



The Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania

AN AFFILIATE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

- Volume 21, Issue 1 Summer 2019
- Editor: Joan Watroba • bluebirdhappy365@outlook.com • www.thebsp.org



A Message from the President

NEST ID - EABL*

Neat, cup shaped, woven nest typically 100% fine grass or pine needles. Fairly deep, often cylindrical nest cup, usually 3-4 "deep with the cup portion 2.5" in diameter and 2.25" deep. Nest may include some horsehair or feathers.

www.sialis.org/nests.htm

Nest building is performed almost exclusively by the female Eastern Bluebird. The male is the chief encourager/coach for his mate on the nest project. He warbles softly to her while she gathers and weaves her nesting materials. Bluebird nests are neatly constructed and are usually rather homogeneous in composition; the discriminating female selects dry fine grasses, pine needles (*Pinus strobus*), or coarse grasses/straw (if only that is available). She is quite particular & selective in choosing all of the same type of material, for the nest is totally her style. The female EABL is a first-class artisan and her nest will be a work of art. In the avian songbird world, she is considered a master craftsman at nest building. To form the hollow cup in the nest, the female will

sit inside the nest and flutter her wings pressing her breast up against the sides. This is called "moulding".

Typically in early spring, nest building can take 4 or 5 days for completion depending on the weather. Later in the summer, a Bluebird nest can be completed in a day or two. As the 2nd half of the brood season approaches (June & July), Mrs. Blue senses some urgency and she ramps up her work schedule to complete her nest in record time. She may even take a shorter break or less downtime between nests #1 & 2.

First year mothers are just that – they are novices at nest building. They are "hard wired" on how to perform the task but they have never accomplished it. If you have ever tried to remove one of these 1st year nests to inspect it or take a photo, even with the help of a supporting 4" wide putty knife, you know what I mean!! Total disaster as the nest unravels and you panic. The nest is weaved loosely and it just crumbles! This is, ugh was, a 1st year nest!! She will refine her skills with each successive nest build and become a real professional by year 2 or 3. Now her nests seem like they are woven tighter and almost glued together holding their shape perfectly. Since I am using more nest cups, I have far fewer of these panic episodes at moving nests!

Many female EABL's have an artistic flair in decorating their nests.

Often you will see two or three blue pin-feathers woven into their nests. When I see a nest that has been tastefully decorated, I just smile. Just this spring I found a nest on Weaver Road, Lancaster, that I called the "Patriotic Nest" complete with red, white and blue plastic fibers. (see photo) A long white fiber coiled in the bottom of the nest and red & blue shorter accents on the walls of the nest. Really, you can't make this stuff up!!

At Susquehannock State Park a couple years ago I took a photo of a EABL nest with six eggs. Upon closer inspection I saw a grayish fiber spun around the inside of the nest 75 or more times. This park has several Amish tie-rails for horses around the park near the volleyball & softball fields. Horsehair was used in the nest construction by an ingenious female Blue. (see photo page 2)

Look for EABL nests with the cup oriented toward the back of the nest box. A grass platform landing is in the front of the nest. This allows the male or female to enter the box and stand on the platform to feed chicks and take away fecal sacs. Just another innovation some female Blues build into their nests! They even think about floor plans. Otherwise the Bluebird parents have to tip-toe around the brim of the nest or stand on the chicks each time they enter and leave the box!!

The "picnic basket nest". At Lancaster Country Club I have a couple

>> continued on page 2

A Message from the President continued from page 1

of female Blues which choose straw for their nests. They use long straw pieces in the four corners of the nest rising up to almost the roof. The first time I saw this type nest I did not think it was a Bluebird nest! Upon closer observation, yes, Bluebirds were using the nest and blue eggs soon appeared. It truly looked like a "picnic basket".

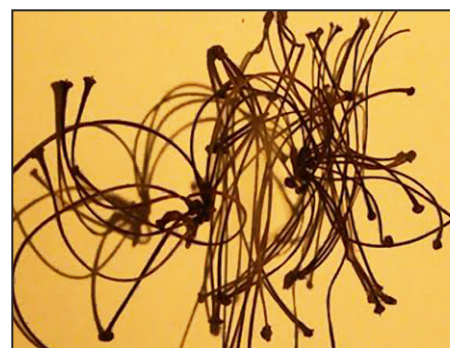
The "fuzzy white cloud nest". This nest was just identified at the Hershey Country Club in the last two weeks. (see photo)

In 2012 I had a nest at the Lancaster Country Club that was built entirely of Red Maple Tree blossoms/ stems (*Acer rubrum*). It was a sparse, smallish nest but homogeneous in building material. (see photo) This is the only nest I have ever seen of this type and I would put it in the category of weed stems or rootlets for Bluebird nests.

