



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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## 2011 NCBS Annual Meeting



This May the North Carolina Bluebird Society celebrated its 25th anniversary. On May 15, 1986 NCBS received its non-profit status and was incorporated by the state of North Carolina. Linda Phillips was the founder and Bea Mansfield the first president.

This cake served as the dessert for the participants of the 2011 NCBS annual meeting in Hickory, NC. Bob Warmuth (pictured below) and his wife Beth were the chairmen of this event held at the Lake Hickory Country Club on Saturday, April 30, 2011. The speakers are described on page 5 and more pictures can be found on pages 12 and 13.

Bob Warmuth stands next to the display board with the bios of the new NCBS Board nominees. The membership voted unanimously to approve this slate of officers. These include Vice-president Donna C. Redmon, Treasurer Carrie Helston, Director Cheryl Gay, Director David Hind-sley, Director Jim Jochum, Director Tony Nicosia, Director Glenda Ryan (web administrator), Director Lynn Siefferman and Director Robert Warmuth. This makes the NCBS Board in compliance with the NCBS By-laws.



Carol Robbins and Beth Warmuth greeted everyone at the registration table making sure that all received their "goody bag," gold coin for lunch and their raffle tickets for chances on the door prizes. There were about 40 door prize items and 15 "silent auction" articles donated by NCBS members. Danish pastries, donuts, fresh fruit, coffee and juice were available during the morning followed by a delicious lunch at noon.

## Bluebird Notes

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## Bluebird Tales



### Snake caught in a deer net baffle

I use deer netting around the base of my boxes to catch snakes. This is the earliest I've ever had one - April 21st. Unlike Mr. Jack (Finch) who let his snakes die in the netting. I carefully cut mine out and take them down the road and put them out on the other side of the river. Hopefully they won't return. It is not my favorite thing to do, but I cannot kill them.

After I released this one, I noticed two more strands around his body under his scales, so I recaptured him and cut those. He was not the least appreciative and kept striking at me. I held him down with a hoe and kept cutting. I would guesstimate him at about 4 feet long.

*Ann Weaver, Kenly, NC*

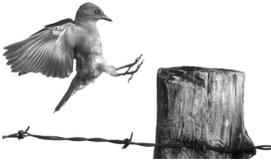


### Bluebird Answer via E-mail

Reply to the question printed in the February 2011 newsletter from Matthew Grant about kerfs inside the doors,

I think it is IMPERATIVE that the boxes have either kerfs or hardware cloth inside below the hole. The Bluebirds might not need these for fledging, but sometimes (every year on my trails) Chickadees will nest in at least one or two of the Bluebird boxes. These Chickadee babies are sometimes not strong enough or big enough to get out of the boxes unless there are kerfs.

*Linda Hunt, Nashville, NC*



# Bluebird Tales



## Bluebird Nestbox Kibitzer

Recently, as I was reinstalling a Bluebird nestbox on a power-pole that had been replaced by Duke Energy on Tanglewood Park, a golfer approached me as I was completing my work. He greeted me by saying something like "Hello, I am Woody Schmidlap (Name changed to protect the identity of the observer.) of the Audubon Society. Isn't that an unusual place for a Bluebird box?"

Note: This box is on a power-pole next to a busy golf cart path as well as a "T" intersection of motor ways leading to various Park facilities. I responded with something clever such as, "I guess that would depend on who is building the nest" and "Let me refer to my trail-notes" (which I carry as I wander about my trail).

"Well," I replied after thumbing through my notes, "this box has had three successful nesting and fledging cycles in each of years 2008, 2009 and 2010 and two in each of 2006 and 2007. Not too bad for an unusual spot." Woody went on to play his golf game without further offer of advice.

(Bill Abbey, Clemmons, NC)

## BurMil Park Bluebird Trail

The bluebird trail at BurMil was originally part of the North American Bluebird Society Transcontinental Bluebird Trail (TBT), and was installed by Helen Munro, Jim Jochum, and me many years ago. I monitored it in the beginning, and my employees have continued to monitor it.

The trail had fallen into a state of disrepair that was, quite frankly, embarrassing.

Over the weekend (April 16-17, 2011), my husband and I replaced all nest boxes and poles through our store, *Wild Birds Unlimited* in Greensboro. I transferred the TBT signs to the new boxes.

I just wanted to inform you of the updates.

