

The Tennessee Bluebird

Spring Edition



North American Bluebird Society Annual Meeting

This years North American Bluebird Society Annual meeting is shaping up to be an excellent meeting.

The host this year is The Ellis Bird Farm in Lacombe, AB, Canada.

The meeting will be from July 7 - 10, 2016. For details on speakers, agenda and cost visit the Ellis Bird Farm website at www.ellisbirdfarm.ca.

Make sure to stay a few extra days and visit Banff and Lake Louise only a few hours away.

We hope we see you.

Chuck James

In This Issue

- Ed & Karen Smith, trail at Norris Dam
- A look at the Tennessee Bluebird Society spring accomplishments.
- North American Bluebird Society benefit by being a Tennessee Bluebird Society member.
- 2016 North American Bluebird Conference - Lacombe, AB, Canada

BLUEBIRD QUOTES

Always keep in mind that the nest boxes you build, install and monitor today, may well be your very real



connection to friends and loved ones long after you are gone.

- David Gwin, Bluebird_L, 2006

PRESIDENTS LETTER CHUCK JAMES

As we look forward to another active nesting season, we are thankful that this past winter was not as severe as the



previous two winters. Let's hope our bluebirds get an early start nesting this year and produce three clutches.

The Tennessee Bluebird Society is entering its third year. We are very proud of the strides we have made in developing nest box trails and our educational programs. As groups become aware that we put on educational programs we are receiving many more requests.

About a month ago we gave a presentation on bluebirds at the Wild Birds Unlimited store in Knoxville. We had seventy-five people attend that presentation and by the number of nest boxes, bluebird food and other supplies being purchased after the presentation, it was very apparent that there is a strong interest in helping our native cavity nesting birds thrive.

As an organization we want to make sure we can service our bluebirders statewide with educational programs and support with nest box trails. Getting children involved in conservation through bluebirding is one of our goals.

We need your help: We are very interested in forming chapters in Nashville, Clarksville and Memphis during 2016. If we could find 4 or 5 people in each of these

areas willing to share their bluebird experiences with others that would be great. There is great satisfaction when a new bluebirder looks into a nest box for the first time to see a naked and pink newborn. What a wonderful experience.

This past year I gave a presentation to the Lenoir City Boys and Girls Club after school program (About 100 children). I showed the short video "Inside The Nest Box" This video shows the bluebird laying eggs, the parents feeding the babies and the fledging of the young. After the program I was packing up my laptop and a young girl (7-8) ran up to me and gave me a big hug. She said, "Thank you mister, I just love birds." For me it brought home why I like doing these presentations.

We really need volunteers. Whether you enjoy giving presentations or want to help in other areas please join our growing society. Please send me an email at tnsialia@gmail.com or call me at (865) 458-6904. The nice feature of our society is you volunteer as much time as you have available. Our new Chapters will probably meet only 4 times a year.

In this newsletter we spotlight some of the activities we have already done this spring. We also, talk about two great opportunities. Attending the NABS Annual Meeting and how to become a member of both TBS and NABS at a considerable savings.

Chuck James
President
Tennessee Bluebird Society

NORRIS DAM NEST BOX TRAIL BY ED SMITH

Written By Ed Smith

My wife and I live near Norris Dam and take our two dogs for walks on the Songbird Trail below the dam. About fifteen years ago, I started noticing the bluebird boxes below the dam were in disrepair and needed attention. My wife, Karen, and I discussed possibly taking this on as a family project. I could repair the boxes and she could record the data etc. When I inquired about this at the TVA office near the dam, they told me that the last person they knew who maintained the boxes was Mr. J. B. Owen. Mr. Owen wrote the bird column in the News Sentinel for a number of years. I called Mr. Owen and he said that he was no longer physically able to check and maintain the boxes. He suggested that if we were interested, he would be pleased for us to take on this project. We readily agreed to this. Our dogs quickly adapted to this project and now know when we are going to check on the boxes.

