



# BLUEBIRD

*Journal of the North American Bluebird Society*



Fall 2008  
Vol. 30 No. 4



*Photo by John Millman*

# Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Fall Message to our Affiliate Organizations - <i>Brian Swanson</i> .....         | 1  |
| From the President - <i>Jonathan Ridgeway</i> .....                              | 2  |
| From the Managing Editor - <i>Scott Gillihan</i> .....                           | 4  |
| From the Membership Committee - <i>Sherry Linn</i> .....                         | 5  |
| Cooperative Nest of Eight Eastern Bluebirds - <i>Mary Roen</i> .....             | 6  |
| My Oregon Friends and Their Western Bluebirds - <i>Dewayne L. Ehman</i> .....    | 8  |
| A Room with a View: Retrofit to a Proven Winner - <i>Gary M. Manfready</i> ..... | 12 |
| Using the Magic Halo to Deter House Sparrows - <i>John Harville</i> .....        | 16 |
| Joe Huber is Remembered - <i>Dick Tuttle</i> .....                               | 18 |
| Farewell to Don Yoder - <i>Georgette Howington</i> .....                         | 19 |
| The Gift of a Blue Bird - <i>Kimberly Corwin</i> .....                           | 20 |
| Research Review - <i>Scott Gillihan</i> .....                                    | 22 |
| Children's Bluebird Activity Book - <i>Bob Niebuhr</i> .....                     | 24 |
| Bluebird Battles - <i>Irby Lovette</i> .....                                     | 25 |
| Affiliates of the North American Bluebird Society .....                          | 27 |

**Cover photo:** *Dave Kinner* shot this nice study of a male and female Eastern Bluebird behind his house near Fredericksburg, Virginia this spring. The female was taking a break from building their first nest of the season. You can see more of Dave's pictures at [www.pbbase.com/uncledave](http://www.pbbase.com/uncledave).



## Bluebird

Bluebird/Sialia (ISSN 0890-7021) is published quarterly by North American Bluebird Society, P.O. Box 43, Miamiville, OH 45147

Printed by Colorado Printing Co.  
Grand Junction, CO

Managing Editor: Scott Gillihan

Subscription is included with membership in NABS. Write for information about bulk quantities. Make checks and money orders payable to NABS in U.S. funds.

Issues are dated Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter and appear approximately on the 15th day of January, April, July, and October. The deadline for submission of materials is three months prior to the publication date.

Letters to the editor and articles in this publication express the opinions and/or positions of the authors. Letters may be edited for length and content. Published articles do not necessarily represent the opinions and positions of the Officers, Directors, or other representatives of NABS.

General questions may be addressed to:  
[info@nabluebirdsociety.org](mailto:info@nabluebirdsociety.org)  
or call 812-988-1876 during office hours  
(12-3 pm EST Mon-Fri).

*The North American Bluebird Society 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.*

[www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)

## Fall Message to our Affiliate Organizations

Mark your calendars. Start planning your trip to NABS 2009. The dates and place are now firm. We will be meeting in the Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey on September 10, 11, and 12, 2009 (please note that this is a change from the information we put out earlier this spring). This location puts us in the heart of great fall birding at places like Hawk Mountain and the more accessible South Mountain. It is close enough to visit the new visitor center at the Gettysburg National Battlefield. Hershey is a short drive away, and the Pennsylvania Dutch country is at hand. There is even a new casino a mile away from our hotel. In other words, there is something for everyone!

Speakers and field trips for NABS 2009 will be announced soon and registration information will be on the website as it becomes available. Rooms at a reasonable price are part of the package that the Pennsylvania conference committee has negotiated. Harrisburg has an airport and Baltimore is served by Southwest Airlines. The Baltimore airport is approximately 100 miles to the south via interstate highways. Philadelphia is 100 miles away and is also served by Southwest. Please plan to join us for what promises to be a great convention.

We now have an Affiliate calendar on the NABS website. If you go to [www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org) and click on "NABS Calendar" (left side), you will see postings of Affiliate activities. The purpose is to let folks in nearby states know about events that they may want to attend. I encourage you to visit that part of our website and to send your event information to Greg Beavers who has volunteered to do the posting. Greg can be emailed at [bluebirdbox@gmail.com](mailto:bluebirdbox@gmail.com).

I hope all of you were as impressed as I was with the look and feel of the Summer issue of *Bluebird*. Our new Managing Editor, Scott Gillihan, has set the bar high with his first issue. He would like to hear from you. One area that would be of particular interest to other Affiliates is what you have done to reenergize your organization. We all have times of dwindling interest and participation. How has your Affiliate reignited the spark that keeps you going?

Finally, I want to welcome a new Affiliate in New York State; the Orleans Bluebird Society is now part of the NABS family.

Keep up the good work!  
Brian Swanson  
NABS Vice President for Affiliate Relations

# From the President

Jonathan Ridgeway

Greetings of peace -

In the summer of 2006, my wife Lynne and I were told that NABS needed some help and we were asked to join the Board. We accepted invitations for Lynne to be Secretary and for me to become one of the Board members. In August the Board voted us in and our first teleconference meeting was November. They seemed to have confidence in my leadership abilities so within two months they recruited me to become President. I was elected to that position in January 2007. Since Lynne and I joined we have strived to make improvements and I believe our record speaks for itself.

All along the way we asked people to help us and one after the other they did. So many wonderful friends have joined our team and taken on so much responsibility that needed to be delegated to them. It is truly gratifying and amazing to see the work that has been accomplished by our dedicated volunteers in a fairly brief period of time.

Now it is time for us to reach out to you, the readers of this message, to elicit your more active participation in the planning and running of the operations of our organization. We find ourselves in an extraordinary position to provide greater benefits to the bluebirding community and to the creatures of our affection, the bluebirds and other cavity nesting species of North America. The more of us who carry the load the less burden each of us will have to bear and the more we can accomplish.

The three areas where we need the most help right now are in the pool of contributors to our journal (photographers, writers, and perhaps some advertisers); an accumulation of committee assignments which will need to be defined; and more high-quality candidates to stand for election to Board offices and positions.

We ask academics and scientists to take notice that we would be eager to publish serious research studies by scholars working to advance the world's knowledge base pertaining to bluebirds or other native cavity nesters. This is a great opportunity for students to publish significant papers in a well recognized and highly regarded international periodical. We are also receptive to backyard birders and citizen scientists who have interesting findings or stories to share. As you are probably well aware, we recently hired a new Bluebird Managing Editor, Scott Gillihan, and his sole discretion will determine what material is accepted, rejected, modified, or delayed. The quality of submissions will be a motivating factor. Top quality high-resolution photographs submitted with permission for their use are in high demand, especially when they come with good descriptions or captions.

The current challenge facing several of our most important committees is to redefine their objectives and procedures. Our collection of educational materials which we eagerly share with our Affiliates, bluebird enthusiasts and other interested parties is out of date and needs to be completely recreated. Our goal is to produce a full array of the most contemporary materials in forms that will be useful and enjoyable to whomever wants them. In the past 30 years our Grants Committee was more conceptual but now we are in a position to award significant grants and need to produce clear guidelines and protocols. Some minor improvements have been made to our Bylaws but serious work is needed in that area, as well as in Long Range and Strategic Planning. These are but a few examples. We are asking anyone who feels they can make a serious contribution to let us know they are willing to serve.

Finding excellent candidates to compete for Board positions is its own challenge. Our next general election will be at our NABS 2009



convention in Pennsylvania. Those who may wish to have their names placed on the ballot could be invited to join the Board earlier so they may have a prior sense of the experience and truly know what they are signing up for. It is not a prerequisite that candidates come with special skills or credentials but those who have them are surely welcome. It is not necessary to be an expert bluebirder, environmentalist, ornithologist, or other scientist but one must be committed to our missions of preserving and promoting bluebirds and other native cavity nesting species.

Why might you want serve? What has changed? The structure of the NABS organization has improved dramatically since 2006. In the summer of 2005 people said NABS would be bankrupt before the year ended. Now our finances are more vibrant, stable and enviable than anyone can remember. There used to be infighting and conflict. Now we play as a team, working toward common goals. We maintain a high level of collegial team spirit, cooperation, affection, courtesy, and appreciation that members show for one another. We conduct a lot of business and make sure to consider the sincere differences of opinions between the various members before we make decisions. We are attentive to the fact that nobody has time they want to waste and make a concerted effort to keep issues focused and on track. We distribute an accurate agenda in advance and stick to it as closely as we can. We treat the issues seriously while the mood remains light hearted because none of us take ourselves too seriously. The result is that the conversations are a lot more fun and very much more productive than they used to be. A lot of credit is due to Lynne for the excellent minutes she prepares and distributes after each meeting because they so clearly report the contexts of events that transpire.

Our conference calls are usually about two hours long and begin at 8 o'clock EST, in consideration of the members calling in from a variety of time zones. We almost always have a quorum and get started by 5 minutes or less after the hour because everyone knows that if they are late we

will start without them and they might miss something. As well as punctuality, we maintain a high level of attendance because everyone realizes they will be missed if they are absent. We count on having everyone play on the team.

Matters that ought to be reported but do not need discussion are printed in the agenda for people to read, in their own time. Subjects that only need active participation by a portion of the group are first handled by committees so the rest of the Board can limit their involvement to the significant final choices. Some of our committees have members who are not on the Board and the sum of their deliberations are reported by the voice of their chairperson. These are only some of the ways we avoid wasting people's time.

Our challenges were big and urgent when I started and only needed to be covered by a broad brush. Now our considerations are ready for more help and we need a sharper focus on particular details. We truly need your support, now more than ever before. The rewards will be due recognition and the knowledge of how much of a difference you are making.

Please take the time to think about it seriously. Please talk to your family and friends about it, whether you are able to devote some time, some energy, and some commitment to it. Please make a positive decision one way or the other if you are willing to offer your participation either on our Board or on any of our committees. It does not have to be a full-time job or a sacrifice of any of the other important things in your life. If you are willing to volunteer to be a player on our team, the level you choose will be entirely up to you. I most respectfully urge you to reach out to me or any of our other Board members and let us know how you would like to help. We will do whatever we can to find something that will suit your fancy and we will be sincerely grateful for any responsible role you may fulfill. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

Yours in peace,  
Jonathan Ridgeway  
NABS President

# From the Managing Editor

Scott Gillihan

As with all new journeys, my foray into the world of editing *Bluebird* is bound to involve some wrong turns and bumps in the road, and the Summer issue was no exception. My apologies to Jonathan Morgan for incorrectly listing his website address; the correct address, of course, is [www.friendofbirds.com](http://www.friendofbirds.com). Also, the journal's mailing labels were inadvertently printed without the membership expiration information; my apologies to all for the confusion.