Finally, with nest building the female will choose to very fine grasses to line the center of the cup where the eggs will be laid. Even when a coarse grass or hay is used for the main part of the nest, a fine grass liner is used for the "finishing touch". You would want a soft seat too if you were going to sit twenty-four hours a day for 16 days straight in one spot incubating eggs.

EXPERIENCE THE JOY THAT ONLY A BLUEBIRD CAN BRING.

Dr. Dean C. Rust
President of the Bluebird Society
of Pennsylvania
May 19, 2019



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Our Mission Statement

The mission statement of the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania is simple, yet powerful:

1. Provide and promote educational activities relating to bluebirds, birding, conservation and related subjects.
2. Monitor and conduct research relating to bluebirds, other cavity nesting birds, food sources, habits, and trails
3. Build, maintain, and monitor bluebird boxes and trails.
4. Provide opportunities for people to become involved in efforts that assist bluebirds and other native bird species.
5. Provide social opportunities to share information and experiences relating to bluebirds and related conservation topics.

WE NEED YOU

The Officers and Board members of this great organization feel strongly about the above statements. It probably goes without saying that the BSP membership also feel the same way. Whether you monitor a trail, interact with other Bluebirders, build your own boxes, or provide educational activities, consider sharing your experience and knowledge by serving on the Board of Directors of the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania. Serving on the Board gives you the opportunity to support and promote our mission, provide your personal experiences, valuable ideas and perspectives regarding the direction of the BSP, and to forge new relationships.

You will also enjoy working with a vibrant and dedicated group of individuals. We have a number of openings for Board positions beginning next year. If you feel that you want to contribute your time, knowledge and experiences regarding Bluebirds, please consider this offer as a nominee to the Board.

If you want to learn more about the BSP and serving on the Board, please do not hesitate to contact me. Looking forward to hearing from you!

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New County Coordinators

New County Coordinator for Montgomery County

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New Co-County Coordinators for Northampton County:

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Thanks to Cricket Klinger who had served as BSP County Coordinator for Union County for many years. She has relocated, so if you live in Union County and wish to serve as BSP County Coordinator for Union County, or for any other County in PA, please contact Ken Leister at 610-696-5271 or email him at: kenapeg@aol.com BSP County Coordinators are active BSP Members who volunteer to be a contact person who shares their knowledge and joy of bluebirds with people in their counties.

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In This Issue

A Message from the President	1 & 2
BSP Officers & Board of Directors	3
Our Mission Statement	3
New County Coordinators	3
BSP Chairpersons	4
In This Issue.	4
From the Editor	5 & 6
BSP Newsletter Submission Contests	6
BSP upcoming Events	6
Less Common Species Which Nest in Bluebird Boxes	7, 8 & 9
A New Generation of Bluebirders	10
Mailbag	10 & 11
BSP's 21st Annual Conference - April 26 & 27, 2019	12
2019 BSP Awards	13 & 14
Special Recognition for BSP Member, Wilma Light	14
Events Report.	15, 16 & 17
2018 BSP Annual Nest Box Report	17
Lyme Disease: A Real Threat in Pennsylvania	18
Mailbag	18
2019 BSP Membership Rate Information	19
Back Cover	20

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Publicity VACANT

From the Editor *by Joan Watroba*

The Spring of 2019 brought a kaleidoscope of colors to PA, and the trees, flowers, and songbirds all competed for our visual attention. The weather pattern produced a smooth progression of blooms and migrating birds, so that we could enjoy all of their beauty in sequence.

First were the Snowdrops and Crocus, then the Forsythia and Daffodils, followed by the Virginia Bluebells, Bleeding Heart, Eastern Red Bud Trees and Magnolia, then the Viburnum and Lilac took front and center.

The arrival of the migrating birds; Red-Breasted Grosbeak, Red-Breasted Nuthatch, Baltimore Oriole, Eastern Towhee, and Indigo Bunting was followed by the Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds, then the colorful warblers were a beautiful and welcome sight. The Brown Thrashers and Wood Thrush are again

▼ *Eastern Redbud*



▲ *Virginia Bluebells*



▲ *Eastern Towhee*



▲ *Ruby Throated Hummingbird*

singing in the back woods. The male bluebirds are very colorful, and the male American Goldfinch are so yellow that they look like a new species has arrived, even though they have been at the feeders all winter.

