



Jersey Blues

The Newsletter of The New Jersey Bluebird Society, an Affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society ~Volume 2, Issue 2 - Spring, 2018

BUBBA SPEAKS: WELCOME 2018 AS NJBBS CONTINUES TO GROW!

As we move closer to nesting season in 2018, please join me in welcoming new officers (Jenfro Nelson as Secretary and Gemma Major as Treasurer) and County Coordinators (April Tarantino for Somerset County and Chuck Kanupke for Camden County). All four are extremely important to our organization and I look forward to working with them. I asked each one to provide some information about themselves:

Meet Gemma Major, Our New Treasurer - It gives me great pleasure to welcome Gemma Major as our new Treasurer. I first met Gemma and Andy at a Bluebird Festival in New Egypt in 2013 when they sat in on a bluebird lecture. They invited me to come see Andy's bluebird trail in Monmouth County. It was evident they had a great interest in bluebirds and a love for the environment. They have been active members in NJBBS since.

Andy and Gemma were born in Hungary, where they attended public school until 1956, then moved to the U.S. where they finished their higher education. While living in Matawan, Monmouth County, Andy started his first bluebird trail 6 years ago in Cheesequake State Park, then added boxes at Holmdel Park. Even though they moved to Manchester, Ocean County in 2016, Andy still maintains those trails and has added more sites in the Manchester area. Andy is a retired veterinarian, working at the Raptor Trust, a well known rehabilitation center in northern NJ. Gemma spent her time teaching, stopping in 1978. Their hobby is nature travel with emphasis on bird watching. Their single focus now is the status of global diversity. I think we may have to call them NJBBS' "Dynamic Duo!"



Photograph by Jenyfra Nelson



Meet Our New Secretary of the Board, Jenyfra Nelson

Jen Nelson was raised by her parents to love all living things – wild and domestic - and that included birds. As she raised a family, in Morris County, her love of birds shone through photography, a hobby that turned into a business of wildlife and landscape photography she shares with her husband, Neal.

While still living in Morris County, Jen became a facilitator for Morris County coordinator/member Jim Newquist of the NJBBS, helping with a nice-sized trail at the public library in their town, and another site or two in that county. Working in the field, photographing the progress and growth of the bluebirds on those trails - and assisting with presentations at the library - Jen grew to know and enjoy the beautiful Eastern Bluebird, and became a member of the NJBBS.

Jen and Neal moved to Mays Landing, in Atlantic County, New Jersey, in 2016, and Jen met with Jim Watson of the same town and county, and has been doing field work and photography for the NJBBS and Jim. Impressed by the number of Eastern Bluebirds in this area, Jen jumped in – both feet and one camera – to help with counting, banding and documenting bluebirds in her new hometown and area. With her sights set on the work of **Secretary of the Board**, Jen plans to continue sharing her work and photography, and is delighted to take on the tasks of Secretary - welcoming new members with information packets, attending meetings, and keeping the minutes and other records of the Society. She looks forward to meeting the other members at the next meeting, and enjoying all that the NJBBS and our beautiful feathered friends have to offer. *(more biographies on page 3)*



NABS NEWS ~ by Allen Jackson

I participate on a monthly conference call with NABS' Board of Directors. Among many responsibilities, the BOD looks for ways to better benefit the affiliate groups. NJBBS tries to promote the mission of NABS and I think we do a pretty good job of that. I also serve on 4 of NABS' committees: Nest box, Education, Journal Advisory, and Development Committees.

The BOD has representation from across North America (~60 affiliate groups) which includes active affiliate groups in Canada. There are 3 bluebird species that live in North America: the Eastern Bluebird, Western Bluebird and the Mountain Bluebird. Most of NABS' membership is located in the Eastern US. Although a national organization, NABS' membership is not that large, approximately 1,500. NABS are the experts on bluebirds and many groups look nationally for advice and management on bluebirds.

If you are new to the world of bluebirds, NABS's website, www.nabluebirdsociety.org is a goldmine of information, including printable (PDF) **fact sheets** on getting started, nest box plans, predator control, monitoring guides and feeding recommendations. Even those of us who consider ourselves "experienced" find these resources to be very useful for our own use and as information for new monitors. We presently are updating the Fact Sheets on various subjects.

