



NCBS Logo with Carolina Blue by Dempsey Essick

Bluebird Notes

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North Carolina Bluebird Society Mission Statement

Our goal is to support activities that foster the resurgence of bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds in our home areas.

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NCBS 2012 Annual Meeting



Life simply doesn't get better than NCBS' Annual Meeting. The topics are all about bluebirds, the joys of bluebirds, what we can do for the bluebirds and how we can share all that with each other and the general public.

Dr. Lynn Siefferman, Associate Professor at Appalachian, revealed that contrary to popular thought bluebirds are not monogamous. The female and her social male take care of the babies, but 30% of the offspring may have been fathered by other males! Scandal in the bluebird world or a way to insure a bigger gene pool?



Amanda Doyle (upper left), an undergraduate at Appalachian, studied supplemental feeding (15 grams of mealworms daily) placed on top of the nest boxes. This resulted in chicks with brighter mouth color getting more food and brighter feathers insuring their later success in breeding.

Alexandra Bentz (upper right), one of Lynn's graduate students, reported on her research with Tree Swallows, another secondary cavity nester. The more testosterone in the female and the offspring, the more aggressive behavior and faster growth. The increased testosterone is due to higher bird density, i.e. more nest boxes in the area.



Jim Burke (upper left), President of the South Carolina Bluebird Society, promoted NABS 2013 which will be sponsored by SCBS and held in Aiken, SC, October 3-5, 2013. He presented an overview of many of the natural attractions available in Aiken.

Mike Lubbock (upper right) of Sylvan Heights Bird Park in Scotland Neck, NC, reported that despite several major challenges (oil spill and snow) that the more than 1,500 birds from around the world are doing well. He encouraged members to visit and enjoy seeing the birds "up close and personal."

Bluebird Notes

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Bluebird Tales



Bluebirds at the Feeder



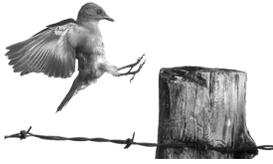
Helen,

I very much enjoyed the recent Bluebird Notes newsletter I received. I am sending along a few pictures I took recently. In case you run out of candidates for future newsletters, it is possible that one of these may be suitable. This is in my Durham backyard where I have recently been holding promotional events featuring mealworms as inducements for early lease signing for qualifying bluebirds.

I have the distinct pleasure of working for Messrs. Kernodle and McDaniel in their efforts to increase the bluebird population in this area. Hope to see you at the NCBS annual meeting.

Regards,
Peter Chauncey, Durham, NC





Bluebird Tales



Bluebirds and Retirement

*Dear Helen,
I just love bluebirds! About 10 years ago, a friend gave us a bluebird house for Christmas. We put it up that following spring and have made our home a haven for them for many years. When I retired, I started making bluebird houses; the first ones were very simple. Now I have my own design and have taken them to farmers' markets, craft events, consignment stores, etc. My houses are made of cedar; put together with deck screws; linseed oil is brushed on to help weatherproof the wood and a hinged door is provided for easy cleaning and monitoring. I've included a picture of my table when I sell houses. Thanks for all you do for the bluebirds!!!*



*Sincerely,
O.T. Bailey, Burlington, NC*

With each sale, I include a pole for mounting; the pole fits into the base of the birdhouse as you can see

Feeding Bluebirds

I have lived in the northeast section of Greensboro for thirty-six years. I feed the birds everyday. Until four years ago, I never saw a bluebird in my yard. Since I spotted one, I can tell you I have about twenty that come to feed in my yard. I use chopped peanut halves mixed with premium seed plus suet balls. Besides bluebirds I can list three other species that know where to come to eat. I use a heater in the birdbath. I use a cane now so it's not that easy, but the joy of watching all the birds is my pleasure. I believe bluebirds are coming back, but they need help.