*Barbara Haralson, Greensboro, NC*

*Editor's Note: Thank you, Barbara and Bill, for reviving this trail that is on public parkland.*

# Wake Forest Bluebirds

I took these photos at my daughter's house Monday (3/21/2011) morning. The male was on the windowsill or the deck railing protecting his territory. His mate was just above on a limb with her back to him - totally ignoring him. Very coy little bird. He finally decided he would join her, but she still ignored him.

I saw my first bluebird egg of the season at the Tobacco Farm Life Museum here in Kenly yesterday (3/24/2011). I was doing a tour for a group of 5th graders and decided to check the box as we walked by. It had not been cleaned out from the previous year and the nest was way too high up. I pulled off the old portion and replaced the nest with the egg in the box. These kids had never seen a bluebird box or egg before. How sad. All schools should have a bluebird trail with someone to monitor them. Happy Bluebirding!

*Ann Weaver, Kenly*

*P.S.* Thanks, Helen.

I've just sent in my 3 year renewal and bought another Inside the Nestbox. I've given a box to my grandson's class in Franklin County and am going to show them the video and talk with them about bluebirds. That is one thing I miss about teaching at my old school since I retired Sept. 1. Think I'll see if the kindergarten classes want me to come to show their classes, too. That's 6 classes of kids who will miss learning about the blues if I don't!



Clockwise: male bluebird;  
male & female; female  
(front view); female (back  
view).



# NCBS 2011 Speakers



Dr. John Brzorad (above), Director of the Reese Institute at Lenoir-Rhyne University told of Margaret Morse Nice who studied the life history of the Song Sparrow. She did this by watching the living birds much like the bluebird monitors do every spring and summer. Dr. Brzorad spoke of banding individual birds so that their behavior in, for example, a family group can be documented.

The recovery of the bluebird is a success story when so many other species are becoming endangered.



David Clanton (above), a turfgrass instructor at Catawba Valley Community College, reported on the advantages of certification by Audubon International of golf courses. This program addresses environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, chemical use reduction and safety, water conservation, water quality management and outreach and education.

The program results in a reduction of the application of chemicals and actually improves the land, water and air quality. There are 2500 certified golf courses in the U.S.

Dr. Gary Freeze (below), Professor of History at Catawba College and author of "The Story of the Sparkling Catawba Springs," stressed the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson and the advantage of living at 1,000 feet above sea level because it is healthier. The Sparkling Catawba Springs is at this same altitude as is Monticello (Jefferson's home) and Warm Springs, GA (F.D. Roosevelt's retreat). Taking the water of the springs may have supplemented the minerals that people did not get in their diets.



Dr. Marsha Fanning, who has taught for 30 years at Lenoir-Rhyne University, presented her student Kristen Lain (below) who will be embarking on a bluebird project in her senior year at Lenoir-Rhyne. This is a collaboration between the university and bluebird trails maintained by members of NCBS at two different golf courses. Kristen will be using data from Bob Warmuth as the basis of her project. Lenoir Rhyne also has a natural area which is used as an outdoor classroom. Bluebird nest boxes are part of the ecology curriculum taught by Dr. Fanning.





## *Bluebirds, Inside the Nest Box*

Recorded by the Cornell Birdhouse Network

Summer 1999

Produced by the North Carolina Bluebird Society

DVD available for \$12.00 including shipping and handling.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NCBS.

SEND ORDER & CHECK TO:

**Ms. Christine Ammons, 670 Nanneytown Rd., Union Mills, NC 28167-8762**

## North Carolina Bluebird Society Products

Description of Item	Cost Postage Included	No. Wanted	Total
Magnets with Bluebird & Dogwood	\$ 4.00	X _____	= _____
Magnets with State Outline/Bluebird	\$ 4.00	X _____	= _____
Bluebird Earrings (pierced)	\$ 7.00	X _____	= _____
Caps with NCBS Logo	\$ 13.00	X _____	= _____
Bluebird Note Cards (12)	\$ 12.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Carolina Blue</i> Tote Bags	\$ 15.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Carolina Blue</i> T-Shirts by Dempsey Essick (S, M, L, XL)	\$ 20.00	X _____	= _____
Lands End blue knitted shirts with NCBS Logo (S, M, L, XL)	\$ 35.00	X _____	= _____
Cloisonné Bluebird Pins (1inch, 4 colors)	\$ 5.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Bluebirds Forever</i> (12 page booklet)	\$ 3.00	X _____	= _____
2 copies	\$ 4.50	X _____	= _____
3 copies	\$ 6.00	X _____	= _____
<i>On the Wings of a Song</i> —CD	\$ 8.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Bluebirds, Inside the Nestbox</i> DVD ( DVD special 2 for \$20; 3 for \$30; 6 for \$60)	\$ 12.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Roberta Lee</i> Bluebird Poster 18" x 24"	\$ 12.50	X _____	= _____
Metal Nest Box Tags (10 tags)	\$ 6.00	X _____	= _____
<b>New Item: 550 piece puzzle of Dempsey Essick's "The Fledgling".</b>	<b>\$ 20.00</b>	X _____	= _____

