



BLUEBIRD TRAILS & TALES

Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania

An Affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

Volume 15, Issue 2

Summer 2012

Editor: Joan Watroba • sunshinebb@msn.com

~ www.thebsp.org ~

A Message from the President -

Dear BSP Members,

First, I would like to thank everyone involved with the 14th annual BSP conference on April 13th & 14th, 2012. Again it was a very successful event thanks to the Conference Staff, Attendees, Speakers, Vendors, Donors, and Auctioneer volunteers along with the excellent services provided by the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in State College, Pa.

Secondly, I would like to welcome three new Board Members to our team: Mr. Dale Cook from York County, Mr. Dean Rust from Lancaster County and Mr. Bill Cuppett from Somerset County. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your willingness to serve the BSP Membership and to help us to maintain and reach our goals as stated in our Mission Statement.

Congratulations to our longtime friends and auction volunteers: Auctioneer, David Birmingham and Auction Clerk, Pat Larthey. Due to their many years of volunteering their auctioneering services to BSP, we have raised funds needed to assist BSP to meet goals related to educational outreach for the protection, enjoyment and propagation of the Eastern bluebird and other native cavity-nesting species in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. BSP greatly appreciates their services and have awarded them with an Honorary Lifetime Membership to the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania. Again, Thank You David and Pat.

Plans for our 15th Annual Anniversary Conference are underway. You will not

want to miss out on this event because we are planning a combined conference with the Purple Martin Conservation Association of Erie, PA.

Bluebirds and Purple Martins are both cavity-nesters and face many of the same nesting challenges. This special event will be held in Harrisburg, PA at the Best Western Premier Central Hotel & Conference Center in Harrisburg, PA, which offers over 9000 square feet of space with a Breakfast Buffet and Luncheon being planned. Visit this hotel online at: <http://www.thecentralhotelharrisburg.com>

And yes, you can make your reservations now by calling 1-717- 561-2800, mention the combined Bluebird & Purple Martin Conference being held on April 5 & 6, 2013. More Information will be forthcoming in the Fall Issue of our newsletter and also on our BSP website. Visit our new BSP website with the same address at: www.thebsp.org

Let us know what you think of this new site and please make suggestions regarding any items you would like to see added. Our Webmaster is Joanne Slavinski, jmsbsp@comcast.net and Web Support, Harry Schneider at harryschneider@gmail.com

Our goal is to have an informative, exciting, and fun website. Joanne and I would like you to consider this to be your website, too, so please let us know what you would like to see and experience on this new website. You can fill out the *Contact Webmaster*

Form on the site and both of us will receive your comments and suggestions.

I would like to conclude by saying Thank You to all of our Members, Speaker, Vendors, Corporate Donors, and Non-Profit Organizations for your financial support, talents, service, and most of all, your concern for the Bluebirds and all the other native cavity-nesting songbirds across Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Without your support we could never accomplish our goals and mission statement which appears on the front page of the BSP Website: www.thebsp.org.

Respectfully Submitted,
Harry Schneider

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Photo by Susan Renkel

From the Editor -

It is the last day of April as I write this message. The weather fluctuations during March and April have been severe-March was much warmer than April. Unfortunately the dramatic changes in temperature have been very difficult for the songbirds, as the extreme warm weather-in the 80's prompted many songbirds to start nesting early and then the colder weather arrived-in the

30's, rainy, and windy. This reduced the availability of insects, which limited the food supplies. Some bluebirders have experienced losses of young nestlings, apparently due to lack of nutrition and hypothermia. I had two early bluebird nestings-one with eggs only and the other with four young bluebirds and when the weather got cold and damp, I made daily trips to the nest boxes to deliver live mealworms. The male bluebird eagerly fed himself and his mate as she incubated the eggs, and the bluebird pair fed themselves and their young. It was a thrill to watch the parents entering the nest box with their beaks full of mealworms. I continued to do this for 5 days in a row. When I arrived one day at the end of the cold spell, I was thrilled to see that it was fledged day, and I heard the parents chirping to their young and watched the parents bringing the mealworms up to the tree branches and feeding their young. Hopefully, the weather will stay milder and they will have an easier time raising their families. Because they started so early, there may be more triple nestings this year. Hope that your nesting season is productive and fun!



Editor's Note: Illustration credits – correction, bottom of page 2 of the Spring 2012 Newsletter:

*The correct sources of the illustrations of the **European Starling** and the **House Sparrows** (non-native birds which are not protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act) which compete with native cavity-nesting species are:*

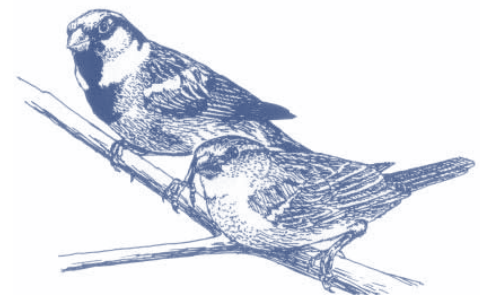
***House Sparrow Illustration: Emily Oseas Routman** obtained from Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management, Clip Art Commons*

***European Starling Illustration: Florida Center for Instructional Technology (FCIT) Clip Art** <http://etc.usf.edu/clipart>*

European Starling



House Sparrows



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Phil Durgin-Vice President-Cumberland County

717.732.5325

pdurgin@comcast.net

Nancy Putt-Secretary-York County

717.432.2647

bluebirds@pa.net

Joyce Stuff-Treasurer-Franklin County

717.328.3411

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BSP BOARD OF DIRECTORS & SERVICE DATES:

2011-2013

Harry Schmeider – Butler County

Shirley Halk – Lebanon County

Ken Leister – Chester County

Joyce Stuff – Franklin County

Nancy Putt – York County

2012-2014

Philip Durgin – Cumberland County

Dan Thomas – Lancaster County

Dale Cook – York County

Bill Cuppett – Somerset County

Welcome!

