is still interesting and surprising to me.

This article originally appeared in a slightly different format in Bluebird News, the newsletter of the East Central Illinois Bluebird Society. It appears here with their kind permission.
Eastern Bluebird with a Beak Deformity
Mary Roen

This fall, I set up my Audubon Wingscapes Bird Cam by a bird bath that I had attached to the railing on my back deck. I got pictures of a number of bluebirds, and their behavior at the bath. I also got a picture of a juvenile bluebird with a deformed beak and deformed toe on his right foot. It got me thinking about possible causes for the deformities.

I did some searching and found out that studies have been done about beak deformities in songbirds, but none mentioned bluebirds. The families of birds with the most frequent beak deformities in passerines were Icteridae (blackbirds), Mimidae (catbirds, mockingbirds and thrashers), Corvidae (especially crows), Paridae (especially Black-capped Chickadees), and common abundant birds like starlings, House Finches, and House Sparrows. Even so, beak deformities are relatively rare in wild birds overall, but there are some areas of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest that are seeing larger numbers. Beaks can have crossed mandibles, upper or lower mandibles that curve upwards or downwards, or mandibles that grow abnormally long due to an overgrown keratin layer of the beak or “avian keratin disorder.” This disorder has only been seen in adult birds, not juveniles.

There are several causes cited in the literature for beak abnormalities. These include genetic birth defects or developmental causes, injuries, nutritional deficiencies, disease, and environmental toxins. None of these has been proven, and some are doubtful. I did not see this juvenile bluebird as a nestling, so I don’t know if he hatched with this deformity, or if it developed later.

According to Keith Kridler (Bluebird Monitor’s Guide), “Beaks are still soft and malleable after the birds hatch out, and a severe blow can damage the base of the beak to begin abnormal growth of these cells.” Normal beak development depends on contact and alignment between the tips of the upper and lower mandibles, wearing them down evenly, since they continue to grow. An injury to either tip would prevent even wearing, thus the beak elongates. Keith also said “there are all sorts of reasons for crossed bills in birds. Chemicals are a concern for some of the bird’s defects in the wild, but this also happens on a regular basis with domesticated poultry flocks.”

Possible nutritional causes of beak deformities include deficiencies of vitamin A, vitamin D3, calcium, biotin, niacin, riboflavin, zinc, or folic acid. These deficiencies along with liver disease and parasite infections prevent the beak from forming correctly, so it tends to bend and not wear properly.

Exposure to environmental toxins including pesticides, organochlorines, selenium, and PCBs could cause DNA damage and abnormal beak growth. Deformed beaks in songbirds are not common, possibly because they are low in the food chain and therefore accumulate fewer toxins.

The degree of the abnormality of the beak will influence the survival rate of the affected bird. If it is not severe, the bird may adjust to the deformity and find a way to forage enough food to survive. Others may be unable to do so, and starve. Another serious problem is the bird may not be able to clean and preen itself adequately. “If the crooked beaks do not allow the bird to ‘zip’ their feather barbs back together, they cannot make their feathers waterproof to stay dry and warm, or remove mites or lice. They end up looking really ‘frumpy’ and unkempt. If the primary flight feathers get ragged enough, they will not be able to provide the lift and speed needed to quickly fly away from danger or predators,” according to Keith Kridler. These birds probably will not last long in the wild. Another consequence of the deformity may be an inability to reproduce and raise young.
Along with the beak deformity, this juvenile bluebird also appeared to have a defect of the hind toe (hallux) of his right foot. Instead of grasping under the rim of the birdbath, it is curved up and forward, between the front toes. I only got one picture of this bird, so his abnormalities may have led to an early demise.

The reason for this bird’s deformities remains unknown, but I will be watching more closely in the future, to see if this occurs in other bluebirds. If so, could it indicate underlying environmental health problems? Hopefully the ongoing research will find the answers and initiate interventions.

Mary Roen lives in rural Wisconsin where she has monitored an Eastern Bluebird trail for 24 years. Her current trail consists of 75 nestboxes. She is a member of NABS, the Bluebird Recovery Program of Minnesota, and is a board member of the St. Croix Valley Bird Club.

The USGS Alaska Science Center is doing research on beak deformities in birds, so anyone who observes one, especially with accompanying pictures, is urged to contact:

Caroline Van Hemert
Research Wildlife Biologist
USGS Alaska Science Center
4210 University Dr.
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone (907)786-7167
Fax (907)786-7021
cvanhemert@USGS.gov

The following Web site has a form for reporting sightings of beak deformities:

Raccoon Nation

Raccoons are perhaps the most devastating mammalian predators on bluebirds, capable of climbing almost any pole to clean out a nestbox of eggs or young. Bluebird supporters go to great lengths to protect nestboxes from marauding raccoons, and some folks consider the raccoon to be their sworn enemy. But even the most hardened raccoon-hater will grudgingly concede that, in spite of all their faults, the little masked bandits are smart. Very smart.

Now comes news that raccoons might actually be getting smarter — and it’s all our fault. Earlier this year, Public Broadcasting Service aired an hour-long episode of its popular program Nature called “Raccoon Nation,” which featured urban-living raccoons. Scientists studying the raccoons put forth the interesting idea that the complex environment found in urban areas pushes raccoons to learn more and, thus, makes them smarter.

