



Bluebird Monitor

OBS encourages good stewardship
by **Monitoring** our Trails

Summer 2015



Mission Statement

The Ohio Bluebird Society was formed in 1987 to support the return and the perpetuation of the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) and other native cavity nesting birds in Ohio. To this end, the Ohio Bluebird Society will strive for the best methods to use, conserve and create habitat for the protection of these species.

What's Inside...

- Getting Ready for Bluebirds.....1
- I'll Have What They're Having.....2
- Blooming Bluebirders.....3
- Big Island Wildlife Area.....4-5
- Out of the Box.....6
- Wildlife Preservation (ODNR).....7
- Buyers Beware: Nestboxes.....8
- Behind the Scenes.....9
- OBS Spotlight.....10
- Why Install Predator Guards.....11
- Tribute to John R. Baker.....11
- Upcoming Events.....12
- Member News.....13
- Advisors and Directors Map.....14
- OBS Communication Block.....15

Deadline for Submitting Articles:

- Spring Issue - February 1
- Summer Issue - May 1
- Fall Issue - August 1
- Winter Issue - November 1

Getting Ready For Bluebirds

By Cathy Priebe and Bob Luttmner, Photo by Dave Loeber

The following information has been adapted from avid bluebird man, Bob Luttmner of Versailles, Ohio in Darke County. He is a long time member of the Ohio Bluebird Society and has 350 bluebird boxes ranging over 60 square miles. Bob agreed to share some of his experience/knowledge so you, too could attract and enjoy bluebirds!

Spring is almost upon us and now is the time to get your bluebird nest boxes ready for occupancy! If you already have a bluebird box or trail, this information will be a nice refresher. If you are considering inviting bluebirds on your property, here are some great tips to make your experience more successful for you and your birds.

The most important factor you need to consider before putting up a bluebird trail is location, location, location!! Make sure you have an open field area with a fence line that has small trees and shrubbery for perching, nest building materials and catching bugs. Do not place the box above bushes or tall grass.

This will make it an easy target for predators. Also, place the opening of the box looking out toward the open area and away from prevailing winds, making it easy for the birds to fly in and out. If you are not installing a bluebird trail, consider

putting up at least two boxes. Good birds such as house wrens, tree swallows and chickadees also like boxes and they can opt to nest in the extra house.

Try to think like a bluebird. First, where is the food? Bluebirds like berries, especially mulberry, so you should consider

having fruit-bearing shrubs or trees within a two acre circle of land. If you cannot find the right location in your back yard or nearby, some cemeteries and golf courses are ideal areas for a bluebird trail and they may be open to the idea. Ask them!

Secondly, what predators are in the area? Raccoons, snakes, cats, dogs and yes, the common house sparrow are all enemies that need to be considered. Farms with livestock and other animals tend to have feed

Continued on page 2



Continued from page 1

that attract house sparrows, so try to locate your boxes away from places (birdfeeders) that sparrows frequent. Since this may not be possible, you will have to remove or deter these pests from your boxes. Attach a baffle or grease the poles for raccoons and snakes and simply remove sparrow nests as often as necessary. Sparrow traps are available for the serious bluebird caretaker.

And lastly, once you have your bluebird nest, monitor your trail. Sometimes your tenants will need a helping hand. Removing unwanted ants, flies etc. may be

necessary for the young to survive. And don't worry if you have to touch the babies. The parents will not reject them.

If your first attempt does not attract bluebirds, but you are able to attract swallows or other beneficial birds, don't worry the bluebirds will soon follow. Add another box or two and see what happens. Be flexible, you may have to find another location if you are unsuccessful after numerous attempts. Sometimes it takes perseverance and TLC, but if you build it, they will come! Eventually!

I'll Have What They're Having!



We have just gone through the one of the coldest winters on record, with temperatures significantly below freezing for most of February. I decided that something needed to be done to encourage Bluebirds to my bird feeder, so I decided to use a recipe that I found several years ago with a few changes to the presentation.



A 16" log about 3" in diameter was used for the base. Two holes were drilled in the front, two in the back, and one on each side; these holes were 1 1/2" diameter and 3/4" deep. A small "eye bolt" was screwed in the center of the top for mounting. Any strong cord can be used to hang the feeder to a tree branch.

The first picture above shows three Eastern Bluebirds on a feeder on a morning last February when the temperature was 8 below zero! The recipe for the food in the log will also attract Nuthatches, Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied, Red-headed, and Pileated Woodpeckers (second picture above).

This is the Bluebird Winter Feeding Recipe:

4 cups yellow corn meal; 2 cups all purpose flour;
1 cup lard; 1 cup creamy peanut butter; 1 cup chopped raisins; 1 cup raw sunflower kernels.

Mix dry ingredients with a mixer. With mixer running, add alternating tablespoon of lard and peanut butter. Mix in raisins and sunflower kernels. The goal is to get the mix not too sticky, and not too crumbly. Squeeze into golf ball

size balls and freeze in freezer bags in groups of 5. When ready to use, put the 5 balls in the microwave on high for about 30 seconds. Press the balls in place in the log feeder and get ready for the fun to start.



This gives you something to look forward to next winter in the cold months. Enjoy!

By Dale Rabung,
OBS Board of Trustees

Dale Rabung spoke at the Briarwood Beach Garden Club meeting last evening on "Bluebirds in your Backyard". He was wonderful! Everyone enjoyed his talk and the time flew by! He was very knowledgeable and very passionate. He shared the story about his father introducing bluebirds to him and how special it was to him.