A big thank-you for assistance with this issue (and a big apology to anyone I've forgotten to mention): Laura Erickson (Cornell Lab of Ornithology), Kurt Hagemeister (Michigan Bluebird Society), Keith Kridler, Brenda Martin, NABS Board, Bill Read (Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society), and Bet Zimmerman.



## Officials of North American Bluebird Society, Inc.

### Executive Committee

Jonathan Ridgeway -  
President  
Brian Swanson - First  
Vice President (Affiliate  
Relations)  
Phil Berry - Second Vice  
President (Community  
Relations)  
Greg Beavers - Treasurer  
Lynne Ridgeway -  
Secretary

### Board of Directors

Bob Benson  
Tom Comfort  
Bernie Daniel  
Jimmy Dodson  
Sherry Linn  
Walter Mugdan  
Terry Neumyer  
David Rutherford  
John Schuster  
Dan Sparks  
Anne Sturm  
Dick Tuttle  
Bet Zimmerman

### Awards Committee

Anne Sturm - Chair  
Greg Beavers  
David Smith  
Maynard Sumner

### Bylaws Committee

Brian Swanson - Chair  
Bernie Daniel  
Walter Mugdan  
Lynne Ridgeway

### Education Committee

Terry Neumyer - Chair  
Susan Balenger, PhD  
Tom Barber  
Kevin Berner  
Bernie Daniel, PhD  
Chris Desjardins, PhD  
Jimmy Dodson  
Donna Harris  
Christine Hill  
Howard Hill  
Rhitoban "Ray"  
Raychoudhury  
John Schuster  
Lynn Siefferman, PhD  
Julie Zickefoose  
Bet Zimmerman

### Finance Committee

Greg Beavers - Chair  
Bernie Daniel  
Jimmy Dodson  
Dan Sparks

### Hotline Committee

Bob Benson - Chair  
Barbara Chambers  
Bernie Daniel  
John Schuster  
Dan Sparks

### Journal Advisory Committee

Bernie Daniel  
Benjamin Leese  
Lynne Ridgeway  
Dick Tuttle

### Law Committee

Walter Mugdan - Chair

### Membership Committee

Sherry Linn - Chair  
Phil Berry  
Nancy Crawford  
Tena Taylor

### Nestbox Approval Committee

Bob Benson - Chair  
Tom Comfort  
Steve Eno  
Dan Sparks

### Nominating Committee

Bob Benson - Chair  
Bernie Daniel  
Maynard Sumner  
Brian Swanson

### Photography Committee

Maynard Sumner - Chair  
Marjorie Sumner

### Grants Committee

Anne Sturm - Chair  
Bernie Daniel  
Sherry Linn

### Speakers Bureau Committee

Jimmy Dodson - Chair

### Technical Advisory Committee

Bernie Daniel  
Jimmy Dodson

### Website Committee

Jim McLochlin - Chair  
Dan Sparks

### Webmaster

Jim McLochlin

*Bluebird* Managing Editor  
Scott Gillihan

# From the Membership Committee

I'd like to introduce you to our Membership Team: Tena Taylor, Phil Berry, Nancy Crawford, and me, Sherry Linn. As with other NABS committees, we are spread across the continent and volunteer to serve you—our 2600 (and growing) NABS members. Over the past year our team has completed an outreach campaign to past members to “Please Come Back,” handles quarterly renewal reminders to current members, is working on the “A+” program for Affiliate organizations, and keeps the NABS database updated.

Speaking to the database issue, we do have some “glitches” in our data and are working hard to correct all our membership records. This updating is very time consuming and not all the inaccuracies are readily found. This is where **you can help!** We ask you to take a moment and read your personal information on the mailing label on the back cover. **Please check all aspects of your name and address.** If anything is incorrect—notify us right away so that we may make the necessary changes. And, when you contact us, please be sure to include your phone number and email. Remember—NABS does not share your information and we do not sell our membership list.

We apologize for any inconvenience these errors may have caused you, but **you are important to us** and we are striving to do our best to ensure a smooth delivery of your *Bluebird*. On the back cover you will also see a section with your membership ID and the date of the last issue you will receive. Your journal label

information also gives you a reminder to renew on the last two issues before your membership lapses. If you have renewed and receive a separate reminder in the mail, please accept that quite often your renewal payment crosses in the mail with the notice. It can take 3-6 weeks from when you renew to when we receive the information to update your information. This is dependent on the payment method and the processing time required before it makes it to Tena for input. We appreciate your understanding regarding the timing issue as again, everyone is in different parts of the country. Until we can have you update your information directly on the NABS website, and we can use that mechanical means to send you notices, please understand that using the post is the most timely way we can remind you to renew.

You can renew on line using a credit card or PayPal, or mail in the form on the back of your *Bluebird* or printed from our website ([www.NABluebirdSociety.org](http://www.NABluebirdSociety.org)).

It has been a great learning experience for me since I joined the Membership Team and the opportunity to correspond with many of you by email or on the phone is always a pleasure. Please contact me directly if you have any questions or feedback that will help us serve you better.

Yours in Blue – Sherry Linn  
Chair, Membership Committee  
[goldstrm@vip.net](mailto:goldstrm@vip.net)  
250.495.7891 (Pacific Time)

## North American Bluebird Society Awards 2009

Do you know of an individual, group, or business that deserves to be recognized for their outstanding contributions to bluebird conservation? If so, we want to hear from you! Please submit a NABS award nomination form by June 30, 2009. The 2009 Awards will be presented during the 2009 NABS Convention, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Bluebird Society in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, September 10 - 12, 2009.

Visit the NABS website ([www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)) to complete the nomination form online, or download a copy to fill out and mail to us.



# Cooperative Nest of Eight Eastern Bluebirds

Mary Roen

I put up my first bluebird nest box in 1988, nailing it to a tree in a patch of woods. Unbelievably, a pair of bluebirds did nest in it, but a House Wren destroyed the eggs. I've learned a lot in the 21 years since I placed that first nest box. I didn't have a lot of resources to turn to in those days. Today there are state and national bluebird associations and conferences, books, and Internet listservs like Bluebird-L through Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Because of what I have learned, I now have all of my boxes mounted on electric conduit/rebar poles in open areas with stovepipe baffles to eliminate mammalian predators. I have had a lot of great experiences with my bluebird trail of 53 nest boxes, but this year was exceptional.

On May 31, 2008, I monitored a pair of boxes, #11 and #12, in the back of our farm. Box #11 had three bluebird eggs in it, and Box #12 had two bluebird nestlings and two unhatched eggs. It was unheard of to have bluebird nests in each of two nest boxes 15 feet apart, so I didn't know what was going on, but assumed the box with eggs was abandoned. When I monitored the trail again on June 7, the nestlings and eggs were all gone! The nests were not disturbed, and with the baffles on both poles, I had no idea what happened. The most likely possibility was avian depredation. I removed both nests and when I monitored my trail again on June 15, there were five bluebird eggs in box #12.



I was on vacation and couldn't monitor again until June 27 when I found nine bluebird eggs in Box #12! The only way I could explain this was that two females were laying eggs in the same nest box. Maybe it was a mother and last year's daughter. That might

explain why there was no rivalry between the two females. On July 4 there were eight nestlings about 2-3 days old and one infertile egg. I set up my video camera and documented two females and one male



bluebird feeding the nestlings. I could see that the Gilwood nest box was not going to be big enough for eight nestlings, so I built a bigger box, inside dimensions of 7.25" by 6.5" by 9" deep. I made two 1.5-inch holes in the front of the box. I thought it would be interesting to see if both holes would be used, maybe at the same time, and I did get pictures of this occurring. I hinged the roof of this box so I could take pictures more easily from the top.





On July 8, I moved the whole nest with nestlings to the larger box, on the same pole as the smaller box had been, and set up my video camera to be sure the parents would accept the new nest box. It showed that 5½ minutes after I moved the nestlings, one of the females flew to the top of the new box, and in less than 8 minutes, went in the box. It took about 19 minutes for the male to enter the new box. They



accepted it! The nestlings were well cared for by the three parents. One nestling was smaller and seemed less developed than the others, so I watched it closely and took pictures daily. The picture taking did not disturb the nestlings. I was careful not to stay more than 2 minutes. They sat quietly and “froze” when the top was opened. I put the video camera out by the box on July 11 and taped the parents feeding the nestlings 46 times in 69 minutes. The “runt” continued to grow quickly, and soon it could hardly be distinguished from its siblings.



On July 18, I checked the box, and six of the eight nestlings had fledged at 17 days of age. The remaining two nestlings fledged the next day, on July 19. I had my motion-activated camera set up and did get a few pictures as the last two nestlings were sitting in the holes ready to fledge out into the big world. It was like they were saying “good-bye” to me. On July 20 when I looked in the box, it was empty. All eight nestlings fledged successfully. As far as I know, this was the first documented case of two females nesting in one nest box. I am leaving the larger 2-hole box up where it is, to see if it is used again next year. In 21 years, I have never bonded to any nest of bluebirds as I did to this one. My bluebird obsession went up several notches and I truly have “empty nest syndrome”! Many people at work, church, and home have followed the progress of these bluebirds, and so they have increased bluebird awareness, too.

My hope is that these fledglings survive to come back next year to start a new generation of bluebirds. This is why bluebirds get in your heart and never leave. I love happy endings!



*Mary Roen is a nurse and lives in rural Western Wisconsin. She has had an Eastern Bluebird trail since 1988. She monitors 53 nest boxes, mostly paired, and had 148 Eastern Bluebirds fledge this year. She is a member of NABS, the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW), and the Bluebird Recovery Program of Minnesota (BBRP). She also participates in the Bluebird-L listserv through Cornell.*

# My Oregon Friends and Their Western Bluebirds

Dewayne L. Ehman

I live in Yuma, Arizona, where many snowbirds spend the winter months. I met Lloyd and Jill Martin, snowbirds from Dallas, Oregon, in the winter of 2005, through a mutual friend. Our friend knew that both Lloyd and I enjoyed fishing, so he suggested that we go fishing together. We did, and we liked each other so well that we became fishing buddies, going fishing almost every day. Lloyd is a witty, gregarious man with boundless energy and a seemingly unquenchable thirst for adventure; he is also a very good fisherman. Once, I jokingly told Jill that I couldn't keep up with Lloyd at fishing or at anything else. As a matter of fact, I was finding it difficult just staying out of Lloyd's way.

Lloyd and Jill were indeed snowbirds, but for only three months each year: November, December, and January—the months during which their Oregon bluebirds migrate south. During the rest of the year they wanted to be in Oregon to care for any of the Western Bluebird families who chose to make their homes in the Martins' backyard. I *knew* those bluebirds had to be very special if the Martins wanted to leave Yuma for Oregon in the middle of winter!

