



The Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania

AN AFFILIATE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

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- Editor: Joan Watroba • bluebirdhappy365@outlook.com • www.thebsp.org



A Message from the President

Dr. Dean C. Rust, BSP President

Welcome BSP New Members

The lifeblood of any organization is the infusion of new members. It is a two-part process: attraction and assimilation. We need to be pro-active in 2020 in both areas if we want to continue to be a successful organization. As your President, I would like us to focus on and be intentional about growing our membership base in 2020. We have a great story - the ecology and management of the Eastern Bluebird and how we can be ambassadors for them and promote their survival. Let's get started!!

In my President's Message (Spring 2015) I wrote: "On a sad note I would like to inform you that over the past two years, there have been two state bluebird organizations that have gone off



the radar screen. Both the Massachusetts Bluebird Association and the New Hampshire Bluebird Conspiracy have disbanded due to insufficient interest in service on their Boards and lack of participation/interest by a steadily declining membership year after year".

I want our Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania to be a shining example for other states and be steadfast in our dedication to service, enthusiasm and growth in membership. To be sure, there are Bluebird Lovers even today in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, but they do NOT have a state Bluebird Society to guide, educate and support their people.



>> continued on page 2

A Message from the President continued from page 1

In my 1st President's Message (Spring 2014): 2014 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE...was one of my bulleted points. Over the years my perspective has not changed. I think we need to constantly keep a close eye on our "bottom-line" membership numbers. I know of a state bluebird society that has been losing 20-plus members a year for the last 10 years ---- that is over 200 members!!! And they are not sure how to reverse the trend. Here are a few ideas going forward in 2020 regarding BSP membership.

1. EACH ONE – RECRUIT ONE. Think about your "sphere of influence" - your neighbors, your co-workers, your friends at church, your relatives, your hairdresser and your lifelong friends. We all have a special group of people that could number over 100+ people and why not ask just one of them if they like Bluebirds? And if they do, why not ask them to join BSP and have as much fun as we do with the Blues? If each of our members would recruit just one new member, our total membership would double. That would be an amazing total number of 1600!!

2. Have you seen our new BSP brochures? They are an excellent way to introduce new people to our organization with a 4-fold of full color photos complete with a membership application that can be detached and sent in. I am currently "working with" 20 people and all of them have the brochure since last December.

3. Jr. BSP Membership. This is another tool that we have available to "grow our own future members". When you are talking to grandparents, you can mention that a fringe benefit of their new membership is our Jr. BSP program. With their new BSP Membership, they can sign up one or more of their grandchildren as Jr. BSP Members from age 8 until age 16. You can explain that by sharing the love of Bluebirds with their grandchildren, they can have "talking points" for life with them on

Bluebird nesting cycles, nest boxes, sightings of Blues and love of the outdoors.

4. A BSP 1-year BSP Bluebird Membership makes a great gift for that 'hard to buy for' person (@\$15.00). It is the gift that keeps on giving during the year with three newsletters: Spring, Summer and Fall-Winter. Here is an option for those of you who don't think they have the



gift of selling someone on the idea of buying a membership. Just use your gift of generosity and give them a gift membership. They will appreciate your kindness and may become a friend of the Bluebirds for life.

5. When recruiting a new member to our society, don't forget the "Top Ten Reasons for becoming a Member of BSP" found on our web page: www.thebsp.org. Use these reasons as "talking points" and commit them to memory when sharing the joy of Bluebirding with others.

As I embark on my 7th year as your President, I am still humbled and have a sense of awe as your leader. I anticipate great things for BSP in 2020 and I look forward to meeting and working with many of you this coming year.

EXPERIENCE THE JOY THAT ONLY A BLUEBIRD CAN BRING!

Dr. Dean C. Rust

January 2020

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BSP Officers

President
DEAN RUST 2020
 July7ds@aol.com
 717-669-0167

Vice President
PHIL DURGIN 2020
 pdurgin@comcast.net
 717-732-5325

Secretary
NANCY PUTT 2021
 bluebirds@pa.net
 717-432-2647

Treasurer
JOYCE STUFF 2021
 bspcc@innernet.net
 717-328-3411

Board of Directors

SHIRLEY HALK 2021
 zebraswallowtail@juno.com
 717-865-2650

KEN LEISTER 2021
 kenapeg@aol.com
 610-696-5271

DAN THOMAS 2020
 adthomas10@comcast.net
 717-786-7893

BILL CUPPETT 2020
 grammied34@gmail.com
 814-479-2230

TERRY GERHART 2021
 gerhartsat@aol.com
 610-670-5508

MARILYN L. MICHALSKI 2021
 emeraldmm@verizon.net
 610-933-0497

BSP Chairpersons

Newsletter Editor/Auction

JOAN WATROBA

bluebirdhappy365@outlook.com
717 766 2102

State County Coordinator

KEN LEISTER

kenapeg@aol.com
610 696 5271

Farm Show/York Garden Show

NANCY PUTT

bluebirds@pa.net
717 432 2647

Nominations/Elections

VACANT

Membership

NANCY FRAIM

nancyfraim@comcast.net
610 873 7454

Finance

JOYCE STUFF

bspcc@innet.net
717 328 3411

2020 Conference

PHIL DURGIN

pdurgin@comcast.net
717 732 5325

State Monitoring/Awards

SHIRLEY HALK

zebraswallowtail@juno.com
717 865 2650

Research

CHUCK MUSSER

chasmusser@aol.com
717 367 3548

Merchandise Manager

SUSAN DURGIN

susiedurgin@comcast.net
717 448 3739

Promotion/Ned Smith Day

PHILIP DURGIN

pdurgin@comcast.net
717 732 5325

Webmaster/Speaker Bureau

HARRY SCHMEIDER

harryschmeider@gmail.com
724-285-1209

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.