After he took his materials and left and we were conducting our meeting, everyone commented on how much they liked his presentation.

Personally, I was impressed with his knowledge and expertise. I enjoyed how he explained the habitat of bluebirds, the proper boxes for bluebirds, and how you can still have bluebirds in your backyard to feed even if your yard is not conducive for nesting. I also appreciated his explanation of what we can and cannot do with regard to our native songbirds if trying to take over another native bird's nest. My husband saw his first bluebird in our yard this spring, last month, two times and I will definitely be sharing the homemade bluebird feed with him so we can continue attracting bluebirds and other songbirds to our yard.

Thank you,
Amber Dalakas, Secretary - Briarwood Beach Garden Club

Blooming Bluebirders



June is “Visit The Nestbox With a Child month”

Have you ever seen the eyes of a young person light up while looking into a nestbox and seeing eggs or nestlings for the very first time? Did you know that this experience can help create the next generation of conservation enthusiasts?

OBS wants young people to know who we are and understand the important roll OBS plays in the conservation community. More importantly, we want to ensure young people connect with nature and learn about stewardship of our natural resources. You can become the teacher who shows them that path in life. And later in life, they will remember you as the person who gave them the first chance to hold a baby Bluebird.

During the entire month of June we challenge the OBS membership to help get 1000 young people all over the State of Ohio out on the trail to experience firsthand what the Ohio Bluebird Society does to help nature. This includes building nest boxes, installing a trail, checking a nest for blowfly larva, banding babies, counting eggs, and recording data.

We then ask that you share your stories and photos of your outdoor classroom with us. And challenge your friends to Visit The Nestbox With a Child, too!

So can we count on you? Can the kids count on you? Can the future of nature preservation count on you? Let's see what OBS can do for the future! Let's show other Bluebird Societies how much we care about young people.



It's up to you and it all starts Monday June 1st, 2015. Please send your stories and photos to info@ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Find us on Facebook and share them that way, too.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Bluebird-Society/147503035273304>

*In the spirit of Aldo Leopold:
“We must teach our children to see
the land, to understand what they see
and to enjoy what they understand.”*

Twenty-five Nestboxes Found a New Home At Big Island Wildlife Area

By Dick Tuttle, OBS Advisor and Past OBS Blue Feather Award Recipient



Nestboxes in storage do not produce birds. After I had dismantled 26 nestboxes from a bluebird nestbox trail with a 38-year history, I looked at my nestboxes sitting on four shelves in my garage and I wondered where could I transplant them so they could continue to raise birds? Soon, I had two locations in

mind. One was a roadway ditch in front of a park that could sprout nestboxes out of the way of mowers while providing excellent habitats for aerial-feeding Tree Swallows and ground-feeding Eastern Bluebirds.

A second candidate was an elementary school where a wide drainage ditch saturated with cattails led to a large pond surrounded by lots of open space. Presently, both locations could use mosquito control for the safety of our species.

I was close to making a choice as to whom to approach with my idea of transplanting nestboxes from my garage in order to apply conservation techniques that promised good insect control with many educational opportunities when I received an email from Donna Daniel of the Ohio Division of Wildlife. For decades, volunteer Michael Bailey had maintained and monitored nearly fifty nestboxes at the Big Island Wildlife Area in Marion County and he was moving from the area following retirement. The division was searching for a successor to an exceptional bluebirder.

Harry Condry stepped up to take on the rewarding task. Since the early 1980's, Harry has been the effective bluebirder at the Army Corps of Engineers' Alum Creek Dam where he presently maintains 23 nestboxes and a gourd rack of eight gourds that have raised Purple Martins since 2001. For the last three years, Harry has managed 13 boxes throughout the prairie at the OSU campus in Marion. I have known Harry for years as we are both charter members of the WRRC, founded by Don Burton, that later changed its name to the Ohio Wildlife Center.

On March 20, I joined Harry and Wildlife Area Manager Tim Davis for a tour of the 3,800 acre area four miles west

of Marion on Rt. 95. The main objective was to locate 46 nestboxes, but seeing several of the area's five eagle nests was an extra bonus. The wildlife observation deck caught my attention as I saw a future home for my 25 nestboxes. The deck is elevated so bird watchers can see extra acres of prairie and wetlands. Ducks, eagles, and swans were common sights as I became obsessed with hope for a new nestbox grid for Tree Swallows.

The Wildlife observation deck at the Big Island Wildlife Area is surrounded by 25 nestboxes occupied by Tree Swallows



Once home, I began preparing to transplant my boxes from garage to wetland. I purchased five 15-foot lengths of four-inch green drainpipes. I used my table saw to cut each pipe into five 33-inch-long baffles. For each baffle, I drilled a 7/8-inch hole in the center of a plastic cap. I used three small screws to hold each cap to its baffle. After I assembled the baffles, I painted their white caps with Pratt and Lambert's "Yucca Green" to match the nestboxes.

The baffles hang from 20-inch lengths of one-half-inch gas pipe that I have salvaged from former bluebird trails. After I used a pipe cutter to cut 25 lengths of suitable pipe, I drilled two 9/32-inch holes in each; one hole one inch from one end for the nestbox, and the other hole was drilled five inches from the opposite end for it to be bolted to a steel post. An electric conduit clamp, size #0, is bolted to the pipe nine inches from the end drilled for the nestbox's bolt. The conduit clamp supports the baffle below the nestbox.