New BSP County Coordinator for

Sullivan County

Kat Clark - (570) 928-8952

"Bed and Breakfast for the Bluebirds"

Hi Bluebird fans,

Another nesting season is underway and I want to share our enjoyment of providing care for our favorite bird. We started with one nest box and very few clues of how to go about it but were lucky to have a fledging the first year. Watching the devotion of the parents and the cuteness of the babies has us thoroughly hooked even now ten years later.

Observing the adults tough out the winter weather prompted us to add a heated bath, heated mealworm feeder and now a heated roost box. Yes, they are pampered and spoiled but we are continually rewarded by displays of rare beauty and gentleness that seem to just be part of Bluebird life.

There are usually three, and one year four, fledges each season. Occasionally disaster strikes like last year - we returned from a trip discovering seven babies taken by a cat. It was clear from the fresh claw marks on the post what had happened. The next week a nest of robins was taken from a nearby tree. The Bluebirds did not give up but brought two more hatchings that season.

The roost box was being staked out for nesting so I removed it until next fall. There is not enough ventilation for summer use and the entrance is too low to prevent premature fledging. When I built the roost, 60 watt lamps were recommended but this made the metal floor too hot to touch. Using 15 watt lamps provided 25-30 degree ceiling temps even with single digit temps and winds.

Soon the seed feeders will come down to reduce the competition in such a small space. After warmer weather sets in, we add a hanging shallow bath which the Bluebirds just love.

Few hobbies have rewarded us like this has.

Happy Bluebirding
Bob and Bev Walker
Pleasant Gap, PA

BSP is GOING GREEN!



Benefits of receiving the BSP newsletter by e-mail:

- * Quicker Delivery of the publication
- * Reduction of the cost for printing and postage fees to deliver the newsletter
- * Reduce the use of natural resources-trees to make paper and fuel to transport mail to its destination
- * Ability to view photos in color

Please consider going GREEN as your newsletter delivery option!

To receive the e-mail version, please **send an e-mail from the e-mail address that you wish to receive your BSP newsletter to: btntnewsletter@thebsp.org**.

In your e-mail, please include BSP Newsletter Delivery in the subject line of your e-mail, along with the following:

1. Your name as it appears on the mailing label of your newsletter.
2. Your current mailing address.
3. Your phone number.
4. Retype your e-mail address.

Note: The email address above is a NEW email address to use to request the Green Choice delivery of your newsletter or to change your e-mail address.



Please consider going GREEN as your newsletter delivery option!

BSP THANKS

**Bayer Corp. of Pittsburgh, PA for their Corporate Membership
to support the educational outreach of the Bluebird Society of PA.**

Special thanks to Rich Polaski of Bayer, Corporation.

BLUEBIRD TRAILS WANTED & BLUEBIRD TRAIL MONITORS NEEDED

Bluebird Trail Monitor Needed:

Codorus State Park

2600 Smith Station Road, Hanover, PA, York County

There are several productive bluebird trails in Codorus State Park that desperately need trail monitors. This is a wonderful location for bluebirds and purple martins. The park even offers a *Breakfast for Bluebirds* during the nesting season. Every Friday from May 18 through July 27, bring a brown bag breakfast to the park visitor center at 9:00 a.m. for a 30 minute program followed by a 15 minute walk to monitor bluebird nest boxes. Bluebird sightings likely....coffee and good company - GUARANTEED!

Please contact: Wendy Looker, Environmental Education Specialist, DCNR,
Bureau of State Parks • 717-637-3454 or e-mail: wlooker@pa.gov

Bluebird Trail Wanted:

Arun Natarajan, Camp Hill, Cumberland County • 848-565-8880, NARUNDBA@gmail.com

No restrictions/preference in number of nest boxes requested. Prefer trail located near Camp Hill.

GREENBELT BLUEBIRD TRAIL REHAB - 3/7/12



Dale Cook



Old Box



Jim Lenker and Bill Strauss

The Greenbelt Bluebird Trail in Harrisburg was established several years ago by BSP volunteers and has been very productive in providing nesting sites for bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting songbirds. However, after so many years, many of the nest boxes had deteriorated, and thanks to BSP volunteers, this trail has received a major facelift. Some of the nest boxes were repaired, many of the boxes and poles were replaced, and additional nest boxes have been added in suitable habitat within the former Harrisburg State Hospital grounds. The trail will be actively monitored by volunteers from the Greenbelt Trail Association. Thanks to them, and to Bill Strauss and Dale Cook of the BSP Woodworking Committee, and also to Jim Lenker, original BSP Board Member and trail developer for providing details regarding the history of the trail. Thanks, Marcus Schneck, Outdoor Writer of the Patriot News, who wrote a feature story about the trail and the importance of providing nesting sites in suitable habitat of bluebirds. There are now 27 nest boxes along the Greenbelt Trail ready to accommodate new tenants.

To view Marcus's article: http://blog.pennlive.com/wildaboutpa/2012/03/bluebird_society_of_pennsylvan.html

BSP EVENT REPORTS

PA Garden Expo

BSP hosted an educational booth and provided a bluebird program with nest box building activity at the PA Garden Expo on February 24-26, 2012 at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg.

A BIG THANKS to all of the volunteers who staffed the booth and participated with the activities. Fifty eight new members joined BSP, and 22 children built nest boxes during this event.

BSP will be attending the **PA Garden Show of York from March 2-4, 2013** instead of the PA Garden Expo in Harrisburg, as this venue will not charge BSP a fee for the display space as the PA Garden Expo currently does. Our booth will be free of charge and BSP will provide a bluebird program and/or nest box building for 25 children. Volunteers will be needed.