We are working diligently to secure an affiliate group to host our **2019 NABS Conference**. These conferences have been held throughout the US and Canada. John Layton and I have attended conferences in South Carolina and Quebec in 2013 and 2015 and I was able to attend the conference at the Ellis Bird Farm in Alberta, Canada. There are expert speakers, exhibitors, a banquet and other interesting field trips held over a 2-3 day period.

When the next location for the conference is set, I will spread the word. I can guarantee you will enjoy getting together with people who have that special interest in bluebirds.

TRUE BLUE! - NJBBS is now a "True Blue Level Sponsor" in NABS' *Bluebird* periodical. **A special thanks to Frank Budney** who donated \$100 towards our sponsorship. NJBBS then added \$150 to that amount, enabling us to sponsor at the True Blue Level. Look for our logo on the inside back page of *Bluebird* in their Spring issue. As an affiliate organization of NABS, we play a major role nationally.

Here's another tidbit about New Jersey and its number of NABS members: As of last December, NABS had a total of 1413 members. **55 of those were from New Jersey.** Only 7 states had more members than NJ: MD, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN and VI. Those states are all large affiliates that have been around for many years. Considering we only became established in 2011, we are right up there with the national leaders. PA is the leader with 98 members. Way to go, NJBBS!

DUAL MEMBERSHIP

There are lots of advantages to being a member of both **NJBBS** and **NABS**. Joining NABS entitles you to receive "Bluebird", their colorful quarterly publication. This is a quality periodical of interest to anyone who appreciates bluebirds and other secondary cavity nesters. The North American Bluebird Society organization supports and helps unify the work of state chapters across America.

Go to our NJBBS website, www.njbluebirdsociety.org and look for NABS's membership form that accompanies the NJBBS membership form. For a small membership fee (\$15 special price the first year, then \$20 per year), everyone in NJBBS is encouraged to consider joining NABS as well. We get a better understanding of what our bluebird friends are doing in North America as we work together for the benefit of bluebirds.



New Jersey Bluebird Society: Our Mission Statement, Goals & Methods

Our mission is to provide education and guidance in order to conserve and promote Bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds in New Jersey. Our primary goal is to produce a healthy and productive bluebird population in New Jersey by establishing trails that are located in suitable habitat while utilizing and promoting recommended bluebird management practices (proper housing, protection from predators, and nest monitoring.). We also recognize the importance and necessity to promote management of bluebirds in backyards. We provide expertise and guidance to trail monitors and backyard bluebird enthusiasts, monitor yearly population trends by surveying the number of young fledged from nest boxes, and provide public education about bluebirds to interested people in the state of New Jersey.

(Bubba Speaks, biographies - continued from front page) **NEW COUNTY COORDINATORS**



Meet April Tarantino, Somerset County Coordinator

I met April when I conducted an on site at her residence because she had Bluebirds along with a severe House Sparrow problem. We made some changes and developed a plan to resolve the sparrow issue and she is now working on plans to promote Bluebirds in Somerset County. She is one enthusiastic blue birder!

April is a life long resident of Somerset, Somerset County and has been in the realty business for 31 years (that must represent a lot of houses). Her husband Walter Degnan is originally from Long Island and now has his own general contracting business. They live in a secluded area of Somerset surrounded by preserved land adjacent to the Raritan Canal. They live close to a girl scout camp with bluebird boxes that have not been maintained or monitored so that is one of April's projects to improve upon.

They love to cook, hike, entertain their 2 dogs, bird watch, have an interest in indigenous plants and are totally dedicated to benefiting Bluebirds. Interestingly, we have already identified a few people in her County that she can contact to help support her position as Somerset County Coordinator. It is especially nice to have someone so enthusiastic about Bluebirds in northern part of the State.