Total = \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NCBS.  
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# Nest Cups for Nest Boxes

*Editor's Note: I was at a NABS meeting in Illinois when I overheard someone asking about the cups in Jack Finch's nest boxes. Thanks to Jack, this use is unique to his boxes and, of course, makes it easier to clean and to pull out an intact nest to share with visitors.*

*NCBS President Ray Welch has been trying 4" square plastic pots. These seem to be working quite well. Someone had a concern that they were hotter than the ones used by Jack Finch. Please let me know what type of cups you use.*

*Helen Munro, Editor*



Jean Walker of Southern Pines wrote this spring:

Helen, Jim and I ran out of nest box cups so thought about using things around the house. The low plastic container (looks like a mostly grass nest) is a 6oz blueberry box -- and the one with the pine needle nest is a storage container for the refrigerator (holes punched in for drainage,) I am also trying a cut down orange juice carton,-- 2 halves of a regular strawberry box, cut in half and slid together,-- a 15 cent peat pot with sides cut down -- and the plastic bottom of a qt. of milk.

## “Stolen Property”

Three years ago Lowe's Home Improvement opened a new store near me in Winston-Salem. Every time I went to the new store I saw bluebirds on the utility line around the property. I finally asked the manager if I could put up three boxes the first year. I had great success that year fledging 28 babies. The second year, I asked to put up 3 additional boxes and fledged a total of 37 babies, before last summer heat got so hot. This year, in late winter I went on my "cleaning cycle" rounds and to my amazement someone had stolen the number 1 box, warning tag, poles, nest cup the whole darn thing! I commented to the store manager about the theft and he stated "nothing is safe around here."

The two pictures to the right show the nest box that I put up in place of the original. As one can see, I marked this box as "stolen property" just in case the same villain comes along needing another box! My only hope out of this situation is that the nest box theft will have as good luck this year with the stolen nest box, as I had last year!

Incidentally, all of these boxes have the plastic flower pots that I gave out at the annual meeting in Garner. The little hens seem to accept these boxes as quickly as any other. The only thing is that one has to give it an extra rap to get the mess out of the ridges in the bottom of the cup.

*Ray Welch, Winston-Salem  
NCBS President*



## 2010 NCBS Nesting

*A thank you to Reah Kittelberger for collecting all of the 2010 Nesting Surveys. It is my pleasure to extract the comments in this issue. I try to pick ones that will help us all become better bluebirders. I cannot include all the comments for which I apologize, but do enjoy these from monitors in North Carolina. It is like a visit with old friends.*

*Helen S. Munro, Editor*

**Asheboro, NC, Chuck Bliss**—First box of 5 bluebird eggs in the backyard were destroyed by a wren on May 20. Second box had 1 egg laid and then the wren started filling the box with small sticks. I removed the box. I had a wren problem last year and may have to declare war on wrens in 2011.

**Asheville, NC, Diane Hankins**—I have gone from 5 successful families in '08 to 1 in '09 to 0 in 2010. Asheville had four big snows (Dec/Jan/Feb/March) which is much more than usual. Then there was a hot, dry summer with 90 degree days starting in June and off and on through mid-August. (Much hotter than normal for us.)

The nest that was abandoned was in the one box that has had successful families for years. For whatever reasons, no bluebirds came to the bird baths in the yard all spring and summer as they have in the past.

**Burlington, NC, Kathryn Carroll**—I've had a good year without problems. Two bluebird eggs were laid in one of my boxes, but the adults abandoned the nest and the eggs didn't hatch. Don't know what happened.

**Burlington, NC, Cedarock Park, Frances Outhwaite, Cynthia Benson & Susan Buchanon**—Heat seems to be a problem, but no signs of snakes. i.e. squashed nest, with eggs disappearing leaving "untouched" nest.