Big Island supplied the seven-foot-long poles for the grid. The grid poles are smaller and lighter than U-posts typically used to hold stop signs and Wood Duck boxes, but they are similar by having bolt holes in their spines spaced every inch. I learned that the use of the grid poles helps the local economy since they are manufactured in Marion, Ohio.

Harry and I agreed to meet at 9:00 on Friday, March 27 to pick up poles and install the grid. We were joined by wildlife technician Andy Landon who saved us hours of intense labor. Andy brought along the unit's four-wheeled Gator that hauled the poles, nestboxes, baffles, and pipe lengths. Nonetheless, we worked without breaks for the next four hours in below freezing temperatures.

First, we used two 100-foot measuring tapes and two rolls of chalk line to put into practice the Pythagorean Theorem in order to layout the grid with nestboxes 25 yards apart at right angles. We measured 45 feet out from the deck's two corners on its west side. We pounded two tall stakes into the ground and stretched a chalk line north to south that barely touched the stakes as a third point was agreed upon for the first nestbox location. We pounded in the first post which became the first box location for the southern most row of boxes. From this first stake, we pulled the tape to measure 80 feet to the north with the tape barely touching the first two wooden stakes. At 80-feet, we drove a third wooden stake into the ground.

Back at the original steel post, the second tape was used to measure 60 feet to the west, then from the north stake at 80 feet, the tape was pulled 100 feet to cross the second tape at 60 feet to complete a 3-4-5 right triangle with sides measuring 60, 80, and 100 feet, respectively. Once a right angle is established, a combination of chalk lines and measuring tapes were used to layout a grid of nestboxes spaced at 25 yards, or 75 feet, apart. When we finished, we had a grid made up of three rows of seven boxes each, one row of three boxes, and a lone box on the deck's east side that stands very near a wetland. The rows line up beautifully, and since they are corners of squares, boxes also line up diagonally. The grid's boxes surround the deck on three sides and the grid measures 75 x 150 yards.

Of course, birds don't care about right angles and symmetry, but such exactness catches the eye of many people. As for birds and people, nestboxes should point in an arc from east to south so entrances can catch the morning sun while avoiding overheating due to afternoon sunlight. Keeping this and the viewing people in mind, we aimed the boxes from east to south while making sure that all entrances can be seen by bird watchers on the deck.

All that is seen in this photo, except the ladder, is described in its article. Have fun in the workshop and field helping our native cavity nesters.



We installed a yellow sign titled "Wildlife Management for Tree Swallows" a short distance from the deck. This sign explains the spacing of the boxes and the fact that the avian inhabitants will consume more than 300,000 small insects during the 45-day period when each box is used to raise a family. Why didn't we tack the sign to the deck itself? I have had three different photographers show and tell me that they were extremely happy to photograph swallows perched on grid signs at the Delaware Wildlife Area. Swallows perched on the signs produce good composition for photographs.

Hopefully, the Big Island grid will inspire many of its visitors to establish their own grids. I have recently counted four grids in Delaware County on private lands and I hope the idea continues to grow. Beavers were the original grid makers before the European Fur Market arrived in the 1600's. As far as formal education goes, Elgin High School is two miles away if you are a crow, and three road miles away for our species. Yes, the high school and the wildlife area do interact and the grid is an added educational resource. This all makes me feel good since I am a member of the 1962 class from Prospect High School, the last class before consolidation to form Elgin. In addition, during my genealogical quest to find ancestors in the late 1970's, I located farms close to the northwest corner of the wildlife area where five of my ancestral families settled in the early 1800's. They came from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and one family migrated directly from England, so in more ways than one, the grid at Big Island is a full circle accomplishment for me.

And, so far, individual visits to see how things are going tell us that every nestbox in the new grid has been claimed by Tree Swallows, thanks to the previous dedication of Michael Bailey.



Out of the Box

AMERICAN KESTREL

Falco sparverius

By Jim Jablonski

Although they might not realize it, everyone has seen kestrels. At least those of us who have driven country roads have seen the small falcons serving as sentries on telephone lines and fence posts, or patrolling over farm land, keeping an eye out for field mice, large insects or other agricultural pests.

The small falcon's size and darker colors might hurt identification from a distance but at close range there is no mistaking the kestrel. Once known as the sparrow hawk for its tendency to seize smaller birds, the kestrel's vertical stripes on the side of its head are striking as are the blue and salmon coloration of its head and the blue and gray wings. The orange and brown stripes along its back and the brown and white coloring of its front make the kestrel our most vibrantly colored falcon.



The small raptor's hunting patterns are also distinctive. It keeps an eye on the surrounding fields from its perch atop poles and posts, often pumping its tail in order to maintain balance. When it spots its prey, the kestrel will hover above by flapping its sickle-shaped wings into the wind before dropping and seizing the victim.

The kestrel is a cavity nester, making good use of natural cavities, woodpecker holes, nest boxes and even holes in cacti in southwestern desert areas. The nest is no particular bother once a hole is found. Neither parent feels a need to line it with any material. The three to seven pinkish eggs and

eventual hatchlings seem to do fine in the spare nest. Males are good providers in doing all the hunting during the breeding period. Incubation lasts up to thirty-one days as does fledging. Generally there is just one brood but a second is possible.