Nancy Putt, Event Coordinator

Master Gardener's Symposium

On Sat March 31st Shirley, my wife, and I had a BSP booth at the MG Symposium at Willow Valley, PA. 275 registered Master Gardeners attended the event from 7:30 to 3:30.

All of the attendees received our BSP brochure in their packets. During the day we had a steady stream of interested people in BSP with their questions and personal bluebird stories.

We signed up 11 new memberships to BSP and sold an additional 9 nestbox kits. We had a "custom-made" Bluebird nestbox prize drawing and had 86 people put their name in.

It was a great day and many seeds were planted for future growth of BSP. Hopefully, we will get invited back again next year. The attendees were primarily from Lancaster County.

All the Best,
Dean Rust, CC Lancaster County

Build a Box Workshop –April 18, 2012

Hi, Joyce - We ended up with 8 child/adult pairs participating, so we were pleased for the first time trying it out. Dean gave out patches to each child and seemed to enjoy the program, too! We're already looking forward to next year's program - we'll shoot for a late February or March date to stay ahead of the nesting cycle. Thanks for your help, and if you need anything more from me please let me know.

Regards - Harry Norton, Adult & Family Program Manager, Manheim Township Recreation and Park Planning Department.

Editor's Note: BSP thanks Dean Rust, BSP Lancaster County Coordinator for chairing this event and the POWA, Pennsylvania Outdoor Writer's Association for providing the funding needed to provide this enjoyable outdoor educational children's program.

Wetlands Festival

Wildwood Park, Harrisburg- April 28, 2012

There was a pretty good turnout at the Wetlands Festival, despite the cold and threat of rain. This event is all about being outside and enjoying the bounty of nature, along with demonstrations of native local wildlife from ZooAmerica to bird banding and wetland animals on display, also bird and flower walks. Lots of fun activities for the kids (I know because I brought my granddaughter and she enjoyed all of these activities for 3 hours!) This was a great chance to speak to many people about bluebirds and share our experiences. Four new members signed up and each received a free nest box kit. Welcome and thanks for your support! Thanks to Dale Cook, Joan Watroba, Bill Strauss, and Doris Hoffman for all of your help with the BSP booth.

Nancy Putt, Event Coordinator

BSP EVENT REPORTS, con't.

2012 BSP Conference

Thanks to everyone who helped to make our 14th Annual Conference that was held on April 13 and 14 at the Penn Stater in State College such a success. It was well-attended, the speakers were very interesting and we learned so much about a variety of topics.

The Friday night program, hosted by BSP State County Coordinator, Ken Leister was fun and educational. The evening started with a wonderful program presented by Nancy Schriver about *Creating a Habitat for Wildlife*. She spoke of four main features which will attract songbirds-Food, Water, Shelter, and Nesting Sites and offered a variety of ways to make our home landscapes more appealing:

1. Planting native plants which bear fruit, seeds, and berries.
2. Adding a water feature such as a bird bath. Birds need water year-round for drinking, bathing, and preening. Adding a heater to the bird bath provides a supply of fresh water even during the winter months.
3. Planting trees such as hemlocks and maples which provide canopies for shelter from the elements and predators.
4. Providing both natural and manmade nesting sites

The second part of the program was "*Seventeen Ways to Interest People in Bluebirds*" presented by Ken Leister. Ken is an avid bluebirder, nest box builder, and presenter of bluebird programs and he summarized an impressive list of opportunities to spread the word about the importance of bluebirds and to inspire others to get actively involved in bluebird conservation activities.

The third part of Friday evening was a *Build Your Best Nest Box Contest*. Several BSP Members brought a sample of their favorite nest box, explained the specific features which they felt made it the best, and then a contest via a hand count from the audience determined the winner. Chuck Musser's PVC nest box with a heavy duty Noel guard got the most votes. Chuck serves as

BSP's Research Chair. Then Joyce Stuff explained that she has had very good results over a period of many years with simple nest boxes which lacked many of the special features of the display boxes. The conclusion was that it is mostly a matter of location, location, and location that determines how productive the nest box will be.

Saturday was a full day of presentations, vendors, a live and silent auction with a welcoming continental breakfast and delicious luncheon.



Mr. Warren Miller, President of the PA State Beekeepers Organization presented a fascinating presentation about

the vital role that honeybees have to pollinate most of the fruits and vegetables that we eat. The community hierarchy of the hive is so well-organized to ensure the productivity of the hive. Honeybees are transported across the country to pollinate specific plants and trees that produce a variety of foods, including almonds in California and cranberries in Maine. There are many factors which may be involved in the collapse of honeybee hives, including mites, insect diseases, pesticides, and the stresses of migratory beekeeping.

Editor's Note:

From our speaker: Warren and Renee Miller-On behalf of my wife and I, we would like to thank you and the Bluebird Society for a wonderful opportunity to speak to all of you. I hope the program was what you expected from me and I would like to say that I enjoyed spending time with all of your members. What a wonderful group of people. Just for the record I will be building some bluebird boxes and setting them up in areas of my beeyards. What a better way to take a break from beekeeping than watching these beauties. Thanks again for this opportunity.

BSP EVENT REPORTS, con't.



Mr. Thomas Serfass spoke of the endearing North American river otter during his program, ***“Otter, Past, Present, and Future”***. This is the species which appears on the PA Wild Resource Conservation Fund’s License Plate. He explained the efforts of the reintroduction program of these animals to their natural habitat throughout Pennsylvania and their role in the ecosystem. He showed a wonderful video which captured them repeatedly sliding down a snowy hill along a river bank just for the fun of it.