**Chapel Hill, NC, Lois Herring**—We have had continuing problems with hornets building nests on ceilings of nest boxes and causing bluebirds to

abandon nests. Removing wasp nests (if it can be accomplished without a painful sting) was useless as the wasps were back in a matter of minutes. This year we coated ceilings of boxes with petroleum jelly. This discouraged wasps and did not seem to bother the birds. Last winter our nest boxes were used by different kinds of birds as shelter on those bitter nights.

**Chapel Hill, NC, Carol Woods Retirement Community, Audrey Booth**—The house wrens are a severe problem here in this beautifully wooded site. We are continually planning for better box placement. I have resumed the task of Trail Master after a six year sabbatical.

**Clemmons, NC, Bill Abbey**—This year's results tie-in closely with predator attacks which were somewhat over-norm....not to mention the cold spring and hot summer.. Historically, however, the "fledgling to box ratio" over the past ten years at Tanglewood places 2010 at 3.6:1 just above mid-range with 2007 at 5.0:1 the high and 2003 the low at 2.1:1. I judge the whole picture to be pretty much a "Mother Nature norm"...

**Clayton, NC, Jim Marks**—We got started a little late this year. We began the year with numerous battles against Sparrows. As a result, I modified some of my boxes to 1.5 inch top-slot boxes, and next year all boxes will be that type. Wild Birds Unlimited tells me that Sparrows will not enter this type of box and my own observations seem to confirm this.

**Four Oaks, NC, Ethelene Allen**—Many eggs didn't hatch, some because of overheating. I painted some boxes and had successful nesting attempts in them except the ones the snakes ate. The very hot weather seems to cook the yolks in some eggs. I broke one that contained a partially developed baby and the egg yolk that was feeding the chick looked as if it cooked and the baby died in its shell. One nestbox that was used for 3 broods had 6 eggs the first time and 5 eggs the next 2 times. All 16

# Survey Comments

eggs hatched and fledged. That box is in an older couple's front yard on an utility pole. The couple enjoyed watching the birds.

**Fuquay-Varina, NC, Fuquay-Varina High School, Randy Senzig**—We fought with sparrows nesting in 4 boxes near the school building and had 2 chickadee nests and 3 Carolina wren nests. Am having a problem with lawn maintenance crew that sprays herbicides around base of nest boxes. I think that this is causing a decrease in eggs. We also found an invasion of fire ants. The school system used Ambros Chemical to control them.

**Greensboro, NC, The Grande & Golf Course, Jim Jochum**—Mockingbirds continue to be a problem by attacking the female bluebirds at the nest box and driving them away. I used a modified pigeon trap to catch 5 mockingbirds at one nest box over a 30 day period.

**Greensboro, NC, Bryan Park Players Course, Barbara Haralson**—Brown-headed nuthatch in honorarium box near wooded edge; later had bluebirds in the same box. One box had an early brood and then they just kept building huge nests with no eggs.

**Hendersonville, NC, Joe Sanders**—I lost 2 babies and 1 egg, but don't know what it was. I suspect a cat as it was a box in a condo complex. I inherited 42 boxes in the condo complex and added 5 more. These boxes are less than 100 yards apart. However, 3 boxes were in a line of a total of 100 yards and all 3 were successful.

**Hickory, NC, Kristin Dzimitrowicz**—In 2009 I lost 9 eggs to Raccoons in two boxes. I snuffed out these predator deaths by making sure that all my nest boxes had baffles (and found out that I prefer the Stovepipe baffles). However, 2010 brought a new problem, adult deaths of four bluebirds, two found in a nest box. Now, how do I prevent this in the future? Could it be the pesticides the park is using? How do I find out?

**Holly Springs, NC, Betty Packler**—I felt the plastic "nest box" held heat. I tried to cool with cold water over box on hot days. I think I'll go back to paper nest cups if it is so hot next year. I had a single baby fledge after removing one unhatched egg and two dead babies.

**Kernersville, NC, Dillon Ronell (Age 13)** - Of my first two broods, only one didn't hatch, but in my third brood all hatched. The male and female bluebird were doing the wing wave displays. The male bluebird took the egg that wasn't good out of the nest. (Bill Abbey was the mentor of this young bluebirder.)

**Liberty, NC, Brian Greene, Jr.**—I found a dead female on top of her eggs. Her head was gone. I couldn't find it anywhere. I am puzzled about what could have beheaded her.