Harriet Rothrock, Greensboro, NC

North Carolina Bluebird Society

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Please complete this form and send it with your check made payable to "NCBS" to:

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ATTN: David Hindsley
135 Lakeview Drive
Tarboro, NC 27886

I am interested in:

- _____ Assisting with the annual meeting
 _____ Serving as a NCBS Board Member
 _____ Helping with the newsletter
 _____ Conducting a bluebird workshop
 _____ Contacting my local paper with news
 _____ Volunteering to be a NCBS County Coordinator
 _____ Other (please explain)
- _____
- _____

Contributions to the Newsletter

Sharing Bluebird information and stories make this a unique publication

Please submit to: Helen Munro, Editor
 22 Bobolink Rd. Jackson Springs, NC 27281
 Phone - (910) 673-6936 Fax - (910) 673-7345
 e-mail - hsmunro@ac.net

Suet for Bluebirds

- 4 C yellow corn meal
- 1 C all purpose flour
- 1 cup lard (not shortening!)
- 2 cups extra crunchy peanut butter
- 1 tsp corn oil

Melt lard and peanut butter and stir in other ingredients. Such as grits, currants, raisins, and peanut hearts! Pecan or walnut pieces, sunflower chips, but do not add regular bird seed, as a lot of birds that come to this are not seed eaters.

I place wax paper in the bottom of my 9 x 13 pan, and pour the above in it and smooth it out. The wax paper should also cover the sides. Then put it in the refrigerator until hard. Cut into squares, either 6 large ones, or 8 good size ones. Wrap in wax paper. Honestly they love this!

Katie Hoth (Davie County)

President's Note: One thing I do is to save my spent commercial suet container and reuse them for my mixture. Works great and the blocks are easily removable!

Ray Welch, Winston-Salem

Meet NCBS 2012-2014 New Officers

Kay Hindsley, Corresponding Secretary



- ◆ Serves as Corresponding Secretary
- ◆ Born in Welch, WV
- ◆ Graduated from Queens University, Charlotte NC
- ◆ Married Joseph David Hindsley; has two sons & one daughter & four grandchildren
- ◆ Lived in Fayetteville 25 years and has lived in Tarboro 5 years (Edgecombe County)
- ◆ Member of the North American Bluebird Society for over 25 years and attended some of their meetings.
- ◆ Regularly attends NCBS Annual Meetings opening the meeting with her Bluebird Medley
- ◆ Kay has enjoyed serving NCBS along with her husband David who is the Membership Chairman. Kay is a sought out speaker on Bluebirds to many organizations such as garden clubs, civic groups, Master Gardeners, church groups, etc. She recorded a CD, [On the Wings of a Song](#), a collection of many familiar Bluebird songs, which she has given to NABS & NCBS so they can share these songs with others.

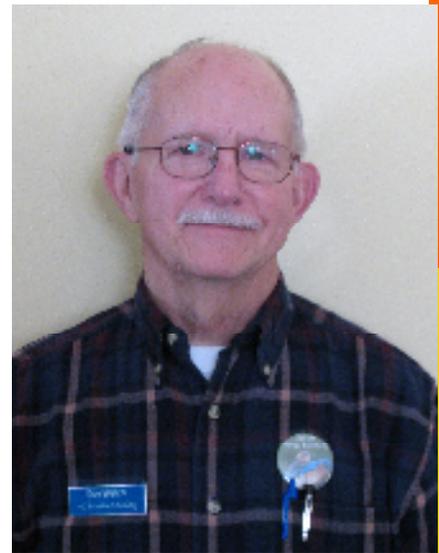
Joye Stephenson, Director



- ◆ Resides in Garner (Wake County) where she grew up "Garner-reared"
- ◆ Retired from NCSU
- ◆ Member of NCBS since 2004
- ◆ Wake County Coordinator - It's been my pleasure to share this position with Wake County's Bluebird Man, Bill Satterwhite
- ◆ Served on Planning Committee for 2011 NCBS Annual Meeting in Garner
- ◆ Elected to Board of Directors in 2010
- ◆ Helps monitor Bluebird Trail at Lake Benson and White Deer Parks in Garner
- ◆ Helps monitor Bluebird Trail at Mordecai Historic Park, Raleigh
- ◆ Member of the Bluebirders of Wake County
www.bluebirdersofwake.org
- ◆ Enjoys gardening & photography

Ray Welch, President

- ◆ Resides in the northern part of Davidson County just south of Winston-Salem
- ◆ Davidson County Coordinator
- ◆ President of NCBS
- ◆ Served as Board member and Secretary
- ◆ Married to Betsy for 50 years; has two daughters and four granddaughters.
- ◆ Studied at Roanoke College and High Point University; majored in Behavioral Science.
- ◆ Served four years in the US Air Force during Vietnam Era.
- ◆ Retired from Piedmont / US Airways with 33 years of service as Director of Employee Relations.
- ◆ Active in his Church and other community activities.
- ◆ Founding President of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Forsyth County.
- ◆ Serves on the Board of the Friends of the Southside Branch Library and currently Secretary.
- ◆ Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity for 10 years.