Male Eastern Bluebird on Oakleaf Hydrangea

photo by Maria Prentice, New Jersey

Website Videographer

SHIRLEY RUST

july7ds@aol.com
717 669 0167

Publication/Artwork

CHARLES LUCAS

chaslucas@gmail.com
412 462 6735

Website Photographer

DICK HESS

aa3hv1@verizon.net
570 437 2755

Junior Membership

MARILYN MICHALSKI

emeraldmm@verizon.net
610 993 0497

Woodworking

DEAN RUST

july7ds@aol.com
717 669 0167

Publicity

VACANT

From the Editor *by Joan Watroba*

The title of Dean Rust's beautiful bluebird book, *The Beloved and Charismatic Bluebird* summarizes the sweet qualities of bluebirds which have inspired people throughout history to regard bluebirds as symbols of Beauty, Happiness and Hope. Authors, Artists, Songwriters, Musicians, and even businesses have honored bluebirds by incorporating bluebirds in their artistic expressions, services, and products.

Any greeting card display includes beautiful images of bluebirds, using either photographs or drawings of bluebirds as symbols of Happiness and Good Cheer. Many songwriters have bluebirds in their lyrics, and businesses use bluebirds in their logos for advertising their products and services.

Why? Who doesn't love Bluebirds?

If one types in songs with bluebirds in the lyrics in your computer search engine, you can pull up and listen to countless songs in all musical genres-Blues, Country, Soul, Pop, R&B, Folk, and Jazz which have bluebirds in their lyrics and even in their titles. If you love music, check out the following link which has a wonderful assortment of music on YouTube files which feature the

beautiful and inspiring Bluebird:

The best songs with bluebird in the title:

<https://www.ranker.com/list/the-best-songs-with-bluebird-in-the-title/ranker-music>

Have greeting cards for all occasions which have Bluebirds on them:

<https://fineartamerica.com/shop/greeting+cards/bluebird>

Also:

<https://www.amazon.com/bluebird-cards/s?k=bluebird+cards>

In the Fall, my husband and I went to see the biopic movie, *Judy*, which was based on the life of child star actress, Judy Garland in which Renee Zellweger stars as Judy Garland. In the end of the movie, Renee was singing Judy's song, Somewhere Over the Rainbow, but when she got to the word-Bluebirds she became so emotional that she could not continue the song. However, her loyal and admiring audience stood up and sang the remainder of this beloved song in unison.

Here is Judy Garland singing Somewhere Over the Rainbow:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=judy+garland+somewhere+over+the+rainbow>

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high,
There's a land that I
dreamed of
Once in a lullaby.
Somewhere over the rainbow
Skies are blue,
And the dreams that you
dare to dream Really do
come true.
Someday I'll wish upon a
star And wake up where the
clouds are far Behind me.
Where troubles melt like
lemon drops
High above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me.
Somewhere over the rainbow
Bluebirds fly.
Birds fly over the rainbow.
Why then, oh why can't I?
If happy little bluebirds fly
Beyond the rainbow
Why, oh why can't I?*

May you enjoy the beauty and charm of Bluebirds and wishing you much success with your bluebird boxes in the upcoming nesting season!!!

Joan Watroba

Joan Watroba

Plan a Backyard Wildlife Habitat by Pamela Hubbard, Master Gardener Monroe County

When I planned my flower and vegetable gardens, I envisioned not only beautiful plants but also a haven for wildlife. Of course, I don't mean problem wildlife like deer and rabbits, but beneficial creatures such as butterflies, hummingbirds, bees, songbirds, and frogs.

I discovered that all wildlife is increasingly threatened by the loss of natural habitat due to the rate of commercial and residential development, and the way we maintain our homes. To attract birds, butterflies and other wonderful animals; therefore, we need to restore their habitat.

This is as simple as providing for their basic needs: food, water, cover and places for them to raise their young. These four conditions that enable wildlife to survive and thrive were identified by the National Wildlife Federation.

On a recent morning, I found five swallowtail butterfly caterpillars on my dill, watched hummingbirds feeding on beebalm (*Monarda didyma*), and listened to the sweet song of our native sparrow. I will show you how I created this small, wildlife refuge.

Creating a quality habitat

Provide food

Plant a variety of flowering annuals and perennials that will bloom the entire growing season. Native plants are best, providing natural food sources for birds, small mammals and beneficial insects such as bees.

Include some nectar plants and host plants to attract butterflies. Butterflies lay their eggs on a host plant; the caterpillars hatch from the eggs and feed on the leaves of the plant. Dill is one of the host plants for swallowtail butterflies, hence the caterpillars in my garden. The caterpillar of the monarch butterfly feeds exclusively on milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.). Other plants that I grow for butterflies are hollyhock (*Alcea* spp.), asters (*Aster* spp.), coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*), purple coneflower (*Echinacea* spp.), Joe pye weed (*Eupatorium*

purpureum), gayfeather (*Liatris* spp.), and phlox. Zinnia is my favorite annual that supplies nectar for adult butterflies.