Lloyd and Jill's schedule meant that I couldn't go fishing with Lloyd for nine months out of each year. However, Lloyd and Jill told me that I was welcome to visit them in Oregon anytime; I could stay with them and meet their bluebirds. I couldn't wait to see the Martins and their birds, so I drove up in July 2006.

The Martins live on the western edge of Dallas, Oregon, in a beautiful two-story home with magnificent landscaping incorporating azaleas, red maples, irises, and evergreens. What a paradise!

Everything about the Martins' home was a visual feast, and their backyard was truly a bird sanctuary. It included bird-feeding stations, a birdbath, and several

birdhouses for Western Bluebirds and swallows. The landscaping's wood-chip base was a perfect hunting ground for the birds in their quests for insects and seeds. In addition, whenever the birds wanted to forage in the wilderness, they could fly to the Martins' seven-acre pasture. Lloyd kept this pasture mowed to give the birds easy access to grassland food. This avian paradise attracted Western Bluebirds, Pine Siskins, Spotted Towhees, and various hummingbirds, swallows, finches, grosbeaks, juncos, and quail.

During the first day of my visit Lloyd and Jill told me about their 12-year association with Western

Bluebirds and how they had helped to raise nearly 300 baby bluebirds. In early 1994 Lloyd built his first backyard bird feeder. That spring he saw his first Western Bluebird, sitting on his feeder. Immediately, Lloyd and Jill gathered information on Western Bluebirds. They discovered that the species had once been abundant but was now listed as "rarely seen." That's all it took to galvanize Lloyd and Jill into action. Lloyd built bluebird houses for his backyard and began

providing nest-building materials.

Meanwhile, Jill researched the Western Bluebirds' diet. She discovered that they love to eat mealworms, so the Martins began buying mealworms—lots of mealworms. Lloyd used an upended five-gallon bucket as the feeding station. He placed it 15 feet from the chair where he liked to sit in his backyard. Then he whistled to let the birds know that it was feeding time. Soon a male Western Bluebird came to the bucket, landed, got one mealworm, and flew away. The next day Lloyd repeated this routine five times. That day two Western Bluebirds, a male and a female, ate mealworms from the bucket. Every day Lloyd continued his feeding of the bluebird pair, moving the bucket closer and closer to his chair. Within two weeks the bluebird couple was eating from the bucket feeder right beside him. Lloyd and Jill named those



Lloyd Martin with a friend



birds Bill and Shirley, after two very special friends. In 1994 Bill and Shirley had two clutches.

Bill and Shirley returned to the Martins' backyard every year through 2001. In 1995 they had four clutches. This time, after fledging, the babies came to the feeding station. After the members of each clutch had been taught to fend for themselves, Bill and Shirley would try (sometimes unsuccessfully) to drive them away, apparently to make sure that the food supply for the next clutch would be plentiful. One year Bill and Shirley had five clutches with six babies per clutch.

By 2001 Bill was following Lloyd on his daily walks down the hill; Jill would know when Lloyd was about to return, because she'd see Bill first, as Bill would always precede Lloyd back up the hill. Sometimes, when Lloyd was sitting in his backyard chair, Bill would sit on the toe of Lloyd's shoe. If Lloyd was working in his backyard, the bluebird babies would land on his head and shoulders. Sadly, after the second clutch of 2001, a cat killed Bill. This meant that Lloyd had to help Shirley feed all of her babies—from sunup until sundown. Shirley and her babies stayed with Lloyd and Jill for the rest of the season, but Shirley never remarried in 2001, and she never again returned to the Martins' home.

From 2002 until 2006 a new pair of Western Bluebirds lived in one of the Martins' backyard birdhouses. Obviously, the new birds were descendants of Bill and Shirley because, when Lloyd whistled, the new pair flew right to the feeding bucket by Lloyd in his chair. Lloyd and Jill named this new pair Bill Bill and Amy.

In 2006 Bill Bill and Amy produced two clutches. Before the second clutch could fledge, Bill Bill became sick. Within days, another male appeared and chased the ailing Bill Bill away. Amy tried to get rid of the new male, but he was very persistent (and apparently charming and persuasive). Within one more day Amy was permitting the new male to help her feed her babies. Soon, Lloyd and Jill realized that the new male

was Amy's new mate. They named him Dewayne (after me!).

Now that I knew the history of the Martins' 12-year association with Western Bluebirds, I was ready to go out to their backyard and meet their bluebird friends. So that I wouldn't frighten the birds the first time that they saw me, I stayed in the background and watched as the birds interacted with Lloyd and Jill.

Usually the Martins conducted five to eight bluebird feedings per day. By the second or third feeding the next day Dewayne and four of his babies trusted me enough to eat from the bucket feeder with me sitting nearby. What gorgeous birds they are!

By the end of the first week of my visit I was calling and feeding the bluebirds by myself. At feeding time Lloyd was now whistling *and* clapping, so that's what I did, too. Then I sat down by the bucket feeder, and before long several bluebirds were eating mealworms beside me.



Jill Martin

What fantastic hosts the Martins were! I didn't want to leave, but I said farewell to Lloyd, Jill, and my bluebird friends and headed back to Yuma. I talked to Lloyd and Jill by telephone weekly until they returned to Yuma in

October 2006. From our telephone conversations I learned that Amy (with Bill Bill and then Dewayne) had produced five clutches—with six babies per clutch—that season.

In January 2007, just before Lloyd and Jill left for Oregon, Jill suggested I visit them in April, because that's when their azaleas would be in full bloom.

Once the Martins returned to Oregon, our weekly telephone conversations resumed. Then, on February 21, 2007, I received a call from Lloyd, who told me Jill had passed away that morning. He told me that his wife had died in her sleep and he hadn't known until he tried to awaken her. Lloyd also told me that, when he was making the 911 call for an ambulance, he happened to look out his living-room window, and there, lined up on his deck's railing, were 13 Western



Bluebirds. These loyal birds had arrived an hour ahead of schedule, as if to say “Goodbye” to Jill.

Lloyd, of course, was devastated by his wife’s death. No one knew that Jill, who was only 60 years old, had any serious health problems. From that day onward Lloyd and I conversed by telephone at least twice a day. In the weeks immediately following Jill’s death Lloyd was surrounded by family members, friends, and neighbors. Consequently, we decided that I should adhere to my original plan of waiting until April to visit—when he would perhaps need his fishing buddy from Yuma to be there with him.

The night before Jill died, she and Lloyd had discussed starting a bluebird trail, which would stretch for miles through the Willamette Valley and contain dozens of bluebird houses. The purpose of the birdhouses would be, of course, to encourage Western Bluebirds to build nests, have families, and increase their numbers. Lloyd had promised Jill that he would start the trail, and Jill had promised Lloyd that she would help him. Now, Lloyd is a passionate, energetic man who always keeps his promises, so I wasn’t surprised to learn that, before I arrived to visit him in April, he had already created a plan for the trail and had started building and erecting bluebird houses.

When I arrived to visit Lloyd in April, I found that he was coping with his grief by filling his every waking hour with productive, generally enjoyable, and—most important—time-consuming activities. Let me tell you, during my visit, there was no way that I could keep up with Lloyd’s pace. The best that I could do was to make daily lists so that we wouldn’t forget any event that he had scheduled. All of Lloyd’s activities were definitely helping him to cope with his grief, but his bluebirds were his biggest and most constant source of comfort. They offered him love, hope, and happiness.

For several hours each day Lloyd would talk to the birds. Sometimes he would sing to them. The bluebirds ate their mealworms and listened as Lloyd, frequently with tears streaming down his cheeks, talked and sang to them. They seemed to understand his keen sense of loss and loneliness.

Lloyd’s newly created bluebird trail required much of his attention. By now he had named it the Jill Martin Memorial Bluebird Trail, and it already included 12 bluebird houses. The birdhouses were located along a six-mile-long line running roughly north-south with the mid-point in Lloyd’s backyard. He envisioned that soon the trail would contain 50 birdhouses, extend southward as far as Corvallis, and branch eastward through downtown Dallas.

By now, Lloyd’s fame was spreading throughout Polk County, where he was becoming known as the “Birdman of Bridlewood” (he lives in the Bridlewood Estates subdivision). It seemed that everyone in the county wanted to come to see Lloyd and his birds. On an almost daily basis, at least one friend, neighbor, or relative would drop by Lloyd’s home to visit with him and his birds. Sometimes, people who had never met Lloyd would call him just to be invited to his home to meet him and his bluebirds. Naturally, Lloyd welcomed everyone to his home and, after they arrived, would soon have them seated in his backyard, watching as he offered mealworms to his birds. I know that no one ever got tired of watching those bluebirds. Those birds brought a feeling of peace and happiness to everyone who visited.



Amy at home

Once again, I did not want to leave; I was having too much fun helping Lloyd with his activities, and I had fallen in love with his bluebirds.

Moreover, I felt that I was providing Lloyd some measure of comfort for his grief. We agreed that I should return in June. (By the way, Jill had been correct about the azaleas. When I arrived in mid April, the red azaleas in the front yard were in full, magnificent bloom, and when I left in late April, the purple azaleas in the backyard were in full bloom.)

When I arrived in June, I discovered that Lloyd was even busier than he had been in April. Again, he let me help with his projects; for example, I assumed responsibility for the bluebirds’ first feeding of the day. This allowed Lloyd an extra hour’s sleep, which he desperately needed because of the demanding pace of his lifestyle. In almost no time at all, the bluebirds became comfortable with my presence—I think that, except for the newest babies, they remembered me from April. So, every morning I was

calling them by whistling and clapping. At first I thought that I was doing a perfect imitation of Lloyd and therefore somewhat fooling the birds. However, a few days later Lloyd's next-door neighbors told us that they knew that I was feeding the bluebirds in the mornings, because my whistling and clapping were distinctly different from Lloyd's. And I thought that I was being so clever!

Lloyd had made good progress on the Jill Martin Memorial Bluebird Trail, which now had 25 birdhouses. It extended to downtown Dallas, and there were definite plans for the extension of the trail into Corvallis.

As the fame of the "Birdman of Bridlewood" spread, Lloyd received his first invitation to give a presentation about his bluebirds, to be given to a group of senior citizens. Immediately, Lloyd began working on his "lesson plan" and assembling visual aids, such as his best bluebird pictures, bluebird houses, some used bluebird nests, and a few mealworms. Lloyd was so excited about this new opportunity to tell people—for free—about bluebirds.