Most range maps show the kestrel's yearlong territory to almost exactly match the borders of the U.S. except in the south where it spreads into Mexico and Central America. As with bluebirds, the kestrel's reliance on cavities for nesting is

a problem. After the introduction of starlings to the U.S, the tiny falcon has been forced to battle that nasty invader for nesting spots. However, according to Kenn Kaufman's *Lives of North American Birds*, the kestrel's population seems to be healthy in most area of the U.S., except the Northeast where its numbers seem to be

declining. He points out that regularly checked and maintained nest boxes have seemed to help it recover in localized areas.

With help, the kestrel should be around for a long time to come. Now if I could only get them to patrol my backyard for voles and house sparrows!

References: The Birder's Handbook, Paul Ehrlich, David Dobkin and Darryle Wheye; The Crossley Guide: Eastern Birds, Richard Crossley; Field Guide to Birds: Eastern Region, Donald & Lillian Stokes; Lives of North American Birds, Kenn Kaufman.



Wildlife Preservation

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

By Jim McCormac



The ruby-throated hummingbirds are arriving in the Buckeye State, having survived yet another amazing journey. Our only native hummingbird, ruby-throats are familiar sights in many a backyard and feeding them is very popular.

But, the rest of the story...

Ruby-throated hummingbirds spend the winter in tropical climates very different from Ohio, and in habitats totally dissimilar to ours. Most of our hummers overwinter in Central America, from Costa Rica to the Yucatan region of Mexico. Hummingbirds nesting in Ohio will have traveled some 2,000 miles to get here, including a 525 mile flight across the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Take a nickel and heft it in your hand. The coin outweighs a ruby-throated hummingbird. Yet these elfin dynamos rank high among the world's most specialized animals. At full whirl, a hummer's wings beat up to 80 times a second; when a male hits full speed in a courtship display power dive, its wings might fan the air 200 times a second.

It takes serious muscle to fly like this, and a ruby-throated hummingbird's muscle mass would make Arnold Schwarzenegger envious. About 25% of a hummer's weight is the flight muscles. A big heart is also required to pump blood through this supercharged system; a hummer's heart might tick over 1,200 times a minute in flight.

Good for us that these little beasts aren't the size of great blue herons. Anyone who spends time around them knows how feisty and pugnacious hummingbirds are, and if they were much larger we'd probably be in trouble if we got in their way.

Fifteen species of hummingbirds breed in the United States, but the ruby-throated is the only one that nests in Ohio and the eastern U.S. They are common here, nesting in all of our eighty-eight counties. The nest is a piece of work – a tiny golf ball-sized affair of plant down and lichens, bound together by spider webs. Once



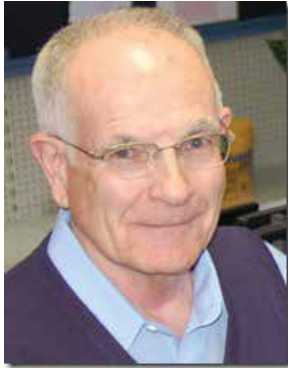
complete, two eggs the size of your pinky fingernail are laid. If all goes well, about a month later the young hummers make their first flight.

Luring hummingbirds into your yard is easy. Specialized feeders are readily available; just fill one with a mixture of one part white cane sugar to four parts water. Multiple feeders often attract more birds. Some large feeder operations bring in dozens of hummingbirds, making for a spectacular show. Another way to make a hummer-friendly yard is to plant suitable native plants. Good choices include blue vervain; cardinal-flower; touch-me-nots (*Impatiens*); wild bergamot; and wild columbine.

Add a few hummingbird-friendly touches to your yard, and you may play host to one of nature's most incredible flying machines.

Buyer Beware: Not All Nest Boxes are the Same

by Mel Bolt, OBS Advisor and Past OBS Blue Feather Award Recipient



Early on in my association with OBS I came across information about the first designed nest box with an open roof touted by Vince Bauldery. He claimed it to be sparrow proof. I never tried it but NABS declared it an unsafe box, one of the reasons was due to the hot sunlight on the chicks. Later on another

fellow produced the Native American box which was a different style box with a fully open screened top. They touted it as being like the fence post that Bluebirds used prior to nest boxes which were not introduced until 1850. Here again the sun light is a factor but also the enclosed container when wet with rain retained moisture causing the chicks to die from hypothermia. Wet nests was another problem with the Bauldery box.

The fence post nest were exposed to the open air so they would or could dry out rather quickly. I relate this to illustrate open top boxes of different sorts are not new and to my knowledge they are failures. Keep in mind that House Sparrows will colonize Spruce Trees, building huge grass nest which are exposed to the rain. They also build nest in open areas around shopping malls and stores behind signs and other semi concealed areas. These nest are very bulky but the the thickness of the nest helps to shed the rain and the being open to the air allows them to dry out rather quickly, thus being successful.

Now they are coming up with plastic covered openings. I looked on the internet and found three vendors advertising boxes with open tops covered with plastic. Will they ever learn that the July and August hot sun, especially in the South and even in the North, when directly overhead can shine on newly hatched chicks and blister or burn their tender skin? Also, the sun shining into the box can elevate the inside temperature

of the box. If the temperature reaches 107 degrees, so I have read, the chicks will die and the eggs cannot hatch. One of several reasons for facing the boxes eastward is to keep the sun out of the entrance hole.