Continued on page 12

**The NCBS Store is shutdown for renovation.
It will be reopened in August with new merchandise.
In the meantime, enjoy these great pictures!**



Wake County Coordinators get the young!

In the far left of the photo above are Bella Bluebird, Joye Stephenson, and Great Grandpa Bill Satterwhite. They did a bluebird program for Ms. Alison Eisenstadt's class at the Raleigh Preschool. The artwork to the right was created by the children using their thumb prints.



The picture to the left reminds members of bluebird societies why we do what we do. It is a conservation that all of us can participate in by furnishing nest boxes for them to raise their young. Their beauty just makes furnishing nest boxes more rewarding.

Photo submitted by Teresa Jackson, wife of Mike Jackson, Bladen County Coordinator.

Alamance County Coordinator Honored



Photo by Joye Stephenson

Fran Outhwaite, one of the original members of the NCBS (since 1986) and one of our first County Coordinators, was recently honored for military service during WWII. Fran is still busy today caring for the Bluebird trail (30 nest boxes) at Cedarrock Park in Burlington. She was recently awarded a NCBS grant to replace boxes on the trail. Fran has reluctantly given up being Alamance County Coordinator, and has been replaced by Rob McGowan.

When someone calls Fran and she is not home, her answering machine says that she "is having tea with the Queen." Somehow, her accent makes you believe that, indeed, she is!

Burlington Bird Club Member Honored On Triad Flight of Honor

On October 15th, BBC member Fran Outhwaite was honored for her military service during World War Two by being selected for the Triad Flight of

Honor to Washington, DC to see the WWII Memorial and other sights there. At the start of the 1940's, Fran was a British citizen living with her sister on Long Island. As the war progressed, she tried to join the American Army's Women's Army Corps (WAC); but they wouldn't accept her because she was not at least 21 years old and an American citizen. She then went to Canada and joined the Canadian Army's WAC. She was shipped to England on the Queen Mary, where she spent three years working as a clerk for the Canadian Army and attained the rank of corporal. Fran remembered that it was so very cold in England that she had to type with gloves on because there was no coal to heat the buildings. She said it was very dismal with everything rationed and piles of rubble from bombed-out buildings everywhere. At the end of the war, she came back to Canada on the Queen Mary which had been painted haze grey, but did not have any destroyer escorts. Fran said the trip to Washington was a once in-a-lifetime experience. The veterans were treated as royalty with people cheering them at the airports and everywhere they went.



Information provided by Fran to Ed Burgess (BBC); reprinted with permission of BBC)

Articles submitted by Joye Stephenson County Coordinator State Co-Chair

Compiled by Helen S. Munro

NCBS 2011

Farmville, NC, Jerry Wicker : All of my boxes have ventilation which I seal until after the first nesting. I then remove the seals from all the boxes and add a much larger temporary roof to the houses for shade in the heat of the summer. I believe that this protection from cold, rain (with seals) and heat (without seals and extra wide roof) plus almost daily monitoring contributed to the high hatching and fledging percentages of total eggs laid. Ninety-five percent of the bluebird eggs hatched and ninety-one percent of those that hatched fledged. (*Editor's Note: Compare this to the total eggs reported that hatched had an eighty-two percent success rate. However, once hatched ninety-six percent fledged.*) I was able to watch two boxes of nuthatches and one box of bluebirds fledge. Again, I believe this was due to the close monitoring. Fifteen of these boxes are in my immediate area of extended family (about 30 acres) with a mixture of open fields and large lawns. The other three boxes are at my parents' home place (vacant) approximately two and a half miles away.

One story I have is about one box that was in an ideal location, but had not been used probably because I had removed wasps three times from it and smeared ivory soap all within a two week period. I was checking it sometimes twice daily to see what was happening with it. I checked it one morning at approximately 9 a.m. and there were no wasps nor signs of birds. I next checked it the following afternoon (6:30 p.m.) and to my amazement there was a completed bluebird nest in less than 36 hours from first pine needle to a completion! They started a successful clutch of 5 eggs that next day. Monitoring as often as I do makes me truly a "bluebird nut!"