I knew that Lloyd would give an excellent lecture on his birds. I knew that he was a talented speaker with captivating charm and infectious enthusiasm. Well, Lloyd did indeed give a superior presentation. As a result, he began receiving more and more invitations to present his bluebird story. He was invited to speak to other senior-citizen groups, garden clubs, church groups, and youth groups. Of course, he accepted all invitations.

After each of his lectures, Lloyd would tweak his "lesson plan," subtly improving what was already a great story. He also began offering a bluebird house as a door prize at the end of each presentation and started planning a powerfully evocative slide show, which would start toward the end of his speech.

For his presentations Lloyd wore his signature coveralls. For groups of young children, he wore coveralls decorated with patches depicting ducklings, bunnies, and bluebirds. For adult groups he wore coveralls with a breast-pocket patch depicting a bluebird. Well, the man is definitely not boring! I guess what I'm trying to say is this: Lloyd Martin is the perfect ambassador, or champion, for Western Bluebirds. With Lloyd on their side, those birds will win their battle for survival.

During my June visit, Lloyd presented his bluebird

story to a group of 35 children from 5 to 11 years old. Naturally, he wore his decorated coveralls. I noticed that the older children and adults got a bigger kick out of Lloyd's coveralls than did the kindergartners. The kindergartners seemed to regard Lloyd as a big, 6'2" kid who had come to the park in his playsuit.

Once the group became quiet, Lloyd began to cast his magic spell. He geared his bluebird story down so that each child got caught up in it. He used his body to imitate the mealworms wiggling in the sunshine; he cocked his head at just the right angle and peered at the ground to imitate how a bluebird "eyes" a wiggling mealworm and evaluates it for a potential snack. Lloyd had the attention of all those children. The kids *and* the adults loved Lloyd and his bluebirds.

My two-week visit with Lloyd sped by, and soon I was on my way home. This time, I departed with the comforting certainty that Lloyd was going to be all right. After I arrived in Yuma, our twice-daily telephone conversations resumed. Lloyd told me that the trail was continuing to expand and that he was receiving more invitations to tell his bluebird story.

Since I've returned home, I've gone fishing as often as possible and I've traveled to see other friends and relatives. However, I miss Lloyd, his fast-paced lifestyle, his friends, and his bluebirds, especially Dewayne and Amy. It's now mid August, and I'm not sure that I can wait until the last week of October to see Lloyd again. That's when he plans to return to Yuma for his three months of fishing with me. During all of my Yuma activities, I find myself contemplating two of my friendships—one that I had with Jill, who would have done anything for me, and one that I have with Lloyd, who knows all about me, still likes me, and would do anything for me. I'm thankful that Jill Martin was my friend, and I feel truly blessed that Lloyd Martin is my best friend and fishing buddy. (Yes, he knows this; I've told him on several occasions.)

*Dewayne L. Ehman is a retired environmental chemist, now living in Yuma, AZ. He became a bluebird enthusiast upon visiting Lloyd and Jill Martin. Meanwhile, Lloyd, when in Oregon, keeps busy caring for his bluebirds, giving lectures, building bluebird houses, and maintaining the Jill Martin Memorial Bluebird Trail, which now includes nearly 125 birdhouses. Lloyd still winters in Yuma, where he fishes with Dewayne almost daily.*

# A Room with a View: Retrofit to a Proven Winner

Gary M. Manfready

Since the first nest box design for bluebirds there have been many improvements to the design and even some new designs offered. Some were radical departures from previous attempts while others provided modifications to existing structures based on newly discovered needs and behaviors of the species. One must wonder if there is any room for improvement to these designs! As I continue to monitor my nest trails I have found a few areas that I believe can be improved upon. I offer in this article a few “tweakings” to existing structures as well as a new addition to the box design. I believe this additional modification will reduce stress on mom and dad as well as babies during my frequent nest visits.

Let me begin by describing some of the modifications in construction and design. I like to call this a “hybrid” box design developed from some of the time-proven designs. The basic structure follows the box design that has been in use since Mussleman<sup>1</sup> first developed the artificial nest for the bluebird. I chose to follow the rectangular box developed by Duncan<sup>2</sup>. From here I have opted to locate the access door to the side panel, which follows the second design iteration by NABS<sup>3</sup>. I modified some of the dimensions of these two original designs. The maximum length of the side (to the top of the angled end) is 13 ½ inches. This length is between the first NABS box dimension of 16 ¾ inches and the second of 10 ¼ inches. Did I have a reason for choosing this dimension? The reason is not based on any available data to warrant the change. I found in my many attempts to create an overall dimension that incorporated my modifications that the 13 ½ inch dimension worked most efficiently. Besides, I enjoy the aesthetics of the design.

Box designers are not all convinced that a hole guard is necessary<sup>4</sup>. I have seen it prevent various predators from whittling away at the hole as they try to gain entrance. I have also noticed how well a thick dimension guard can slow down some intruders from reaching into the box cavity. I therefore opted to include the guard. My guard is constructed from ¾ inch stock and mounted in a manner that I believe adds character to the box. Coupled with the roof modifications (see the discussion below) predators must reach over 1 ½ inches before entering the cavity.



The need for proper ventilation is essential. This is especially a priority here in the south where nest season air temperatures can exceed 95F. Many existing designs offer various holes, slots, and other ways to improve air movement. I have added three small ¼-inch “portholes” on each side panel and five to the back panel just low enough to provide maximum air convection yet prohibit rain from entering. The front panel was lowered ¼ inch from the roof. These ventilation openings have created a “chimney” effect, drafting air upwards due to another design modification (see the discussion below on floor ventilation).

The roof system has also undergone some small changes from existing box design. The overhang of the roof should be maximized to provide rain and sun protection. I have followed the suggestion of Kridler<sup>5</sup> and provided 2 inches of roof extension from all adjoining panels. Using an artificial light system I have rotated the light source through a typical “summer day” from one side to the top over to the back and observed the extent of shadow covering to be maximized. Any larger size would not be cost effective in materials and fabrication to warrant additional shade. The extended roof overhang also provides greater protection against intruders. Coupled with the thick hole guard it is quite a stretch to reach inside!





I have tried another construction modification to see if I can control roof warping. To accommodate the oversize roof dimensions and keep costs down I have joined two smaller dimension boards together using biscuit joinery. In my years of hobby carpentry I have discovered this technique provides maximum resistance to warp. As an additional protection from warping and to provide further protection from rain, sun, and predators I have added two cross beams just under the front and back edge. The roof slant angle of 5 degrees is half of the value in the NABS design. Again this was only changed for aesthetic reasons to coincide with overall design ratios. To prevent water from entering the box I have added two rain diverters to the roof. These send the majority of rainwater to either side of the entrance hole and also add to warp resistance.

I have noticed that some box designs call for saw cuts or abrasion be done to the inside front panel to provide a surface for nestlings to grab as they climb to the access hole. I have added a structure to provide the nestlings easier access to the nest hole during fledging.



A section of vinyl window screening was attached to the inside front panel. Using water based wood glue to ensure that toxic substances are not present in the box the screen was mounted along with a wood frame perimeter to keep it from coming loose.

All that I have described thus far involve minor changes to existing box designs. One of the two major changes I have made involve the method of attaching the box to a mounting pole. This change was actually developed as a result of my concern for an effective drainage system (as mentioned above) coupled with a way to increase the expulsion of parasitic eggs. The bottom plate was perforated with a series of nine holes bored  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in diameter. In addition the plate was cut  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch shorter on each of two sides. My intention was to provide ample drainage without compromising the integrity of the bottom plate. As mentioned earlier I was also interested in providing an active ventilation system. Here in the south, heat is a real issue during nesting season. Box temperatures can become uncomfortably high on sunny humid days when the wind fails to blow. With the new design air is actively channeled toward the top ventilation holes by convection. As the roof heats up the air in the box rises to escape through the top ventilation holes. The additional gaps and holes in the bottom provide ample volume of air exchange creating a current of air through the box. In essence air conditioning has been provided for the birds.



This change also led to a different way to mount the box to a pole. The central drainage hole was bored to a slightly larger diameter of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " to accommodate a bolt with dual ends. I inserted a threaded sleeve as extra protection against wearing out the hole and to prevent wobbling of the box on the pole mount. The machine screw end was inserted into the central hole of the box and capped with a dome nut. This does not create a hazard for the nesting bird since the nut is rounded off and will be covered by nest material. The other end of the bolt contains a wood screw thread. After drilling a  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch pilot hole in the mounting post the box was screwed into the hole. I did not want the box to rest directly on the top of the mounting pole as this would impede the flow of air through

the ventilation holes. To overcome this problem I inserted two washers between the box and pole on the mounting bolt. This raises the box ¼ inch from the pole, providing ventilation and drainage. The box is very sturdy and does not wobble on the bolt mount. It is easy to remove for maintenance and best of all inexpensive and simple to construct.

The greatest change made to the box design is reflected in the title of this article. Making observations of nesting activity has always been accomplished through the side panel. I have always been concerned that my interests were a bit disconcerting to the happy nesters. As carefully as I opened the panel I knew this was just not natural to the everyday life of the mom and kids. So I decided to create a nest box with a view. This provides a way to observe with minimal impact and interaction. To create the window view I removed a 3 x 8 inch rectangular section of wood from the back panel. This is not a difficult technique and can be accomplished with simple hand tools. I drilled four corner holes in the area to be removed so I could insert my jigsaw and proceed to cut the section from the panel. On the inside of the panel I cut a ¼ x ¼ inch edge that would receive the ¼ inch acrylic window. This design ensured the window would remain flush with the inside surface. After inserting the window I glued a frame around the inside perimeter to ensure the window would remain intact. I used a water-based wood glue that does not present any toxicity to the birds.



The door was a bit more tricky but not beyond the ability of the amateur woodworker. I cut ¾ inch stock to a size equal to ¼ inch larger than the window. The inside perimeter received a rabbet (a woodworking term for cutting an edge groove) to a width that allowed the door to set inside the window opening. The outside edge was rounded over to minimize erosion

of the door. I drilled a ¼ inch hole through the side panel. To secure the door a small “eye” hook was fastened to the door. The bolt slips easily into the hook. For both this door and the side panel access door, I used ¼ x 3 inch bolts with a wing nut for easier grasping. Brass hinges secured the door to the panel and I was now in business!

Much of the data I have collected during the “testing” phase has shown the modifications to be efficiently performing the job they were intended to do. By producing a synthetic rain event with a garden hose set to the “shower” mode, I have been able to determine the impact of the rain diverter and extra large roof overhang. Rain does not have a chance! Water is removed from the entrance area and ventilation openings. This is not to say it will keep a driving rain from penetrating the access hole. The additional thickness provided by the hole guard was tested to determine if a strong wind-blown rain could also be diverted. I sprayed water from oblique angles to see just how much water would enter during heaving blowing rain events. I compared this data to that of a similar box without a nest guard. Although driven rain perpendicular to the hole remains a problem, the additional thickness provided by the guard reduces water penetration at any other angle by approximately 50%! A welcome addition to the box design for sure. I did also notice that my new design to the floor rapidly and effectively drains any water that does enter the box.