A variety of shrubs and trees provide food and cover throughout the year: blackberries, raspberries, Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*), mountain ash (*Sorbus americana*), and spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*). Many birds enjoy the fruit of the flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) and serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.) Hummingbirds have long beaks and long tongues for eating nectar from flowers. They are attracted to red, orange, and pink blossoms with petals joined into tubes. Some of their favorites are cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), and wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*).

You may supplement the food

that your plantings provide by setting up bird feeders that hold seed and hummingbird feeders containing sugar-water solutions. Be aware in some parts of Pennsylvania, however, that these feeders may attract bears.

Provide water

Water is essential for any wildlife habitat. Furnish your garden with a simple birdbath such as a saucer, shallow basin, or even a trashcan lid. A birdbath with a misting fountain will entice hummingbirds because they enjoy bathing by flying through a fine mist.

Keep your birdbath clean and filled with fresh water; change the water frequently to discourage mosquitoes. In the winter, consider providing a heated birdbath.

A small pond will attract a variety of species and provide

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Plan a Backyard Wildlife Habitat continued from page 6



entertainment and educational opportunities. Some wildlife, such as frogs, need water to reproduce and raise their young. A healthy backyard pond closely resembles a natural pond. In ours, we created ledges for aquatic plants plus a shallow area and a deeper section. Birds and butterflies are able to dip into the shallower water. Fish survive in the deep parts that do not freeze to the bottom in winter. Pumps, waterfalls, and fountains create a wonderful environment for wildlife. Birds, for example, are attracted to moving water. Keep the water circulating to prevent mosquito larvae from hatching.

Consider providing a puddling dish for male butterflies: mix sand with soil or dung in a shallow pan, fill it with water, and place it in a sunny area. Male butterflies will be seen puddling in the muddy dish--they are gathering and lapping up liquid that is full of minerals.

Provide cover and places to raise their young

You can attract a great diversity of wildlife by providing multiple layers of vegetation: plant clusters of shrubs like winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) and viburnums (*Viburnum* spp.); small trees such as chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) and American holly (*Ilex opaca*); plus tall trees, for example American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*). Evergreens are especially important in colder regions provide shelter from the winter weather. If possible, plant them on the northwest side of your lot to block cold winds. Plants that furnish cover and a retreat from predators also provide nest sites. Woodpeckers, chickadees, and nuthatches nest in cavities in living and dead trees—dead trees are called snags. Snags show the importance of dead vegetation as a source of cover for insects and invertebrates. We have created log and brush piles

on our property to form “wildlife hotels.” A rock feature in your garden is particularly attractive to creatures that depend upon their surroundings for temperature regulation. For example, many butterflies need places where they can bask in the sun. In addition to natural nesting places you may provide cavity nesting boxes.

Practice sustainable gardening

Sustainability means not doing harm to the environment or depleting natural resources. It is vital to practice sustainable gardening when you are restoring wildlife habitats. First, reduce or eliminate chemical pesticide use. Insecticides kill beneficial insects as well as nuisance ones. Herbicides eliminate sources of food for caterpillars, thus harming the butterfly population.

Next, remove invasive nonnative plants that aggressively take over natural habitat. Invasive species in Pennsylvania include multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) and Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*). Thirdly, limit the amount of lawn. Lawn offers very little food or cover to most animals while requiring a lot of maintenance. You may replace lawn grass with ground cover plants or perhaps make a butterfly garden.

There are many excellent reasons to garden including the love of watching plants grow, the health benefits of being active outdoors and the joy of creating beautiful spaces. But what better reason than attracting birds, butterflies and other beneficial wildlife to your backyard by restoring their natural habitats?

Tribute to Lynn Crouthamel

The BSP was saddened to learn of the death of Lynn Crouthamel of Sellersville, PA on October 23, 2019 at the age of 77. He was born in Quakertown, PA and was a graduate of Pennridge High School in Perkasie, PA. He served stateside with the U.S. Marine Corps. Lynn was employed by the U.S. Postal Service at the Sellersville location for 32 years until his retirement in 1997. After retirement, he continued to be actively involved with the Paletown Rod & Gun Club in Quakertown, PA and with the Bluebird Society of PA.

For those of us who were with BSP from the beginning, we know that Lynn was a generous and humble man who obtained quality wood remnants from a local furniture company to construct all of the nest box kits that BSP used as part of the New Membership incentive to establish bluebird trails throughout PA. His nest boxes were beautiful and very well-made and provided bluebirds and other cavity-nesting species with a quality nest box. His efforts were instrumental in getting people actively involved with BSP

and helping the bluebirds to find suitable nesting by their efforts to put up and monitor his quality nest boxes. Lynn and his wife, Sophie of 53 years were both very supportive of BSP for many years through their service and membership.

Individual Tributes:

Lynn was a sweet man and very generous with his time and labor, and such a blessing to BSP. In our early years he made and donated a continuous supply of nest boxes which inspired hundreds of people to join BSP and become bluebird landlords.

Joan Watroba, BSP Editor



I remember getting that letter he wrote and all those years he made the boxes. (Lynn reached out to Kathy and offered to make bluebird boxes for BSP). He was a wonderful kind man.

*Kathy Clark,
Past President of BSP*



Thanks, Joan for letting us know of Lynn's death. I recall the Lenkers (Jim and Anna) and the Pietsch's (Dave and Jane) going to Sellersville and picking up the boxes and kits that Lynn made for BSP free of charge. They made a day of it eating lunch somewhere along the way.