Winston-Salem, NC, Juanna Wooten: I found my first black snake in bird netting I had put around a post with a bird house containing baby bluebirds. The snake was almost dead and the mother had quit feeding the four baby bluebirds and two babies were dead. I removed the snake and the two dead birds, changed the nest and left the other two. I checked back within the hour and the mother was feeding the

two remaining birds. They both fledged! I am sending a picture of the bird house pairing that I am trying. I have tree swallows who try to nest in my boxes in Ashe County after the first set of bluebirds. I am trying to see if they both can nest near each other. I placed the boxes about nine



feet apart. We will see what happens next year.

Asheville, NC, Diane B. Hankins: I had great fun with my first two sets of white bluebird eggs. All five of the April group fledged. The parents (same pair?) abandoned the July set of four white eggs. Miserably hot July here in Asheville.

Cedarock Park, Burlington, NC, Fran Outhwaite: The 2011 season began with modifying four boxes with one inch holes to encourage the nesting of the Brown-headed Nuthatch which are being dangerously reduced in numbers. Cedarock did get one set of nuthatches (6 eggs, 6 hatched & 6 fledged) in a box, but strangely enough, not in one of the boxes modified with the 1" holes. In the four boxes with 1" holes, thirty-six chickadee eggs were laid, twenty-four hatched and eighteen fledged.

One of the most positive events that occurred this

Bluebird Survey Comments

season was the installation of snake (and other predators) baffles/guards on all thirty bluebird boxes at Cedarock. This thanks in a great part to Mr. Harry Carlson. The maintenance crew at Cedarock also made and installed four boxes, so we now have all thirty boxes with baffles helping to protect our nesting birds.

Many thanks to Cindy Benson who had to stop monitoring due to a knee injury and to Susan Buchanan, a newbie, who took her place.

Pinehurst, NC, Marisa Back: It is my pleasure to see the changes from year to year. I'm even seeing the "return" of previous birds from year to year. (They have a way of looking special.)

Chapel Hill, NC, Lois Herring: This year two different boxes in our yard were occupied so we could watch fledging.

Nest #1—One very reluctant fledgling just wouldn't come out. Parents spent several hours coaxing and scolding to get him to take the plunge. Eventually the whole family was united and they took off for a sheltered spot in the woods.

Nest #2—Junior bravely followed his brothers and sisters, but hit the deck to his parents' distress. He couldn't fly, but could he ever run. Finally caught the baby and put him on a tall feeder to try again. This time he made it and the family took off for the deeper woods.

West End, NC, Robert & Ruth Stolting:

One bluebird nest had ant problems right from the start. The previous nest had fledged successfully, but the new nest, with one egg laid, was filled with small ants.

I was told that Tanglefoot (a sticky substance) would be safe to use and that I would put it on the pole leading to the nestbox in order to stop the ants in their tracks. So I put tape on the pole, and smeared three inch depth of Tanglefoot all around the pole. I also cleaned the nestbox, replaced the nest with one abandoned the previous year and replaced the egg.

The next week I found four eggs in the nest. I felt a sense of accomplishment. Of the four eggs, two babies hatched. They were fine when I saw them at eleven days old. I did not check the box for almost three weeks since I didn't want to disturb them before they fledge and the weather got extremely hot.

When I went to clean out the nestbox, I found a pile of feathers and clean bones (heads, backbones, legs). None had fledged. I spoke with Ranger Scott Hartley at Weymouth Woods, Southern Pines. It appears that the fire ants which are carnivorous may have been the culprit.

What a heart-breaking disappointment. Perhaps refreshing the pole with Tangle foot mid-nesting would have safeguarded the birds.

Clemmons, NC, Bill Abbey: The Bluebird Trail at Tanglewood was digitized this season and regular reports were published on the Tanglewood website.

Greensboro, NC, Robert Rothrock: This year I fed a goodly number of bluebirds and their speckled young from the surrounding neighborhood. I fed them peanut chips, sun flower chips and mixed peanut butter suet plus premium mixed seed. My squirrel proof feeder is attached to my patio wall and has three perches. Bluebirds don't perch, but they sure like mine. I use a penny to keep the water baths clean.

I have two boxes on my yard with predator guards. I also have a neighbor's cat who learned to stay clear of the yard.

Asheboro, NC, Chuck Bliss: Sixty percent of the boxes used by the bluebirds for the first nesting had five eggs laid as compared to only twenty-two percent having five eggs laid during the first nesting in 2010.

One box of the twenty-nine used had five white eggs in it. Four of them fledged.