The cavity-nesting birds are actively nesting and we hope that the bluebirds have a productive season of fledgling two or even three broods. The nesting season started about three weeks later than usual on my bluebird trails, so the different species are all nesting at the same time. As of early May, I have active nests of Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, Black-Capped Chickadees, and House Wrens. My hope is that they all behave and not interfere with the nesting activity of their neighbors, as I have provided enough nest boxes for all of them

>> **continued on page 6**

From the Editor continued from page 5

to use on my bluebird trails of 80 nest boxes in various locations.

Wishing all of you joy and much fun and success with your bluebirds!

Please keep a record of your nesting activity so that we can include your data in our compiled report, and

for this purpose, we are including the Annual Nest Box Report Form with this issue.



Joan Watroba
Editor

BSP Newsletter Submission Contest Winner

Congratulation! **Theresa Stoeckl**, from Lancaster County. You are the Winner of the BSP Newsletter Submission Contest!

Please select an item from the BSP Store at www.thebsp.org and then call BSP Merchandise Manager, Susan Durgin at (717) 732-5325 to arrange for the delivery of your prize.

The Newsletter Committee is very excited that many BSP members are submitting material for the BSP newsletter, and we want to encourage more members to do so. By submitting your questions, nesting experiences, and field observations, we will be able to offer a wider variety of articles and materials that are of interest to our readers.

Contest Rules:

1. Your entry can be a general question or article about bluebirds or other nature topics, a write-up about something that you observed in your yard or on your trail, an original poem, a trail monitoring tip, or any non-copyrighted material. Please send copies only of printed materials or PDF's/ word documents of electronic submissions and jpeg files of photos.

2. To submit by regular mail, write: Attn: Newsletter Submission Contest on the front of the envelope and send to: BSP, P.O. Box 756, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-0756

3. To submit by e-mail, include Newsletter Submission Contest in the subject line of your e-mail and e-mail to:

bluebirdhappy365@outlook.com

One submission will be randomly drawn at the cut-off date for each newsletter edition, and the person whose entry was randomly picked will have their choice of any item offered in the BSP Merchandise Store website: www.thebsp.org

The latest date to submit items is the following: Spring - January 7 Summer- May 7 Fall/Winter- September 7

The Newsletter Editor will then review the items and reserve the right to include your submission in an upcoming edition. Since we cannot return any items, please send copies only of materials and/or photos. Please include your contact information-name, address, phone number or email address (optional) with your entry.

BSP Upcoming Events

2019 Membership/Board Meeting dates:

July 25, 2019 -Thursday evening-6:00 P.M.

Oct 24, 2019 -Thursday evening-6:00 P.M.

Location:

Giant Conference Center Upstairs Community Room
Camp Hill Shopping Center
3301 E.Trindle Road, Camp Hill, PA

All BSP members are invited to attend board meetings to

learn about upcoming BSP activities and events and to share your ideas about a variety of issues related to bluebird conservation. If you cannot attend the meetings in person, we can arrange for you to attend via conference call.

Contact Dean Rust, BSP President to make arrangements to join BSP meetings by phone from your home.

Dean's contact number is 717-669-0167 or e-mail Dean at: july7ds@aol.com

Come and join us at our meetings!

Less Common Species Which Nest in Bluebird Boxes

by Joan Watroba

Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, and House Wrens

are the three most common songbirds which use bluebird nest boxes, but there are several other native cavity-nesting species which will nest in bluebird boxes:

Here are the Entrance Hole Sizes for Less Common Songbirds which may nest in your bluebird boxes:

Black-Capped Chickadees

1 1/8 inch but they will nest in bluebird boxes, which have entrance holes of 1 1/2 inch

▼ Eastern Bluebirds

photo by David Kinneer



Bluebird eggs are usually blue, but sometimes they are white.