It’s a fascinating show; check your local listings to see if it will be aired again. Alternatively, you can go to www.pbs.org and search for “Raccoon Nation” — the entire episode is available online for free viewing. PBS also sells a DVD of the episode through their website.
Mice and Rats in Nestboxes
Bet Zimmerman

Sometimes you get a surprise when you open a nestbox. Not all occupants of birdhouses are birds. Mice may use a box to overwinter or breed. Rats may use nestboxes to sleep during the day or to overwinter. On one trail, 75% of boxes were occupied by mice during the winter months. If a “nest” shows up in one of your boxes in the fall or winter, it might belong to a mouse.

Rodent ID
Deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) and white-footed mice (*Peromyscus leucopus*) are hard to tell apart, but deer mice are better climbers, have a longer tail, and are distinctly bicolored (light brown above and white below). Both are fairly common, with as many as 11–12 per acre in some areas. In northern areas, these native mice breed from about March through October; in southern areas, they may breed year-round. They may have 2–4 litters per year with 1–11 young per litter (typically 4–6). Their eyes open on about the 15th day, and they are weaned at 25–35 days old.

House mice (*Mus musculus*), Norway rats (*Rattus norvegicus*), and the smaller roof rats (*Rattus rattus*, also called black, tree, or ship rats) are introduced pests. These nocturnal rodents are attracted to pet and bird feed, and thus are most common near homes. All are grayish brown or black; the belly can be grayish but never white, as it is in native mice. They breed throughout the year, but primarily in February and March and again in May and June, with 8–10 young per litter. Young are weaned when about 3–4 weeks old, and are able to reproduce when they are approximately 2–5 months old. Females can produce 5–12 litters per year. These introduced rodents are best identified by their scaly, hairless tails.

Note that woodrats (various species in the genus *Neotoma*) are native and part of the natural environment, and may be protected by law. They are vegetarian and pose no danger to bluebirds. Woodrats are brown above and white below, like an overgrown deer mouse, and have fur on their tails.

Nest ID
Mice usually make their nest from a variety of materials, such as grass, leaves, hair, feathers, milkweed silk, shredded bark, moss, cotton, or shredded cloth. Their droppings are generally evident.

A mouse nest looks a bit like a Tufted Titmouse nest, only messier, and it does not have a cup, and does not appear to be tamped down, since the mouse nests or overwinters on the inside. I have seen a mouse nest constructed entirely of grass clippings. Like bird nests, construction depends on the individual and available materials.

Rats generally use a bare nestbox, or sleep on a nest made by a bird. They may collect pine branches. They may chew the entrance hole and top edges of the nestbox roof. For breeding, they build a disheveled nest that may include bits of nut shells and fur.

Hazards
In addition to leaving behind a malodorous urine-soaked mess, mice and rats pose several hazards to bluebirds and humans:

- Deer mice and several other common mouse species can carry Hantavirus, a rare but deadly pulmonary syndrome. The virus is transmitted by infected rodents through urine, droppings, or saliva. Inhaling airborne particles contaminated with mouse droppings can cause infection. Signs of Hantavirus infections begin with a flu-like illness, including fever, sore muscles, headache, nausea, and shortness of breath. Chills, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain have also been reported. Most cases report a dry, non-productive cough. The disease progresses rapidly, with fluid building up in the lungs in a matter of days and making breathing very difficult. Approximately 60–70% of infected people die.
• Mice may carry deer ticks which in turn transmit Lyme Disease.
• Mice may evict or attack birds that attempt to nest in a box they are using or want to use. They may destroy eggs and nestlings in nestboxes, as will rats, chipmunks, and squirrels. However, some cases have been reported where mice have actually cohabited in a nestbox underneath an active bluebird nest without problems.
• Rats can transmit human diseases such as endemic typhus, rat bite fever, and bubonic plague.
• When boxes are opened in the spring, be aware that a startled rodent might jump out at you.

Deterring Mice and Rats from a Bluebird Trail
Mice are more likely to use nestboxes mounted on T-posts, wooden posts, or fence lines, and boxes in tall grass or near shrubs. Rats may be partial to hanging boxes or those mounted on trees or houses. Some sources say mice can’t climb metal conduit, but I have found mice in boxes mounted 5 feet high on conduit. Mice can climb 10 feet or more up a tree trunk; rats can also climb vertical surfaces and can enter a 1” hole. To prevent mice or rats from using nestboxes, try these tips:
• On pole-mounted boxes, use a stovepipe guard with wire mesh covering the top, PVC baffle (with a cap sitting on a hose clamp or other means to make it wobble), or a downspout sleeve over the pole. Make sure there is almost no gap between the baffle and the pole. Put the guard/baffle/sleeve a few inches below the floor of the nestbox.
• Build a mouse-sized, cheap, unobtrusive predator guard. Using scissors, cut a 7” diameter circle from a piece of plastic (like a salad bar container lid) and cut a hole in the center for the nestbox pole to pass through (3/4” for metal conduit). Then cut a straight line from outside edge to center hole. Duct tape the disk to the pole below the box, pulling the two cut edges together some to form a cone with the wide end down. Staple the seam.
• Plug up the box entrance (e.g., with a plastic or Styrofoam plug) or leave the door open until the ground freezes solid (at which point the mice have hopefully hunkered down elsewhere). Of course this will make the box unavailable for birds (bluebirds, chickadees, woodpeckers) that might use it to roost.
• Do not mount boxes low on wooden posts. If you do use wooden poles, wrap thin flexible tin around the pole directly underneath the box down to the middle of the pole—the metal surface is too slippery for rodents to climb.