(Continued on page 14)

NCBS 2012



Chairman of NCBS 2012, Ken Kernodle (upper left) with the help of Steve McDaniel, Beverly Frassinelli and Phyllis Dobson (upper right) organized NCBS 2012 to perfection. Anne Montgomery headed up the great lunch. Also serving on the committee were Joye Stephenson as NCBS Board Advisor and Linda Smith, Jane Hogan, Peter Chauncey and John Boone.



Ray Welch (left), President of NCBS, presided over the NCBS 2012. He reported on the membership (403 regular members including about 80 on-line ones) and the fact that the organization continued to have a healthy treasury. Ray stepped down while Jim Jochum, nominating committee chair, introduced this year's candidates (featured on pages 5 & 8). There were no nominations from the floor and the slate of officers was approved. Kay Hindsley (right), sang her "Bluebird Medley."



Maria and Chuck Bliss (upper left), Jim Jochum (upper right) receive a "pat on the back" from Ray Welch. Chuck is known for recruiting NCBS Board Members by saying, "Try it for a year and see if you like it." Both Chuck and Jim have been NCBS Presidents, County Coordinators, bluebird trail monitors and have served on the NCBS Board for more than fifteen years.



Carrie and David Helston (upper right) enjoyed seeing the more than fifty door prizes that were donated and given away by putting raffle tickets in the corresponding bag.

The unique bird house (center above) was donated by Robert S. Shuping of Chapel Hill. This beautiful bird-house is designed so that the top can be removed and the old nest cleaned out. It was part of the Silent Auction.

Annual Meeting

Photos of NCBS 2012 courtesy of Joye Stephenson and Helen Munro.



Dana Glenn (left), County Coordinator of Gaston County, has recruited Marcia Stager (right) to be County Coordinator for Mecklenberg County.



Tim (Ziggy) Carroll (left) and Gilmer Long (right) manage an 86 box bluebird trail on 2600 acres owned by the DuPont Co. in Fayetteville. They plan to add 50 houses.



Julie Smith (left) and Fran Outhwaite were not "having tea with the queen" but did enjoy NCBS 2012.



Mark (left) and Cindy (right) Matthews donated mealworms as door prizes and sold mealworms during the meeting.



Patricia Rogers (left) and her mother, Ethelene Allen (right), Johnston County Coordinator, have attended many NCBS meetings.



NCBS Director Tony Nicosia has become the new manager of the NCBS Store. He is looking for unique items.



Priscilla (left) and Ron (right) Kingston of the Virginia Bluebird Society (VBS) have often attended NCBS Annual Meetings.



Christine Boran, a County Coordinator for the VBS won the birdbath raffled by the SCBS.

Meet NCBS 2012-2014 New Officers

Robert G. Wolk, Recording Secretary



- ◆ Born in New York City.
- ◆ Learned field natural history wandering the parks and museums of metropolitan New York City and Los Angeles.
- ◆ Learned bird taxonomy at the American Museum of Natural History where, under the tutelage of a museum curator, he analyzed the relationships in a population of nondescript Australian Scrub-wrens.
- ◆ His current interest in birds centers on their vision and behavior.
- ◆ For years he was in the ivy-shrouded ivory towers of several college campuses in New York State whose state bird is, of course, the Eastern Bluebird.
- ◆ Devoted his attention to the public understanding of science through programs and exhibits in natural history museums. Active in NC statewide museum issues and served as president of the NC Museums Council.
- ◆ Retired from the Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh.
- ◆ Has sought birds in Alaska, Hawaii, and the Everglades, in Central and South America, the Galápagos, Australia, and New Zealand.
- ◆ Interest in bluebirds was rekindled recently when, after many years of backyard bird watching in suburban Raleigh, a single bluebird appeared at the feeders.
- ◆ Following a quick trip to acquire several of Jack Finch's boxes, he set them up and has had modest breeding success since then.