Meet Chuck Kanupke, Camden County Coordinator

Chuck Kanupke is the Vice President of the Audubon Wildlife Society (AWS). He is a long-time resident of Haddonfield and has been passionate about birds since his high school days in North Carolina. I was asked to speak at the AWS monthly meeting in Collingswood in December 2017 which is where I first met Chuck. To say he is an energetic birder is an understatement. He has birded extensively across New Jersey as well as Cape Cod, Maine and Peru. He has participated in the New Jersey Audubon World Series of Birding and the Audubon Pinelands Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for over 25 years. In fact, he is the Compiler for the NJ Pinelands area for the Audubon Society's CBC.

Also at that meeting was Lisa Herman who operates the Wild Birds Unlimited store in Cherry Hill. WBU happens to be the major sponsor of in NABS' periodical Bluebird. Without my knowing what was going to happen, Chuck wrote a news release following some discussion about forming partnerships in Camden County to benefit bluebirds. That news release lead to a story being published in the Philadelphia Inquirer in early February 2018. This has opened up a new and progressive way to educate the public, bring in new members to both the AWS and NJBBS, bring customers to WBU, and give WBU knowledge where to direct customers for information about bluebirds. Most of all, the benefits to bluebirds in NJ are obvious. I am excited to welcome Chuck as our Camden County Coordinator. ~ Allen Jackson

NJBBS OFFICERS

President: Allen Jackson
 Vice President North: Jim Newquist
 Vice President South: Laura Stone
 Treasurer: Gemma Major
 Secretary: Jenyfra Nelson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Past President: Frank Budney
 At Large: Nels Anderson, Shelly Cucugliello
 Dave Gilcrest, Lori Jo Jamieson, John Layton,
 Gary Pilling Jim Watson, Ed Zboyan

Jersey Blues

The newsletter of The New Jersey Bluebird Society

Editor: Lori Jo Jamieson lorijo.jamieson@gmail.com

Webmaster: Gary Pilling gpilling32@gmail.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

<u>2017 Season Summary</u>	<u>back page</u>
<u>Beware of Neonicotinoids!</u>	<u>page 13</u>
<u>Bubba Speaks</u>	<u>cover, 3</u>
<u>County Coordinators Needed</u>	<u>page 11</u>
<u>Feeding Bluebirds</u>	<u>page 6, 12</u>
<u>Growing the Program</u>	<u>pages 8, 9</u>
<u>Membership</u>	<u>page 2, back</u>
<u>NABS News</u>	<u>page 2</u>
<u>New Partnership!</u>	<u>page 5</u>
<u>President?</u>	<u>page 4</u>
<u>Squirrel-Proof Feeder</u>	<u>page 10</u>
<u>Tips to Starting the Season</u>	<u>page 7</u>

“Any Interested Candidates for NJBBS President?”

My term as President ends in 2018. I would like for someone to step forward and take our organization to another level. Frank Budney was President for 4 years while I acted as Vice President during that tenure. When Frank’s term expired I stepped to the plate to be President. We have accomplished much during the past 8 years. We are looking for an energetic person with progressive ideas, more organized than I, and wants to continue to help NJBBS grow. New blood is always good.

Another thought, if anyone is interested in serving on our Board of Directors, please let me know. It is a neat way to help direct NJBBS’s activities and promote leadership in protecting *Sialia sialis*, the Eastern Bluebird.

When I took over as President, my goals were to increase our membership, identify more County Coordinators and increase our efforts to benefit bluebirds. Not only have we accomplished all three, but so much more.

Our by-laws were rewritten; we now have a well maintained website thanks to webmaster Gary Pilling; Lori Jo Jamieson volunteered to be our newsletter editor and *Jersey Blues* is published every 6 months. We divided the State into a northern and southern zone with Dr. Laura Stone not only being elected into that position but acting as Ocean County Coordinator as well. She has lots going on in Ocean County. David Gilcrest is accomplishing great things as our Gloucester County Coordinator and summarizes the annual bluebird report. Gail Fisher stepped forward to be our Cape May County Coordinator. She is extremely organized and routinely comes up with new ways to promote bluebirds in that county as well as state-wide.

We have developed partnerships with Atlantic Audubon Society, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Gloucester County Nature Club, Little Egg Harbor Environmental Commission, Cloverdale Farm County Park, and Audubon Wildlife Society. We found a central location to meet thanks to the NJ Division of Forestry in Jackson. We have probably built and erected over 800 bluebird boxes. We have a ever-increasing banding program with Dave Gilcrest, Jim Watson, Gail Fisher, John Layton and myself banding bluebirds throughout much of southern NJ.