>> continued on page 8

Carolina Wren

1½ inch



wren and eggs photos by Bet Zimmerman



White Breasted Nuthatch

1½ inch

nuthatch photo above by Wendell Long

eggs photo by Bet Zimmerman



Tufted Titmouse

1½ inch

photo by Nancy Fraim

>> continued on page 9



Prothonotary Warbler

1 1/8 inch



photo by Robert Peak

Great-Crested Flycatcher

1 3/4 inch (This species may nest in standard bluebird nest boxes in which the entrance hole has been made larger by woodpeckers.)



egg photo by Keith Kridler

main photo by Richard Hodder

Note: For a round entrance hole, Eastern bluebird boxes should have a 1 1/2 inches diameter round entrance hole, and for an oval hole, it should be 1.375" x 2.250 "

More Information about specifications for wildlife nesting boxes: www.sialis.org On the main page, scroll down to section: **Other Cavity Nesters**

The following video is about wildlife nesting boxes for bluebirds, wood ducks, kestrels, and bats and where & when to place them out on your property:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVOLKZIsRSc>

Note: It is very important to offer the correct entrance hole size to eliminate larger pest birds such as European starlings from using the nest box.

European Starlings and House Sparrows are aggressive, non-native birds which are not protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and should not be allowed to nest in our nest boxes.

A New Generation of Bluebirders *by Bill Strauss*



Jay Smullen, a thirteen year old Junior Member of the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania, has been very busy this spring. Jay is monitoring three Bluebird Trails. Two of them are in West Hanover Township: Lenker Park trail has eight boxes – Skyline Park trail has twelve boxes. The third trail is inside The

Hershey Rose Garden which currently has twenty three boxes; however, several more boxes will be added to this trail in the near future. These three trails are all located in Dauphin County. His transportation is provided by his parents, his grandmother and his mentor.

Jay builds his own new and also the replacement nest boxes for these three trails. He helps out friends and neighbors by building boxes and installing them for those who enjoy watching “The Blue’s” in their back yards.



Bill and Jay assemble a bluebird nest box

In January 2019, Jay worked the Bluebird Booth at the PA Farm Show on three separate days and is scheduled to work booths at several upcoming Bluebird events.



Jay and Bill at Hershey Gardens Butterfly Atrium

Jay continues to grow in knowledge and understanding of the Eastern Bluebird under the watchful eye of his dedicated mentor, Bill Strauss, Dauphin County Coordinator.

In addition, Jay is an active member of his church and its youth group; he is a scout in Boy Scout Troop 27 in West Hanover Township and is actively working toward completing his Eagle Scout Award. He also plays the piano and does yard work for friends and family.

Great job, Jay! Keep up the good work looking after our beautiful and special feathered friends.

Mailbag

Subject: Suspicious Eggs

Last week a Peterson box with Noel Guard had 4 bluebird nestlings about a week old. This week part of the nest was in the guard and inside was a new nest with 4 large blue eggs. They are shaped like a tree swallow egg, only twice the size and color of bluebird eggs. I need help in identifying this bird.
Joyce, Franklin County

Replies:

Hi Joyce,
Starlings lay blue eggs and they are 4% to 5% bigger than bluebird eggs. Also, the Peterson box usually has the large oval entrance which allows the Starling to enter. Hope this helps.
Ken
Starling? Check entrance hole of the nest box. Some people say even correct size allows access to smaller starlings. Bet Z. Smith



Mailbag

Hi Joan,

I thought you'd enjoy seeing some pictures of this situation from my brother and sister-in-law.

One male bluebird and two females, they laid 10 eggs in one box and 3 in the other one, seven hatched out of the ten, one died and six fledged, three hatched from the second box and we are waiting for them to fledge. Both females and the male have been feeding the young in both boxes. Hope you enjoy the pictures! Pat and John Musser

Chuck Musser (717) 367-3548



Joan,

Great newsletter as always.

I especially liked the tips on presentations, as I am going to give one this Saturday. I first started presentations at elementary schools.

The bowl of live mealworms was always a big hit! One presentation comes to mind when I showed the mealworms and elicited "gross" and "eww." Telling them the worms were full of protein, one boy "double-dog" dared me to eat one! Of course, I did

and they hung on my every word. If Andrea tries this I'll give her a hint: don't chew, just swallow!

Hope you have a great season!
Sincerely, Terry M
South Carolina
Bluebird Society

Editor's Note: Crickets, mealworms, and grasshoppers have a lot of protein and use fewer resources than what is needed to produce animal meat. In many cultures,

insects form a large part of human diet and are regularly eaten by an estimated 2 billion people. Toasted grasshoppers, *chapulines*, tossed in a chili lime salt sell out at Mariners games in Seattle, WA. Do not eat any commercial insect product which is sold for bird feed, as it will be labeled "**not for human consumption**".