Joyce Stuff, BSP Treasurer



Mailbag

From: Dean Rust

july7ds@aol.com

(Tom & Celine Clouse have a Bluebird Tail Trail in Lititz, PA.)

Hi Dean...hope all is well with you and Shirley! Thought you'd enjoy this photo! After two months of not seeing "our" bluebirds, I took down my feeder. Upon returning from a cruise in October I decided to put the feeder on the window again. Within an hour I had a flock of more than a dozen blues fluttering at the feeder waiting (not patiently) to get at the meal worms! It made my day!!

Celine Clouse,
Lititz, PA



This is from one of my bluebird friends in West Virginia.

Linda Cornell

Dean-

This was one of my favorite pictures this year of the family.

Linda Cornell



Mailbag

Volunteers Build Nestboxes

This is the wood delivery to Willow Valley North Woodshop on 11/13/2019 from Lezzer Lumber in the morning.

Pine wood will be processed at North Woodshop on Thursday morning 11/14/2019. 100 nest box kits will be branded & bagged complete with screws/rivets.

Twelve Willow Valley North Wood Shop Volunteers worked from 9 to 11:30 on 11/14/2019. Bob Goodhart was their group leader. Dan Thomas, Shaun Rust and Dean Rust represented BSP and assisted.

Thanks to all in processing 63 white pine boards into Nest Box Kits all bagged, wood-burned, boxed and ready for 2020 box building events!!!

Dean Rust



8ft Pine boards both 6" & 8" for 100 nest box kits



Bob Goodhart (right) and volunteers packing up nest box kits



Volunteers pre-drilling holes for nest box kits

2019 Hershey Gardens Bluebird Trail Revitalization Project

Hershey Gardens is a 23-acre botanical garden and arboretum at 170 Hotel Rd, Hershey, PA 17033. It is set atop a hill overlooking Hershey Park and behind it is the Hershey Hotel. It was built as a gift from chocolate magnate Milton S. Hershey for his community and to honor his wife, Catherine.

Joanne Slavinski, our former BSP Membership Chairperson, started a Bluebird Trail at Hershey Gardens during the summer of 1999 with the help of Barbara Whitcraft. Bill Kieffer, the current Operations Manager at HG for the last 25 years, recently reported that he had many conversations with Joanne about Bluebirds since the inception of the trail.



Bill Strauss and Jay Smullen building nest boxes

In January of 2019 Jay Smullen and Bill Strauss got a memo from Nancy Fraim that Hershey Gardens had inquired about some assistance with their Bluebird Trail. They contacted Bill Kieffer and scheduled a tour on March 14th to appraise the needs of the trail. Bill and Jay found the original 18 nest boxes that day. With Bill Kieffer's approval, they embarked on a complete transformation of the Hershey Gardens Bluebird Trail replacing all nest boxes with new BSP models, added all new smooth metal conduit poles and relocated all boxes to new and better locations. To date,



Hershey Gardens showing The Hotel Hershey in the background. photo by Mim

a grand total of 28 boxes have been either relocated or newly installed. Most of this work was accomplished by Jay and Bill in March and April.

Jay's first monitoring date was April 14, 2019. The first sighting of Bluebirds was by Bill Kieffer very early on Easter Sunday morning April 21st during the Sunrise Service at Hershey Gardens. Jay's monitoring/installing grand total of hours was 57 and Bill's total was 37 hours.



Jay Smullen and Bill Strauss at Hershey Gardens

By late spring of 2019 many of the volunteers and staff began to notice and applaud hard work of the Smullen-Strauss team. The interest level of this

new trail permeated the grounds each day that Jay and Bill applied their "skillful transformative work." Almost 100 hours of labor between Jay and Bill made this "new" HG Bluebird Trail a reality.

Today there are 28 Bluebird nest boxes on the HG Trail and last summer there were several successful Bluebird nesting pairs. Jay Smullen will continue to monitor the trail in 2020 with the help of staff.

What a "win-win" project for everyone!!

In the words of Bill Kieffer, until this past summer he remarked that he had never even seen a Bluebird pair in all his years at Hershey Gardens.



Bluebirds along the fence at Hotel Hershey - photo by Bill Kieffer

He is so grateful that he and his staff (as well as visitors!!) can enjoy Eastern Bluebirds flying the skies and sitting on the fences around the manicured grounds at Hershey Gardens for years to come. Our thanks to Jay and Bill for making this dream come true. Please visit Hershey Gardens this summer and **Have A Bluebird Day!!**