We have official shirts with our logo on it thanks to Gary Pilling. Gail Fisher developed placards with our logo on it that can be placed on bluebird boxes informing the public those boxes are being managed by NJBBS.

We have representation nationally on NABS’ Board of Directors and serve on their Development, Nest box,

Education and Journal Advisory Committees. We frequently provide articles, pictures, etc in NABS’ periodical *Bluebird*. Names that come to mind are myself, John Layton, Ken Glaspey, Gail Fisher, Shelly Cucugliello, Lynn Wood, Frank Langella, Kendall Creamer, and Leo Hollein. That is 9 people from NJ who are contributing nationally. We are being noticed nationally as well as throughout the State.

To say we have come a long ways is an understatement. However, after serving as VP for 4 years and President the past 4 years, I think it is time for someone else to step forward and take NJBBS to another level. There is lots of talent out there and someone with better organizational skills than I can promote new ideas and grow the program more than I. I plan to continue my involvement but believe there is someone with more organizational skills that can continue to lead our group.

~ Allen Jackson, President, NJBBS



Bluebirds are no weaklings, that’s for sure! These photos were taken this past winter (and after March 21st’s snowfall!). Photos above and left were taken by Jen Creamer. Top right two were taken by Lori Jo Jamieson.

Wild Birds Unlimited, Audubon Wildlife Society and New Jersey Bluebird Society Form Alliance to Attract and Sustain Bluebirds in Camden County ~ by Chuck Kanupke

New Jersey Bluebird Society (NJBBS), Audubon Wildlife Society (AWS) and Wild Birds Unlimited announce a new partnership to design and implement environmental enhancements that will provide nesting habitats for bluebirds in Camden County. Through the bluebird nesting program, Wild Birds Unlimited and Audubon Wildlife are working with the New Jersey Bluebird Society to transform public sanctuaries and personal properties into thriving bluebird nesting environments.

"We are proud to partner with Audubon Wildlife, Wild Birds Unlimited and other dedicated groups on this wonderful project," Allen Jackson, President New Jersey Bluebird Society, said. "When Audubon Wildlife approached us with this idea, we knew it was something our organization wanted to be a part of. We are firm believers in the notion that amazing things can happen to bluebird populations when groups and the public-sector work together regarding attracting and increasing bluebird populations in Camden County."



"Wild Birds Unlimited of Cherry Hill is pleased to partner in this important birding project. As a birding retail store, we are trained to show birding enthusiasts how to turn their landscape into bluebird habitat that not only brings song, color and life to their home, but also benefits the bluebirds and the environment in their area. We have designed our products to be the highest quality bluebird nest boxes and feeding equipment on the market today" said Ms. Lisa Herman, Owner.

"The AWS is pleased to be working with New Jersey Bluebird Society and Wild Birds Unlimited to enhance the public's knowledge of bluebird nesting and their ecosystem," stated Chuck Kanupke, Vice President Audubon Wildlife Society. "AWS is taking the lead to seek citizen volunteer participants who will assist in providing suitable nest box locations in Camden County. We're looking forward to working with many partners to strengthen and to inspire all people to enjoy and protect bluebirds."

About AWS

The AWS has a long, proud history going back to 1949 when it was founded. AWS has helped preserve hundreds of acres of land from commercial development to the benefit of the wildlife residing there. In 1995, AWS sponsored the purchase of a 112-acre tract of land on Hawkin Road in Medford and Southampton Townships. With the help of Green Acres funding, the AWS accomplished this and turned the land over to the NJ Natural Lands Trust. The area is known as Bear Swamp and is a 3,000-acre wilderness in the middle of urban sprawl near the Red Lion Circle. AWS contributed moneys toward the state's newest NJ State Park, Tall Pines State Park, in Gloucester County. These contributions helped preserve the golf course from becoming a large housing development. Tall Pines State Park is home to a sizable and varied bird population, and protects many non-avian species including: frogs, snakes, deer, fox, butterflies, dragonflies among others.