Bet Zimmerman is a longtime contributor to Bluebird, member of the NABS Board of Directors and Education Committee, and creator of the amazingly comprehensive website about bluebirds, www.sialis.org. This article is based on material on that site.
In Remembrance of Barbara Chambers 1929-2012

A
fter a very brief illness, Barbara Chambers suddenly passed away on October 15th. Barbara leaves behind her husband of 56 years, Charlie, three children, three grandchildren, and her sister Bette.

Barbara loved nature, especially birds, and was a dynamo when it came to bluebirds and cavity-nesting bird conservation. Earlier in her life she taught elementary school and this background gave her a firm standing for her years of volunteer work with both NABS and the Virginia Bluebird Society (VBS).

As a NABS Board member, Barbara’s energy and knowledge were invaluable. She participated in all facets of managing our organization and took on leadership roles within our committees—she chaired the Speaker’s Bureau and Nominating Committee; Co-chaired the Nestbox Committee; was a very active member of the Bylaw Committee; and handled queries for the Hotline. Wherever her help was needed, you could count on Barbara being there.

Her volunteer work for bluebirds and conservation did not stop at NABS’s doorstep. As a founding member of the Virginia Bluebird Society in 1996, Barbara took on many roles over the years. At various times she held Board positions, edited the newsletter, sat on the nominating committee, and was not only a county coordinator but also was the state county coordinator. Barbara volunteered in programs hosted by local and state parks, the National Wildlife Refuge system, and the Northern Virginia Bird Club. She embraced any opportunity to make presentations to children and to instill in them a love for nature and the outdoors.

Although the list of roles Barbara played is long, it is her contributions to the overall success of our organizations that will be remembered. Perhaps her biggest accomplishments are not on that list—Barbara mentored so many folks all across North America in the world of bluebirds and we each have our own stories, experiences, and warm memories of interacting with her. As Carmen Bishop, President of VBS stated, “Barbara educated and encouraged us in the conservation of bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting birds. Drawing on her career as a teacher, she had a way of motivating people to do the right thing by our bluebirds.”

The Boards of both NABS and the VBS are planning lasting tributes to Barbara’s tireless devotion to the cause of bluebird conservation. Please watch our websites and Facebook pages for updates. Donations in Barbara’s memory may be made to NABS, P.O. Box 7844, Bloomington, IN 47407 or VBS, 726 William Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. Your donation will be gratefully acknowledged.

Our condolences go out to all of the Chambers family and Barbara’s many friends. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her as she left our lives better for having known her.
Mr Bluebird Blue
Words and Music by Tommy Outerbridge

I look around my island,
My island in the sunshine;
I look for green, green, green fields,
Blue sea and blue, blue, blue sky...
But as I walk, under my feet
The pathway’s turning to concrete.
There where there was a tree,
Now’s condos and electricity.

Hello Mr Progress! My, my what a mess.
Hello Urban City; my, my what a pity!

I see sparrows and starlings,
And kisskadees fill the air.
Where oh where are my darlings?
I look around, but they’re not there.
Where have all the bluebirds gone?
Have they all flown away?
Wait a minute, I just saw one...
This must be my lucky day!

Hello, Mr Bluebird. Bermuda needs you.
Hang on Mr Bluebird, Mr Bluebird Blue!

I look around this island, this little pearl in the sea;
And thinking back to yesteryear,
This little pearl was an emerald green..
We can’t bring back those good ol’ days,
But plan our future in better ways.

Mr Bluebird don’t fly away, Bermuda needs you!
Hang on Mr Bluebird, Mr Bluebird Blue!

Mr. Outerbridge sent this note along with a link to his performance of this song on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=lUwboTWVpYI):
"I founded the Bermuda Bluebird Society in 1981/82, when I erected nestboxes on poles for Bermudians and anyone else who had the right sort of territory. I usually built the boxes on Saturday and would erect them on Sunday. Every recipient of a nest-box became a member of the Bluebird Society, automatic, and the wife of the then Governor of Bermuda, Lady Diana Dunrossil, became our Patron. To this day the Bermuda Bluebird Society holds its AGMs at Government House, which is a feather in its cap; and the beautiful grounds even now have their own successful bluebird trail.

After I broke my neck in 1984, and returned from rehabilitation in England, a quadriplegic with anterograde amnesia, the Bermuda Bluebird Society actually hosted the NABS annual meeting, with Larry Zeleny et al, at Government House some years later... circa 1991?

The Bluebird was always well-liked in Bermuda, having been noted as endemic when settlers first colonised the uninhabited isles in 1609. A huge decline in their numbers was noted after World War II, with the loss of the cedar forest. But after the Bermuda Bluebird Society was formed, the bluebird grew to be a national treasure; with school kids building and erecting their own trails of nestboxes, and war was declared on the imported sparrows and starlings which are still decimating the number of blueys to a critical extent."
2012 Federal Duck Stamp Contest
Robert Steiner, an artist from San Francisco, California, is the winner of the 2012 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. Steiner’s acrylic painting of the cavity-nesting Common Goldeneye will be made into the 2013-2014 Federal Duck Stamp, the 80th such stamp, which will go on sale in June 2013. The US Fish & Wildlife Service produces the Federal Duck Stamp, which raises about $25 million each year to help conserve wetlands in the National Wildlife Refuge system. Since 1934, Federal Duck Stamp sales have raised more than $850 million, funding the purchase or lease of six million acres of wildlife habitat. www.fws.gov/duckstamps/stamps.htm

Let Birds Do the Work
The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, HawkWatch International, and Utah State University Extension have teamed up to create an informational flyer called "Attracting Wildlife for Pest Control on Farmland." The two-page flyer presents basic information for farmers, golf course superintendents, and other land managers in how the use of nestboxes and perches for American Kestrels, Barn Owls, and other birds of prey can be a key part of an overall pest control program. The free flyer is available online at www.hwi.org or by contacting HawkWatch International, 2240 South 900 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84106, or telephone 801-484-6808.