**Matthews, NC, Garrett Rhyne**—A family of 2 bluebirds started making a nest in one of my boxes, and then started making a nest in another box. Both the male and female bluebirds swapped everyday on which box they would help build. They were doing double duty. Eventually they abandoned one nest when incubation time came. I had to clean out a nest that was empty. These bluebirds had 5 eggs hatch and fledge successfully. I will never forget that family.

**Morganton, NC, Mimosa Garden Club, Linda Julien**—One box had 3 nests. Three eggs were in it the first nesting. I found the box with its door open, and the nest 3 feet away without any eggs. The second nesting had 3 babies that hatched, but were dead in the nest at the first monitoring. The third nest had 3 eggs, all hatched and fledged! I think that this was one determined female.

**Pinehurst, NC, Len & Joyce Tufts**—I had a problem interpreting the "Failed nest attempts for Bluebirds" so I concluded that if every egg in one nest developed to fly, I counted it as complete. There

*(Continued on page 10)*

## 2010 Survey Comments Concluded

were only 11 nests completed. There were 15 other starts ranging from 5 fledgling from 5 eggs to all. Also had 2 nests of Carolina Chickadees fledging 11 and one nest of Great Crested Flycatchers with 6 eggs producing 4 hatched and within the week they were gone! Zero fledged!

**Purlear, NC, Zane Walsh**— Season was late getting started. Three nests with eggs disappeared, but had a nest of kinglets late in the season (August).

**Pinehurst, NC, Pinehurst Greenway Wildlife Habitat, Marisa Back**—Eight bluebird nests had a total of 33 eggs, 20 hatched and 20 fledged. This is only 61%. The weather was exceptionally hot and the insect population was down. One nest had many chokecherry seeds, a large grasshopper and a snail shell. This year there were 3 exceptionally “messy” nests after the young fledged. The inside of the nest box, between the box and insert, was filled with fecal sacs. Maybe the parents didn’t remove the sacs to encourage the young to “get out” on their own. It was a very hot week. We may be seeing a decline in nesting bluebirds along our trail due to the sale of Bluebird Nest Boxes in the community. Our committee has sold over 150 in the Pinehurst area over the past 4 years.

**Raleigh, NC, Maggie Goldston**—For the previous three years, I have had 1 to 2 hatchings per season in the bluebird box in my herb garden. There was 0 this year. In the box in the front yard there has been 1 to 2 hatchings over the past several years. There was 0 this year. This year only the new box was used. The babies did well, but I never encountered the usual flurry of activity with the parents. The remaining box (out of 4) needs to be moved as they don’t seem to like the location. However, I left it alone this year because I observed a beautiful male standing on it in the spring. One problem may be Kitty Hattie. She is very timid and usually does not catch anything and is rarely outside. She did catch a male bluebird. My

husband rescued him and set him free. He later found a dead male in the front yard. The rescued male seemed fine and flew away.

**Raleigh, NC, Sandy Thach**—Not a good year for me! Something happened to the male but the female with my help in providing food successfully fed 4 hatchlings and they all fledged. To my dismay, this was my one and only bluebird nesting. Hope next spring will be a better year for me!

**Thomasville, NC, Rev. Chet & Gennie Lou Byerly**—Weaver finches (English House Sparrow) moved in and drove the bluebirds out. We tried a flap from the roof of the bluebird boxes (in front of the hole) made out of black vinyl in an attempt to keep the weaver finches out. It worked for awhile, but the weaver finches learned how to get around it. The birds we raised were in a ceramic hanging bird house. The weaver finches left them alone. We were worried about them during a straight line wind thunderstorm, but they were ok, but probably a little seasick!

**Union Mills, NC, Christine Ammons**—Heat did not seem to harm birds, but it just about melted me. I had English Sparrow problems for the first time in years. Someone did steal one box. I hope that they make a good bluebirder!

**Winston Salem, NC, Carrie Pippins**— First date of eggs laid was April 3, but a black snake got one baby fledgling and am not sure what happened to the second fledgling.

**Winston Salem, NC, Juanna Wooten**— Bobcat pulled out nest of the second box in Ashe county.

**West End, NC, Bob & Ruth Stolting**—This year we had three nests out of 25 nests that had eggs that never hatched. This may have been because of the high temperatures that we had this past summer. It’s very unusual for us to see this.

