

The Tennessee Bluebird

Winter Edition



Photo By Bill Lewis

Tennessee Bluebird Society Honor Roll (Life Time Members)

Margaret Beasley
Stan & Linda Colburn
Mary Cushman
Chuck & Terry James
John Langley
Farrell & Jane Roe
Donald Turner
Dr. Heather Wilkins

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**Interested in
becoming a Tennessee
Bluebird Society Life
Time Member. For more
details see the application
on the last page of this
newsletter.**

BLUEBIRD QUOTES

*Checking on a bluebird
trail is like opening one
Christmas present after
another. Each box has a*



surprise inside.

*- Helen S. Munro, The
Lesson of the Bluebird, 2006
Bluebird Winter*

PRESIDENTS LETTER CHUCK JAMES

Another very active nesting season has drawn to a close. 2016 saw many early nests, however, the heat and dryness of the summer slowed down nesting activities. We did have a number of bluebirds produce a third brood which was much better than the 2015 season.



As this year comes to an end we have many things to be thankful for: We have added a new and very energetic chapter to the Tennessee Bluebird Society in Shelby County, TN (Collierville). We have also added new TBS Board members that are willing to take an active role in TBS. Awareness of TBS statewide has grown and we are receiving many more requests for educational programs. During 2017 we will be launching our County Coordinator program statewide, which will help us reach out and provide support to all the counties in Tennessee with educational programs and awareness of the issues that face our native cavity nesting birds and conservation issues.

Are you interested in supporting the Tennessee Bluebird Society by becoming a County Coordinator? It's a great way to give back to your community by providing educational programs for individuals interested in birding and conservation. You control your commitment and we provide you with all the materials and information you need for this program. We will also give the first presentation in your county to make sure you are comfortable with the presentation and the questions that will be asked.

If you are interested in becoming a County Coordinator for the Tennessee Bluebird Society please send me an email at tnsialia@gmail.com. I'll be happy to talk to you about this fun program.

In this year end issue of the Tennessee Bluebird Society newsletter we will be recapping 2016. We will also provide some good practices for the upcoming winter months.

Chuck James

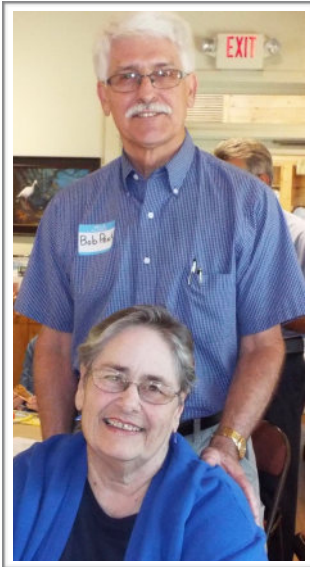
President

Tennessee Bluebird Society

2016 3RD ANNUAL TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The 2016 3rd Annual Tennessee Bluebird Society Meeting was held at Warner Park, Nashville, TN October 15, 2016.

First we like to thank Jerry Rysticken and Chuck Cruickshank for chairing our 3rd annual meeting.



Judy & Bob Peak

They put in a lot of time and effort and it showed in a wonderfully planned event. We are pleased that 100% of the TBS Board attended this annual meeting.

After a short business meeting we had three presentations from across the state: Our first presentation was by Bob and Judy Peak. For the past 25 years, Bob and Judy Peak have monitored and managed the bluebird nest boxes on federal lands (currently 170 boxes), as well as a 60-box bluebird trail at nearby

Lake Barkley State Resort Park (LBSRP) in Trigg County, Kentucky. The Peaks refer to their volunteer effort as Project SOS (Save Our Sialia). During their tenure, Bob and Judy have recorded over 30,000 bluebird fledglings on these public lands, and in recent years, the annual bluebird fledgling totals for these properties have been averaging around 1,800 baby bluebirds per year.



Justine Cucchiara

Our second presenter was Justine Cucchiara Park Manager of Seven Islands State Birding Park in Kodak, TN. She reported on the joint effort with the Tennessee Bluebird Society in establishing a 50 nest box trail at Seven Islands State Birding Park. She also gave an up date on current activities and projects ongoing at Seven Islands State Birding Park. Justine has opened the doors for TBS with other

State Parks within Tennessee.



Dr. Dawn Wilkins

Our third speaker was Dr. Dawn Wilkins, Professor from the University of Tennessee, Martin Campus.

She spoke on the bluebirds friend the woodpecker. She went over the variety of woodpeckers in Tennessee and their habits. Of course, the woodpecker will make cavities that bluebirds rely on when there is not a nest box to nest in during the spring.