Bluebirds Everywhere
“Bluebirds Everywhere” is a feature that celebrates the widespread and creative uses of bluebird images and the word itself. We invite you to submit your own images and ideas — simply e-mail them to NABSeitor@gmail.com or mail them to NABS Editor, 5405 Villa View Dr., Farmington, NM 87402. Let’s see what bluebirds you can find!

Joyce Stuff sent in this beautiful cover for a piece of sheet music. The composer, Abe Olman, was known for his ragtime compositions; he wrote this piece in 1914. He was a co-founder of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, which honors his contributions by presenting the Abe Olman Publisher Award each year.

Fred and Michelle Harwood submitted this image. They tell us it is “a Chinese business card from Yunnan, China, that carries ‘Blue Bird’ on its face. The card was brought back by Michelle’s brother after a business trip. We don’t know what the business does, but the word seems to be everywhere on the planet!”

Suzi Conklin of Oregon passed along this advertisement she spied in Edible Portland magazine. Bluebird Grain Farms grows and markets organic heirloom wheat, rye, and other grains. Their products, including some nice gift baskets, are available at www.bluebirdgrainfarms.com or by calling 1-888-232-0331 Mon-Fri, 9 am–4 pm Pacific time.
This image of an icy nestbox originally appeared in Bluebird News, newsletter of the East Central Illinois Bluebird Society, with the caption, "New type of predator guard?" Photo by Roy Schodtler.

MEALWORMS!!!

Special pricing for NABS members!!!

Supply Bluebirds With the Best Tasting and Highest Quality Mealworms!!
Guaranteed Live Delivery & Same Day Shipments

Bassett’s Cricket Ranch, Inc.
1-800-634-2445 www.bcrcricket.com info@bcrcricket.com
A Bluebird Fledgling's Collision with a Window
Mary Roen

Most people can relate to the feeling of dread when there is a “thunk” on a window of your house and you just know a bird hit it. This happened to me in August. I was exercising in my living room when I heard it. Oh, no! A bird strike! I quickly looked out the window on the deck, but did not see anything. I went outside and there he was—a fledgling bluebird! After all the care I put into keeping bluebirds safe at my place—quality nestboxes, conduit/rebar poles with stovepipe baffles, and “Bye-Bye Blackfly” applied to the outside of the nestbox, this little fledgling made it this far, just to strike a window after visiting the bird bath I have on the deck railing!

When I first looked at him, I thought his chances at survival were poor. He was sitting on the deck with his head turned backwards. I thought he had broken his neck. I sure didn’t want him to be eaten by a predator, so I gently picked him up in my hands and inspected him more closely. He was breathing, and seemed dazed, but I could see no major injuries. Of course I could not tell if there were internal injuries. By now, he turned his head forward. I put him in a box with a soft cloth, and covered the box to see if he would recover. Ideally, I would have liked to have left him there for an hour, but I had to go to work. After a half an hour, I peeked in the box and he was standing alert, his eyes were bright, he held both of his wings normally, and his head was erect. He appeared to be okay! I carried him outside in the box, and then held him in my hand. He stayed there for a minute or two as if to say, “Thank you for helping me!” and flew off to the nearest tree. His flight was strong and direct.

Not all window strikes have this happy ending. Our deck railing is just 4 feet from the window, so the fledgling hadn’t gotten up to full speed, and he may have hit the window at an angle, causing less impact. Thankfully, he was not seriously injured.

I don’t have frequent window strikes, but it has happened before. To prevent or reduce these collisions, it is important to break up the reflection in the window. If the windows appear transparent a bird may fly into the glass anticipating it can fly through. If the window reflects branches and leaves, birds believe that they are flying to the safety of trees.

Here are methods I found to reduce window collisions:

1. **Decals.** Put decals on the most frequently struck windows. From the WindowAlert website, “The decals contain a component which brilliantly reflects ultraviolet sunlight. This ultraviolet light is invisible to humans, but glows like a stoplight for birds. Birds have vision that is up to 12 times better than that of humans. WindowAlert decals help birds see windows and avoid striking the glass.” Just be sure you put enough decals on the window so they are about 4 inches apart. (www.windowalert.com/)

2. **FeatherGuard.** Stiles Thomas of New Jersey created FeatherGuard. This consists of bird feathers placed about 8 inches apart on fishing line. These lines of feathers are strung vertically across windows that are frequently struck by birds. The birds may see the feathers, and turn away from the window. They might think they were evidence of a successful predator, or the moving feathers may frighten the birds. Although no one knows for sure, FeatherGuard seems to work. (www.featherguard.com/)

3. **Garden netting.** If you have a bird-loving, understanding family, you can put a barrier of garden netting outside the windows. The most effective method is to firmly mount it about a foot away from the window glass. Other methods include soaping the windows, spraying on fake Christmas snow, coating the most commonly hit windows with vegetable oil, or leaving them a little dirty, to break up the reflection. This is not an option for people who are a little obsessive about clean windows (like me!).