# “Hoppy,” Mother Nature’s Surprise

Our first nesting went perfectly, resulting in five healthy fledglings from two experienced parents (surmised because of the precision, beauty and fineness of the nest – they knew what they were doing).

The second nesting was different than we’d yet seen in

our few years of backyard birding. The nest was even more intricately built than the first and we presumed it was the same pair of birds. The first egg was laid June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the fourth on June 5<sup>th</sup>, one a day as usual. But they didn’t all hatch on the same day as we’d come to expect. The first hatched June 17<sup>th</sup>. On the 18<sup>th</sup> we saw three hatchlings and one egg only slightly cracked. We always do our checks in the late afternoon or early evening so we don’t disturb egg-laying, etc. that seems to happen in the mornings.

Since I worried all evening about what to do with an unhatched egg, I was relieved to find all four hatched when we checked on the

19<sup>th</sup>. It had taken three days! Everything proceeded as normal from there and the parents were very attentive. When Fledge day came on July 5<sup>th</sup>, Dave and I pulled our lawn chairs out a respectful distance and watched. There was much fluttering in the box and many apprehensive looks from the doorway, then finally the first one took off and flew to a nearby branch where he sat as if stunned at what he had done. A little while later Number Two did the same and then pretty quickly Number Three. It was thrilling to watch and we felt like a silent cheering section. Between the two of us, we were trying to watch all the babies and the parents.

With our attention scattered so, we weren’t sure if we had missed the fourth fledgling or not. It happens awfully fast, and the box was quiet for a long time. I thought it must be empty now, but then suddenly we saw that last little face in the doorway. She seemed noticeably more hesitant than the others, which is saying something.

When she finally got her feet up under her on the door-sill, she fumbled, fluttered and caught herself with one wing against the outside of the box, spread against the wood, as she sat still in the doorway and looked desperate. With both parents (and us) encouraging, she finally screwed up the courage to make the leap. And went

straight down. On the ground, she just hopped, all around the perimeter of the yard, with Mom and Dad taking turns landing in front of her and then flying to a low branch trying to get her to follow. It just didn’t seem like she could do it.



You can see that the one on the upper right is smaller and less developed. Is this Hoppy?

In my own consternation over her survival, I called my County Coordinator, Mr. Satterwhite, and he said that as long as the parents were attending, the baby would have a chance. We lost sight of all of them when they followed “Hoppy” into a neighboring yard. I like to think she eventually found her wings with her parents’ help. As dedicated as they were, they wouldn’t have given up easily.

My question is this: would “Hoppy” have been the last hatchling, two days younger and less developed than her siblings and that’s why she had a hard time? Or I guess her wing could have been hurt when she held it outside

the box for so long as she prepared to fledge. We’ll never know. But I have thought they always hatched together in one day and then fledged together in a single day. I guess it proves once again, Mother Nature can always surprise us and doesn’t that make the world infinitely fascinating to watch!

*Carrie & Dave Helston, Willow Springs, NC*



Now that I look at the pictures again, I think “she” may have been “he.” Oops

*Carrie Helston*

# North Carolina Bluebird



Ray Welch (left), President of NCBS received the Key to Hickory from Hickory's Mayor Rudy Wright (right). Mayor Wright was pleased that NCBS selected Hickory for their meeting.



(Photo - left) Joel Reece and his wife Ann are two of the monitors of the Catawba Springs Bluebird Trail. Joe reported that moving non-productive boxes to new locations increased the number of bluebirds fledged in 2008 from 48 to 132!



(Photo- left bottom) Don McHugh, master bird carver, displayed many beautiful carvings.

(Photo below, from left to right) Allen Huffman is associated with the Historical Association; Bruce Beerbower, Naturalist for the Catawba Science Center; Michelle Palmore, Site Manager for the Catawba Historical Association exchange ideas during the annual meeting.



# Society 2011 Annual Meeting



(Photos upper left) Kristtin Dzimitrowicz, Catawba County Coordinator, shared the annual meeting with her daughters, Sara and Megan, as well as her husband Jeff.

(Photo upper center) Fran Outhwaite, long time county coordinator for Alamance County, enjoyed seeing old friends and learning even more about bluebirds.

(Photo upper right) Christine Ammons, NCBS Store Manager, and her Aunt, Frances Phillips, show off some of the wares of the NCBS Store.

(Photo lower right) Jim Jochum, past president and long time Board Member, poses with Bob Wolk, NCBS recording secretary.