Ken Kernodle, Vice President



- ◆ Raised on a family farm in Guilford County.
- ◆ Developed an appreciation and love for the outdoors.
- ◆ Would often hunt for dead hollow trees that could be used for bluebird houses.
- ◆ Built nesting boxes in shop class in high school.
- ◆ Graduated from North Carolina State University with a BS in Agricultural Engineering Technology in 1969.
- ◆ Retired from Duke Energy as District Manager, Community and Local Government Relations for Orange, Durham and Granville Counties after 42 years.
- ◆ Always had a bluebird nesting box in his yard.
- ◆ Met Steve McDaniel in 2006. In 2007 they built six boxes and began their first bluebird "trial" trail!
- ◆ Now have ten trails in Durham and Orange Counties with 60 boxes.
- ◆ Have built with Steve numerous boxes for individuals over the past 5 years.
- ◆ Learned about NCBS and attended his first NCBS annual meeting in Garner in 2010.
- ◆ Impressed with the overall event, especially the quality of the presentations and friendliness of the attendees, Ken became Co-Coordinator for Durham and Orange Counties and Chair of the Planning Committee for 2012 Annual Meeting
- ◆ Member of Durham Arts Council and Durham Rotary Club and resides in Durham with his wife

Down Memory Lane —

This picture was submitted by Joye Stephenson and shows Bob Sexton (left) and Jack Finch (right). It was taken at Finch Nursery in Bailey, NC, "years ago." They are seated in Jack's golf cart that Jack used to get around his property in his later years. Finch's Nursery is known throughout North Carolina for its blueberry bushes and, of course, *Homes for Bluebirds*.

Visit www.danfinch.com for more information on *Homes for Bluebirds*.



Christine Ammons, Store Manager Extraordinaire

Ray Welch, President of NCBS, traveled to Union Mills, NC, to say a very special “Thank You” to Christine Ammons, Manager of the NCBS Store. She is shown here with Ray (left) and her husband Buck (right) holding the plaque that reads “To Christine Ammons with Deepest Appreciation.” The picture is a copy of *Summer Blues* by Dempsey Essick.

Christine became a charter member of NCBS in 1986. She has also been a member of NABS since 1985 and attended many of their annual meetings including their 10th anniversary meeting in Silver Springs, Maryland, in 1987 when Lawrence Zeleny was the speaker.

Christine has been responsible for processing the mail orders of bluebird items since 1990. Each year she and her mother, Alla Biscoe, or in later years, her aunt, Frances Phillips, would move the NCBS merchandise to wherever the Annual Meeting was and sell the items.

When asked about the store, she wrote, “I do not know when the store began. Brenda Clary in Shelby had the store items. I went to Shelby and picked up t-shirts and caps. Brenda was a director in 1992. I did



see that in a newsletter. The t-shirts were yellow, gray and white. Did have the outline of the state with a bluebird.”

Christine also writes, “Knowing all the nice people has been the best part of my NCBS years. It was great to get to know Jack and Ruby Finch. Thanks so much to the society for the nice picture. It will hang where I can see it each day.”

Christine missed the Annual Meeting this year because of a back problem. However, she hopes to get to future annual meetings, just without the NCBS merchandise. In turn, NCBS members missed seeing her and look forward to her return at future meetings.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918

This was a posting on the NCBS Face Book page by Charlene Chakalos Gallagher.

"I had a neighborhood child open up my blue bird box ~ take out an egg & CRUSH IT !! thinking it wasn't real !!!!! OMG !!! I CRIED sooo long & hard !!!!! is there a LAW in NORTH CAROLINA to PROTECT THIS from happening???????? SHE KILLED my baby bird!!!!!! :("

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 made it a federal offense to take the eggs, nests, chicks, fledglings and adults (or parts there of) of any native bird.

Of the secondary cavity nesters the starlings and English House Sparrows are not protected because they were imported from England. The House Sparrow male is particularly aggressive and as reported in the NABS *Bluebird*, Spring 2012, is more attached to his house than his mate. This explains the observation that the House Sparrow will continue to rebuild a nest that has been destroyed even if the female leaves the area.

2011 Bluebird Survey Comments

(Continued from page 9)

Four Oaks, NC, Ethelene Allen: Five failed due to cats, snakes, starlings, and House Sparrows. I did have white bluebird eggs in two boxes. I removed starling nests twice and many English House Sparrows' nests. I broke my wrist (changing a light bulb) and monitoring nestboxes was somewhat difficult.

Raleigh, NC, Maggie Goldston: Ants invaded two boxes. I used the Vaseline method recommended and it worked. The May baby bluebirds had the most aggressive father I have ever encountered. Bill (Satterwhite) thinks that this was his first experience at parenting. When I would check the nest he would dive-bomb me and appear combative. He was the most protective father I met this summer. When the mother made an appearance, she was as noisy as the dad.