Dean C. Rust January 27, 2020

Event Report - Pennsylvania Farm Show - January 4 - 11, 2020

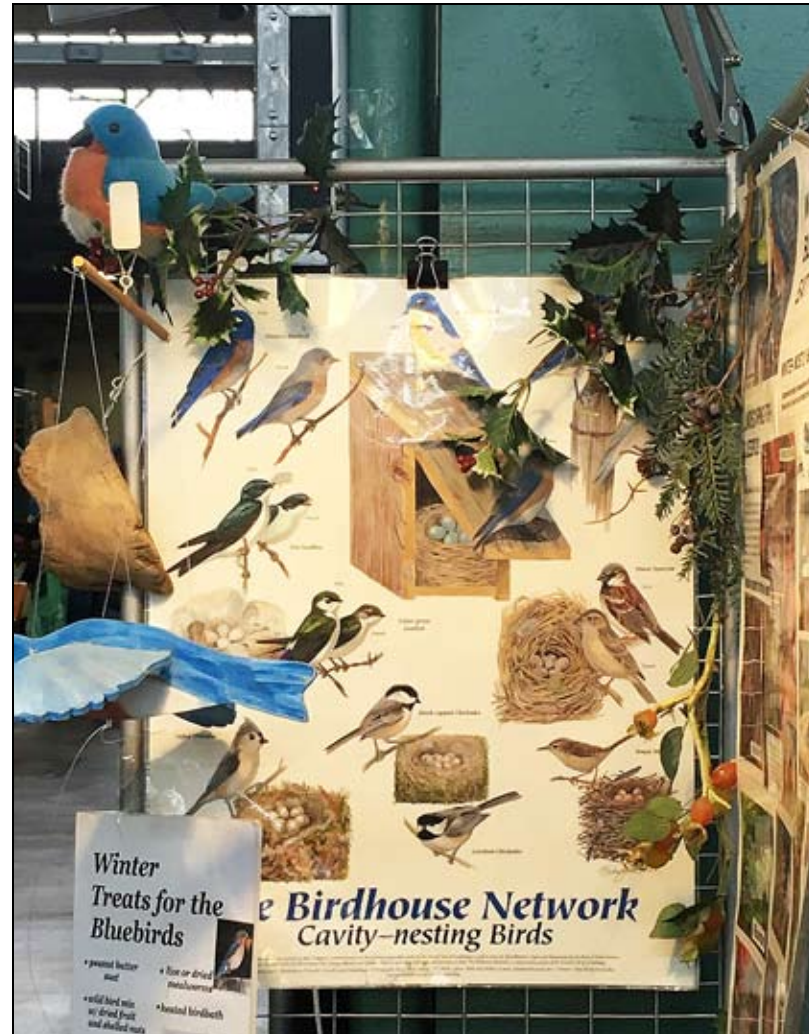


This was another FUN and exciting eight days for the BSP at the Farm Show.

The weather cooperated for all 500,000 attendees of the Farm Show to see all attractions, like the 1,200 lb. 1st Prize Pumpkin, prize-winning livestock, cute bunnies, and to sample all of the great food! It was a busy time for volunteers at our educational booth. Many flocks of people visited and talked with us about their bluebird experiences or asked how to deter house sparrows. We love talking about our favorite birds, answering questions, and sharing bluebird love and information.

Our box building event is always a big hit with families and new this year, our "Prez", Dean Rust gave his presentation "All About Bluebirds" to an audience of about 30 attendees on the Main Stage. Thirty-nine New Members

BSP
at the
PA
FARM
SHOW



signed up, and we WELCOME them as hopeful bluebird landlords!

THANK YOU to each of our 37 volunteers who helped out at our booth, and special thanks to those who worked extra days as needed and to get things set up.

VOLUNTEERS:

Bill Strauss • Phil and Susan Durgin • Dean, Shirley and Shawn Rust • Nancy Putt • Bill Frantz • Debra and Loren Carmen • Ken Leister • Marilyn Michalski • Wilma Light • Jim and Darlene Crone • Becca Patrick • Terry and Sandy Gerhart •

Kelly Peck • David Price • Bill Cuppett • Jay Smullen • Kathy Clark • Zach and Dale • Nancy and Joseph Fraim • Joyce and Stephen Horner • John Shemwell • Chuck and Bonnie Musser • Debbie Hershey • Joyce and Rich Covey • John Woodward • and Carol McCall.

Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania Financial Report 2019

Submitted by Joyce Stuff, BSP Treasurer

Revenue

Store.....	\$979.00
Membership Fees.....	9,164.02
Donations.....	1,572.00
Speaker Income.....	1,050.00
Fundraising	1,648.00
Woodworking.....	3,252.00
Conference.....	3,130.00
Total Revenue.....	\$20,795.02

Expenses

Administration.....	\$2,327.97
Store.....	2,124.70
Membership	1,909.99
Fundraising.....	241.56
Woodworking.....	5,064.69
Conference.....	7,216.51
Education	277.26
Newsletter	3,744.21
County Coordinator.....	00.00
Research.....	55.00
Total Expenses.....	\$22,961.89

BSP Financial Statement Summary for 2019

Checking Account Balance (12/31/18).....	\$40,658.51
2019 Revenue	+20,795.02
2019 Expenses.....	-22,961.89
Checking Account Balance (12/31/19).....	\$38,491.64
Certificate of Deposit Balance (12/31/19)	+10,656.13
BB&T Harrisburg PA	
Cash On Hand (store cash box)	+100.00
Total Cash Assets (12/31/19).....	\$49,247.77

Winners of the 2019 Annual Nest Box Report Contest

Congratulations!

Jerryl Adams, Lehigh County

Winifred Illig, Cambria County

Kathryn M. Miller, Schuylkill County

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

- BSP Members/Trail Monitors: Please keep records of your nesting activity in 2020 and submit your Annual Nest Box Report to BSP by 12.15.2020.
- Reports received by 10.15.2020 will be entered into the Nest Box Report Contest drawing.
- Weekly and Annual Report Forms are posted on the BSP web site: www.thebsp.org
- The compiled nesting report by county for 2019 will be posted on the BSP web site in the near future.

Submitted by Shirley Halk,
BSP Annual Nest Box Reporter



photo by Susan Renkel

2019 BSP Newsletters are Now Available on our Web Site at www.thebsp.org

Now that the year 2019 is behind us, the seasonal newsletters for 2019 are now archived on the BSP web site: www.thebsp.org

On the main page, select **More...** and then scroll down to **Past Newsletters**.