4. **Plastic food wrap.** Another way to break up the
reflection of glass is to put large sheets of plastic food wrap across the center of your windows. If you have trouble getting the wrap to stick, spray a light coating of vegetable oil or water on the window before putting on the wrap. The wrap’s surface is not as reflective as glass.

5. **Branches.** A natural way to break up the reflection of windows is to hang tree branches in front of the most frequently struck windows. You can try to do this in a way that will cover the window but will not entirely restrict your view.

6. **Other objects.** Strips of plastic or mylar balloons/used CDs/tinsel/wind chimes. Objects hanging in front of a window may scare birds away or let them know that it is not a place to which they should fly.

7. **Move your feeders.** Many birds that strike our windows are common birds that use our feeders every day. Try moving your feeders farther from your house to change the bird’s flight path away from your windows, or move them closer so the birds don’t get up enough speed to seriously injure themselves if they hit the window.

I am sure there are many other ways to protect birds from striking windows, but these ideas give me a good place to start. I certainly don’t want to put the fledglings from my nestboxes at any greater risk than is already out there in nature.

---

**One Pole, Two Very Different Views**

Steve Malecha, Goodhue County Coordinator for the Bluebird Recovery Program of Minnesota (BBRP), took these pictures in October at the edge of his county. They are of two sides of the same pole, offering contrasting views of nature. One side is a sign about protecting raccoons while the other side holds (ironically) a Peterson-style bluebird nestbox.

Steve is a very active and successful bluebirder with BBRP and he is working with families in and near Goodhue county to provide safe and secure nesting sites.

The BBRP’s “Keep Bluebirds Safe” program encourages members to find these “raccoon feeders” and follow up by contacting the owners to encourage them to remove unsafe nestboxes or relocate them using the BBRP’s best practices methods to avoid predators.

More information is available on the BBRP website at www.bbrp.org or see the Affiliates list at the end of this issue for BBRP contact information.
Is it okay to peek in winter roosting boxes?
On cold winter nights, bluebirds and other cavity-nesting species sometimes seek shelter in natural cavities, nestboxes, or boxes designed specifically for winter roosting. The boxes provide protection from wind and precipitation, and if more than one bird climbs inside, the box helps the birds to stay warm through huddling or just the extra body heat.

If you have a box that you think is being used for winter roosting, you might be tempted to take a peek inside some night. Is there any harm in that?

Researchers in the Czech Republic found that opening boxes at night and shining a red light inside did not seem to bother roosting Great Tits (a close relative of our chickadees and titmice)—the birds did not flush from the box and they continued to use it on subsequent nights throughout the winter. However, if a white light was used, and the birds were handled (to band them), they were much less likely to return to that box on subsequent nights and the box would be essentially abandoned that winter.

The take-home message seems to be that a white light and disturbance will cause birds to abandon your roosting box. If you want to peek, use a red light (red filters are commercially available for some types of flashlights) and minimize the amount of time and disturbance.


Same old story: an invasive species devastates native species
Bluebirders are very familiar with the devastating effects of the invasive House Sparrow and European Starling on native bluebird populations. These aggressive invaders from Europe take over nest sites from bluebirds, often killing the young or adults in the process. Their aggressive nature and broad diet have allowed them to spread across North America.

A similar story is unfolding in the Pacific Coast rainforest. Historically, Barred Owls were found only east of the Great Plains. But in the 1990s they expanded their range to Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. No one knows for sure how they made that leap, but one theory is that 100+ years of fire suppression, flood control, and urbanization allowed enough forest growth to create a travel corridor across the continent.

The Pacific Coast rainforest is home to the Western Screech-Owl and the rare Northern Spotted Owl (both species will nest in tree cavities). Unfortunately, both are suffering under the onslaught of the Barred Owl invasion. Compared to Spotted Owls, Barred Owls are bigger, more aggressive, and less picky about their diet and nesting requirements; as a result, Barred Owls outcompete and sometimes kill Spotted Owls. Also, Barred Owls are known to prey on the much-smaller Western Screech-Owls. Populations of both native species are declining as a result of the Barred Owl invasion.

Wildlife managers have no simple solutions to the problem. Officials have backed away from proposals to remove the Barred Owls (using shotguns), in part because of public outcry but primarily because of the impracticality of such a strategy—there are simply too many Barred Owls, and they continue to arrive. The best-case scenario for the Spotted Owls is that they retreat to pockets of habitat not favored by Barred
Wrens, but to make this happen managers may need to set aside more old-growth forest to protect it from logging. The same scenario might play out for the screech owl, although its situation is less critical since its population is larger and its range extends across much of western North America.


Cigarettes: bad for you but good for birds?
Among the many challenges faced by birds is the prevalence of parasites in the nest. All manner of creepy crawly bugs inhabit nests to take advantage of the easy meal of blood and other items offered by nestlings. Some birds utilize a clever line of defense in the form of aromatic plant leaves, incorporated into the nest. The leaves of various plants are known to repel insects and serve as a form of organic pest control.

City birds have found an abundant and effective bug repellent of their own: used cigarette butts. The nicotine contained in used butts is highly effective at repelling mites and other biting bugs—in fact, nicotine is used as an insect repellant in some organic crops and on organically raised poultry.