The most important test for me and my greatest concern was whether the window unit would cause excessive heat buildup when left open for extended periods of time. Let me say that I do not recommend leaving the door open for long periods especially unattended. I fear that the ability to see all activity might cause unknown behavior to the birds. It would also be an attractive target for many predators. For this reason I suggest the window be used only for short periods of observation.

My tests on box temperature were carried out by placing a thermometer in the box and recording running temperatures for eight of the warmest hours during the day. I did this with the window opposing the angle of sun penetration and also with the sun shining on the window. As expected the sun does its job very well when the box is oriented toward it. Temperatures were much higher than those experienced in a box without the window. I suggest the box always be mounted with the window as far from direct sunlight as possible. This



is especially important if you perform extended observations during the sunniest time of the day. I was pleased by the performance when the window is positioned away from direct sunlight. The internal box temperature rose in proportion to the outside air temperature but remained within a degree of the rate for a windowless box. I attribute much of this to the enhanced ventilation system. I am hopeful that with a full nest and living bodies the air movement will still be appreciable. My next step is to erect and monitor the box during the nesting season!

You may think to yourself that this is a bit of “overkill” for a simple nest box. You may also think that if you were providing hundreds of boxes the construction would be a bit tedious. I have kept track of my time in construction and it did not amount to more than 15 minutes beyond the normal construction period for a simpler nest box design. I plan to build these boxes by having all components cut in bulk amounts. This will increase the efficiency of construction. After all these are our bluebirds we work so diligently to protect. They deserve the best we can provide!

## References

1. Musselman, T.E. 1934. Help the bluebirds. Bird-Lore 36.
2. Berger, Cynthia,; Kridler, Keith,; Griggs, Jack. 2001. The bluebird monitor’s guide. p. 95. Harper Collins. N.Y.
3. Berger, Cynthia,; Kridler, Keith,; Griggs, Jack. 2001. The bluebird monitor’s guide. p. 97. Harper Collins. N.Y.
4. <http://davesgarden.com/guides/articles/view/1093>
5. Berger, Cynthia,; Kridler, Keith,; Griggs, Jack. 2001. The bluebird monitor’s guide. p. 93. Harper Collins. N.Y.

*Dr. Gary Manfredy is a professor of biology at Troy University Dothan Campus in Alabama. His interests in ornithology have recently been focused on the status of bluebirds in southeast Alabama known as the “wiregrass” region. Currently he is maintaining four nest box trails with a total of 70 boxes and a second year 85% occupancy. Plans are currently underway to expand to other sites. A strong advocate of public environmental education, he presents workshops and informational meetings on bluebirds and nest box management to local schools and organizations. He is a member of NABS and The Alabama Ornithological Society.*



Bet Zimmerman



# Using the Magic Halo to Deter Sparrows

John Harville

The English Sparrow, commonly called House Sparrow, could be called public enemy number one for our bluebirds. Most, maybe all of us in the business of providing for bluebirds will come face to face with the devastating effects of sparrows, sooner or later. The year 2002 could be termed a pivotal year for me. Halfway through the nestling period with five youngsters, one morning I noticed a sparrow sitting on my backyard nest box. "What's he doing there?" I wondered. The adult bluebirds, who had been spending a lot of time on, in, and around the box, were nowhere to be seen. Checking the box, I found all five nestlings dead with their heads picked bloody. This is the absolute height of frustration for bluebirders. At this point I could have easily taken everything down and just given up.

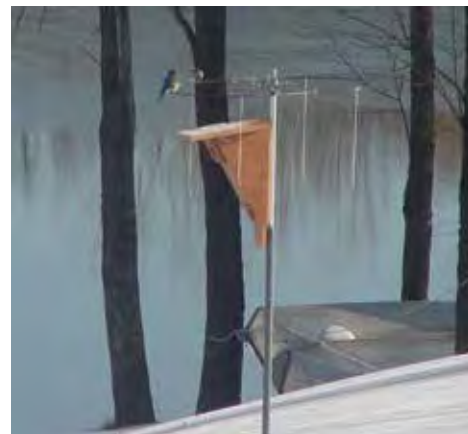
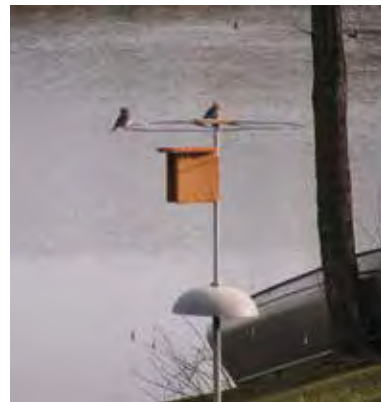
Enter the Magic Halo. This is a product that has been around for a few years and specifically designed to repel House Sparrows. The circular halo sits above the nest box and has four monofilament lines hanging down with 1 oz. lead fishing sinkers attached. Some, but not all Wild Birds Unlimited stores carry it, and this is where I learned of it. In discussing my situation with my local owner in 2002, he stated that "this is new and I don't know anything about it, but try it and let me know how it works." Sparrows did eventually return, but with great reluctance to land on the Halo or the box. Bluebirds moved in again too, and I was able to salvage the season with a successful nesting. Some six years later my sparrow intrusions have been reduced to near zero, mainly because of the Magic Halo.

This has not been all peaches and cream however. There has been some negative feedback from the public, and I'm convinced it is because they did not know how to correctly use the Halo. Through trial and error I've learned how to use it effectively. Most important is that it MUST be installed BEFORE sparrow activity. Once the male sparrow has imprinted on or claimed the box, nothing will keep him out of it short of a gun. The bond is so strong between the male and his nest site that he will leave his mate before he leaves his nest. Many people have developed sparrow problems and added the Halo after the fact. This will not work, and when it doesn't work they take it down and throw it away. It must be installed prior to sparrow trouble. Another trouble

point would be if you have large numbers of sparrows on a regular basis. The literature accompanying the Halo claims it is effective on 98% of sparrows. If you have large numbers, then you are more likely to have that one or two in a hundred that will breach the halo. It only takes one male to spoil your party.

The Halo was originally designed for feeders, but we felt that if it worked on feeders, then why not on nest boxes as well? It does work very well on feeders. I've had one on my feeders for five years now, with no sparrows ever working the feeders. They are still there every day, but feeding on the ground. I don't mind them cleaning up my yard, but I did mind them emptying out my feeders every day.

Halo installation might take special configuration for you. I wanted it fixed as opposed to dangling free, so I mount mine between two small pieces of plywood on a short piece of ½ inch EMT or metal conduit, using double-nutted conduit clamps. My nest box posts are always ¾ inch EMT, so the ½ inch just slides into the post. Set it 8 inches or so above the box, drill through



Bluebird houses with the Magic Halo installed.

both EMTs and bolt through. All of the materials are readily available at home centers. You will quickly get used to looking at it, too. My boxes look naked to me now without it.

Interestingly, the Halo only affects House Sparrows, by interfering with their rapid escape mechanism. No other birds are affected and the bluebirds love to sit on the wires. I've learned also that the war with sparrows is continuous. We might lose a battle here and there, but persistence will eventually yield a bluebird experience for you. You will see a major reduction of sparrow activity by using the Halo correctly. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

*[Editor's note: To keep bluebirds from getting tangled, it is recommended that you replace the monofilament line with a fine-gauge wire.]*

*John Harville is the Michigan Bluebird Society's Berrien County Coordinator. He can be reached at [john\\_s\\_harville@comcast.net](mailto:john_s_harville@comcast.net). This article originally appeared in The Bluebird Flyer, the newsletter of the Michigan Bluebird Society, and is reprinted here with their permission.*

**FUNDRAISER**

Enjoy a great bird-watching magazine and

**Help Support**  
**The North American Bluebird Society**



Subscribe to *BWD* today and you'll receive a useful and interesting birding magazine written by birders and for birders. But even better, you will also support **The North American Bluebird Society**. For every NEW paid *BWD* subscription sold through this special promotion, **The North American Bluebird Society** receives \$10 from *BWD*!

**BIRDWATCHER'S**  
*Digest*

**Subscribe by phone to help support**  
**The North American Bluebird Society:**  
**Call 1-800-879-2473**  
Weekdays from 8-5 EST. Mention this ad and The North American Bluebird Society when you call.

**Or Subscribe Online:**  
[www.birdwatchersdigest.com/site/subshare.aspx](http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/site/subshare.aspx)

**Sign up today & begin receiving BWD right away!**

# Joe Huber is Remembered

Dick Tuttle

**B**luebird conservation lost one of its pioneers on March 13, 2008 when Joe Huber died in Venice, Florida at the age of 77. Joe and his late wife Phyllis lived in Heath, Ohio before moving to Florida in the early 1990s.

Before there was a North American Bluebird Society, Joe Huber wrote descriptive letters to the *Purple Martin Capital News* out of Griggsville, Illinois, predecessor to today's *Nature Society News*. In a letter published on November 26, 1969, Joe described his quest to attract Purple Martins as he had just built his fifth martin hotel, offering 89 rooms for the 1970 martin season. He also emphasized that all of his boxes were free of sparrows since he maintained two sparrow traps year round.

After the organization of NABS in 1978, Joe became a charter member, and more important, he wrote articles and participated as a speaker at annual meetings. He discovered that multiflora rose hips were survival food for wintering bluebirds, and he credited bluebirds for keeping his garden free of harmful insects. By the third meeting of NABS in 1980, Joe had designed his in-house sparrow trap, making it possible to protect our struggling bluebirds. The most complete plans for the Huber House Sparrow Trap appear on pages 100 and 101 of *Sialia*, Summer 1983, Vol. 5, Number 3 (download these plans from [www.nabluebirdsociety.org/publications.htm](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/publications.htm)).

NABS formally honored Joe Huber at its Fifteenth Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota on September 11, 1992. Joe received the Individual Award for major contributions to bluebird conservation. The following proclamation accompanied Joe's award:

*Joe's first experience with nesting bluebirds started in 1968 when bluebirds nested in a newly erected martin house. During the next few years, he*

*added bluebird-nesting boxes to his lawn and to lawns in the surrounding neighborhood. Joe's trails were and still remain attractive to sparrows, but his continuous trapping program has resulted in successful bluebird trails. In 1973, he started experimenting with traps inside nesting boxes along with different box placement. By 1974, Joe had improved his in-box trap; it is the trap that we bluebirders now refer to as the Huber trap. He has received more than 3,000 letters requesting information on building a box trap, and he answers everyone. Joe was a charter member of NABS. He continues to stress that trapping does make a difference.*

In 1992, Joe received the "Blue Feather" Award from the Ohio Bluebird Society for his outstanding contributions in bluebird conservation.