2019 Summary of Cavity Nesting Trail Report for PA State Parks

The following is a Summary of the 2019 Bureau of State Parks Cavity-Nesting Trails Report Submitted by Teresa A. Kromel, Chief of the Outdoor Programming Services Division:

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers and staff, 50 state parks monitored 2,041 boxes and fledged a total of 7,848 birds, including Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, Purple Martins, American Kestrels, and several other species. Despite a wet and cooler early spring this year across most of the state, this is an increase in fledgling numbers compared to 2018. Since the program's beginning in 1980, volunteers have fledged over 133,000 individual birds and over 19 species.

This year's annual Cavity-nesting Monitors Meeting was held on Saturday, September 28 at the Tom Ridge Environmental Education Center at Presque Isle State Park in

Fledged by Species:

Eastern Bluebirds	2409
Tree Swallows	2828
House Wrens	1773
Other Wrens	82
Purple Martin	530
Chickadees.....	150
Tufted Titmouse	16
Wood Duck.....	9
Merganser Species.....	14
Flycatcher Species.....	3
American Kestrel	9
Other (non-native).....	25

Erie, PA with 22 participants including presenters, volunteers, and park staff. Participants heard from Presque Isle's cavity-nesting trail partners at Erie Bluffs – Dan Ste Marie, a scout leader whose scouts built and placed the nest boxes, and Mary Margaret Torrance from NeuroRestorative, who brings patients with varying degrees of brain injuries out to monitor the boxes as a form of avocational therapy.

Other presenters included Andy Troyer, who discussed nest box design and house sparrows, and Joe Siegrist from the Purple Martin Conservation Association (based out of TREC), who presented on Purple Martin biology and their current research.

Meeting attendees were also treated to a trolley tour of the park, including a visit to the Presque Isle Lighthouse. Six participants also took advantage of the lagoon kayak tour offered the following morning. Thanks to the EE staff at Presque Isle State Park for putting together a fun and educational meeting for our cavity-nesting volunteers and staff.

Also, thank you to the volunteers and staff at the Presque Isle Lighthouse for providing tours for the participants.

If you would like to volunteer to Monitor nest boxes within the PA State Parks, please contact Carly Broder at cbroder@pa.gov or 717-783-3344

BSP Newsletter Submission Contest

Congratulations to the Winner -Celine Clouse

Please 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 BSP Newsletter Committee is very excited that many 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.

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

>> **BSP Newsletter Submission Contest continues on page 15**

BSP Newsletter Submission Contest Continued from page 14

4 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 e-mail address (optional) with your entry.

Thank you in advance for your submission!

Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDAR — PLAN TO ATTEND!

BSP Membership/Board Meetings

- **April 23, 2020-**
Thursday evening-6:00 P.M.
- **July 23, 2020-**
Thursday evening-6:00 P.M.
- **October 22, 2020-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 BSP 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 prior to the meeting dates to arrange to join BSP meetings by phone from the comfort your home.

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

Please join us at our meetings!

Wetlands Festival

April 25, 2020 (SATURDAY)

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wildwood Lake Park

Olewine Nature Center

100 Wildwood Way

Harrisburg, PA

<https://www.wildwoodlake.org>

(Located near the PA Farm Show, past HACC)

The Wetlands Festival is a time to honor Wildwood Park's treasured wetlands and the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Join in the celebration with a day of free, fun educational activities. Enjoy musical entertainment and get to know the animals of Wildwood through live animal programs.

Attendees participate in engaging environmental activities, enjoy delicious food and explore creative exhibitor displays and unique vendors. Fun and Free for the entire family. BSP will be participating in this fun and educational event. Stop by our booth to talk with us about bluebirds and learn how you can attract bluebirds and how your nest boxes can be more productive.

If you are a bluebirder, please assist us to educate others about bluebirds.

Event Chair: Nancy Putt,
bluebirds@pa.net, 717-712-3951

22 nd Annual BSP Conference March 27 & 28, 2020

**Location: Best Western/Lehigh Valley,
300 Gateway Drive, Bethlehem, PA**
<https://www.lehighvalleyhotel.com/>

BSP has reserved a block of rooms at the Best Western/Lehigh Valley at a group rate until March 6th, so please let them know that you are attending the BSP Conference when you reserve your lodging at 610- 866-5800.

The BSP Annual conference offers excellent speakers, demonstrations, vendors and an opportunity to learn from, and socialize with people who share your love of bluebirds and enjoy the wonders of the natural

world. A special mailing regarding the conference, including registration information, speaker bios, and itinerary was sent out to all active BSP members in late January.

Registration Forms and Itinerary are also posted on the BSP web site:

www.thebsp.org

Mark Your Calendar — Plan to attend!

Ned Smith Festival for Nature and Art

MYO Park, Millersburg, PA

www.nedsmithcenter.org

FREE event which celebrates nature and the arts; the perfect way to celebrate summer! Since 1994, the Center has held its annual festival, which began as the "Ned Smith Tribute Festival." Now, 25 years later, this event is still going strong, bringing free family-friendly, educational entertainment to thousands of people. Although elements of the festival have changed over the years, certain favorite activities have become permanent fixtures, like the make-it-yourself bluebird boxes, live-animal demonstrations and fish-print t-shirts.

BSP will present a bluebird program, host an educational booth, and assist in the nest box building activity. To participate in or to volunteer at this event, please contact Phil Durgin at pdurgin@comcast.net or call him at 717-732-5325.