Dr. Scott Shalaway presented a program, ***“The Hole Story”*** which was a fascinating look inside of actual nest cavities of many songbird species. Bluebirds are considered secondary cavity nesters, as they do not excavate their own cavities as other species,

like woodpeckers, do. Part of the nesting ritual of woodpeckers is to excavate a new cavity for each nesting cycle, so that makes more natural cavities available for the secondary nesting species. Scott also discussed the importance of leaving dead trees or snags if they do not present a safety hazard to serve as nesting sites for the secondary cavity-nesting songbirds.

Thanks to the vendors who provided a wonderful variety of items and information for the conference attendees and for David Birmingham, Auctioneer, and Pat Larthey, Auction Clerk, for making the live auction so much fun and such a profitable fundraiser to support bluebird education programs and outreach. Because of their many years of providing auction services to BSP without charging a fee for services, they were also awarded a BSP Membership.

Special thanks to the companies and individuals who participated in the raffles and who donated such wonderful nature items to the live and silent auctions. Without your support, we would not be able to continue to provide educational outreach and to expand bluebird trails to promote nesting success of native cavity-nesting songbirds.

Conference Raffle Winners

First Place - Handmade Amish Bluebird Quilt Aleta Simpson, Palmyra, PA

Editor’s Note: Nancy Schriver delivered the quilt to Aleta the evening of the conference. She was delighted that she won, as she and her husband are true bluebirders. They have several nest boxes in their yard and some of them are being used by bluebirds. They appreciate the addition of the bluebird quilt as they enjoy having many decorative bluebird-related items in their home and yard.

Second Place - Handmade Amish Quilted Songbird Wall Hanging

Cheryl A. Parker, Enon Valley, PA

Third Place- Embroidered Bluebird of Happiness Pillow Fran Cooley, Tyrone, PA

Winner of the Pennsylvania Game Commission Print Raffle- “The Night Watchman” by Randy Zigo Don Moore

Winner of the Conference Bluebird Basket Chris Sterganos



BSP CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BSP Board Meeting Dates:

July 26th, 2012 -Thursday evening - 6:00 p.m

Oct 25th, 2012 -Thursday evening - 6:00 p.m

Location: Giant Foods Community Room, Camp Hill, PA
Please plan to attend the 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 meeting in person, we can arrange for you to attend via conference call.

Contact BSP President: Harry Schmeider: harryschmeider@gmail.com or call (724) 285-1209 to make arrangements to join the meeting.

Saturday, July 28th, 2012

Ned Smith Festival for Nature and Art

MYO Park, Millersburg, PA

9 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

www.nedsmithcenter.org

This **FREE** annual celebration of nature and the arts features over 50 fun and educational programs on a huge variety of topics, live music, dozens of children's activities, vendors of beautiful nature items and delicious food choices.

BSP volunteers will present a bluebird program, host the booth, and will assist children and their parents to assemble nestboxes.

VOLUNTEERS are needed.

Contact: Phil Durgin at: (717)732-5325 or e-mail: pdurgin@comcast.net.

On the Horizon..... 15th Annual BSP Conference

April 5th and 6th , 2013

Best Western Premier/The Central Hotel and Conference Center

800 East Park Dr. (off of Union Deposit Road), Harrisburg

Plan to join us to celebrate 15 years of service to bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting species. We welcome the Purple Martin Conservation Association as co-hosts of this very special event. Purple Martins and Eastern Bluebirds face many of the same nesting challenges...learn new skills and new tips from experienced trail monitors. More information will become available through a special mailing to all active members and on the BSP web site:

www.thebsp.org closer to the event.

Saturday, August 18th

BSP Picnic/Nest Box Building Bee

Lenker Park, 7555 Manor Drive, Harrisburg,

8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

(Picnic Lunch at 11:30 a.m.)

During this special event, we will assemble and package nest boxes and kits needed for our inventory. Enjoy the fellowship of other bluebirders and delicious food. BSP will provide the main menu item and beverages. Please bring a covered dish or dessert. Please RSVP Bill Strauss at: mbstrauss@verizon.net (717) 756-5914 or (717) 541-9168 and indicate your covered dish offering.

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Lenker Park is located in West Hanover Township:

Directions:

From Route 22 East/Allentown Boulevard, Harrisburg:

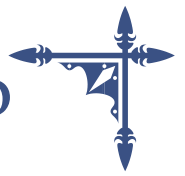
Left onto Blue Ridge Ave. then bear Right onto Jonestown Rd. then turn Left onto Manor Drive.

Lenker Park will be on the left side of Manor Drive # 7555-watch for signs-pavilion is set back from the road.





2012 BLUEBIRDER OF THE YEAR AWARD



~ *Harry Schmeider* ~

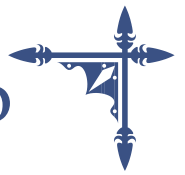


When **Harry** retired, he decided to give back something to nature. He has always enjoyed birds and after studying cavity-nesting birds, he discovered their plight in finding a natural cavity. Harry got involved by putting up a nest box and watching a pair of Eastern bluebirds nesting and fledging their young. Being so inspired by this experience, it led him into another venture: sharing his joy of bluebirds and other cavity-nesting songbirds by presenting bluebird seminars. Harry is a member of the Bluebird Society of PA, and currently serves as BSP President and BSP Butler County Coordinator and is known as the “Ambassador for the Bluebirds.” He is dedicated to educational outreach and offers a personal web site: [http:// www.ambassadorforthebluebirds.com](http://www.ambassadorforthebluebirds.com) which highlights his ongoing commitment to bluebird conservation and education. Harry presents interesting and visually-beautiful programs to inspire others to get actively involved with bluebirding and graciously shares his programs and talents with everyone he meets. He has encouraged many people to join BSP and become actively involved in promoting the nesting and habitat needs of bluebirds. Harry has

already received the Blue Feather Award from the Bluebird Society of PA in recognition of efforts and achievement to promote bluebird nesting success and a Certificate of Recognition from the Butler Pennsylvania Outdoors Club for his outstanding service by building and maintaining bluebird trails and by preserving the earth for today and tomorrow. He has served as BSP President for over two years and has accomplished many things in that time frame to improve educational outreach. He has boundless enthusiasm, and his sincere love of bluebirds is an inspiration to everyone he meets. In recognition of his passionate desire to share the AWESOME wonders of bluebirding, Harry Schmeider is very deserving to be **BSP’s 2012 Bluebirder of the Year.**