A recent study in Mexico City found that House Finch and House Sparrow nests there contained an average of 8–10 cigarette butts (one House Finch nest contained an astonishing 48 butts!). The researchers found that, the more cigarette butts in a nest, the fewer parasites.

It might make an interesting study to see if the careful placing of used cigarette butts in bluebird nestboxes results in fewer problems with buffalo gnats and other pests that torment nestlings.


Are parasites to blame for the decline of American Kestrels?
American Kestrel populations have been showing widespread declines commencing in the 1980s. The cause(s) of the declines are unclear, although researchers have pointed fingers at habitat loss, climate change, growing numbers of Cooper’s Hawks (a predator on kestrels), and West Nile Virus, among other problems. One area that has not received much attention is parasite loads on nestlings.

Ectoparasites (parasites that live on the outside of animals) can weaken and even kill nestlings. Depending on the parasite, nestlings may suffer blood loss, feather loss, skin irritation, secondary infections, and other unpleasant conditions.

Researchers in New Jersey worked with a set of kestrel nestboxes. At the start of the nesting season, they cleaned out all the old nesting material from half of the active boxes. They returned at regular intervals to remove all ectoparasites from those nestlings and to replace all the nesting material with fresh material; they visited the nestboxes of the other group just as often but did not remove nestlings or replace the nest materials. When the nestlings were 20–22 days old, both groups were weighed and measured.

The result: All that careful work of removing parasites and replenishing the nesting material was for naught. There was no difference in size between the two groups and no difference in nestling survival.

Much scientific research is conducted to find out what isn’t true, which is usually easier and more definitive than finding out what is true. This study was a good example of this approach. Although we still do not know what is causing the population declines among American Kestrels, we can probably scratch parasites off the list.

Affiliates of the North American Bluebird Society

The North American Bluebird Society serves as a clearinghouse for ideas, research, management and education on behalf of all bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting species. NABS invites all state, provincial, and regional bluebird organizations to become NABS affiliates in a confederation of equals all working together toward a common goal, a further partnership in international bluebird conservation. No cost is associated with affiliating with NABS. Your affiliated organization will be recognized and listed on the NABS website and in Bluebird. If your organization has a newsletter, please forward a copy to our headquarters. To find out more about becoming a NABS affiliate, read our Affiliate Letter. Notice: If you are listed below, please check listing to see if it is current. If not, please contact web@nabluebirdsociety.org and NABSEditor@gmail.com with correct information.

Alberta
Calgary Area Nestbox Monitors
Ron Reist
5720 59 Ave.
Olds, Alberta T4H 1K3 - CANADA
403-556-8043
rreist1@shaw.ca
www.canadiannaturenetwork.ca

Ellis Bird Farm, Ltd.
Myrna Pearman
PO Box 5090
Lacombe, AB T4L-1W7 - CANADA
403-885-4477
403-887-5779
mpearman@telus.net
www.ellisbirdfarm.ab.ca

Mountain Bluebird Trails Conservation Society
Gwen Tietz
P.O. Box 401
Lethbridge, AB T1J-3Z1 - CANADA
403-317-1252
gwen.tietz@gmail.com

Alaska

Arkansas
Bella Vista Bluebird Society
Jim Janssen
83 Forfar Drive
Bella Vista, AR 72715
479-855-4451
jans33@sbcglobal.net

Bluebird
Bermuda
Bermuda Bluebird Society
Stuart Smith
145 Middle Road
Southampton SN01, Bermuda
441-734-9856
smitty@ibl.bm
www.bermudabluebirdsociety.com

British Columbia
Southern Interior Bluebird Trail Society
Sherry Linn
18588 Old Richter Pass Rd
Osoyoos, BC V0H-1V5 - CANADA
250-495-7891
goldstrm@vip.net
www.bcbluebirds.org

California
California Bluebird Recovery Program
Dick Blaine
22284 N. De Anza Circle
Cupertino, CA 95014
408-257-6410
dick@theblaines.net
www.cbrp.org

Palos Verdes South Bay Audubon Society
Nancy Feagans
2010½ Pullman Lane
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
310-483-8192
nancy@pvbs-audubon.org
www.pvbs-audubon.org

Florida
Florida Bluebird Society
Bill Pennewill
P.O. Box 1086
Penney Farms, FL 32079
floridabluebirdsociety@yahoo.com
www.floridabluebirdsociety.com

Southern California Bluebird Club
Jo-Ann Coller
18132 Larkstone Dr.
Santa Ana, CA 92705
www.socalbluebirds.org

Colorado
Colorado Bluebird Project
Audubon Soc of Greater Denver
Kevin Corwin - 720.482.8454
9308 S Wadsworth Blvd
Littleton, CO 80128
303-973-9530
303-973-1038 f
bluebirdproject@denveraudubon.org
www.denveraudubon.org/conservation/bluebird-project/

Idaho
Our Bluebird Ranch
Leola Roberts
152 N 200 E
Blackfoot, ID 83221
208-782-9676