John Lapin of Poland, OH (now deceased and a recipient of the Blue feather Award), once advocated boxes with a removable side of wood and plastic. He ask me to experiment with one of them. I put it on a power pole facing West but with shade from a tree in the later part of the day. I allowed a sparrow to build a nest and lay 2 eggs with the wood side installed. Then I replaced it with the plastic side and poked a hole in the side of the nest to expose light into the cavity. The sparrows repaired the nest and laid the 3rd egg. Then I again opened up the light. The male sparrow abandoned the box, went to my next door neighbor's box of Bluebird chicks and started attacking it, which is their nature to do when disturbance their nest is made. I ask the neighbor man to shoot it with his BB gun but he declined. So, I placed a box 8 ft. away with a trap and saved the Bluebirds.

Then I took the box to the back of the lot which was wooded. Even the House Wrens would not use it with the plastic side installed. I had boxes on the cow pasture fence row of OARDC. The nest season one of them was this box with the plastic side installed on the OARDC fence. I don't recall specifically which year the Bluebirds or Tree Swallows used it first but one hatched babies one year and the next the other had babies with the plastic side in place. Both fledged successfully. This box was placed facing due East so as not to have the hot sun invading the box. I gave John a progressive report on the events as they happened.

The suggested moral of this experience is to avoid the advertised sales gimmicks of boxes with covered or uncovered holes in nest boxes as they are simply not suitable for our Bluebirds and our other small cavity nesting birds to use for raising their families.

Behind the Scenes...

From the OBS Trustees Meeting

On April 11th the Ohio Bluebird Society trustees and officers met at the Wilderness Center in Wilmot, Ohio from 10am to 2pm. Those attending were Jay Brindo, President, Mike Watson, Vice President, Dianna Plant, Sec/Treasurer, Nancy Cox, membership Chair, and trustees Penny Brandau, Chuck Jakubchak, Don Plant, and Dale Rabung.

A brief summary by Penny Brandau of Dianna Plant's meeting notes is provided for those of you who would like to know what new things are happening in OBS: The treasurer's report listed assets of \$15,097.25 as of March 31, 2015 - stable since last fall.

Nancy Cox's membership update reported that there are 350 current members. More are choosing to renew as 3 year members. Nancy gave an explanation of the membership process.

Mike Watson reported 5495 bluebird fledglings last year. Information is collected on several species which are cavity nesters. The fledgling numbers are up. 73 reports were submitted to OBS in 2014.

A review of the many regional OBS workshops which have been held so far in Ohio followed including several which have been planned and will be held within the next 2 months.

Lots of discussion surrounded the topics of making OBS DVDs/Powerpoints which could be used for educational programs. Carrie and Penny presented some new ideas and review of current materials.

There will be a need for 2 new Trustees next year so nominations of candidates will be needed.

Chuck Jakubchak gave an update on the new Legacy Program which has gotten off to a good start and is a very meaningful way to honor a loved one.

Jay Brindo talked about a planned OBS challenge to reach hundreds of children in June by taking them to see nestboxes. Information about this will be included on the OBS website and in the next newsletter.

The OBS grant program was reviewed, ideas were considered.

Next year's OBS conference preliminary ideas were talked about including location, costs, responsibilities, vendors/raffle, and charges. Possible locations will be sought within the next 2 weeks.

The newsletter needs were mentioned and several ideas and options were suggested. Penny will gather information and articles for the next newsletter.

The OBS members' business meeting is planned for October 24th at the Wilderness Center in Wilmot, Ohio. This will be an opportunity for members to be actively involved in OBS decisions and the state of OBS. This is the required once per year "Member's Business Meeting" as stated in the Bylaws. Please come!

I hope this gives you some insight into some of the work being done "behind the scenes" by the OBS officers and trustees!

We are here to work with each other and you to fulfill the OBS mission!



OBS Spotlight

Legacy Program Honoree: John R. Love

By Chuck Jakubchak, OBS Board of Trustees Photo by Jeanne Jakubchak

The OBS Legacy Program kicked off in late 2014 and the first honor recipient was Mr. John R. Love. Marsha Sergi, Mr. Love's stepdaughter, contacted the OBS in late November and requested that a bluebird nesting box be erected in his honor. Approximately 30 days later, on a sunny, crisp December morning, Dale Rabung (OBS Trustee and experienced volunteer) placed a new, cedar nesting box on Bunker Hill golf course in Medina and affixed a fitting plaque with John's name, along with his status as a WWII veteran and bluebird enthusiast. The box was strategically located between fairways, adjacent to a wooded plot and overlooking a scenic pond; perfect habitat for bluebirds.

Mrs. Sergi's Legacy donation was designated as a gift to her grieving mother at Christmas, since Mr. Love, her husband of 32 years, had recently passed away. Mrs. Love was thrilled with the idea of having a nest box in the midst of a beautiful golf course and she was optimistic that "his" box would draw many beautiful bluebirds. The nest box seemed like the perfect gift and a fitting way to honor a special man.

John R. Love enjoyed watching backyard birds for many years and liked feeding them throughout the year. When he was 82 he received a bluebird nest box as a Christmas gift and quickly attracted interested bluebirds. John became hooked on the hobby and shortly thereafter purchased additional boxes. His interest blossomed along with his population of bluebirds in his backyard and he maintained an interest in bluebirds until his unfortunate passing at the age of 89.

The Ohio Bluebird Society was pleased to have the opportunity to memorialize John R. Love. Every OBS member that participated in the Legacy Box process felt privileged to contribute to the erection of a nest box that honors his life and his love of the Eastern Bluebird. We especially want to thank Marsha Sergi for the donation and for being the first individual to participate in the OBS Legacy Program.