Most recently, the April 2008 *Nature Society News* announced Joe's death and honored him by republishing a 1992 letter wherein Joe summed up his sparrow trapping routines in his suburban neighborhood. He used a pampered live decoy sparrow to trap feeding sparrows, and used his in-house traps during the nesting season. During the first couple of years of trapping, Joe caught more than 350 sparrows. Then, the yearly yields leveled off to 60-80. His trap plans were included on the same page.

Yes, Joe Huber's inventions and his articles gave hope to many bluebirders as they struggled to give their

bluebirds the best possible chances to raise families. Societies give awards to draw attention to good examples to be followed. Joe Huber was a prolific letter writer, inventor, problem solver, and a humble human being. His contributions made the world a better place for our native birds and the people who love to help them. He passed on the knowledge of what was needed to raise bluebirds in a suburban neighborhood, making the world a better place.



*Photo by Connie Toops from The Bluebird Monitor's Guide by Cynthia Berger, Keith Kridler, and Jack Griggs; published in 2001 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and NABS*



# Farewell to Don Yoder

Georgette Howington

**D**on Yoder, a dedicated and much loved member of the Mt. Diablo (California) Audubon Society passed away on July 9, 2008. While Don devoted much of his life to public service through the Rotary Club, Emergency Preparedness (Don was a radio man in the military), the Rossmoor Nature Association, and his church, most of us knew him as the founder of the California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP).

Building, setting up, and monitoring nest boxes at Rossmoor in the early '70s after he and his wife, Sue, became residents there, became more than just a hobby. Don knew that habitat loss would cause the Western Bluebird population to continue to dwindle and possibly even disappear, unless someone stepped in to help. In 1994, supported by the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society and affiliated with the North American Bluebird Society, the California Bluebird Recovery Program was born.

CBRP is "for the encouragement and conservation of cavity nesters—especially bluebirds—anywhere in the West."

Since its founding, 31 county coordinators in California and hundreds of nest box monitors have helped CBRP to fledge thousands of secondary cavity nesters annually.

Robert Carlton, President and founder of the Rossmoor Nature Association, has organized a group of monitors to maintain Don's nest box trail where he monitored over 70 nest boxes. The trail has been named after Don in honor of his contribution not to mention the continual source of joy and beauty in the sightings of the many Western Bluebirds fledged there every year.

Don's life teaches us that one person CAN make a difference.

Benjamin Desarali said, "Most people leave this life with their music still locked up inside their head." But we shall hear our friend Don Yoder's music every February when the Western Bluebird male sings to find his mate, when the hatchlings' hungry mouths chirp, and when the last fledgling has flown from the nest box—finally free to sing his very own song.

Don's family asks that if you would like to make a contribution on Don's behalf, please make checks payable to CBRP and mail to: Dick Blaine, CBRP, 22284 N. De Anza Circle, Cupertino, CA 95014.

*Georgette Howington is the Contra Costa County Coordinator for CBRP. This article and photo originally appeared in the CBRP Newsletter; they are reprinted here with permission.*



# The Gift of a Blue Bird

By Kimberley Corwin

**T**hirty-seven years ago my grandparents purchased a tiny cottage on a lake in southern New Hampshire. A box-shaped footprint of about 800 square feet included a living room, an alley kitchen, a hallway with bunkbeds and a single bedroom, the perfect weekend getaway. Imagine a summer weekend with the house awake, windows flung open for a family gathering... two happy kids with sandy feet and wearing bathing suits all day, one hour bobbing in floats on the water and the next popping colorful wooden croquet balls across the tiny lawn. We loved the absence of a schedule and the grown-ups loved the absence of a television. There wasn't even a phone.

The accommodations were cozy. One set of grandparents slept in the bedroom and the other on the pull-out couch in the living room. My parents slept in single cots on the screened porch. My brother and I were the luckiest—we occupied the bunks in the hallway. Lying in bed at night, still warmed from the day's outdoor play, listening to the rain fall on the thin roof so close to my head is one of my fondest childhood memories.

Of course, there is wildlife at the lake. Each summer we counted the baby mallards. Actually, on each *day* we counted the baby mallards. "One, two, three, four... one missing today? Darned snappers!" And the loons; despite the boating activity on the lake, loons appear to be thriving. In almost four decades

of watching for them, loons have become more numerous and more visible. It is not unusual to see an adult emerge seamlessly in front of the house. Their appearance and their calls never fail to stop us in mid-sentence.

This beautiful place has grown with my family. It is now my parents' primary residence. The little cottage is gone and a three bedroom, year-round house stands in its place, complete with televisions, telephones, and wireless internet. Two kids in a new generation enjoy the same summer pleasures that my brother and I did. Each summer we make new memories that feel comfortably familiar and we quietly miss our elder generation.

Over the years my parents have noted the birds that visit the waters, trees, and feeders there, calling their birder daughter with discoveries and questions: "There was a Common Merganser here today! The loon took a baby duck! We had an oriole at the feeder! Will chickadees use our nest box? The Great Blue Heron is hunting on the point." They never had a visit from a bluebird, though, until recently.

On my birthday a few weeks ago, we were sitting on the deck enjoying the morning sunshine and watching the day's first ripples appear on the lake. Like magic, a female bluebird tossed herself into the ancient-looking branches of the red pine just fifteen feet in front of us. We held our breath and stared. As if that bird was not enough, the male followed, perching attentively next to her and making us hold our breath even tighter. I didn't know whether to watch the birds or the look on my mom's face. She had been lamenting for years that she had not seen a bluebird in so long. The lake with its treed edges is an unlikely place to see her wish fulfilled. What a festive gift those birds were. Two gifts, in fact, bundled into one.

*Kimberley Corwin lives in Albany, NY. She is a member of NABS and is on the Board of the NYS Bluebird Society. Kim is a wildlife biologist for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and co-editor of The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State. She enjoys birding in her spare time and is an avid road cyclist and mountain biker.*



# Nature's Way ™

*The Industry Leader*

Producers of Live Food Totally Pest Free!

## ATTRACT WILD BIRDS WITH MEALWORMS!

- Shipped only M-W to guarantee live delivery
- Order 24 hours a day
- Door to Door Service

15% Discount  
for All NABS  
Members

*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*



# Research Review

## *A Summary of Recent Scientific Research on Bluebirds and Other Cavity-nesters*

Scott W. Gillihan

### Why don't Brown-headed Cowbirds parasitize cavity-nesting birds?

The Brown-headed Cowbird is a native North American species that lays its eggs in the nests of other birds and relies on those other birds to raise its young. Cowbirds almost always lay their eggs in open-cup nests, such as those of warblers. Several theories have been proposed to explain why cowbirds seldom lay their eggs in the nests of cavity-nesting birds:

1) Some cavity-nesters cover their eggs during the egg-laying stage; 2) The cavity-nesting adults might not be capable of providing adequate nutrition to the growing cowbird; or 3) Female cowbirds cannot get into nest cavities because the openings are too small.

Two recent publications help shed light on this question. In the first, researchers in Ohio who were studying Carolina Chickadees made an unexpected discovery: they found a dead female Brown-headed Cowbird in one of their chickadee nests. The cowbird had apparently seen the chickadees using the natural tree cavity, so when the coast was clear she squeezed in through the opening and laid an egg in the chickadee nest. However, she was trapped. She could neither back out through the opening nor turn around in the cramped quarters to exit head-first. The researchers could not pinpoint the cause of death or the date, although the cowbird appeared to have died only a day or two before they found it. The opening to the cavity was 38 mm high X 42 mm wide (about 1.5 X 1.6 inches); a previous study determined that the smallest opening that a cowbird could fit through was 38 mm. Thus, even though a cowbird is capable of squeezing into a small nest cavity, it may choose not to in order to avoid becoming trapped.

In the second study, researchers wanted to test whether bluebirds will toss out cowbird eggs when they find them in their nest. The researchers placed plaster eggs (painted to look like cowbird eggs) in the nests of Eastern Bluebirds using nest boxes. For comparison, they placed wooden eggs painted to look like bluebird eggs in some other nests. In both cases, the artificial eggs were the same size as the genuine eggs. As it turned out, the bluebirds removed 65% of the "cowbird" eggs but *none* of the artificial bluebird eggs. Nearly all of the ejections occurred within 24 hours, suggesting that bluebirds are very vigilant

about protecting their nests and very intolerant of cowbird eggs. Over time, cowbirds may have learned that Eastern Bluebirds are not good hosts for cowbird eggs, so they look for other species to parasitize.

D.A. Zuwerink and J.S. Marshall. 2006. Brown-headed Cowbird's Fatal Attempt to Parasitize a Carolina Chickadee Nest. *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 118:418-419.

B.D. Peer, L.R. Hawkins, E.P. Steinke, P.B. Bollinger, E.K. Bollinger. 2006. Eastern Bluebirds Eject Brown-headed Cowbird Eggs. *The Condor* 108:741-745.

### Do snake skins at the nest deter predators?

Several bird species sometimes include pieces of shed snake skin in their nests. The cavity-nesting Great-crested Flycatcher sometimes places a snake skin outside the entrance to its nest cavity. Some scientists have speculated that the skin serves as a deterrent to mammalian predators such as flying squirrels. To test the effect of snake skins, researchers placed artificial nests in 60 nest boxes; in 20 of the boxes they coiled a snake skin around the nest, while in another 20 boxes they placed a snake skin outside the box. They left the other 20 boxes "unadorned." Into each nest they placed three Japanese Quail eggs (which are slightly larger than robin eggs) and one clay egg. The clay eggs were used to provide a record of the teeth marks of any mammalian predators, to aid in identification. The nests were checked daily for 14 days. Eggs in five of the nests without snake skins were eaten, with the evidence pointing to southern flying squirrels. *None* of the nests with snake skins inside or outside the nest box were bothered by predators. The authors speculated that squirrels and other mammalian predators are repelled by the scent of the snake skin.

E.C. Medlin and T.S. Risch. 2006. An Experimental Test of Snake Skin Use to Deter Nest Predation. *The Condor* 108:963-965.

### How do elevation and latitude affect clutch size?

High-elevation sites experience colder and more erratic weather than low-elevation sites, and the breeding season is shorter. Surprisingly little is

known about how breeding birds respond to these conditions. A study in the mountains of Wyoming found that Mountain Bluebirds at a high-elevation site produced, on average, slightly smaller eggs and smaller clutches than did bluebirds at a low-elevation site. High-elevation and low-elevation females were the same size (as measured by wing length), but the high-elevation birds weighed less, which means they were in poorer condition. Their smaller size also meant they experienced greater energetic and nutritional stresses when the weather was cold, all of which probably accounted for the smaller eggs at high elevation. The high-elevation birds also tended to produce smaller clutches, but this trend was not as strong as the trend for smaller eggs at high elevations.