2020 BSP COUNTY COORDINATORS KEN LEISTER, STATE COUNTY COORDINATOR -KENAPEG@AOL.COM

BLUEBIRD SOCIETY OF PA COUNTY COORDINATORS ARE HERE TO ASSIST YOU WITH ANY PROBLEMS AND QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING BLUEBIRDING AND REQUESTS FOR BLUEBIRD PROGRAMS IN YOUR COUNTY. THERE ARE COUNTIES THAT NEED COORDINATORS, IF YOU LIVE IN THAT COUNTY AND WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A COUNTY COORDINATOR CONTACT THE STATE COUNTY COORDINATOR:

KEN LEISTER PHONE: 610 696 5271 E-MAIL: KENAPEG@AOL.COM

ADAMS

John Gabreski
717-337-2851

ALLEGHENY

Ed Monroe
412-486-0766
ewmonroe2@verizon.net

ARMSTRONG (Vacant)

BEAVER

Scott Parry
412-841-5071

BEDFORD

John & Cathy Everhart
814-623-8852
johneverhart3077@gmail.com

BERKS

Terry Gerhart
610-775-9474
gerhartsat@aol.com

BLAIR

Kelly Baronner
814-932-4100
rkbaronner@gmail.com

BRADFORD (Vacant)

BUCKS

Bill Moyer
215-536-7032
wcpmoy@comcast.net

BUTLER

Darrell Daubenspeck
724-735-2363
daubie@zoominternet.net
and

Harry Schmeider

724-285-1209
harryschmeider@gmail.com

CAMBRIA

Winnie and Bob Illig
814-533-9237
winillig@hotmail.com

CAMERON

Robert Kerner
814-486-3484

CARBON

Sandy & Don Bonett
610-681-8807
don4nett@ptd.net
and
Ken Leister
kenapeg@aol.com

CENTRE

Joanna Taylor
772-559-3216
jojowebb@me.com

CHESTER

Marilyn Michalski
610-933-0497
emeralddmm@verizon.net

and

Nancy Fraim
610-873-7454
nancyfraim@comcast.net

CLARION

Amy Wolbert
814-764-5321
ashoupdwolbert@gmail.com

CLEARFIELD

Norman Bloom
814-761-7962
ngbloom@comcast.net

CLINTON

Linda Frye
570-769-7375
vfrye@kcnet.org

COLUMBIA

Margaret Pickin
570-784-2633
mpickin@ptd.net

CRAWFORD

Bill Wenger
412-720-0766
w.wenger@comcast.net

CUMBERLAND

Joan Watroba
717-766-2102
bluebirdhappy365@outlook.com

and

David L. Price
717-245-2926
david17007@aol.com

DAUPHIN

Bill Strauss
717-541-9168
mbstrauss@verizon.net

DELAWARE

Alice Severeid
610-544 9057
alicesevereid@hotmail.com

ELK

Wayne Bryndel
814-772-4604
wbryndel@windstream.net

ERIE

Bernie Connelly
814-734-5446
bbconnelly1@verizon.net

and

Andrea Wyman
814-398-8384
awyman@edinboro.edu

FAYETTE

Jane Shuck
724-277-8526
janshuck@zoominternet.net
[net](mailto:janshuck@zoominternet.net)

FOREST

Mark Ritke
814-676-4747
bluebirdsunlimit@aol.com

FRANKLIN

Joyce Stuff
717-328-3411
bspcc@innernet.net

FULTON

___and
Florence & Robert Pyle
610-322-7031
bluebirdflo@yahoo.com

GREENE(Vacant)

HUNTINGDON (Vacant)

INDIANA

Michael Schmaus
814-938-0928
mspaelk@yahoo.com
___and
Debbi Barate
814-446-5661
ridgebackqueen@aol.com

2020 BSP COUNTY COORDINATORS CONTINUED

JEFFERSON

Marsha Harris
814-265-1231
mlharris@penn.com

JUNIATA

Gail Getz
717-463-4041
dggetz@embarqmail.com

LACKAWANNA (Vacant)

LANCASTER

Dan Thomas
717-786-7893
adthomas10@comcast.net
and
Dean Rust
717-669-0167
luly7ds@aol.com

LAWRENCE

Bill Wenger
412-720-0766

LEBANON

Shirley Halk
717-865-2650
zebraswallowtail@juno.com

LEHIGH

Denise/Peter Reinhart
610-965-5389
parrots@ptd.net

LUZERNE

Jeffrey Stratford
570-332-2942
jeffrey.stratford@wilkes.edu

LYCOMING

Fred Stiner
570-323-1313
fredstiner@yahoo.com

McKEAN (Vacant)

MERCER

Ed Palmer
724-301-3113
plife@zoominternet.net

MIFFLIN (Vacant)

MONROE

Deron Erney
610-657-4653
erneyoutdoors@hotmail.com

MONTGOMERY

Richard Leatherman
215-723-6476
rich-rach@juno.com
and
Kevin Sekula
267-664-3513
ksekula2002@yahoo.com

MONTOUR

Donna Kreischer
570-437-3649
dkteacher@verizon.net

NORTHAMPTON

Rebecca Patrick Jeffrey Fritz
484-256-7490
beccapattick@yahoo.com

NORTHUMBERLAND

Ben Rissinger
570-758-4771
jar43@comcast.net

PERRY

Larry & Cheryl Gross
717-756-6975
lcg1112@comcast.net

PHILADELPHIA

Margaret Rohde
(Montgomery Co)
973-271-4375
margaret@wvwa.org

PIKE

Tom Peifer
570-470-9960
tomp345@ptd.net

POTTER

David Hauber
814-274-8946
haubers3@penn.com

SCHUYLKILL

Charles Trusky
570-773-2737

SNYDER (Vacant)