Some bluebird boxes had been in existence since TVA started in the 1930's. Many of the boxes were very old and I would frequently take two boxes and make one serviceable box. I wanted to maintain the initial integrity of the bluebird boxes as much as possible. I found boxes on poles, on trees, on power poles and scattered about. I told my wife that if we took on this project, I would like to put the boxes in a row for both esthetic value and ease of checking on them.

We currently have sixteen boxes lined up from Norris Dam to the Weir Dam and another three on

our property. I maintain the boxes and Karen keeps the data. Initially, we would send our data to Steve Cottrell, TVA biologist.

Things went fine for the first couple of years. One afternoon as we approached box #1, I noticed nesting material sticking out of the hole. I knew this wasn't good and soon learned that a raccoon had gone from box to box, reaching in and getting birds, eggs, etc. I called Steve for help and TVA made some predator baffles. They also furnished a man to help me install them. The problem was solved.



Steve retired and TVA moved their operations to Lenoir City. Earlier this year I ran into Steve at the dam while I was jogging. He asked if we were still involved with the bluebirds and how that was going. I mentioned the new situation with a major influx of

swallows. These birds have interfered with the second bluebird nesting for the past couple of years. Steve offered the suggestion of putting bluebird boxes back to back on the same pole to see if bluebirds would take one box and swallows the other box. With the help of a friend who makes bluebird boxes, I have installed boxes back to back on three poles. I will eventually have two boxes on about six poles. We will keep data on all the boxes and see what happens. This is not totally scientific but it will be interesting to see if the birds accept the duplex boxes.

Ed Smith

THE TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY HAS BEEN BUSY THIS SPRING

Seven Islands State Birding Park

On Saturday March 12, 2016 Thirteen volunteers attended a nest box monitoring training session at Seven Islands State Birding Park. The training leader was Chuck Cruickshank VP Tennessee Bluebird Society and Stan Colburn TBS Treasurer.



The oldest garden club in the Southeast. The women enjoyed a catered lunch at the Tellico Village Yacht Club, Loudon, TN while learning about bluebirds.

Chuck Cruickshank Preparing for Spring

Chuck recently made the rounds on the Toqua Golf Course repairing and preparing the 30 nestboxes for spring.



The nest box trail coordinator is Mark Armstrong. He will be setting the weekly schedule for the monitors. All data will be recorded and reported at the end of the year to TBS and the Cornell Nest Watch program.

Dixie Garden Club

On March 10, 2016 Chuck James gave a basic Bluebird Presentation to the Dixie Garden Club.



Montgomery County Master Gardeners Association

On March 10th well known Tennessee Bluebird and TBS Board Member Duane Rice gave a presentation to the Montgomery County Master Gardeners at the Cumberland Heights Elementary School, there were 30 attendees.



THE TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY HAS BEEN BUSY THIS SPRING

Jordon & Mary Reif Replace 18 Nestboxes On the Kahite Golf Course In Loudon, TN

When it comes to rolling up your sleeves and taking on a project all you have to do is ask Jordon and Mary. They took on the project of rebuilding the nest box trail on the Kahite golf course. Before we had a chance to ask for volunteers to help them they had the job done and installed 18 nestboxes. Very impressive, the bluebirds and your fellow TVBC members thank you.



After the presentation the attendees were eager to purchase their needed supplies to make this year the best bluebird year ever in East Tennessee.

The owners of the Wild Birds Unlimited, Knoxville, Liz and Tony Cutrone surprised the TBS Board Members by presenting them with a check becoming a corporate sponsor. Their support is greatly appreciated. Please support them if you are in East Tennessee.

Wild Birds Unlimited, Knoxville

On Saturday February, 13, 2016 over 75 people jammed



Wild Birds Unlimited in Knoxville, TN for a presentation on "Basic Bluebirding" presented by the Tennessee Bluebird Society, Chuck James, Stan Colburn and Chuck Cruickshank.

 A bluebird is perched on a nest made of straw and twigs. The nest is set against a dark background.