Why Install Predator Guards?

by Jay K. Brindo, OBS President



A few years back while shadowing as a volunteer, my mentor and I were out monitoring our trail. We approached a box we knew was home to five 10 day old Bluebird nestlings. When we opened the box you would have thought you heard two little girls screaming. To say the least we were a bit shocked. After that I started installing predator guards on my trail. They not only protect the nest, but I sleep much better too! There are many areas in nature where we have no control, but doing all we can to help is part of good stewardship. Many styles of guards are available but my personal preference is the cone style shown under one of the boxes I displayed in the ODNR area at our local Fair.

A Tribute to John R. Baker, 1928-2014

John Baker, of Jeromesville, Ohio, known as the “Bluebird Man” of Ashland County, passed away on December 26, 2014.

Most of you probably have never heard of John, but I wish you could have gotten to know him as I did. I got to know John in 1990, when we attended the same church. From the very beginning, John and I established a friendship. After church, each Sunday, John and I would stand at the back of the church, and talk about one of our truly favorite subjects, “Bluebirds.” I saw in John a truly loving compassion for these wonderful “blue jewels.”

John was a quiet, humble person, never seeking glory for himself. He wasn't a person that was involved with organizations, which is why he never became a member of OBS. But, during his 30 year career as a well-tender for Columbia Gas Transmission, he developed an 80-

box Bluebird trail, at the wells that he tended. He also provided and managed nest boxes for friends and neighbors, over a wide area in Ashland County.

For me, John was one of those “unsung heroes” for Bluebird conservation. I always have thought that if anyone deserved the “Blue Feather Award,” it would be someone like John Baker. His love for Bluebirds would have been a true inspiration for all of us. I know I will truly miss him. I know his wonderful family will miss him. But there is one thing we can all be assured of, John is managing his Bluebirds in his new celestial home.



Thank you, John, for your friendship and dedication.

By Don Plant,
OBS Board of Trustees

Upcoming Dates & Events



Drumroll..... **The Ohio Bluebird Society has just decided on a time and place for next year's exciting spring conference so please make plans to join us on Feb. 20th, 2016** at the Ashland University! More information will be announced on the OBS website as further details are finalized. Information will also be posted on the OBS Facebook site so please visit us there too!

A members meeting for all Ohio Bluebird Society members will be held on October 24th, 2015 at the Wilderness Center in Wilmot. Please mark your calendars and look for more details on the OBS website and Facebook page!

Cofounders of the Ohio Bluebird Society F. Reid and Teresa T. Caldwell will be hosting a **Conservation Workshop on June 18th, 2015** at the Athens Public Library. The title of the workshop is "Bluebirds and other Cavity Nesting 'Bug Busters'". For more information check out the OBS website link for upcoming events or email to teresacaldwell@athensswcd.org

The 38th Annual North American Bluebird Society Annual Conference will take place September 17-20 in beautiful Magog, Quebec, Canada. Check in Thursday and check out Sunday. More details will be included in the NABS summer journal and also on their website: www.nabluebirdsociety.org. Going to a national conference is a great experience and a wonderful excuse to travel to a different region every year and meet other fellow bluebird lovers!

On May 31 from 1-5 p.m., the Holden Arboretum is hosting a Basics of Bluebirding Workshop. Topics covered include: Proper nest box design and installation, solutions to common problems and more! The workshop is free for members and \$10 for non-members. See our website for more information!

The annual Optics Fling held in Amish Country will take place on June 5 and 6. This free event will feature guided bird trips to local hot spots including barn owl locations, blue grosbeaks, bobolinks and up to 18 species of nesting Warblers. Try out new optics equipment before you purchase - many retailers including Opticron of North America.!

ECO TOUR: ECUADOR

The Wilderness Center in Wilmot, Ohio is hosting an EcoTour trip to Ecuador this year from November 3rd through the 12th. The primary focus of this trip will be birdwatching and they expect this trip to be a journey of a lifetime. In 2011 The Wilderness Center's trip to Ecuador was extremely successful and they saw 274 different species, 39 of which were hummingbirds.

The leader of the Ecuador trip is OBS Trustee, Chuck Jakubchak and Chuck would be happy to answer any questions should you be interested in birding Ecuador. Chuck can be contacted via email at jakubchak@yahoo.com or via phone at 440.238.1720. Chuck would really enjoy having OBS members join him on this exciting trip!

Member News



OBS Members - PLEASE tell us what you are up to!

Bluebird conservation has largely been a grassroots effort, succeeding due to the large number of individuals installing and maintaining nest boxes in the backyard, neighborhood parks, cemetery, and other locations. Equally important are educational and outreach efforts; many nest boxes were installed after someone was inspired by an active bluebirder. OBS knows that our members offer many important presentations and are involved in other events that allow the chance to reach out to non-bluebirders or bluebird novices.

We are asking our members to please report the presentations that they offer and any event where they represent OBS and the bluebird community. This may be a speaking event at your local garden club or hosting a booth at an Earth Day celebration.

Why is OBS interested in knowing about these events? As mentioned above, these are a vital part of the grassroots conservation effort and OBS would like to support these efforts if we can. We can send email blitzes to our members, post on Facebook and our website, and include it in the newsletter. If you think that kind of promotion of the event will help attendance, please let us know.