SOMERSET
Bill Cuppett
814-421-9795
grammied34@gmail.com
and
Simeon Yoder
814-267-9932

SULLIVAN

Kat Clark
570-928-8952
hayes.clark@frontiernet.net

SUSQUEHANNA (Vacant)

TIOGA

Leslie Clifford
507 622 4527
lcliffor@mansfield.edu

UNION (Vacant)

VENANGO

Carl Hohmann
814-676-2782
hohmannc@comcast.net

WARREN

Mark Ritke
814-676-4747
bluebirdsunlimit@aol.com

WASHINGTON

Gigi Gerben
414-206-1310
kasgerb@yahoo.com

WAYNE

James Kilgore
609-874-2122

WESTMORELAND

Joanne McIlhattan
724-523-9203
ejmci@comcast.net
and
Wilma Light
724-331-1180
lightgarden515@gmail.com

WYOMING

Ray Massacesi
570-836-0173
agnesma@ptd.net

YORK

Nancy Putt
717-432-2647
bluebirds@pa.net



Artist: Susan Renkel

How to Attract Bluebirds

Select a Nest Box

Choose a nest box designed for bluebirds with a 1.5" opening. Make sure the box can be easily opened for weekly monitoring and allows for drainage.

Pick a Good Spot

Bluebirds prefer semi-open, mowed areas with occasional trees, fences or power lines for perching. Rural roadsides, suburban areas with open yards, golf courses and cemeteries are suitable locations. Always obtain permission before installing a nest box.

Installation of a Bluebird Box

To protect bluebirds from predators, never mount a nest box on a tree, fence, utility pole or wooden post. Mount your nest box on a smooth pole where claws cannot grip; conduit pipe with conduit clamps work well. Mount your box at least five feet off of the ground. Adding a stovepipe predator guard or a Noel Guard can provide extra protection from predators (raccoons, cats, opossum, weasels, squirrels).

Monitor the Nest Box Weekly

It is very important to check the nest box each week to view the nesting activity. Bluebirds build a neat, cupped nest made of fine grass or pine needles, and their eggs are usually light blue or sometimes white. It is also important to keep nesting records and submit them to the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania or other conservation organization so that they can measure the nesting success of the population.

Tame the Competition

House sparrows will remove bluebird eggs and kill both young and adult



photo by Nancy Fraim

birds. They are non-native birds, which are not protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Box owners are legally permitted to remove house sparrow nests, eggs and young from their bluebird nest box. It is important to monitor your nest box weekly and remove any house sparrow nests.

Supply Supplemental Food

Bluebirds cannot resist mealworms; live or dried. They also eat suet during winter when insects and berries are not available.



photo by Peter Jessup

Provide a Bird Bath

A birdbath should be a maximum of 3" deep with gently sloping sides. Bluebirds especially like running or dripping water and need water all

year round. Providing a heater in your birdbath will ensure that your bluebirds can get a drink, even in freezing weather. Replenish with fresh water every few days.

Keep It Clean

Bluebirds can nest up to three times a season. Clean out your nest box after each nesting cycle; a scraper makes easy work of this. Dirty nest boxes encourage bacteria growth. If the used nest is not removed, a second nest may be built on top of the old one, causing the new eggs or young birds to be too close to the entrance hole. Bluebirds won't make a nest in a box that has sticks, straw or feathers from another bird.

Leave Your Nest Box Up in the Winter

Birds searching for future nesting sites in the fall may find your nest box and return to nest in the spring. Bluebirds may also use your box as a shelter on cold winter nights.

Provide Natural Habitat

To attract hungry birds to your backyard, provide native plants that produce fruit and berries. When selecting tree varieties, consider the American Holly, Black Cherry, Crabapple, Flowering Dogwood, Hawthorn or Sumac. Consider shrubs such as Blackberry, Blueberry, Elderberry, Viburnum, Juniper, Winterberry or Pokeberry. For more information, visit www.thebsp.org or www.sialis.org. Photos courtesy of Peter Jessup & Nancy Fraim



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 _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

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

E-mail Address: _____ (required if questions or e-mailed 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 E-mail

Please tell us how you learned about us: _____

- I would like to help with:
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> County Coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> Nestbox Monitoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nestbox Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speakers' Bureau | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Show (Jan) | <input type="checkbox"/> BSP Conference (April) |

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



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BSP RENEWAL DATES/Mailing Address Changes - *Please check your mailing label on your regular mailed copy to see your renewal date. You can renew for one year or for multiple years, which will provide a discount. Both e-mail and regular mail members will also receive a letter by regular mail notifying of your renewal date. *If you need to update your mailing address, please send changes to: BSP • P.O. Box 12 • Exton, PA 19341*

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

nancyfrain@comcast.net

Mailbag

Check out this Happy Fella!!!

Subject: Cool Bluebird

Hi Dean, Happy New Year to you!
Look at this cool B.B. -this was from the Facebook page Eastern Bluebird Landlord. The location is Haymarket, VA. The bird is at least 5 yrs old and has offspring—but has not reproduced anything like Dad. I think he is very cool. They call him Johnny Whitehead. LOL I just love him. So cute. I had to share.
Linda Cornell



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