2012 BLUEBIRDER OF THE YEAR AWARD



~ *Charles H. Riley* ~

For 22 years, **Charles Riley** has tended the bluebird colony at neighboring Cartmel, before moving to Crosslands, (Kennett Square, PA) in 2003 and expanding their bluebird trail. Along the way Charlie has helped young Boy Scouts attain the rank



of Eagle Scout through bluebird projects, and has introduced countless youngsters to the joys of bluebirds. Charlie has presented countless programs and talks on the mysteries and beauty of bluebirds to Crossland residents, being especially pleased to show visiting children a bluebird nest and share his joy of bluebirds with them. Highly interested in the natural world beyond bluebirds, Charlie provided the leadership with the Crosslands Nature Conservancy Committee in building a special room devoted to wildlife, flowers, trees, and plants, complete with a library and video collection. Still alert and interested at 95 years of age, Charlie no longer can walk the “Bluebird Trail,” but he keeps weekly tabs on all monitoring reports from the residents he trained to continue his work with the bluebirds. Charlie

exemplifies all the qualities needed to be honored as **2012 Bluebirder of the Year.**



BLUE FEATHER AWARDS 2012



~ Lindsay Delp ~



Lindsay Delp of Carlisle, PA, Cumberland County is very committed to environmental and conservation causes. Through her work with the Sierra Club and also with the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania, she has been studying and promoting the protection and propagation of animal populations for many years and has inspired many other people to do the same. Lindsay is a BSP Member, an active volunteer, and a bluebird trail monitor. She is a worthy recipient of a Blue Feather Award for her efforts to increase bluebird populations and for her ongoing educational outreach activities which educate the public about important conservation issues.

Lindsay volunteers at many BSP events where she enthusiastically shares her knowledge and keen observations related to nature. She monitors a very productive bluebird trail in Dauphin County which annually fledges a variety of native songbirds including bluebirds, tree swallows, and house wrens. Lindsay always demonstrates a keen desire to protect the natural world and she enjoys spending time outdoors in nature. A highlight of her nature research experience was studying orca whales in the San Juan Islands. She has said, however, that checking and recording her bluebird box activity and observing the bluebirds every week is always a thrilling experience. For all that she does for the bluebirds and for the protection of the natural environment, the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania proudly presents the **2012 Blue Feather Award** to Lindsay Delp.

~ Dean Rust ~

Dean is a relatively new member of the Bluebird Society of PA, but because he has made such a positive impact with the number of activities that he participates in, he is deserving of an award of merit. Dean has participated in or sponsored the following activities which support bluebird educational and propagation:

- Hosted nest box building events for Girl Scouts and other youth groups
- Presented bluebird presentations to local groups within his community
- Volunteered at the BSP booths, including the PA Garden Expo in Harrisburg
- Constructs quality nest boxes which promote nesting success
- Attends BSP Conferences and donates well-crafted nest boxes to BSP for fundraising educational programs
- Established and monitors 14 bluebird trails with a total of 265 nest boxes and successfully fledged 303 bluebirds last year

In recognition of his participation in these and many other activities, The Bluebird Society of PA presented the **Blue Feather Award** to Dean Rust of Lancaster County.



~ Thomas Weaver ~



Tom Weaver, an avid lover of the outdoors has proved that he is dedicated to nature and bluebirds. Although Tom resides in Lancaster County, he monitors and maintains two trails, one 30 miles to the east in Chester County and the other 45 miles to the west in Cumberland County. The distance traveled plus the required maintenance of boxes and posts shows his unflinching dedication to bluebirds. He has been an inspiration to his fellow employees and others. Tom is a real asset to the hobby of bluebirding and the BSP. His many fine qualities have made him a worthy recipient of a **Blue Feather Award**.

~ Nancy Schriver ~

Nancy has been an active member and volunteer for the BSP since 2000. She is a true go-getter who goes above and beyond for bluebirds. Along with volunteering for many BSP functions, presenting educational programs, and donating items for fundraisers, she also maintains and monitors trails in Lebanon, Dauphin, and Perry counties. Nancy's enthusiasm, dedication, and desire to conserve and protect our native species and their environment make her a well-deserved **Blue Feather Award** recipient.





LETTERS OF COMMENDATION



~ *Alec Engelman* ~

Alec Engelman, a senior at Milton High School and having a passion for the outdoors, decided to commit to rebuilding the bluebird trail at Montour Preserve for his Eagle Scout project. This trail had been in decline for many years. Alec secured donations for the needed wood, raised monies for needed supplies, improved the trail, and enlisted his fellow scouts into building the nest boxes. Today the trail stands completed and will be maintained and monitored for future generations. Alec has proven through his dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work that he is most worthy of a **Letter of Commendation**.