Second, OBS would like to compile a list of these activities as another measure of our efforts towards the OBS mission. We consider this to be as important as the fledgling count reports. It directly measures how the OBS community is reaching out to educate others about bluebirds and other cavity nesting species and their conservation. This list will be the basis for a county by county report presented to the board of trustees.

Please provide the following information for your events:

1. Name of Event
2. Location
3. County
4. Date and Time
5. Brief Description
6. Would you like OBS to help promote this event?

Thank you for sharing this information and for everything else you do on behalf of bluebirds and their conservation!

E-mail: info@ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Phone: 330.466.6926

Website: www.ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Address: PMB 111, 343 West Milltown Rd., Wooster, Ohio 44691-7241

Welcome To Our New Members

June Brott
Matt & Kristin Dailey
Vick & Pam Feinauer
Barb Hubbell
Ford Kelly
Pam Miller
Jan Oyster
Breanne Shank
Max Stacy
Angela Thompson
Jeff Tiller
Barbara White

Donations

Donations to The Legacy Fund - \$375.00

Marsha Sergi - \$125.00

In memory of John R. Love - Box placed and monitored by Dale Rabung, Medina County

Janice Petko - \$125.00

In memory of Arlene Kunkel - Box placed and monitored by Carma Jo Kauffman, Knox County

Don and Diana Plant - \$125.00

In memory of John Baker - Box placed and monitored by Don and Diana Plant, Richland County

Other Donations - \$75.00

Navarre Garden Club, Navarre - \$50.00

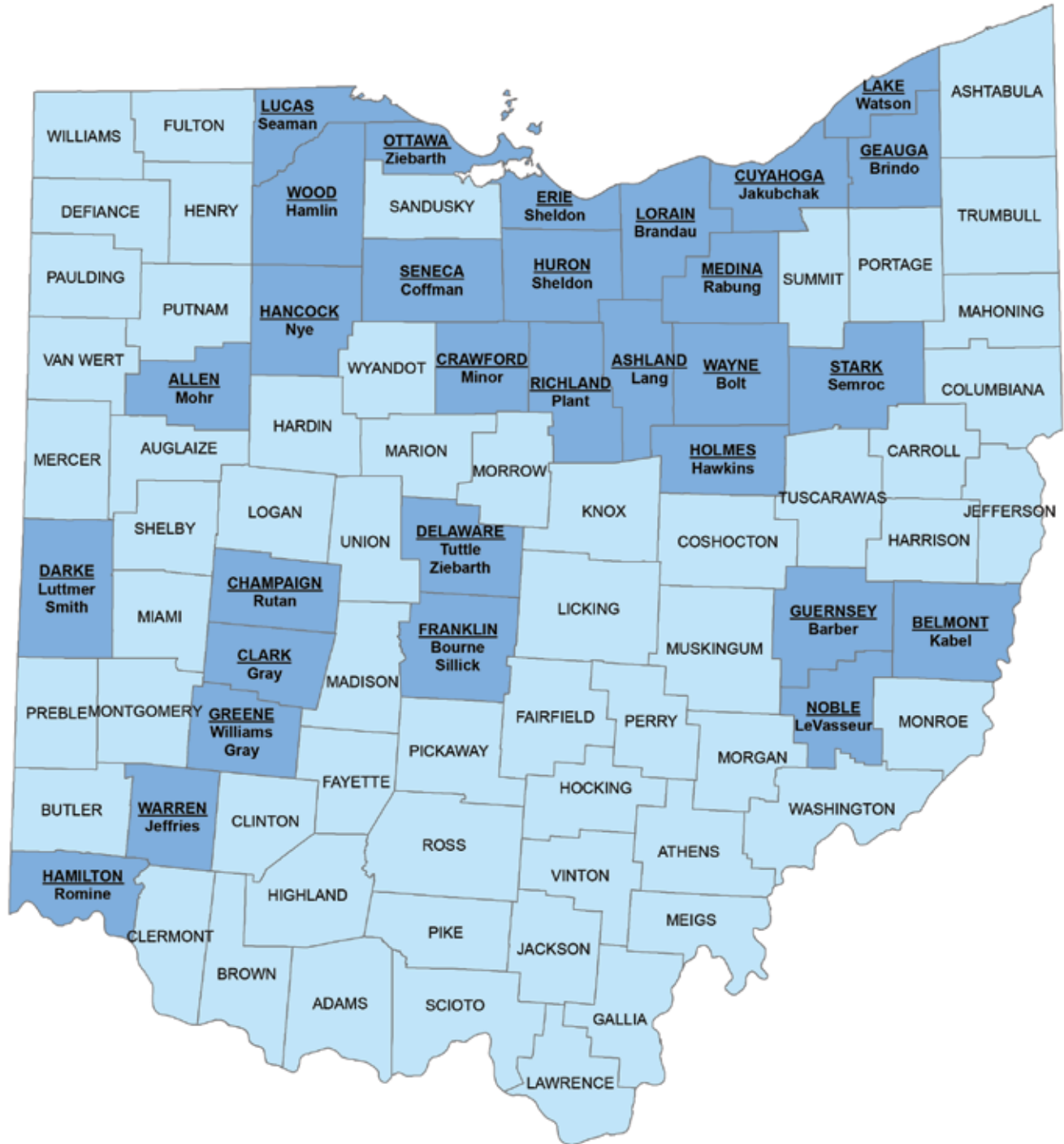
For program presented by Mel Bolt

Floralynn Garden Club, Wooster - \$25.00

For program presented by Marcella Hawkins

Ohio Bluebird Society

Counties with Director, Advisor, or Area Contact



Counties w/ Director, Advisor, or Area Contact
 Counties w/out



created by Mike Watson; The Holden Arboretum

OBS Area Contacts (as of April 1, 2014)