We Love our Bluebirds

If you need a Nesting Box, Bluebird Feeder, or Meal Worms, we have everything you need to get started, and take great care of our Bluebirds.


Wild Birds Unlimited
 Nature Shop
 BIRD FOOD • FEEDERS • GARDEN ACCENTS • UNIQUE GIFTS

7240 Kingston Pike Ste. 164, Knoxville, TN 37919
 (865) 337-5990 www.knoxville.wbu.com

THE TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY HAS BEEN BUSY THIS SPRING

Tennessee College Of Applied Technology Shelbyville

Tennessee Bluebird Society Board Member Gary Buchanan has been working with Russell White, Post-Secondary SkillsUSA Advisor Associate Instructor Drafting & CAD Technology at Tennessee College of Technology in Shelbyville.

TCAT will place bluebird houses and feeding platforms and park benches around H. V. Griffin

Park for people to sit and enjoy the various native cavity nesting birds.

Russell took this project seriously, by becoming a certified nest box monitor through the Cornell Nest Watch Program and working with TBS. The plans for the nest boxes are approved North American Bluebird Society nest boxes. More importantly, there will be a ongoing monitoring program.

TBS is looking for partnering opportunities around the state.

LEGEND

- NESTING BOX
- PLATFORM FEEDER
- PARK BENCH
- VIEWING STATION

NOTES:

- AERIAL PHOTOGRAMMETRY AND CONCEPT PLAN SUPPLIED BY RAGAN SMITH
- NESTING BOXES ARE TO FOLLOW THE MODIFIED CARL LITTLE NESTING BOX OR THE BLUEBIRD OF HAPPINESS NESTING BOX

H. V. Griffin Park Expansion
Concept Plan

LOGOS: Lowe's, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, SkillsUSA, Tennessee Bluebird Society, Shelbyville Parks and Recreation Department.

ADDRESS: SHELBYVILLE, TN 37172

THE TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY HAS BEEN BUSY THIS SPRING

Warner Park, Nashville

The Tennessee Bluebird Society held its 2015 annual meeting at the Warner Park Nature Center in Nashville. As a gift of appreciation for their great hospitality TBS gave the park 3 nestboxes and poles.



John Kell “Team Bluebird” member at Warner Park, installs one of the donated nestboxes and adds a baffle. Warner Park currently has 42 nestboxes they monitor throughout the season.

On Saturday, April 30, 2016 Warner Park will be hosting “Spring Bird Festival.” Among other activities they will be banding birds from 10am - 2pm.

Shelby County, Joanne Watson

Joanne, is our TBS Board Member in Shelby County. She has been working to establish a TBS Chapter in the county. While working on that project she has found time to give a number of presentations this spring. It’s amazing what one dedicated person can do in the area of conservation.



Kirby Woods Garden Club

On February 1, 2016 Joanne spoke to a group about 35-40 people at the Kirby Woods Garden Club.

Bartlett Library

On February 6, 2016 Joanne spoke to a large interested group of 75 at the Bartlett Library.

Germantown Library

On February 9, 2016, spoke to a max crowd of 30 people at the Germantown Library. Some people were turned away because the room was full.

Master Gardener Share and Learn Talk

Another large group of 65-70 turned out on March 17, 2016 to hear Joanne speak at the Master Gardener Share and Learn Talk.

Wild Birds Unlimited

On March 31, 2016 Joanne will be speaking at WBU.



THE WOOD THRUSH SHOP

Supplying Nashville Since 1985
With
Bluebird boxes
Wild bird feeds & feeders
Hummingbird feeders and more.