The North American Bluebird Society
serves as a clearinghouse for ideas, research, management and education on behalf of all bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting species. NABS invites all state, provincial, and regional bluebird organizations to become NABS affiliates in a confederation of equals all working together toward a common goal, a further partnership in international bluebird conservation. No cost is associated with affiliating with NABS. Your affiliated organization will be recognized and listed on the NABS website and in Bluebird. If your organization has a newsletter, please forward a copy to our headquarters. To find out more about becoming a NABS affiliate, read our Affiliate Letter. Notice: If you are listed below, please check listing to see if it is current. If not, please contact web@nabluebirdsociety.org and NABSEditor@gmail.com with correct information.
Rocky Mountain Blues
David Richmond
HC 67 Box 680
Clayton, ID 83227
208-838-2431
fowest@custertel.net

Illinois
East Central Illinois Bluebird Society
Loren Hughes
1234 Tucker Beach Rd
Paris, IL 61944
217-463-7175
lghughes@joink.com

Jo Daviess County BBRP
Dick Bach
9262 Fitzsimmons Rd.
Stockton, IL 61085
815-947-2661
kiritemoa@mwci.net
www.jdcf.org/guardians

Southern Illinois Audubon Society
Laraine Wright
P.O. Box 222
Carbondale, IL 62903-0222
618-457-8769
imabirder@earthlink.net

Indiana
Brown County Bluebird Club
Dan Sparks
PO Box 660
Nashville, IN 47448
812-988-1876
360-361-3704 f
bdbluebirds@yahoo.com

Hendricks County Bluebird Society
Karen Smith
7369 Caldwell Lane
Avon, IN 46123
317-513-6403
Karen12208@aol.com
www.hendricksbluebirsociety.info

Indiana Bluebird Society
Ken Murray
PO Box 134
Rensselaer, IN 47978-0134
219-866-3081
lbs07@rhsi.tv
www.indianabirdsociety.org

Iowa
Bluebirds of Iowa Restoration
Jaclyn Hill
2946 Ubhen Ave
Ellsworth IA 50075-7554
515-836-4579
jaclynhill@netins.net

Iowa Bluebird Conservationists
Jerald Getter
PO Box 302
Griswold, IA 51535
712-624-9433 h
712-527-9685 w
jgetter@hotmail.com

Johnson County Songbird Project
Jim Walters
1033 E Washington
Iowa City, IA 52240-5248
319-466-1134
james-walters@uiowa.edu

Kentucky
Kentucky Bluebird Society
Philip Tamplin, Jr.
26 Poplar Hill Rd.
Louisville, KY 40207
502-895-4737
ptamplin@aol.com
www.biology.uky.edu/kbs

Kentucky Bayou Bluebird Society
Evelyn Cooper
1222 Cook Rd
Delhi, LA 71232
318-878-3210
emcooper@hughes.net
www.labayoubluebirdsociety.org

Louisiana
Mid-Coast Audubon Society
Joseph F. Gray
35 Schooner Street #103
Damariscotta, ME 04543
207-563-3578
cgray025@gmail.com
www.mlabayoubluebirdsociety.org

Maine
Friends of the Bluebirds
Barry Danard
PO Box 569
Killarney, MB R0K 1G0 - CANADA
204-535-2132
sandhill@midrivers.com
www.mountainbluebirdtrails.com

Maryland
Maryland Bluebird Society
Kathy Kremsitzer
19305 Deer Path
Knoxville, MD 21758
301-662-7818
Griffin459@myactv.net
www.mdbirdsociety.org

Michigan
Michigan Bluebird Society
Kurt Hagemeister
PO Box 2028
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-2028
734-663-9746
810-736-8713 f
khagemeister@michiganbluebirds.org
www.michiganbluebirds.org

Minnesota
Bluebird Recovery Program
Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
Keith Radel & JENean Mortenson
P.O. Box 984
Faribault, MN 55021
507-332-7003
clmjmm@ll.net
www.bbrp.org

Missouri
Missouri Bluebird Society
Steve Garr
P.O. Box 105830
Jefferson City, MO 65110
573-638-2473
steve@birds-i-view.biz
www.missouribluebird.org

Montana
Mountain Bluebird Trails, Inc.
Tom Anderson
5532 Sandhill Road
Lewistown, MT 59457
406-535-2132
sandhill@midrivers.com
www.mountainbluebirdtrails.com

New Hampshire
NH Bluebird Conspiracy
Bruce Burdett
5 Upper Bay Rd
Sunapee, NH 03782-2330
603-763-5705
bluebud@myfairpoint.net

New Jersey
New Jersey Bluebird Society
Frank V. Budney
173 Carolyn Road
Union, NJ 07083-9424
908-687-2169
www.njbluebirds.org
New York
Bronx River - Sound Shore Audubon Society
Sandy Morrissey
Scarsdale, NY
914-949-2531
www.brssaudubon.org

Michael Kudish Natural History Preserve
David Turan
2515 Tower Mountain Rd
Stamford, NY 12167
607-652-9137
princessprism@yahoo.com

NY State Bluebird Society
Jenny Murtaugh
2119 Eastern Parkway
Schenectady, NY 12309
518-322-7460
agilityfastantics@yahoo.com

Orleans Bluebird Society
Gary Kent
3806 Allen’s Bridge Rd.
Albion, NY 14411
585-589-5130
gkworking4u@hotmail.com

Scholarie County Bluebird Society
Kevin Berner
499 West Richmondville Rd
Richmondville NY 12149
518-294-7196
bernerkl@cobleskill.edu

North Carolina
NC Bluebird Society
Ray Welch
401 Farmbrooke Lane
Winston-Salem, NC 27127-9218
336-764-0226
president@ncbluebird.org
www.ncbluebird.org