(Photo lower left) Bill Abbey, Forsyth County Coordinator; Helen Munro, past president and editor; and Kay Hindsley, NCBS Corresponding Secretary, admire the “Welcome Friends” sign. Kay opened the meeting by singing a medley of bluebird songs.



(Above) Farrell Horton sold nesting cups along with a “Welcome Birds” sign (see photo lower left).



# North Carolina Bluebird Society

## NORTH CAROLINA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

North Carolina Bluebird Society Dues:

( ) 1 Year (\$10.00)

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

North Carolina Bluebird Society  
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 an unique publication

Please submit to: Helen Munro, Co-editor  
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Phone - (910) 673-6936 Fax - (910) 673-7345  
e-mail - hsmunro@ac.net

Slide Programs, Videos and books can be borrowed,  
Please Contact: Hank Moss, Jr.

525 Fairway Drive Southern Pines, NC 28387  
(910) 692-2328 hmjr@nc.rr.com

## Black Rat Snake



I emailed Annie Runyon to see if she had taken a picture of the black rat snake referred to on page 15. This was her reply:

“It was a beautiful young black rat snake with a white chin and full belly! I did not take a photograph nor sketch it, just encouraged it to move along out of the bird box. We dealt with this predator problem by moving the box away from the sheltering trees and undergrowth. Hopefully, now our fine snake friend can hunt other prey, and the bluebirds can raise their boxed young more successfully. In my mind, this snake really has the “right of way” in this situation, since we are creating an artificial nesting site in the snake’s natural habitat. Killing the snake is the wrong thing to do! I am sure you can find a photo of a similar young black rat snake from the internet, if you want one to show what they look like.”

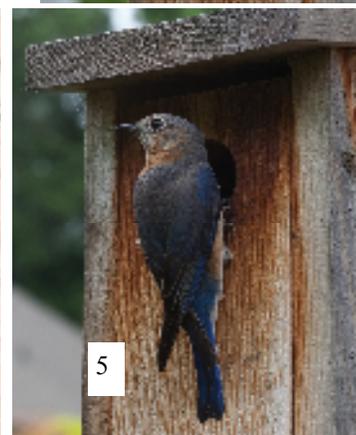
*Helen Munro, Editor*

# Memories from Summer 2010



1. Fledgling take a look outside
2. Male bluebird on nest box entrance
3. Female bluebird on garden crook
4. Recent fledgling feeding second brood
5. Female bluebird on nest box entrance
6. Fledgling making its maiden flight.

*Photos submitted by Nancy Brown, Charlotte, NC*



## Lake Benson and White Deer Park, Town of Garner

The Lake Benson and White Deer Parks are part of the Town of Garner's Parks system. We are fortunate that the staff is dedicated to our project. They keep an eye out and are willing to replace posts, relocate nest boxes, etc.

We have a trail of 10 boxes at Lake Benson. When White Deer Park opened in November, 2009, 2 boxes from Lake Benson were moved to that park and 4 more added to make a trail of 6 nest boxes.

There is 1 nest box at the Senior Center.

At the Lake Benson trail, we got off to a good start having 22 bluebird eggs, 18 hatching and 13 fledging for the first brood of this season with the first egg laid on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Then it went downhill. Although we had the bluebird couples cooperating with 32 eggs this second time around, only 21 hatched and 8 fledged.

A hungry snake consumed 5 nestlings and had the nerve to take its nap in the nestbox. Lucky for it, our naturalist, artist/illustrator and monitor, Annie

Runyon, found him sleeping on her monitoring round.

We are planning to relocate a box that is close to a picnic shelter which makes it attractive to vandals. This box had 4 bluebird nesting attempts in it. The first was successful, but two sets of eggs disappeared and the eggs of the final attempt did not hatch. Lake Benson's bluebird trail ended the season with only 27 fledglings out of 70 eggs laid. This is quite a few down from last year. The monitors were Diane Woerner, Annie Runyon and Joye Stephenson. The White Deer Park trail was new this year. Three of the 6 nest boxes were used by bluebirds. We had 24 bluebird eggs, 18 hatching and 14 fledging. We may need to look at the locations of the boxes not used by bluebirds. Of course, we had sparrows and wrens snooping around. Monitors were Gail Miller, Gail Wall and Jeanne Morin.

*Joye Stephenson,  
Wake County NCBS Co-coordinator*

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THE NORTH CAROLINA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

135 Lakeview Dr.  
Tarboro, NC 27886

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