6029 Hwy 100.
Nashville TN, 37205 **615-356-7640**

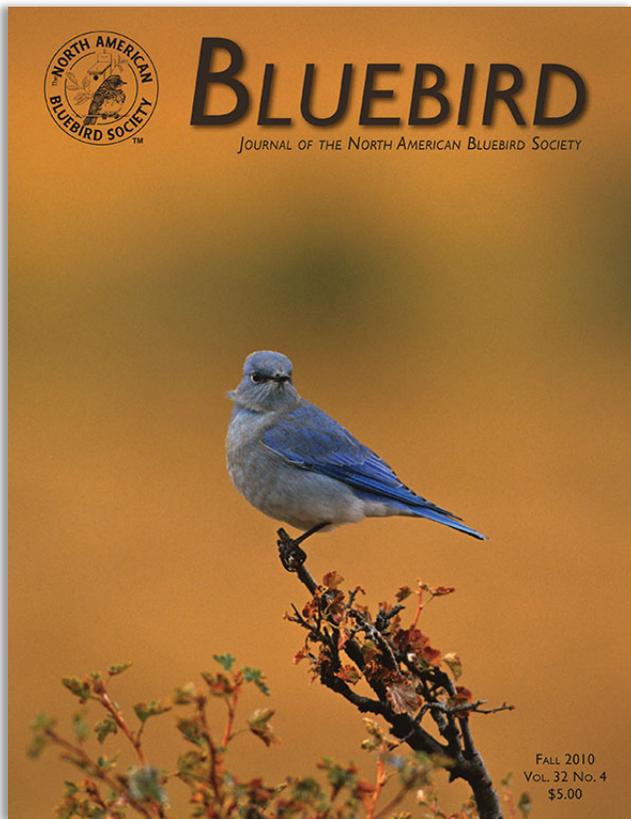
TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

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

2016 NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY CONFERENCE
--

Located in the heart of central Alberta, *Ellis Bird Farm* is both a working farm as well as a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of Mountain Bluebirds, Tree Swallows and other native cavity-nesting birds. Drop-in visitors and tour groups are welcome at *Ellis Bird Farm* during the summer months, when they are open to the public. They invite you to stroll the trails, enjoy the beautiful gardens, see the world's largest outdoor collection of bluebird nest boxes, take a tour out to their bluebird trail, visit the Visitor Centre and linger in the Ellis Café. Enjoy a country drive in Central Alberta.

Please take the time to consider making this conference. For details go either to nabluebirdsociety.org or ellisbirdfarm.ca. On either of these websites you will be able to review the full schedule of speakers and trips. We are convinced this is going to be one of best NABS conferences in recent years.

Here is a partial list of speakers: Tracking Mountain Bluebirds, Dr. Kevin Fraser; RFID Technology, Alisha Ritchie; Engaging the next generation of bluebirders, Dr. Glen Hvenegaard; Thinking inside the nest box, Dr. Margo Pybus; Tree Swallow nest mites, Alexandra Gross; The Tree Swallows of Beaverhill Lake, Dr.

Geoff Holroyd; Tracking Purple Martins, Dr. Kevin Fraser.

On July 10 and 11th, there will be two field trips: Sunday, July 10th, bluebird trail, local cultural, historical and natural history. Monday, July, 11th, Medicine River Wildlife Centre and other points of interest.

Arrive on July 7 and plan on staying to the 11th. After the conference spend a few extra days at Banff and Lake Louise.

See you in Lacombe, AB, Canada

**2016
NORTH AMERICAN
BLUEBIRD SOCIETY
CONFERENCE**

Ellis
Bird Farm

www.ellisbirdfarm.ca
www.nabluebirdsociety.org

Ellis Bird Farm, Lacombe, Alberta, Canada
July 8-10, 2016
*Unlocking the Mysteries of Bird Migration:
Using Technology to Track Avian Journeys*

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

Chuck James - Loudon

Jerry Rysticken - Knoxville

Central Region:

Duane Rice - Chapmansboro

Rosalind Kurita - Clarksville

Western Region:

Farrell Roe - Jackson

Stacey Roe - Jackson

Joanne Watson - Collierville

Email: tnsialia@gmail.com

Website: www.tnbluebirdsociety.org

Facebook: [Tennessee Bluebird Society](#)