In addition to these great speakers Farrell Roe was presented the "Tennessee Bluebird Society Life Time Achievement Award" for his more than 40 years in conservation and restoration of the bluebird in Tennessee. Farrell lead the Telephone Pioneers in the direction of bluebirding. He served on the NABS Board, Co-Founder of TBS and served as President for the first two years. Founder of Bluebirds Across America and much more.

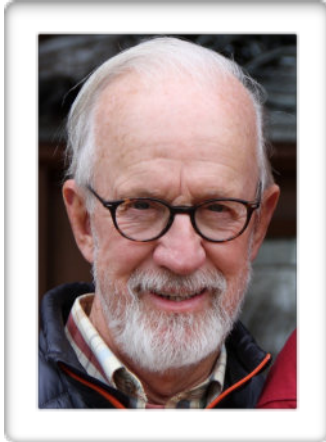


Left to Right: Chuck James & Farrell Roe

REMEMBERING BILL LEWIS BY: CHUCK JAMES**The Traveler**

This past May we lost a true bluebird lover Bill Lewis. We met Bill and his lovely wife Ann in January of 2014. After retiring from a very successful career Bill looked for a simpler life in the country in Blount County, TN.

Ann and Bill settled on an eighty acre site and built a beautiful timber framed home along with a hanger and other out buildings. In addition to his wife Bill enjoyed four things. His peace and quiet, his four dogs, bluebirds and photography.



Bill Lewis

The first time I went to Bill's home I couldn't comprehend what I was seeing. He had feeders everywhere and he was feeding hundreds of bluebirds several times a day.

In his hanger he had a regular operation where he was ordering thousands of live meal worms at a time, then fattening them up to feed to the bluebirds.

Ann Lewis was generous in providing us with some of Bill's photo's to share with fellow bluebirders. Please understand these are for our use only and not to be copied.

Enjoy Bill's beautiful photography.



Photo By Bill Lewis



Photo By Bill Lewis

Blues

REMEMBERING BILL LEWIS BY: CHUCK JAMES

Quilting Bee



Photo By Bill Lewis

Blue Board Meeting



Photo By Bill Lewis

Winter Blue



Photo By Bill Lewis

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NEW TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS

We welcomed in three new Tennessee Bluebird Society Board Members this year that we would like to introduce to our members: Rosemary Chamberlain, Kathy Dooley and Fred Robertson.

Rosemary and her husband, Mark, moved to Dickson seven years ago from Louisiana. Rosemary is a retired RN. She and her husband run



Rosemary Chamberlain

their own business, Bite Terminator and Utility Security Solutions. They love to kayak, hike and try to go to as many TN State Parks as their time allows. Rosemary and Mark are both certified TN State Naturalists. They have turned their property into a wildlife nature sanctuary and plant native plants, wildflowers and milkweed. They have fifteen nest boxes on their property as well as thirty-three nest boxes at Montgomery Bell State Park that they maintain and monitor. Rosemary is very involved in helping our monarch population as well as eastern bluebirds.

Kathy Dooley has always had an interest in birds but, until now, actualizing her interest was limited to broadcasting birdseed on her deck and maintaining a water source and suet for those regular visitors to her “backyard”

in San Francisco, California, mostly chickadees, scrub jays and mourning doves.

After retiring from Nursing in the fall of last year, Kathy relocated to Tellico Village (Loudon, TN) late in January 2016 and immediately began getting involved in the many activities available to the residents in this highly active community. At the outset, two interests were prominent on her To Do List: Birding and Tai Chi.

Following an informative presentation and video of bluebirds at the Public Library at Tellico Village Bluebird she joined both TBS and NABS and volunteered to serve on the TBS Board. Prior to watching the video, she had never seen a bluebird! Shortly after, she was invited by Chuck to learn first hand how to monitor the bluebird boxes on a 18-hole neighborhood golf course. What a great experience that was for her! Since then, she accompanied Chuck and Jerry Rysticken to two sites where new bluebird boxes/monitoring programs are planned and

she is now helping to monitor the bluebird boxes in her Chota Landing lakeside neighborhood. Kathy said she is honored to be a new Board member of TBS and pledged a longterm commitment to her community.



Kathy Dooley

NEW TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS

Fred Robertson left corporate America in 1997 to work for himself as a Furniture Medic in the Memphis area, retiring in 2006.

Fred then wrote a book, went shooting rifle and pistol, did two deer hunts successfully, formed an LLC with his sister and brother, managed it for 2 years and dissolved it in 2015.