BSP's 21st Annual Conference - April 26 & 27, 2019

For this year's conference, we returned to the Toftrees Resort in State College, PA. One hundred BSP members registered for the conference. On Friday evening, we were treated with a talk by Ken Liester on Monitoring A Bluebird Trail, followed by a hands-on craft event in which participants could make and take home one of three different Bluebird boxes, a Bluebird feeder, or a Noel Guard and Sparrow Spooker.

We also had a popular booth where people could make and take home a container of Bluebird Banquet; a nutritious, crumbly mixture of peanut butter, cornmeal, lard, and shelled seeds that bluebirds and other songbirds birds enjoy.

close-up. Wayne Laubscher then gave a very informative and beautiful program on Peregrine Falcons in Clinton County.

After a delicious and satisfying lunch, we had fun during the live auction. Thanks to David Birmingham, Auctioneer and Pat Larthey, Auction Clerk who donated their skills and time for this important fundraising effort.

After the live and silent auctions, we enjoyed our next speaker, Harry Schneider, who presented an informative

to those who donated such wonderful items to our auctions. If you would like a contribution form documenting your donation, please contact Joan Watroba, Auction Chair at 717-766-2102 or e-mail bluebirdhappy365@outlook.com



▲ **Robyn Graboski**

Saturday's program featured Robyn Graboski, from the Non-Profit organization, Centre Wildlife Care, who spoke on her experiences in rehabilitating wildlife-birds, mammals, and even reptiles. The goal is to rehabilitate and release them back into the natural environment. She brought some of the animals that could not be released due to their injuries, so we could see them

powerpoint program, The Fledgling Experience with beautiful photographs which depicted the complete nesting cycle of bluebirds from nest-building to the young leaving the nest.

Thanks to all who participated, who those who volunteered to help out with this year's conference, and



▲ **Ken Liester**

Mark your calendars for next year's conference, which will be held at a new and beautiful venue, the Best Western/ Lehigh Valley, in Bethlehem, PA on March 27 & 28, 2020, so save the date!

▼ **Harry Schneider**



2019 BSP Awards

BSP Appreciation Awards



Nancy Putt with Shirley Halk

Nancy Putt

With Our deepest gratitude for your Enthusiasm, Dedication, Uplifting Attitude, and Tireless Effort to Teach and Share Your Knowledge as York County Coordinator and Secretary of the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania

Joan Watroba

With our Deepest Gratitude for your Years of Commitment, Common Sense Approach to Issues, Innovative Monofilament Design to Deter House Sparrows, for serving as Newsletter Editor and Cumberland County Coordinator for the Bluebird Society of PA

Blue Feather Award—Andrea Wyman

Andrea Wyman has served as BSP County Coordinator for Erie County for more than 10 years. At Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, she is an Associate Professor within the Baron-Forness Library and also serves as Campus Fulbright Program Advisor. In her free time, she is also an avid Bluebirder and applies her skills in education and communication to share her knowledge and passion for bluebird conservation with the public.

She first became a dedicated Bluebirder in 1998 when she purchased a farm in Southwestern PA. The farm already had bluebird boxes installed on the property, and she was greeted by several bluebirds as she first toured the farm with a Realtor. She was thrilled, and presented her first bluebird program at a small public library in Southwestern PA that same year. Since that time, Andrea has continued to present programs throughout Erie County to share information regarding the nesting and habitat needs of Bluebirds, and she

inspires others to get actively involved in bluebirding activities.

Most recently she wrote a wonderful article, "A Few Hints for Bluebird Presentations" for the BSP Spring 2019 Newsletter to guide others to present bluebird programs in their own counties. The article includes how to use a variety of educational display materials and presentation tips to make programs very interesting and fun. Her article is certainly a big hit, and we have even received requests from bluebird organizations in other states to share her article with their volunteers.

For all that she does to promote bluebird education throughout Pennsylvania and beyond, Andrea Wyman is a very worthy recipient of a BSP Blue Feather Award.

>> Awards continue on page 14

2019 BSP Awards *continued from page 14*

Bluebirder of the Year – Kitty Heist

Kitty Heist of Wyomissing, PA (Berks County) was honored with this prestigious BSP Award for her important conservation work with the Berks County Wyomissing Bluebird Project. Since 1983, she has dedicated herself to providing suitable housing for Eastern Bluebirds within the Wyomissing Park System by constructing, installing, and monitoring bluebird houses, and maintaining the bluebird trails within the parks. She commends the Wyomissing

Parks management and support staff for their ongoing support of this important conservation project. An article about Kitty by Michelle N. Lynch appeared in the Reading Eagle on 12/05/2018 and demonstrates how just one person, Kitty Heist can be so instrumental in helping the bluebirds.