~ *Daniel Anthony Tosiano* ~

The Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania would like to commend **Daniel Anthony Tosiano** for his important conservation efforts. Through his Eagle Scout Project, he has promoted the nesting and propagation of Eastern bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting songbirds. To meet this need, Daniel has demonstrated a high level of resourcefulness by researching the nesting and habitat needs of bluebirds, obtaining the donation for materials, conducting fundraising for purchasing supplies, and coordinating the labor to establish a bluebird trail of 17 nest boxes at Shaul Elementary School in Enola, PA. He has also found a Trail Monitor, a Wildlife Biologist, who has the interest and skill level to insure that the nest boxes along the trail will be checked on a weekly basis during the nesting season. Dan is an active member of BSP and he has also sponsored the trail monitor with a membership so that she can receive current information about bluebird conservation tips. He also donated the balance of his fundraising proceeds to the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania to help educate others about the nesting needs of bluebirds. The Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania is happy to present this **Letter of Commendation** to Daniel Anthony Tosiano of Enola, PA for his important contribution to bluebird conservation.

Nominate Your Favorite Bluebirder

*BSP is now accepting award nominations for 2013. Please help us to recognize individuals or groups who you feel have greatly contributed to bluebird education and/or have promoted nesting success of bluebirds and other native songbirds. Please include a brief paragraph about your nominee, including their name, county, and their contact information. Include your name and contact information and send this to the BSP Award Nomination Chairperson:
Shirley Halk, 42 Park Drive, Grantville, PA 17028. Thank you!*



Thank you for participating in our **20th Annual Shirley Wagner Garden Symposium** on March 31, 2012. Your display was a big hit and enjoyed by all. Our symposium was very successful thanks to the support we receive from organizations like the Bluebird Society of PA. We sincerely hope that you also had a positive experience as well.... Thanks again for being a part of our Garden Symposium.
Pamela E. Hall, Master Gardener of Lancaster County
on behalf of Warren Wolf, Coordinator, Master Gardener Program

On Saturday, April 7, I checked the boxes at the Sportsmen's Club and found a partial chickadee nest and a completed one with no eggs. They are not building in the box that was successful for the last two years. Is this early for chickadees? Joyce.

Editor's Reply: From my experience, chickadees usually start a bit earlier than the bluebirds, but usually in mid-April and due to this warm spell, that may be why. Even the bluebirds are starting to nest now. On my Trout Run Trail walk on Saturday, I found that 2 of the PVC nest boxes have a full chickadee nest topped with fur, and in one of my yard nest boxes (a standard nest box style) there is also a full chickadee nest topped with fur, so this seems to be the time frame for chickadees to nest.

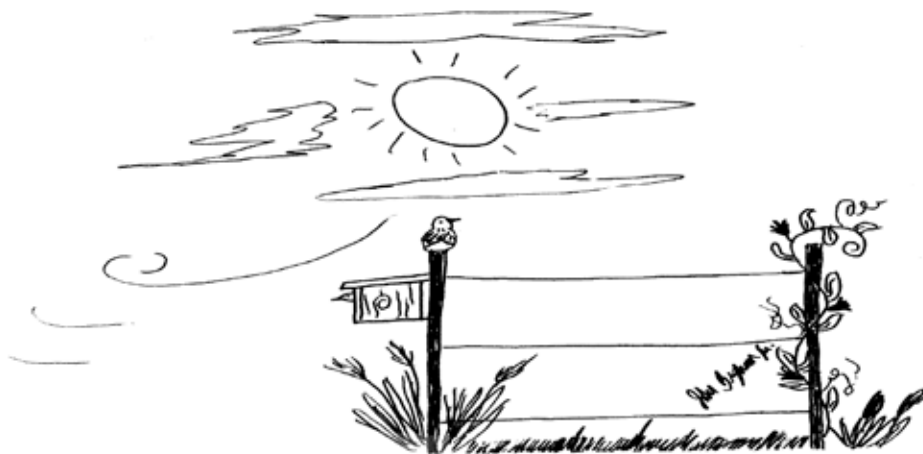
Dear BSP:

.....As I sit here typing on March 26, I already have 6 bluebird nests underway. If all goes well, I will fledge some bluebirds by the end of April! This could be a year that bluebirds raise three broods of chicks!

This year I am monitoring three bluebird trails. The one on our farm has ten boxes and I have one close by with three boxes...and yet another with only two boxes. I plan to make the last two trails longer in the coming summer and winter. Hopefully I will be monitoring 25 bird boxes by 2013! It all depends upon if the landlords will give me permission to mount boxes on their land.

Have a great summer and fledge many bluebirds!

John Bigham Jr.
New Paris, OH



“Ready for That: Bluebirds”

From Facebook: Masonic Villages

Monday, April 9, 2012 •

We had bluebirds and bluebird boxes where we lived before we moved to Masonic Village. Now, when we walk or drive around the campus, we observe bluebird boxes and many bluebirds.

BLUEBIRD LECTURE

“The Bluebird Trail” was a presentation recently held in the Keystone Room. About 50 people were already there when we arrived for the Friday afternoon lecture. I saw familiar faces in the audience from gardening or my yoga class. The meeting started with a short film about bluebird habits and habitats narrated by Don and Lillian Stokes, the authors of many books on birding. The film was followed by a presentation by Chuck Musser, a longtime local bluebird expert who is active in the Pennsylvania Bluebird Society (www.thebsp.org). Chuck showed two varieties of nesting boxes and gave detailed information on what boxes would attract bluebirds but would not appeal to other bird species. He answered a lot of great questions. We were enthusiastic about having a bluebird box near our cottage and hoped our vicinity would be suitable. After the meeting concluded, Jim spent about 15 minutes speaking to Chuck while I had the opportunity to meet and talk to other residents. It is fun and reassuring for me to see people I recognize from other activities here. It gives me a sense of belonging.