Ohio
Ohio Bluebird Society
PMB 111, 343 W. Milltown Rd.
Wooster, OH 44691
330-466-6926
info@ohiobluebirdsociety.org
www.ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Oklahoma
Oklahoma Bluebird Society
Herb Streator
6400 E. Commercial St
Broken Arrow, OK 74014
918-806-2489

Ontario
Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society
Bill Read
24 Brant Place

Oregon
Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project
Charlie Stalzer
PO Box 1469
Sherwood, OR 97140
email@prescottbluebird.com
www.prescottbluebird.com

Pennsylvania
Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania
Harry Schmieder
448 Portman Road
Butler, PA 16002
724-285-1209
harryschmieder@gmail.com
www.thebsp.org

Purple Martin Conservation Assoc.
John Tautin
Tom Ridge Environmental Center
301 Peninsula Dr., Suite 6
Erie, PA 16505
814-833-2090
jtautin@purplemartin.org
www.purplemartin.org

South Carolina
South Carolina Bluebird Society
Jim Burke
P.O. Box 5151
Aiken, SC 29804-5151
803-644-0235
jimburke271@gmail.com
www.southcarolinabluebirds.org

Tennessee
Bluebirds Across America
Farrell Roe
95 Hayes Branch Trail
Jackson, TN 38301
731-424-6161
roerockingr@aol.com

Tennessee Bluebird Trails
Louis Redmon
381 Liberty Rd
Wartburg, TN 37887
423-346-3911
amyredmon@hotmail.com

Texas
Texas Bluebird Society
Pauline Tom
PO Box 40868
Austin, TX 78704
210-201-5678
ptom5678@gmail.com
www.texasbluebirdsociety.org

Virginia
Audubon Society of Northern Virginia
Jill Miller
11100 Wildlife Center Drive, Suite 100
Reston, VA 20190
703-438-6008
info@audubonva.org
www.audubonva.org

Virginia Bluebird Society
Anne Little
726 William St
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
540-373-4594
vbs@virginiabluebirds.org
www.virginiabluebirds.org

Washington
Cascadia Bluebird & Purple Martin Society
Michael Pietro
3015 Squalicum Pkwy #250
Bellingham, WA 98225
360-738-2153
mmpietro@hinet.org

Puget Sound Bluebird Recovery Project
Susan Ford
PO Box 1351
Poulsbo, WA 98370
susan@pugetsoundbluebird.org
www.pugetsoundbluebird.org

West Virginia
Potomac Valley Audubon Society
Peter Smith
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443
304-876-1139
pvsmit@frontiernet.net
www.potomacaudubon.org

Wisconsin
Aldo Leopold Audubon Society
Larry Graham
918 Arts Lane
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-344-0968
lgraham@uwsp.edu
www.aldolepoldaudubon.org

Bluebird Restoration Assoc of Wisconsin
Patrick Ready
1210 Oakwood Ct
Stoughton, WI 53589
608-873-1703
pready@tds.net
www.braw.org

Lafayette County Bluebird Society
Carol McDaniel
14953 State Rd. 23
Darlington, WI 53530-9324
lafayettedountybluebirdsociety@yahoo.com
A great big THANK YOU to these NABS Sponsors!
Our sponsors support the work of NABS through an annual contribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Minimum Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Silver Level</strong></td>
<td>(at least $1,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry &amp; Vicky Larkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature's Way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Langley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grubco</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Bronze Level**       | (at least $500)      |
| True Blue Level        | (at least $250; available only to NABS Affiliates) |
| Southern California Bluebird Club |
| NYS Bluebird Society |
| Texas Bluebird Society |
| Virginia Bluebird Society |

| **Nestbox Neighbors**  | (at least $100; available only to NABS Affiliates) |
| East Central Illinois Bluebird Society |
| Missouri Bluebird Society |
| North Carolina Bluebird Society |
Renew Today! Give a friend the gift of bluebirds!

Date __________________________

☐ New Membership  ☐ Renewal  ☐ A gift subscription from: __________________________________________ for:

☐ 1 Year  ☐ 2 Years  ☐ 3 Years  ☐ 4 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Single Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subscribing</td>
<td>☐ $30</td>
<td>☐ $20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting</td>
<td>☐ $50</td>
<td>☐ $40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing</td>
<td>☐ $85</td>
<td>☐ $75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian</td>
<td>☐ $110</td>
<td>☐ $100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td>☐ $500</td>
<td>☐ $500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organization ☐ $50
Small Business ☐ $50
Corporation ☐ $125
A+ (for Affiliate members only) ☐ $15

Name of Affiliate organization: __________________________

NOTE: Multiple years are not available for “A+” — this membership type must be renewed annually.

Additional Donation
☐ $30  ☐ $50  ☐ Other __________

☐ Check enclosed (in U.S. funds)
☐ Visa  ☐ MasterCard

Card # __________________________

Last 3 digits on reverse side: ___________

Expiry: ______ Signature: __________________________

Total amount paid/charged to credit card: __________________________

We do not share or sell NABS’s membership list.
$10.00 of each annual membership is designated for subscription to Bluebird, the quarterly journal. The remaining portion of payment is a contribution. Payment must be in U.S. funds.

Mail to: NABS Treasurer, P.O. Box 7844, Bloomington IN 47407
An online membership form with payment through PayPal is available online at www.nabluebirdsgociety.org