Shirley Halk, BSP Award Chair, personally delivered the award to this remarkable bluebirder, who is now 87. Kitty has arranged for her important

work to continue by obtaining volunteers to monitor the bluebird boxes and maintain the bluebird trails within the Wyomissing Park System.

For all that she has done to bring the bluebirds to the Wyomissing Park System and for inspiring others to get actively involved in bluebird conservation, Kitty is a very worthy recipient of the BSP Bluebirder of the Year Award for 2019.

BSP Newsletter Editor – Joan Watroba

Joan Watroba is the BSP Newsletter Editor. She's extremely smart about bluebirds as well as many other species. In addition to wearing the Editor's hat, she attends BSP functions and maintains lots of bluebird nest boxes. Like so many others who are

BSP members, she doesn't get paid for her services. Amazing, isn't it.

We should recognize her, I thought. Since I'm the person who designs this piece, I thought I'd say a few words about Joan Watroba. We see each other once a year at the

Annual Conference. Everything else pertaining to the Newsletter is done via e-mail. Some times it tough going, but we manage. She does a great job. Thanks Joan!

Three cheers for Joan, Clucas

Special Recognition for BSP Member, Wilma Light

Wilma Light, BSP County Coordinator from Westmoreland County was recognized by three conservation organizations for her garden projects to enhance the natural habitat to promote bluebird propagation.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society awarded her garden with the Garden of Distinction Award in the PHS Gardening and Greening Contest. Her garden was selected from over 300 entries. Her award statement reads:

We applaud your commitment to enhance your neighborhood through your work in the garden. Thank you for the positive impact that your efforts have on your community.

Wilma also was awarded First Place from the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania's Protection of Birds Award. Wilma is a member of the Weeders and Seeders Garden Club of Ligonier/District VI.

Penn State Extension presented the Master Gardener Search for Excellence Award 2018 to her.

She received Second Place for her Demonstration Garden, the Bluebird Habitat Enhancement Project in Westmoreland County.

Editor's Note: Wilma also received a Blue Feather Award from BSP in 2018 for her projects to restore and create natural habitats for bluebirds.

Thanks, Wilma for all that you do for BSP and for the Bluebirds!

Check out the May issue of the *Conestoga Current*, which features BSP President, Dean Rust and his adventures in bluebirding in the Lancaster area.

Event Report *continued from page 14*

Bluebird Program for the Nature Group of TOA–Silver Spring 04/06/2019

Thanks to Lorrie Preston, who invited me to share information about bluebirds with her Nature Group. I have known Lorrie for many years through involvement



photo by Lorrie Preston

with Appalachian Audubon. I also monitor a bluebird trail at Trout Run Nature Preserve, a parcel of land owned by Audubon. About 40 enthusiastic residents of the residential community attended the program, “How To Attract Bluebirds” and learned about the features of a good nest box, where to place them, and how to monitor them. There was also a discussion of how to enhance habitat by adding a water source and the importance of adding native plants and trees which will produce food for the songbirds.

Some of the attendees currently have bluebird houses and are already seeing bluebird nesting activity this Spring. Other residents purchased nest boxes or nest box kits so that they can become actively involved.

BSP Thanks the Nature Group for their very generous donation to BSP in appreciation for this program offering. Joan Watroba, BSP Cumberland County Coordinator.

Penn State Master Gardeners PlantFest & Sale, Carlisle, PA 05/18/2019

BSP hosted an educational table at this annual event. Gardeners are very interested in creating beautiful and beneficial habitats for songbirds.

Many people stopped by to ask questions about how to attract bluebirds and also how to deal with the House Sparrows, which are a main threat to bluebirds and other native songbirds. They were told about using both passive and aggressive methods to keep House Sparrows from using their nest boxes.

Last year at this event, one of the nest boxes in the garden was being used by House Sparrows. After removing their nest and eggs, I added the monofilament fishing line to the front of the box. The first bird that I saw when arriving at the garden this year was a beautiful male bluebird. I then checked the nest box which had the line installed, and there was a full bluebird nest with young bluebirds-YEAH! During the event, both parents were actively feeding their young with a variety of insect treats. It is wonderful to see the adults finding so much natural food to feed their young. That



photo by Trent Eisenhart

is an indication of a healthy and safe habitat free from insecticides.