About Bluebirds



Bluebirds are primarily ground feeders, with insects making up as much as 90% of their diet during the spring and summer months. They perch to hunt the ground for grubs, grasshoppers and caterpillars. Open areas with sparse or low vegetation provide the best potential habitat for bluebirds to find insects. Other important factors like places to perch and structure for fledglings to fly on their first flight help identify good habitat. Agricultural areas, parks, even back yards and cemeteries can provide this habitat. Bluebirds have struggled to survive due to loss of habitat to development and changes in land management. Bluebirds are secondary cavity-nesters, meaning they cannot excavate their own nesting sites in trees. Since they readily accept nesting boxes man provides and because they respond well to habitat management, we are in a unique position to benefit these beautiful birds. The campuses of schools, community parks and cemeteries provide suitable habitat. A grassy backyard can be a great place for a bluebird nest box.

and because they respond well to habitat management, we are in a unique position to benefit these beautiful birds. The campuses of schools, community parks and cemeteries provide suitable habitat. A grassy backyard can be a great place for a bluebird nest box.

For more and information on Audubon Wildlife Society and participating in the Bluebird nesting program, please visit: <https://sites.google.com/site/audubonwildlifesociety/programs>. For more information about New Jersey Bluebird Society, visit: www.njbluebirdsociety.org. For more information on Wild Birds Unlimited of Cherry Hill visit: <https://cherryhill.wbu.com>. Read the story inspired by Chuck's press release here: http://www.philly.com/philly/news/new_jersey/bluebird-population-location-new-jersey-pennsylvania-20180205.html.

OFFERING MEALWORMS IN BAD WEATHER

*Cold, endlessly rainy days...it happened last Spring, while the parents were trying to feed their babies, and it was deadly. Insects aren't as active in this weather, and the search for them takes longer, so babies aren't fed as often as needed, ESPECIALLY if it's a large brood of five or six chicks. Parents returning to the nests have wet feathers, adding to their nestlings' poor health, since their feathers haven't entirely formed to give them warmth. **Gail Fisher, Cape May County Coordinator**, sent this suggestion to her monitors last year. It made all the difference between life and death for baby bluebirds!*

I keep a supply of live mealworms on hand during the early spring season, just in case. You can always get them from a local pet store, but they are crazy expensive that way (I did this once, though, in an emergency). There are two reliable



online sources that advertise in the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) magazine. One is Grubco, http://www.grubco.com/store/store_product_detail.cfm?Product_ID=1, and the other is Nature's Way, <https://www.thenaturesway.com/>. I order the medium sized mealworms from The Nature's Way. **If you are a NABS member, you get a 15% discount.** Mention it, and be prepared to give your member number when you place your order. I ordered in the morning on Monday and they were here by Wednesday. They're still a bit pricey, but not nearly like at the pet store.



So now I have "pet" mealworms. Here's how they look when they arrive and how you care for them so they will remain plump, juicy and nutritious for your little fluffballs. They arrive in a mesh bag among wads of brown paper.

They eat rolled oats and get water from sliced carrots. I diagonally slice two large carrots for each tub and toss in two large handfuls of rolled oats. I bought 10,00 mealworms, so they will be hungry and thirsty and I want them to be able to spread out.



As I use them, I can reduce the size of the container (which needs tall, slippery sides so they cant crawl out). Save that wadded up brown paper and cut it into container sized sheets to lay over the top. They will eat that too. Finally, I leave them out for most of the day to feast, and then they go in the fridge for storage. Once a week I take them out, dump them into a mesh colander to sift out all their orange colored, dry powdery poop (I then sprinkle it on my houseplants...hey, I figure its like worm compost, right?). I pick out the shriveled up carrots, clean the tub and then repeat the whole process. Do you HAVE to do all that? Possibly not. I know folks who don't. Perhaps I'm odd, but to me, its a matter of dignity and respect for all living things... including mealworms.