Fred got bored last year and found his father's patterns for Bluebird houses from the 1980's and made a couple for the neighborhood, only one has been nested in so far. His Dad was the "Bluebird Colonel" a member of NABS from the 1980's until his passing in 1998.



Fred Robertson

Fred's neighbor had some old cedar fence boards his wife wanted gone so Fred got 60 or so and made a few nest boxes to sell. Another neighbor wanted him to use scrap wood for craft crosses but could not assemble them, so he cut and assemble them for her. This same neighbor introduced Fred to Joanne Watson a Tennessee Bluebird Society Board Member and Membership Chair in February 2016 and that's how it all started.

Making over 100 nest boxes in 2016 and more to come by the end of the year on trails in Collierville, Germantown, Cordova and elsewhere. Schools appear to be the easiest as teachers and students monitor them weekly as a science or outdoor adventure. PTSAs sponsor

them and Fred sells his nest boxes on poles with predator guards.

The Tennessee Bluebird Societies Shelby County Chapter's first trail in Collierville, for that matter in Shelby County, was dedicated on June 7 in Hinton Park in Collierville.

Fred has also taken on the responsibility of becoming the President of the Shelby County Chapter of the Tennessee Bluebird Society.



MEETING ARTIST NICK FARRELL

Nick Farrell moved to Rarity Bay ,TN. from Green Bay, WI 17 years ago with his wife Patti and daughter Molly. His love of golf, fishing, and now he brings things to life through his watercolor painting and drawings. Nick was on the local board of Boys and Girls Club, and other community boards, he started a golf team at Hiwassee College ,Madisonville,TN and currently promoting the arts in Monroe County, TN.

Although he and his wife loved Green Bay and all their friends, moving to Tennessee has been a great experience and opened up doors for him and his wife, and their daughter Molly who is a english teacher in Alcoa,TN. Nick's wife is very active in the local Meals on Wheels program and the arts when not riding her horse. They are also life long Packer Backer's.

Nick started watercolor painting 7 years ago at age of 69 through a class given by Jean Porter in Rarity Bay, TN. He wasn't very good for the first three years but kept at it under Joe Trout a wonderful local artist.

Joe saw something and it started to develop. Nick went to pen/ink /watercolor about three years ago and has been

progressing steadily. He loves to draw and paint birds, horses, nature, portraits, but specially birds and horses.

Nick says "It's been a real gift to create beauty through a brush and at my age 75 gives me something to wake up to and has kept my mind active. I wish I had started at a younger age, but I'm glad my wife urged

me to take the watercolor class 7 years ago. It's never to late to start, age is only a number and doesn't have to affect your ability to get involved with something new.

With three bluebird houses in our back yard it isn't hard to find some good subjects for my paintings".

Nick works were featured at the 3rd Annual Membership Meeting of the Tennessee Bluebird



Society.

If you are interested in his work please email him at perker44@tds.net

Summary of Reported Nest Box Results Around Tennessee

Species	2015	2016	2017
Eastern Bluebird	945	1534	
Carolina Chickadee	129	131	
Carolina Wren	5	7	
Tufted Titmouse	40	25	
House Wren	23	4	
Brown-headed Nuthatch	7	2	
White-breasted Nuthatch	7	0	
Tree Swallow	202	311	
Prothonotary Warbles	0	6	
Purple Martin	4	5	
Total	1362	2025	
Number of Nest Boxes	351	445	

Summary of TBS nest box results for 2015 and 2016 throughout Tennessee. This summary chart is for a broad overview of the state cavity nesting trends. We will post on the Tennessee Bluebird Society website www.tnsialia.org complete data for each trail. From these reports trends can be determined. With only two years of trail results the data set is not large enough to draw any conclusions.

With 94 more nest boxes reported in 2016, one number does stand-out, the Tufted Titmouse decline from 2015 to 2016, especially since we added 94 nest boxes.

We hope you find this recap data interesting and over the coming years our detailed data will guide us in understanding native cavity nesting trends.

HELPING BLUEBIRDS IN THE WINTER

The most important thing we can do for our bluebirds and all birds is supply them with a fresh supply of water daily. If you have a heater on your bird bath great. If not, make sure you get out there each day with fresh water. They need to keep hydrated, just one or two days without water can kill a bluebird.



Photos by: Chuck James

Why do bluebirds folic in the water in the winter. They may bathe more to remove excessive oil from their feathers. Most birds have a preen gland or uropygial gland at the base of the tail. With their beak, birds realign the barbs correctly, remove any dirt or parasites and sometimes apply preen oil. Robins and bluebirds seem to produce more preen oil than other birds.