The take-home story: When experiencing energetic and nutritional stress, Mountain Bluebird females are more likely to produce smaller eggs than to lay fewer eggs. You might say they choose *quantity over quality*.

In another study, this one of clutch size across a north-south swath of the eastern U.S., researchers found the highest rates of hatching failure for nests started late in the season and nests located farther south. In both cases, they felt that the eggs were exposed to higher temperatures and the embryos were therefore more likely to die while the adult was off the nest. This suggests that bluebird stewards in hot areas could boost nest success by taking steps to keep the nests cool when the summer gets hot.

L.S. Johnson, E. Ostlind, J.L. Brubaker, S.L. Balenger, B.G.P. Johnson, and H. Golden. 2006. Changes in Egg Size and Clutch Size with Elevation in a Wyoming Population of Mountain Bluebirds. *The Condor* 108:591-600.

C.B. Cooper, W.M. Hochachka, T.B. Phillips, and A.A. Dhondt. 2006. Geographical and Seasonal Gradients in Hatching Failure in Eastern Bluebirds *Sialia sialis* Reinforce Clutch Size Trends. *Ibis* 148:221-230.

### Why do Red-naped Sapsucker nest cavities in aspen trees usually face south?

In Colorado, Red-naped Sapsuckers excavate their nest cavities in aspen trees. Researchers had noticed that the cavities faced south or southwest more than other directions, but they weren't sure why. Previous studies of cavity orientation have suggested that access to the cavity or to nearby foraging areas, or ease of defending the cavity influence the orientation. But why south or southwest? The most likely reason

seemed to be for temperature regulation: Cavities facing south receive more direct sunlight.

The researchers in this study took a different approach. They knew that sapsuckers usually excavated their cavities in aspen trees that were infected with heartwood rot fungus. Those trees are softer and easier to excavate. The researchers took small core samples from around the circumference of aspens with heartwood rot, and found that the fungus affected the *south* side of the tree more than any other side, probably because of the sunlight and warmth on that side. More rot means less hard, healthy sapwood for sapsuckers to drill through: Sapsuckers excavate south-facing cavities in aspen trees because it's easier and takes less energy.

N. Losin, C.H. Floyd, T.E. Schweitzer, and S.J. Keller. 2006. Relationship Between Aspen Heartwood Rot and the Location of Cavity Excavation by a Primary Cavity-nester, the Red-naped Sapsucker. *The Condor* 108:706-710.

### Can nest boxes enhance California vineyards as bluebird nesting habitat?

The creation of vineyards usually involves the removal of most or all native vegetation from the site, which makes it less desirable as nesting habitat for native birds. Researchers in California wanted to know if a vineyard could be enhanced as bluebird nesting habitat by the addition of nest boxes. They compared the nesting success of bluebirds using vineyard nest boxes with bluebirds nesting in nest boxes placed in nearby native oak savannah. They found that Western Bluebird nests were just as successful in the vineyard. The authors concluded that vineyards could be converted to good nesting habitat by adding nest boxes, although they cautioned that their study site might not be representative of other vineyards, because the owners had preserved many of the large, old, native oaks within the vineyard. Furthermore, the authors noted that the loss of native habitat is a serious problem that cannot be addressed by just adding nest boxes, in part because many species will not use them.

C.M. Fiehler, W.D. Tietje, and W.R. Fields. 2006. Nesting Success of Western Bluebirds (*Sialia mexicana*) Using Nest Boxes in Vineyard and Oak-Savannah Habitats of California. *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 118:552-557.

# Children's Bluebird Activity Book

## Bob Niebuhr

One of the key elements in the Mountain Bluebird Trails mission statement is the educating of people about the preservation of bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds. Many programs are put on each year by MBT members throughout Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming and one of the key groups asking for more information and programs has been grade school teachers. So when MBT received a generous donation from the Thomas and Stacey Siebel Foundation in the spring of 2007 the MBT board decided to use those funds to create a book filled with information targeted specifically for children in grades 2 through 6.

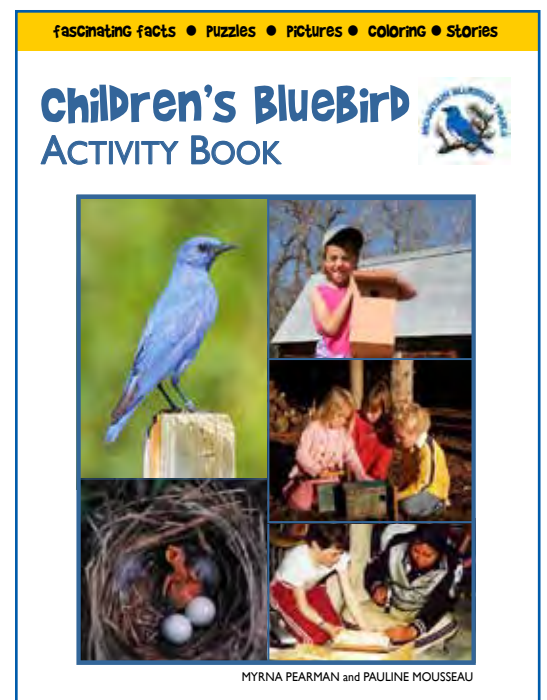
Myrna Pearman, the author of the Mountain Bluebird Trail Monitoring Guide, and Pauline Mousseau, a graphic designer, were contracted to produce this wonderful tool to educate children. Both ladies live in or near Red Deer, Alberta, Canada.

The Children's Bluebird Activity Book is now posted on the MBT website ([www.mountainbluebirdtrails.com](http://www.mountainbluebirdtrails.com)) and we hope you will not only take a moment to read through it, but talk to teachers and educators in your community about where to find it. Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club should also find the book useful. This colorful book is 40 pages long and one page or the entire book can be printed right off the website at no cost. The book is filled with:

- \*\* Fascinating Facts
- \*\* Pictures
- \*\* Puzzles
- \*\* Stories
- \*\* Pictures to Color

The book is written at the 4th-grade level, but teachers working with younger children can read the book to them. Because the Mountain Bluebird is the predominant species in the intermountain region it is the featured species in the book, which is not true with most bluebird material available to educators. That being said, the vast majority of the material pertains to all three species. Information on other cavity nesting birds is also included.

You should also find this information useful when talking to your own children or grandchildren about what you're doing on your bluebird trail.





# Bluebird Battles

Irby Lovette

To human observers, bluebirds might seem like the least pugnacious of birds, but in reality they lead strife-ridden lives. This is especially true during the breeding season, when they must defend their nest sites from rivals attempting to evict them, such as other bluebirds, Tree Swallows or House Sparrows.

Male bluebirds respond in different ways to such threats. In anthropomorphic terms, some are bullies and some are wimps. For example, if researchers place a model of a Tree Swallow on a series of bluebird nest boxes, some male bluebirds will attack the model, whereas others are less aggressive.

A new study by Montana-based researchers Renee Duckworth and Alexander Badyaev shows how these “personality” differences have allowed Western Bluebirds to expand their range at the expense of Mountain Bluebirds (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 104: 15017-15022).

Both species originally occurred in western Montana, but over much of the 20th century they became rare in the valleys as the number of appropriate nest sites decreased. During that period, Mountain Bluebirds persisted at higher elevations where nest cavities were more common, while Western Bluebirds essentially vanished from the state.

Over the past several decades, however, the valleys of Montana have become prime bluebird habitat as forestry practices have become more bluebird-friendly and more people have set up artificial nest boxes for the birds. Mountain Bluebirds were the first to take advantage of these new opportunities by expanding back into the valleys from the adjacent mountain slopes. They have since been joined by Western Bluebirds, which have steadily moved back into the region from the south and west.

Although the Western Bluebirds are the more recent arrivals, Duckworth and Badyaev showed that they are generally dominant over the Mountain Bluebirds, and over time tend to exclude them from prime valley real estate.

How does this all relate to the fact that some Western Bluebirds are more aggressive than others? By studying pedigrees of bluebirds monitored over many generations, the researchers have discovered that bluebird aggressiveness is largely inherited: aggressive males have aggressive sons. The more aggressive birds are also the better dispersers. This means that the most aggressive birds have led the way during the species’ range expansion back into Montana, and into territorial conflict with Mountain Bluebirds living in the valleys. For Western Bluebirds existing on the frontier, aggressiveness has a distinct advantage.

But in a fascinating twist, the story changes entirely when the bluebird frontier becomes well settled. The aggressiveness that confers a competitive advantage at the edge of the range expansion is actually a detriment in areas occupied by a stable Western Bluebird population. Once Western Bluebirds become well established, offspring tend to settle near their close relatives, and some even engage in cooperative breeding. In a high-density Western Bluebird population, the more aggressive males continue to battle and therefore spend less time caring for their nestlings. In this context, they are poor fathers, and therefore have fewer surviving offspring than their less aggressive neighbors.

This difference is readily apparent across the regions of Montana that Duckworth and Badyaev study. Natural selection favors aggression at the leading edge of the species’ expanding range, but it favors lower aggression once populations become well established, and neighbors are friends and family.