And finally, the best way to provide the mealworms is to put up a bluebird feeder near the nest box and train the bluebirds ahead of time to use it. That's great if you have backyard boxes, but probably not practical for larger trails. I made "emergency" feeders by screwing a tuna fish can to a length of PVC pipe and sticking it in the ground 15-20' away from the box. Once a day (early morning) I put a couple tablespoons of mealworms in the tuna can and sprinkled a few on the roof of the box. Depending on the size and number of chicks, this amount can vary. Could also be 2X daily if it's near fledge time. It won't take long, maybe a day or so, for the parents to figure it all out. Makes for great photography too. You might want to supplemental feed them anyway, just for that reason. Note: if you make these feeders, poke holes in the bottom from the inside, so rain can drain.

And... as you've heard me say before, our bluebirds need berries from native plants during the winter. 'Tis the season for great local native plant sales, like the one at **Clemenson's Farm Native Nursery Retail Sale on Saturday May 12th**. This nursery is normally a wholesale-only nursery. However, three times a year they open their doors to wildlife gardeners and homeowners and offer hard-to-find native and pollinator friendly plants. Come and see what the buzz is all about! Take home some natives...the birds and pollinators will love you for it!

Visit <http://www.clemensonfarmsnativenursery.com> for directions and more information on what plants are available.

MARCH IS ACTING LIKE A LION!

As I write this, the FOURTH March Nor'easter is raging, but it IS finally Spring, after all! If you winterized your nest boxes, then once this event clears out, it will be time to prepare them for the upcoming nesting season.

Here's a brief checklist:

1. Remove pine needles. Brush out the floor and clear debris from its corners, to allow for free air flow up through the nest box.
2. Remove insulation
3. Remove any winter residents that may have settled in. Look for old paper wasp nests. Remove them. Spray the inside of the roof only (not the walls) with cooking spray. This light, oily coating makes it difficult for the wasps to attach their nest.
4. Check that all parts of the box are in good working order. Tighten screws, seal cracks, as needed. Decide if box needs significant repair, or replacing.
5. If there is a House Sparrow problem, fit the inside of the box with the screws that can receive the removable VanErt sparrow trap later on, should you need it.
6. Position the entrance hole to face EAST (or slightly southeast).
7. Check the predator guard. Wax and polish if necessary. Check INSIDE. There are often wasp surprises there, too. Cooking spray may prevent new nests here as well.
8. Check that the mounting pole is straight, not tilted, which would cause the predator guard to not wobble as it should.
9. Cut down to ground level any old dead plants, twigs, brush, etc. within about 5 feet all around the pole. Trim away any overhanging branches that may be close enough for a predator to access the box from the side or top.
10. If your nest box is in a public location, attach a laminated NJBBS logo to the NORTH side (usually the right side - the shady side) of the box.

For those of you lucky enough to have BBs all winter AND summer, your birds, having a reliable food supply, may have already begun their nests, building them on top of the pine needles. If you open the box and find that this is the case, first note how the nest sits in the box. If it still seems okay and low in the box, you may just want to slide an old spatula under it, lift it gently, sweep out underneath, and lower it gently back into place. If the parents have used lots of nest material, the nest may sit too high in the box, potentially exposing future young to predators

by being within easy reach. Use your spatula to lift the nest *up off the pine needles*, sweep the pine needles out, and lower the nest back onto the floor of the box.

Incidentally, if, at any time during the season, a driving rain soaks a nest, especially if there are eggs or chicks, you should remove the wet nest and replace it with your best effort at arranging pine needles into a substitute nest. Young cannot survive if they are wet, especially before they have feathers.

Also keep in mind that it is usually the first brood that can die when a cold snap occurs, because there are fewer insects available for the adults to feed the young, and the parents must be away from the nest longer searching for them, leaving the young exposed to the cold (and wet) longer...again, sometimes with no feathers yet!

All these scenarios are good reason to monitor your boxes and keep careful records. If that cold snap hits, you will know which boxes have eggs (which will be just fine), which have feathered young, and which ones have featherless young. These boxes may need supplemental feeding (live mealworms) available to help the parents keep the chicks fed for a couple days till weather improves.

PUBLICATION AVAILABLE TO HELP MONITORS

Below is a Bluebird chick development guide that can be very helpful while out monitoring on your trails. It is available online at the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin website as part of a comprehensive "Info-Pak." Go to <http://www.braw.org> and click on "BRAW info pack" on the right side of the home page.