Fluffy feathers provide proper insulation against bitter winds. Too much oil on the feathers can cause the feathers to clump and lower the body temperature to dangerous levels. Most birds have one main molt a year, so birds have to maintain their feathers carefully for a year until they go through another molt.

FOOD

Bluebirds carry only enough fat reserve to last a couple of days. Bluebirds are bug eaters that switch over to suet, fruit, nuts, and berries in the winter. A bluebird that visits a seed feeder in the winter is much more likely to visit a mealworm feeder or hunt for bugs in the summer.



Feeding the bluebird and other small birds can be difficult especially

if you have a jealous Mockingbirds around. We have found the best solution is a cage feeder.

It only takes the bluebirds, Titmouse, chickadees, wrens a short time to figure out how to get into the cage.

In the dish in the middle you can feed the bluebirds items with protein that will provide them with fat.

Live mealworms are always a mainstay for the bluebird. Dried mealworms offer the same nutritional value as the live mealworms. We have found that our bluebirds have been fussy but have adapted to dried mealworms.

HELPING BLUEBIRDS IN THE WINTER

Live mealworms can be purchased at your local bird store and also online. Some of the online sites are: Bassett's Cricket Ranch, CA www.bcr cricket.com, Nature's Way, OH www.thenaturesway.com and Grubco, OH www.grubco.com.

The dried mealworms can also be purchased at your local bird store or on line.

Personal experience, the only dried mealworms our bluebirds are attracted to are the Royal Wing Dried Mealworms, these can be found at Tractor Supply in most areas of Tennessee.

Other sources of protein and fat can be found in several other sources: The Royal Wing Bluebird Nuggets also found at Tractor Supply is a good source of protein and fat.

Liz Cutrone Owner, Wild Birds Unlimited, Knoxville suggest: "Bark Butter Bits (small nuggets of suet) Bark Butter (spreadable suet) Suet with peanuts blueberries or other fruits Shelled Peanuts Tree Nutty Plus (chopped tree nuts, fruit, suet nuggets, calcium carbonate) Chips (shelled seed) can be found at our store

on Kingston Pike, Knoxville.

***Happy Holidays from The
Tennessee Bluebird Society***



Photo by: Stan Colburn

Bluebirds are not seed eaters. They can't digest seed well. In fact when bluebirds start eating seed they are in desperate times. It's not a good sign when we see this behavior.

Bluebirds like suet bits or pieces. Most insect eating birds will eat suet. The spreadable type is easier for insect eating bills."

HELPING BLUEBIRDS IN THE WINTER

Here are two recipes you should try when it gets cold this winter.

Pinecone Feeder would be a fun project for children.

This would be perfect for a church group for the holidays to have the children make up Pinecone Feeders as a project and take them home for the holidays.

Perhaps a elementary school after the winter break

could do this as a nature / science project to demonstrate how, as an individual, you can help our winter birds.

Please contact your local church, school, Girl Scout Troop, Cub Scouts, Etc.

Natural Foods

Dr. T. David Pitts writes, In January 1977 and January and February 1978 he and Harry McLeod, student at UT Martin studied dry

bluebird fecal material from roosting boxes. They identified 761 fruits that bluebirds had eaten.

Overall, 54% of the fruits were from sumac,

Pinecone Bird Feeder



- 1 Tie a string around the pinecone.
- 2 Mix ½ cup peanut butter/suet/shortening with ½ cup oats/cornmeal.
- 3 Use a spoon (or fingers!) to spread the mixture onto the pinecone. Make sure to get the mixture into the open areas of the pinecone. ...
- 4 Place birdseed in pie tin. ...
- 5 Hang your pinecone feeder in a tree just outside you window.

NEW ZICK DOUGH: SMALL BATCH

Melt in the microwave and stir together:

1 cup peanut butter
1 cup lard

In a large mixing bowl, combine

2 cups chick starter
2 cups quick oats
1 cup yellow cornmeal
and
1 cup flour

Add melted lard/
peanut butter mixture
to the combined dry
ingredients and mix
well.

37% from Japanese honeysuckle, and 5% from deciduous holly; greenbrier, wild rose, bittersweet, pokeberry, hackberry and wild grape together made up the remaining 4%.

Do you have any of these plants in your yard? Sounds like a sumac or honeysuckle bush would help our bluebirds during the winter.

Perhaps we should have a project planting these bushes where bluebirds reside.