BLUEBIRD BOXES PRESENT

Saturday I went to an exercise stretch class, and when I came home, Chuck Musser was on the driveway talking to Jim. He understood Jim’s obvious desire to have bluebirds be a part of our lives. He had made us a box and installed it in a location with good promise of attracting bluebirds. We were happy to observe nesting bluebirds within four days of putting up the new box! We marvel that the birds found the site already and decided to make it a home. At Masonic Village another satisfying interest from our past can be part of our present. We didn’t have to give up bluebirds, and this is yet another reason I can happily say, “I am ready for that.”

Mary Ellen and Jim Tarman moved to the Masonic Village at Elizabethtown with their Chinese Shar Pei, Charlotte, in January 2012. Mary Ellen has volunteered to share her experiences each week as she explores Masonic Village and everything it has to offer.



WE NEED YOU!!
REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS for BSP BOARD MEMBERS

The terms of service for 5 of our current Board Members are expiring in April of 2013, and we would like you to consider becoming a candidate to serve for a period of 2 years. By serving as a Board Member, you can become more directly involved with decisions related to helping BSP to achieve goals related to our mission statement:

- * To take all action deemed by the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania to be beneficial to the protection, enjoyment and propagation of the Eastern Bluebird and other native cavity nesting species in Pennsylvania and elsewhere.
- * Provide and promote educational activities relating to bluebirds, birding, conservation and related subjects.
- * Monitor and conduct research relating to bluebirds, other cavity nesting birds, food sources, habits, and trails.
- * Build, maintain, and monitor bluebird boxes and trails.
- * Provide opportunities for people to become involved in efforts that assist bluebirds and other native bird species.
- * Provide social opportunities to share information and experiences relating to bluebirds and related conservation topics.

Please submit information regarding prospective candidates for Board Members by July 31, 2012 to:

Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania
P.O. Box 756
Mechanicsburg, Pa. 17055-0756

Attn: Dan Thomas, BSP Nomination Chair
(717) 786-7893
e-mail: adthomas10@comcast.net

WELCOME -New BSP MEMBERS!!!!!!

ADAMS

Wendy Daly
Diane Parent

ALLEGHENY

Debbie Wallace-Meyer
Jeanne Haury
Rich Polaski
Bayer Corporation

BEDFORD

Mary Helsel
Lisa McDannell

BERKS

Margaret Helms
Lori Smith
Leslie Long
Michael Pyles
Alan & Mary Ann Micha
Janelle Hoffmaster
Mae Jones

BLAIR

Corien Bakermans

BUTLER

Jimi Haury
Susan Beatty
Arlene Harn
Don Eyth
Susan Race

CAMBRIA

Robin Milchak

CARBON

Mary Ann Arndt
Ed & Virginia Sweeney

CENTRE

Tina McCauley
Karen Foard
Susan Crews-Munnell
Kimball Selmar-Larsen
Jeff Gallo
Richard Barton
Mary Kay Laplante
Rebecca Reese
Larry Campbell

CHESTER

James Annett
Sandy Rocker
Ron Emerine
Nancy Smith-McAdams

CUMBERLAND

Pat Brown
Barb Carman
Alice Herman
Leslie Houck
Sandy Aanensen
Mary Lynn Lynch
David Peaslee
Carol Burd
Glenda Fenicle
Sylvia Morelli
Patricia Heuser
Ruth Hall
David Birmingham
Natalie Leblanc
Kevin Yoo
Sue Sherk
Haley Weiss
Arun Natarajan
Gail Ismart
Francesca McNickol
Daisy Bodman
Bryce Feibel
Pamela Johnson
Diane Runyan
John & April Newbold

DAUPHIN

Tammie Myers
Frances Righter
Janice Black
Diane Peterson
Terry Rowe
Sue Collare
Dorothy Dietrich
Barbara Atticks
Janet Keller
Beth Hockenbrock
Donald Guss
Cathy Blair
Pat Larthey

DELAWARE

Mitchel Helmandollar
Robert Marsden

FAYETTE

Jane Shuck

FRANKLIN

Shirl Ambright
Julia Bowers
Salinda Feldman
Brad Seltzer
Dean Filburn

JUNIATA

Susan Parker
Susanne Shearer
Carol Renninger
V Maxine Kerstetter

LANCASTER

Joe & Barb Skarbowski
Julie Weaver
Gerald Miller
Linda Force
Judith O'Neal
Jim & Mary Ellen Tarman
Betty Beck
Joan Decker
Suzi Smith
Caroline McGrath
Ferne Miller
Jan Haas
Nina Wolf
Mary Ellen Smallwood
Bud Droke
Beth Runkle
Joan Wirth

LAWRENCE

Nancie Shillington

LEBANON

Judy Kopp
Glenn Blauch
Carol Derr
Kathy Conrad
Gina Mason

LEHIGH

Liz Brensinger
Ray Durkin
James George

LYCOMING

Gary Menne

MERCER

Kenneth Miller

MONTGOMERY

Suzanne Fairlie
Tess/Ryan Fairlie

NORTHAMPTON

Belinda Hinkle

PERRY

Jane & Lewis Walker
William & Mary Brillhart
Randy Powell

SOMERSET

Robert Troxell
Scott Lehman

VENANGO

Linda Baker

WESTMORELAND

Marja Bakermans

YORK

Cyndi Smith
Ellen Kann
Andrew & Shari Snell
Joyce Glatfelter
Ellen Dubbs
Julie Darbrow
Glenaire Kreitzer
Darlene Firestone
Pat Sweetman
Kathleen Brenneman

DELAWARE (state)

Ray Powell

CAPE MAY, NJ

Michael Johnson

DUTCHESS, NY

Janet Swartvagher

AIKEN, SC

Jim Burke

HANCOCK, WV

Kelly Argent



Carolina Wrens - They're Back!

Joan Watroba

Last year we were delighted to observe two full nesting cycles of a sweet pair of Carolina wrens. The first time they nested in the window box right outside of the kitchen window. Then they nested a second time inside of a potted geranium on a pedestal stand on the front porch. We had fun observing all of the activity from the nest building to fledge day.