Holly Springs, NC, Betty Packler: My bluebird couple took a long, l-o-n-g time to build a nest, so a titmouse pair took over the second box. It seemed that the pair might be new at the whole thing. Both boxes were marked with pine straw on March 12th but no nest was built until April 25th. Eggs had white areas, not all solid blue either the first or second batch. The second batch of four eggs began on June 18th, fledged cautiously over two days on July 22nd.

Greensboro, NC, Jim Jochum: Mockingbirds and feral cats continue to be a problem by attacking the female bluebirds at the nestbox and driving them away.

Olin, NC, Amelia Walker: I had the best time looking at my bluebirds this spring and summer. I am a retired registered nurse and my sister got me interested in bluebirds. Thank you all for what the Bluebird Society does. God created beautiful creatures.

Raleigh, NC, Linda Sukoski: I have three bluebird generations coming to my feeder. It's neat to watch

them grow and change. Last year the female made four nests with a total of sixteen eggs. None of them hatched. The male bluebird may have been sterile. It broke my heart watching mommy work so hard and not get any chicks.

Union Mills, NC, Brooklyn Breedlove (age 13): My twelve boxes fledged seventy-eight bluebirds and sixteen chickadees. Two boxes of bluebird eggs disappeared and I assume that snakes were the predators.

I had two sets of wrens on the back porch in drawers as well as swallows in the garage. Unfortunately, two swallows were trying to fledge, fell and were eaten by the dogs.

Garner, NC, Diane Woerner, Ellen Cook, Annie Runyon, Karen Williams, Joye Stephenson: Primarily due to persistent, cold nights, our season got off to a slow start with the first egg laid April 3, 2011. After two boxes were ransacked and two others had eggs disappear, we started installing 1 1/2 inch deck screws to the door to slow predators (two legged) down. Then in late May, we had a box stolen with four eggs in it. This box will be replaced next year. One box was inhabited by English House Sparrows for the entire season with twelve eggs discarded. We witnessed a sparring match between a pair of House Sparrows and a pair of bluebirds. This lasted four months and only two House Sparrow eggs were laid and discarded. The bluebirds laid seven eggs late in the season, three on top of four eggs and then abandoned them. Too Exhausted !! Extreme heat this year was another factor.

One interesting story—a friend of one of our bluebird monitors saw a teenager using his shirt-tail to loosen one of our screws that wasn't tightened flush with the door. The monitor spoke to him and he ran away.

We are having steel baffles added to the boxes this fall that we believe were invaded by snakes or raccoons .

Spotlight on a New County Coordinator

Tim Hart, Caldwell County

Tim grew up on the family dairy farm outside Lenoir, NC. After college, and living and working for over 30 years in the Triangle area, he retired to the old homestead -- the 4th generation of Harts to live on the farm. No longer a dairy, the property is home to plenty of deer, coyotes, turkeys and many varieties of songbirds, including bluebirds.

In Tim's words "I was on the internet looking for plans to build bluebird boxes when I came across the NC Bluebird Society's page and noted that there was no coordinator in Caldwell County. As a farm boy and former Caldwell County 4-H'er, this sort of thing runs in my blood and I thought maybe it would be something I could do in the area that would be worthwhile. I contacted Ray Welch and volunteered.

"There are a number of bluebird boxes on the farm that we put up years ago, but it's time to add more. I don't officially monitor trails, etc., but I walk part of the farm almost everyday I'm here, and have noted birds and varieties for decades. There appears to be a lot of bluebirds here and I think it's because conditions are nearly ideal.

"I noticed that at my local NC SECU no bluebird

boxes were sitting out for sale as I always see at the branches of the Credit Union in Raleigh and Carrboro. I talked with the manager and he told me they had remodeled the interior and they just hadn't put them back out. He admitted that they did have some and that he should have them out. I discussed with him getting a sign letting folks know they were available. So I'm in the process of doing this.

Anyway, my plan this year is to publicize bird houses, etc. and take it from there."

Tim can be reached through:

email: satori95@aol.com or
 phone: 828-754-9734

*Submitted by Joye Stephenson,
 County Coordinator Co-chair*



Jim Jochum Speaks for the Bluebirds

Starting the talk circuit off on February 2, 2012, NCBS Director Jim Jochum presented a Bluebird Conservation program to 33 teachers in the ADK Lambda Sorority in Greensboro.

Jim serves as Guilford County Coordinator and was NCBS President more than 10 years ago.

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