We hope you have enjoyed this information. If you have other suggestions please email us at: tnsialia@gmail.com

We need help in the following areas

** **County coordinators** - Give presentations to local civic groups and organize one community project per year.*

** **Data Collection** - Must have strong spreadsheet skills. Collect trail data and collate for research.*

** **Woodworkers** - Willing to build nest boxes.*

** **TBS Board Members** - We need people interested in taking a leadership role in TBS.*

** **Newsletter Publisher** - Must have past experience putting together newsletters.*

Email us if your interested in the above opportunities to:

tnsialia@gmail.com

Tennessee Bluebird Society Board of Directors

Eastern Region:

Stan Colburn - Loudon

Chuck Cruickshank - Loudon

Kathy Dooley - Loudon

Chuck James - Loudon

Jerry Rysticken - Farragut

Central Region:

Rosemary Chamberlain - Dickson

Rosalind Kurita - Clarksville

Duane Rice - Chapmansboro

Western Region:

Fred Robertson - Collierville

Farrell Roe - Jackson

Stacey Roe - Jackson

Joanne Watson - Collierville

Scientific Advisor: Dawn Wilkins,
PhD, UT Martin

Email: tnsialia@gmail.com

Website: www.tnbluebirdsociety.org

Facebook: Tennessee Bluebird Society

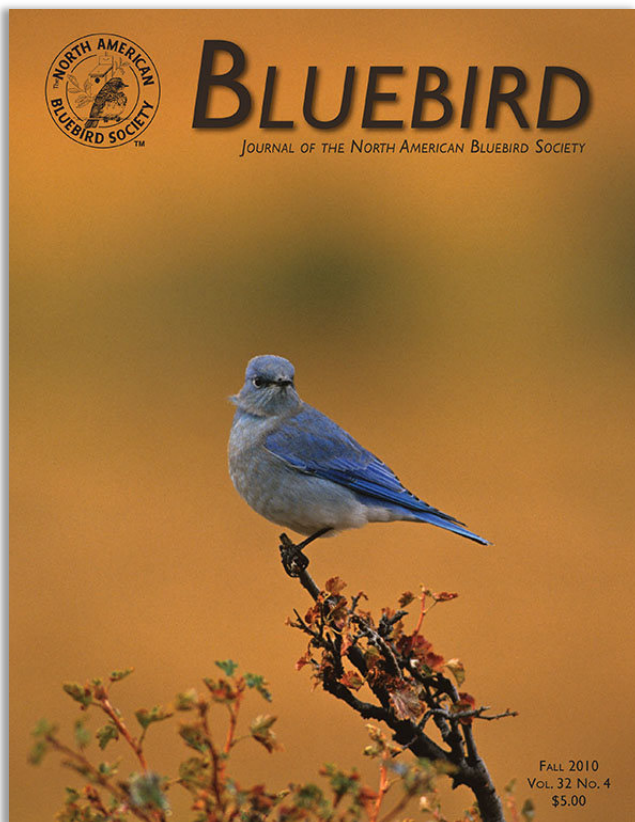
TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Did you know when you become a member of the Tennessee Bluebird Society there is an additional benefit? Once you become a TBS member for an additional \$15 you qualify for your first membership into the North American Bluebird Society at a 50% savings. Only \$15 instead of \$30. Fill out the Tennessee Bluebird Society application on the last page of this newsletter. Indicate that you want a TBS Household Membership for \$15. Then by

the NABS circle (Y) and add \$15 for a total of \$30 and send in your application. We will submit your membership to NABS.

In addition to receiving our 4 TBS newsletters you will receive four issues of Bluebird from the North American Bluebird Society.

Don't miss this great savings.

**Websites**

Tennessee Bluebird Society
www.tnbluebirdsociety.org
North American Bluebird Society
www.nabluebirdsociety.org



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TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY APPLICATION

Category	1 Year	3 year	Lifetime
Household	\$15	\$35	\$150
NABS	\$15 (First Time Member with a TBS Membership) \$30 Value		
Corporate	\$150		

Add only \$15 to a household membership and become a member of the North American Bluebird Society a \$30 value. For first time NABS Members. You will receive four issues of The Bluebird Journal of the North American Bluebird Society.

Please send your application and payment to the address at the bottom of this form

Name/ First: _____

Last: _____

Organization: _____

Address/ Street _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

County _____

Telephone/ Home: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Membership Type: _____ Amount: _____

NABS \$15(Y/N) _____

Total: _____

I have interest in helping the following areas: Newsletter _____,

Membership _____, Education _____,

Website Management _____, Data Collection _____,

Becoming a Board Member of Tennessee Bluebird Society _____

Send your application and check to: Tennessee
Bluebird Society

10350 Altona Cove
Collierville, TN 38017

Website: www.TNBluebirdsociety.org / Email: TNSialia@Gmail.com

Contact Telephone: (865) 437 -9732