This year I noticed that they were starting to bring moss near the area of the shed.

We have our kayaks hanging on brackets on the side of the shed, and when I saw them bringing moss inside of one of the kayaks, I checked and saw a few leaves and some moss-there was no nest yet. As much as I love the birds, I knew that I needed to offer them another nesting spot so that I could use the kayak. I planted flowers in the window box, and a few days later, they started building their nest in the window box. There are now 6 eggs, and the female is incubating them. This year the entrance hole to their domed, hollow nest faces the inside of the house, so this year, we will get a "bird's eye view" of all of the action. Yeah!

Bluebird Display at the Dillsburg Library

So many people are interested in learning about bluebirds, and a Bluebird Display hosted by Nancy Putt, BSP County Coordinator for York County, at the Dillsburg Public Library was a big hit with visitors to the library. She arranged a beautiful display of items related to bluebirds and their nesting needs along with educational handouts and BSP brochures. Libraries are excellent locations to educate others in your community about bluebirds. Hosting a display, presenting a bluebird program, or scheduling a children's book reading about bluebirds will inspire people of all ages to become actively involved in bluebirding. There are several children's books available in the BSP Store: www.thebsp.org which would be suitable for children.





BSP Newsletter Submission/Wiggly Worm Contest

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.

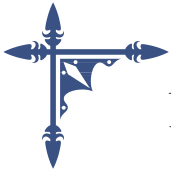
Contest Rules:

1. Locate the illustration of the **Wiggly Worm** which will appear in the content of the newsletter and write that **page #** on the top of your item for the newsletter.
2. 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.
3. Write **Attn: Wiggly Worm Contest** on the front of the envelope and send to: BSP, P.O. Box 756, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-0756. We are also now accepting newsletter submissions by e-mail. Please enter **Wiggly Worm Contest** in the subject line and e-mail to the BSP Editor at: sunshinebb@msn.com.
4. 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 book offered in the BSP 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 e-mail address (optional) with your entry.



BSP NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION CONTEST WINNER:

Shirley McCahan, Harrisburg, PA

CONGRATULATIONS!



Shirley-Please contact the BSP Store Manager, Doris at (717) 766-3877
and provide her with your book prize choice.

Books can be viewed at the BSP web site: www.thebsp.org

Select the link to: BSP Online Store to view the list of books available.



BSP Conference - April 13 & 14, 2012



Photos by
Harry Schneider



Included with this edition of the BSP Newsletter is the **Annual Nest Box Report Form**.

Please keep track of your nesting results and send the completed form to our Nest Box Reporter at the end of the nesting season to the address printed on the bottom of the form. There will be a random drawing for prizes for reports received by October 15th, 2012. Weekly and Annual Nest Box Report Forms are also available on the BSP web site: www.thebsp.org

Website: WWW.THEBSP.ORG

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 15
Mercersburg, PA



PO Box 756
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-0756

***** BSP Needs Storage Space *****

Looking for storage space for BSP to house nest boxes, display items and the BSP Store inventory. It would be wonderful to obtain donated space located in the Mechanicsburg/Camp Hill-West Shore area. We would need approximately 300 square feet of clean, dry, secure, and easily accessible storage space.

Please contact Nancy at 717-432-2647 or e-mail:
bluebirds@pa.net

Fruitcake in April - "That's For the Birds"



Many folks turn up their nose at the fruitcake. Others enjoy it and look forward to its return during the holiday season. Our freezer always contains one cake in case the wait seems too long from one year to the next. Spring 2012 arrived and a large piece of the delicacy was discovered in our freezer in a slightly blemished condition. My thoughts turned to the diet of bluebirds. I was trying to entice the return of bluebirds to the rent-free box located in our back yard. The cake was cut in small pieces and placed in a suet holder close to the bluebird box. In a matter of days, bluebirds and other aviary friends consumed the new found treasure. Result: The bluebird box now contains a nest with four eggs and the property owners are delighted!

Shirley McCahan
Harrisburg, PA



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BLUEBIRD SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA (BSP) ANNUAL BLUEBIRD NEST BOX REPORT FORM

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION CLEARLY.

Write additional information on back if necessary.

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Street

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone (optional)

Fax (optional)

Email (optional)

Year Monitored

Location of Box (county)*

Frequency of Monitoring (daily, weekly, biweekly)

* Note: If you have boxes in more than one county, please submit a separate report for each county

How many nest boxes do you monitor at home? _____

How many nest boxes do you monitor on a trail(s)? _____

Total Number of nest boxes monitored? _____

How many nests did bluebirds try to build in nest boxes? _____

How many of these nests were successful in fledging at least one bluebird? _____

How many bluebird eggs were laid in nest boxes? _____

How many eggs were blue? _____

How many were white? _____

How many bluebird eggs were hatched in nest boxes? _____

How many bluebirds fledged from nest boxes? _____

How many boxes were successfully occupied by:

Tree Swallows _____ # fledged _____

House Wren _____ # fledged _____

Chickadee _____ # fledged _____

Titmouse _____ # fledged _____

What other birds nested successfully? _____

Did house sparrows attempt to use nest boxes? Yes No

If so, please CIRCLE methods used to prevent them:

inbox trapping, Removal of house sparrow nest,
monofilament line, sparrow spooker,
other methods? Please list:

What worked? _____

Did you use a guard on your poles? If so, CIRCLE
method(s) used pvc pipes, baffle,
cone, stovepipe, other? Please list:

Do you report such information to any other organization? Yes No

If so, to whom? _____

Please return this form by **October 15th** to: **Shirley Halk, 42 Park Dr., Grantville, PA 17028**

Aug 09 Revision