Up-to-date list is available online at <http://www.ohiobluebirdsociety.org/about/311-2/>

County	Name	Phone #	Alt. Phone #	E-mail
Allen	Mohr, Mark	419.223.1025, phone mailbox 3		mmohr@jampd.com
Ashland	Lang, Linda	419-945-3005		nrws_lang@tccsa.net
Belmont	Kabel, Michael	304-551-2517		bluebirdpadre@yahoo.com
Champaign	Rutan, Jean	937-834-3336		cpjrutan@gmail.com
Cuyahoga	Jakubchak, Chuck	440.238.1720		jakubchak@yahoo.com
Darke	Luttmer, Bob	937-526-5477		bonnie561@roadrunner.com
Darke	Smith, Tom	937-996-1629		bluebirdman@embarqmail.com
Delaware	Tuttle, Dick	740.363.6433		ohtres@cs.com
Delaware	Ziebarth, Paula	614-848-3784		paulaz@columbus.rr.com
Erie	Sheldon, Dean	419-752-1451		seedbed@accnorwalk.com
Franklin	Bourne, Lum & Meriam	614-882-1188		meriam.lum@worldnet.att.net
Franklin	Sillick, Darlene	614.288.3696		azuretrails@columbus.rr.com
Franklin	Gray, Bethany	614-798-5123		ohiobluebirder@gmail.com
Geauga	Brindo, Jay K.	440.343.9275		jbrindo@aol.com
Greene	Williams, Alice	937-848-2595	937-266-1857	alikay1941@aol.com
Guernsey	Barber, Tom	740-439-4284		klbarber62@roadrunner.com
Hamilton	Romine, Jim	513-236-5598		jdromine@cincinnati.com
Hancock	Nye, Fred	419-387-7465		evaferdy@tds.net
Holmes	Hawkins, Marcella	330.465.6987	330.276.0909	gofish710@embarqmail.com
Huron	Sheldon, Dean	419-752-1451		seedbed@accnorwalk.com
Knox	Glass, Dale	740-397-5573		dglassohio@yahoo.com
Lake	Watson, Mike	440-946-4400 x132	440-813-2628	mwatson@holdenarb.org
Lorain	Brandau, Penny	440-670-3684		pennybrandau@gmail.com
Lucas	Seaman, Tammy	419-349-5162		erictammy@sbcglobal.net
Medina	Rabung, Dale	330-725-0895(H)	216-973-1503 (C)	
Noble	Levasseur, Doug	740-630-7945		emdlev@clover.net
Ottawa	Ziebarth, Paula	614-848-3784		paulaz@columbus.rr.com
Richland	Plant, Don	419.606.7011		ddplantbirds@yahoo.com
Seneca	Coffman, Jim	419.618.1835	419.862.4268	jrusscoff@gmail.com
Stark	Semroc, Judy	330-877-3551		rainefox@neo.rr.com
Warren	Jeffries, Art	317-445-8559		gonebirding@hotmail.com
Wayne	Bolt, Mel	330-262-0448		mellen@sssnet.com
Wood	Hamlin, Terry	419-349-8596		tkhamlin@icloud.com

OBS Board of Trustees and Advisors

TRUSTEES

Penny Brandau - Newsletter Editor:
440.670.3684
pennybrandau@gmail.com

Jay K. Brindo - President:
440.343.9275
JBrindo@aol.com

Carrie Elvey: 330.359.5235
carrie@wildernesscenter.org

Kurt Gaertner: (513) 831-1711, ext. 121
kgaertner@cincynature.org

Chuck Jakubchak: 440.238.1720
jakubchak@yahoo.com

Mary Lee Minor: 419.562.6377
chickadee@columbus.rr.com

Don Plant: 419.938.3737
ddplantbirds@yahoo.com

Dale Rabung: 330.725.0895
twodr@zoominternet.net

Mike Watson - Vice President:
440.946.4400 ext. 132
mwatson@holdenarb.org

ADVISORS

Mel Bolt: 330.262.0448
mellen@sssnet.com

Linda Lang: 419.651.4196

Dean Sheldon: 419.752.1451
seedbed@frontier.com

Dick Tuttle: 740.363.6433

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Diana Plant

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Nancy Cox: 440.354.0894
obschair@gmail.com

E-mail:

info@ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Phone:

330.466.6926

Website:

www.ohiobluebirdsociety.org

Address:

PMB 111, 343 West Milltown Rd.
Wooster, Ohio 44691-7241

facebook

Like us on Facebook! Search for Ohio Bluebird Society to join our group.



OHIO BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

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343 W. Milltown Rd.
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Ohio Bluebird Society Membership Application

- | Membership Class | Annual | 3-years |
|---|--------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (under 21) | \$10 | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Sr. Family | \$12 | \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular/Family | \$15 | \$40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational | \$40 | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | \$100 | \$275 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life | \$300 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax deductible gift to OBS \$ _____ | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership renewal | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New membership | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in participating in OBS activities | | |

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

County: _____

E-mail: _____

Make checks payable to:
Ohio Bluebird Society

Mail to:

OBS
PMB 111, 343 W. Milltown Rd.
Wooster, OH 44691-7214

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