Joan Watroba, BSP Cumberland County Coordinator

>> continued on page 16

Event Report – March 8, 2019

Willow Valley North Woodshop, Lancaster, PA

Today, on Friday March 8, 2019, at Willow Valley North Woodshop 100 BSP nest box kits were cut out, drilled and bagged/labeled. Bob Goodhart and his crew worked efficiently and carefully as expert craftsmen to facilitate another nest box order for our events in 2019.

Dean Rust
Woodworking Chair



Rich Leatherman left, our new Montgomery County Coordinator, helping a father and son team construct a new bluebird nestbox.

*We constructed 60 nest boxes at Cabela's on March 16th, 2019.
Marilyn*

Event Report – March 16, 2019



Thanks to BSP volunteers- Nancy Putt, Event Chair, Dale Cook, and Jim & Darlene Crone.

Audubon Field Day

On May 2, 2019, BSP participated in the Audubon Wetlands Field Day/Watershed Education Program at Gifford Pinchot Park in Lewisberry, PA. Approximately 120-4th grade students from Melrose Elementary School in Harrisburg, PA participated. This fun event offered several hands-on activities, including Aquatic Life, which involved using aquatic nets to capture and identify a variety of aquatic creatures, Habitat Field Studies, Bird Walks using binoculars to view and learn about various songbird species, and all about Bluebirds and other cavity-nesting songbirds. Nancy Putt presented a Bluebird Program which included the viewing of the fascinating video, "Inside The Nest Box" and BSP also provided a nest box building activity.

Event Report *continued from page 15*

PA Garden Show of York **May 1-3, 2019** by Nancy Putt

It is always nice to see all of the spring flowers and garden displays at this colorful show and to talk to everyone about the bluebirds that visit their feeders in the winter months. As we prepare for the nesting season ahead, there are always lots of questions about preventing House Sparrows from invading the nest boxes of the native cavity-nesters. Our handouts regarding Using Monofilament Line to Deter House Sparrows and advice about adding Sparrow Spookers to the top of the nest boxes are helpful ideas that

were shared with the many people who stopped at our popular booth.

On Saturday, Joan Watroba hosted a presentation: "Attracting Bluebirds To Your Yard." This is a topic that many people ask about when they stop by to talk with us. Three main suggestions were: installing and monitoring a bluebird box, adding a water feature such as a bird bath, and adding native plants which produce fruit and berries. After her presentation, a free nest box building event was offered to the participants who had hopes

of attracting bluebirds to their yards by putting up a nest box in suitable habitat.

Thanks to all who helped out at this event: Jim and Darlene Crone, Cindy Self, Richard and Barbara Brown, Bill Bowers, Joan Watroba, Doris Hoffman, Phil and Susan Durgin, Robert Culp, Dave and Barbara Cox.

Event Coordinator,
Nancy Putt
BSP County Coordinator
York County

2018 BSP Annual Nest Box Report

Submitted by: Shirley Halk, BSP State Monitor

Summary of Nesting Activity:

Nest Boxes Reported: 2366

Bluebirds

Bluebird Eggs: 4845 (4749 blue eggs, 96 white eggs)

Bluebirds Fledged: 3730

Other Native Species Fledged:

Tree Swallows: 2851

House Wrens: 1599

Black-Capped Chickadees: 253

Titmouse: 8

White-Breasted Nuthatch: 6

Carolina Wren: 5

The full nesting report for 2018 is posted on the BSP web site: www.thebsp.org

On the main page, go to More... then select the second drop-down box labeled: 2018 Monitors Report

Editor's Note: Per the comments written on the reports that were submitted to BSP, House Sparrows continue to try to use nest boxes, but BSP members are using both active and passive methods to control them and are also trying a variety of nest box styles. Other factors noted were interference by House Wrens, Raccoons, a Bear, and also severe Weather Conditions in 2018-an extremely Wet Spring, and a very Hot Summer, especially in July.

Note that per the 2017 Annual Nest Box Report, 781 more nest boxes were reported in 2017 than in 2018, so the number of reported bluebirds fledged in 2018 was much lower than in 2017.

Please send in your reports so that we can count your bluebirds. Every Nest Box Counts!!!