*Irby Lovette is director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program. This article originally appeared in the Winter 2008 issue of BirdScope, the newsletter of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and appears here with permission.*



# A great big THANK YOU to these NABS Sponsors!

Our sponsors support the work of NABS through an annual contribution

## Blue Diamond Level (at least \$5,000)

### Anonymous

### Silver Level (at least \$1,000)



*Droll Yankees*



*George Petrides*



*Wild Bird Centers  
of America*



*Wild Birds Unlimited*

### Bronze Level (at least \$500)



*Nature's Way*



*Sunshine Mealworms*



*Texas Bluebird Society*



*Ellis Bird Farm*



*Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project*



*Grubco*

### Anonymous

## True Blue Level (at least \$250; available only to NABS Affiliates)



*North Carolina Bluebird Society*



*Virginia Bluebird Society*



*New York State Bluebird Society*



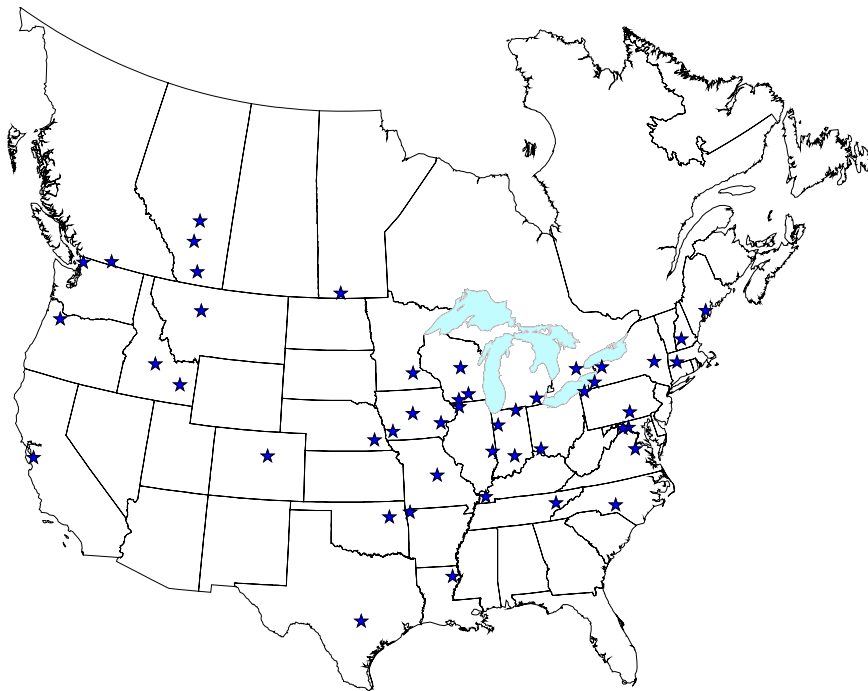
*Indiana Bluebird Society*



*Southern Interior  
Bluebird Trail Society*



*Southern California Bluebird Club*



## 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 web site 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](mailto:web@nabluebirdsociety.org) with correct information.

### Alberta

**Calgary Area Bluebird Trail Monitors**  
George Loades  
167 Canterbury Dr, SW  
Calgary, AB T2W-1H3 - CANADA  
[bluebird@creb.com](mailto:bluebird@creb.com)

### **Ellis Bird Farm, Ltd.**

Myrna Pearman  
PO Box 5090  
Lacombe, AB T4L-1W7 - CANADA  
403.885.4477  
403.887.5779  
[mpearman@telus.net](mailto:mpearman@telus.net)  
[www.ellisbirdfarm.ab.ca](http://www.ellisbirdfarm.ab.ca)

### **Mountain Bluebird Trails Conservation Society**

Gwen Tietz  
PO Box 401 Stn Main  
Lethbridge, AB T1K-3Z1 - CANADA  
403.553.2780  
[mtnblue@telus.net](mailto:mtnblue@telus.net)

### Arkansas

**Bella Vista Bluebird Society**  
Jim Janssen  
83 Forfar Drive  
Bella Vista, AR 72715  
479.855.4451  
[J-G\\_Janssen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:J-G_Janssen@sbcglobal.net)

### 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](mailto:goldstrm@vip.net)  
[www.bcbluebirds.org](http://www.bcbluebirds.org)

### California

**California Bluebird Recovery Program**  
Dick Blaine  
22284 N De Anza Circle  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
408.257.6410  
[dick@theblaines.net](mailto:dick@theblaines.net)  
[www.cbrp.org](http://www.cbrp.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](mailto:bluebirdproject@denveraudubon.org)  
[www.denveraudubon.org/bluebird.htm](http://www.denveraudubon.org/bluebird.htm)



Idaho

**Our Bluebird Ranch**

Leola Roberts  
152 N 200 E  
Blackfoot, ID 83221  
208.782.9676

**Rocky Mountain Blues**

David Richmond  
HC 67 Box 680  
Clayton, ID 83227  
208.838.2431  
fowest@custertel.net

Illinois

**Jo Daviess County BBRP**

Dick Bach  
9262 Fitzsimmons Rd.  
Stockton, IL 61085  
815.947.2661  
kiritemoa@mwci.net  
www.naturalareaguardians.org

**East Central Illinois Bluebird Society**

Loren Hughes  
1234 Tucker Beach Rd  
Paris, IL 61944  
217.463.7175  
lghughes@joink.com

Indiana

**Indiana Bluebird Society**

Ken Murray  
PO Box 134  
Rensselaer, IN 47978-0134  
219.866.3081  
ibs@indianabluebirdsociety.org  
www.indianabluebirdsociety.org

**The Brown County Bluebird Society**

Dan Sparks  
PO Box 660  
Nashville, IN 47448  
812.988.1876  
360.361.3704 f  
b4bluebirds@yahoo.com

**American Bird Conservation Assoc.**

Merlin Lehman  
60026 CR 35  
Middlebury, IN 46540  
574.825.8739

Iowa

**Johnson County Songbird Project**

Jim Walters  
1033 E Washington  
Iowa City, IA 52240-5248  
319.466.1134  
james-walters@uiowa.edu

**Iowa Bluebird Conservationists**

Jerad Getter  
PO Box 302  
Griswold, IA 51535  
712.624.9433 h  
712.527.9685w  
jgetter@hotmail.com

**Bluebirds of Iowa Restoration**

Jaclyn Hill  
2946 Ubben Ave  
Ellsworth IA 50075-7554  
515.836.4579  
bluebird1@netins.net

Kentucky

**Kentucky Bluebird Society**

Bob Ivy  
PO Box 3425  
Paducah, KY 42002  
270.898.6688  
731.688.0031  
bobivy@centurytel.net  
www.biology.eku.edu/kbs

Louisiana

**Louisiana Bayou Bluebird Society**

Evelyn Cooper  
1222 Cook Rd  
Delhi, LA 71232  
318.878.3210  
kpkmajk@cox.net  
www.labayoubluebirdsociety.org

Maine

**Mid-Coast Audubon Society**

Joseph F. Gray  
35 Schooner Street #103  
Damariscotta, ME 04543  
207.563.3578  
joecar@gwi.net  
www.midcoastaudubon.org

Manitoba

**Friends of the Bluebirds**

Barry Danard  
PO Box 569  
Killarney, MB R0K 1G0 - CANADA  
204.523.8258  
jbdanard@mts.net  
www.mts.net/~jbdanard/index.html

Maryland

**Maryland Bluebird Society**

Kathy Kremnitzer  
19305 Deer Path  
Knoxville, MD 21758  
301.662.7818  
Griffin459@myactv.net  
www.mdbluebirdsociety.org

Massachusetts

**Massachusetts Bluebird Association**

Henry R. Denton  
726 Montgomery Road  
Westfield, MA 01085-1090  
413.562.0926  
daltd9@msn.com  
www.massbluebird.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  
Lance Krog  
22035 Penn Ave  
Lakeville, MN 55044  
952.469.2054  
lancek@frontiernet.net  
www.bbrp.org

Missouri

**Missouri Bluebird Society**

Jack Dodson  
3926 Old Hwy 179  
Jefferson City, MO 65109  
573.636.3313w  
jackdodson@missouribluebird.org  
www.missouribluebird.org

Montana

**Mountain Bluebird Trails, Inc.**

Robert Niebuhr  
600 Central Ave, Ste 320  
Great Falls, MT 59401  
406.453.5143  
406.453.3840 fax  
blubrdbob@qwestoffice.net  
www.mountainbluebirdtrails.com

Nebraska

**Bluebirds Across Nebraska**

Derry Wolford  
705 9th Ave  
Shenandoah, IA 51601  
info@bbne.org  
derrywolford@prodigy.net  
www.bbne.org

New Hampshire

**NH Bluebird Conspiracy**

Bruce Burdett  
5 Upper Bay Rd  
Sunapee, NH 03782-2330  
603.763.5705  
blueburd@verizon.net

New York

**NY State Bluebird Society**

John Ruska  
3149 Witaker Road  
Fredonia, NY 14063  
716.679.9676  
ruskhill@adelphia.net  
www.nysbs.org

**Orleans Bluebird Society**

Dennis Colton  
10967 Ridge Road  
Medina, NY 14103  
585.798.4957  
dcolton001@rochester.rr.com

**Schoharie County Bluebird Society**

Kevin Berner  
499 West Richmondville Rd  
Richmondville NY 12149  
518.294.7196  
bernerkl@cobleskill.edu

North Carolina

**NC Bluebird Society**

Helen S. Munro  
22 Bobolink Road  
Jackson Springs, NC 27281  
910.673.6936  
president@ncbluebird.org  
www.ncbluebird.org

Ohio

**Ohio Bluebird Society**

Bernie Daniel  
9211 Solon Dr  
Cincinnati, OH 45242  
513.706.3789  
ohiobluebird@acninc.net  
www.ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Oklahoma

**Oklahoma Bluebird Society**

Herb Streater  
6400 E. Commercial St  
Broken Arrow, OK 74014  
918.806.2489  
sialia@worldnet.att.net

Ontario

**Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society**

Bill Read  
24 Brandt Place  
Cambridge, ON, N1S 2V8 - CANADA  
519.620.0744  
info@billreadsbooks.com  
www.oebs.ca

Oregon

**Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project**

Charlie Stalzer  
PO Box 1469  
Sherwood, OR 97140  
email@prescottbluebird.com  
www.prescottbluebird.com

Pennsylvania

**Bluebird Society of PA**

Shirley Halk  
PO Box 756  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-0756  
717.865.2650  
zebraswallowtail@juno.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

Tennessee

**Tennessee Bluebird Trails**

Louis Redmon  
381 Liberty Rd  
Wartburg, TN 37887  
423.346.3911  
tnbt@comcast.net

Texas

**Texas Bluebird Society**

Pauline Tom  
PO Box 40868  
Austin, TX 78704  
512.268.5678  
ptom5678@gmail.com  
www.texasbluebirdsociety.org

Virginia

**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

West Virginia

**Potomac Valley Audubon Society**

Peter Smith  
PO Box 578  
Shepherdstown, WV 25443  
304.876.1139  
pvsmitth@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.aldoleopoldaudubon.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

# 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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribing Household  \$30  \$20

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting  \$50  \$40

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing  \$85  \$75

Guardian  \$110  \$100

Life  \$500  \$500

State / Province: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization  \$50

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Small Business  \$50

Corporation  \$125

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Donation

\$30  \$50  Other \_\_\_\_\_

"Friend of NABS" for current calendar year (does not include quarterly *Bluebird*) \$15

Check enclosed (in U.S. funds)

Visa  MasterCard

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Last 3 digits on reverse side: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**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, P.O. Box 43, Miamiville OH 45147**

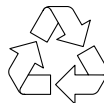
An online membership form with payment through PayPal is available online at [www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)



North American Bluebird Society  
P.O. Box 43  
Miamiville, OH 45147

Fall 2008  
Please recycle

Printed on 100% recycled paper  
with 50% post-consumer waste



NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
CPC Mail