Annual Nest Box Report Winners-2018

Congratulations to:

Pamela and Scott Dimeler, Delaware County

James Koehler, Adams County

Pamera Horter-Moore, Beaver County

Your Annual Nest Box Reports were randomly drawn for a prize from the BSP Merchandise Store: www.thebsp.org

Lyme Disease: A Real Threat in Pennsylvania

For the past five years, Pennsylvania has reported the most Lyme disease cases nationwide.

The infection can cause fever, fatigue, headache, muscle aches and joint pain. The study says blacklegged ticks also can transmit the parasite causing Babesiosis, which can cause anemia and potentially be fatal. Anaplasmosis, another blacklegged-tickborne infection, causes fever, headache, chills and muscle aches, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states. If you experience any of these symptoms, you may want to check with your

doctor to rule out or to confirm a diagnosis of Lyme disease. The administration of antibiotics is the most common treatment mode. To avoid such infections, wear light-colored, protective clothing outdoors, use insect repellents, and do a full-body check after being outside.

Below illustration is from cdc.gov (Center for Disease Control and Prevention)

For more information on Lyme disease:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/tickbornediseases/tick-bites-prevention.html>

Blacklegged Tick (*Ixodes Scapularis*)



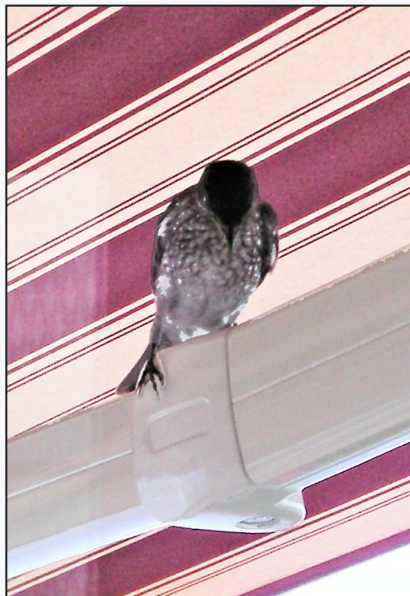
Mailbag

Under Construction

In the Summer of 2014, a pair of bluebirds were nesting in a box just off my patio. By July, the female was tending to her second clutch and the 3 babies from her first clutch would come by frequently to feed on the mealworms I left for them. That month I decided to have a retractable awning installed over the patio. I worried that the installation would be too disruptive for the bluebirds, and the awning would surely scare them away.

All my worrying was in vain. As you can see, the baby blues pitched right in to help. And when all was done, they enjoyed the shade and cooler temperatures under the awning.

As for the second clutch, 4 eggs were laid and all 4 hatched by Sunday July 27th. On Wednesday, 8/13



the first baby fledged at 10:25AM and by 4:10 PM the nest box was empty – all had fledged. Oh what joy these sweet little birds do bring!



Theresa Stoeckl,
Lancaster County

photo by Theresa Stoeckl



Bluebird Society of PA Membership Form

Regular/Family (16-64yrs)	Senior/Couples (65+)	Organization/Corporate	Lifetime
1 year -\$15	1 year - \$12	1 year -\$100	\$375
3 years-\$40	3 years -\$30	3 years -\$275	

***When you Renew for 3 years, you can take advantage of our discounted rates shown above!**

*** See BSP website for Junior Membership opportunities.**

**Mail to:
Bluebird Society of PA
P.O. Box 12
Exton, PA 19341**

New Member Renewal Donation

Name _____

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Phone No.: _____ (required in case newsletter is undeliverable)

E-mail Address: _____ (required if questions or emailed delivery of Newsletter)

Donation (optional): \$_____ Total Amount Enclosed: \$_____

If you are a new member, have you received your new membership packet? Yes No

How would you like to receive your newsletter? Regular mail Email

Please tell us how you learned about us: _____

- I would like to help with:
- County Coordinator
 - Nestbox Construction
 - Photography
 - Speakers' Bureau
 - Farm Show (Jan)
 - Nestbox Monitoring
 - Newsletter
 - Research
 - Fundraising
 - BSP Conference (April)

OFFICIAL USE ONLY: Check No.: _____ Renewal year: _____

Website: WWW.THE BSP.ORG

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*If you need to update your mailing address, please send changes to:

nancyfrain@comcast.net

**"I believe it was thinking...Oh, it's the one with the camera again".
Leslie Thompson**



Male Bluebird at Wildwood Park

BSP is a North American Bluebird Society Affiliate



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