Bluebird chick development

- first 14 days
by Jack Bartholmai

This series of images uses "wing development" as an aid in age estimation. Conditions such as food supply, temperature, number of siblings and other factors might alter the development time a +/- of at least one day for each image after day one. When chicks first hatch they are naked, eyes are closed and they barely can raise their head but they are able to open their mouths to be fed. Between the 5th and 10th day the chicks are most vulnerable to cold temperatures when the female stops brooding them. If they get too chilled and listless they won't raise their heads when the adult birds bring them food and may starve. Both adults may stop feeding them and abandon the nest if they don't respond. Monitoring should stop after the 12th day to prevent premature fledging. Normally by the 16th-18th day they are fledged.



All photos by Jack Bartholmai



Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin
JP Lafouge, Memberships
9154 N. Fielding Rd.,

© BRAW

Image reprinted from [braw.org](http://www.braw.org)

GROWING THE PROGRAM



“Growing the Program” is intended to keep members informed of the things in which NJBBS is involved. Below is a list of activities that members have reported. Please feel free to submit short blurbs of your activities for each issue of “Jersey Blues” to keep all of us informed of things that are benefiting bluebirds and the NJBBS, and ultimately growing our program. There certainly is a lot going on!

Education and Outreach (talks, displays)

Allen met with Lisa Herman, **Wild Birds Unlimited** store owner in Cherry Hill, **Camden County**, to talk about bluebird box design standards. Copies of *Bluebird, Jersey Blues* and flyers were left at the store. On **Saturday, March 17th**, Allen spent the afternoon at WBU answering customer's questions about bluebirds. This complements the new partnership NJBBS has with the **Audubon Wildlife Society** and this Wild Birds Unlimited store in Cherry Hill.

In December 2017, **Allen** gave a presentation to the Audubon Wildlife Society (AWS) in Collingswood, **Camden County**. This led to a partnership and County Coordinator in Camden County.

Allen, Dave Gilcrest and Jim Watson exhibited and worked at the annual **Eagle Festival** February 3rd in Mauricetown, **Cumberland County**. Many people from **Cumberland, Salem, Gloucester, Cape May, Ocean and Atlantic Counties** (as well as some from PA, MD, DE and NY) stopped by our table to talk about bluebirds. Gary Pilling made up new NJBBS flyers with Gemma's address as our new Treasurer. We also handed out material for NABS. Jim, Dave and I were interacting with bluebirders throughout the day and anticipate these on-sites will ultimately benefit bluebirds.

Jenyfra “Jen” Nelson, Jim Watson and Allen presented a program on March 5th to Woods Landing, a residential development organization in Mays Landing, **Atlantic County**. A bluebird trail has been set up with Jen leading the monitoring and Jim banding young. A Purple Martin colony will also be established. Jen and Jim are working diligently to promote bluebird management at Woods Landing. Jen reports there should be a number of residents interested in helping monitor the trail. **An Atlantic Audubon Society partnership.**

Allen will speak to the Medford Leas Birders, **Burlington**

County on June 6th about Purple Martins and Bluebirds.

Bernie Visali made and donated an educational display for NJBBS's public outreach programs. The display includes photos of a winter roosting box and slotted box along with the NJBBS logo. She also called attention to a problem with bluebirds getting trapped in open PVC pipes. **Thank you, Bernie!**

Allen will be speaking at **Longwood Gardens**, in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, about Purple Martins on April 6th. Longwood Gardens has both a martin colony and numerous bluebird boxes.

Allen will be speaking about bluebirds at the **Washington Township Library** in Sewell, **Gloucester County**, on April 11th. Bluebird boxes will be established at various parks in this Township.

Allen and Laura Stone will represent NJBBS at the Big Day of Birding at Cloverdale, **Cloverdale Farm County Park** in Barnegat, **Ocean County** on May 7th.

Real Estate (boxes added)

Allen put up 2 boxes in Pilesgrove, **Salem County**, relocated a box in Pt Elizabeth and reset Frank Dandrea's box in Estell Manor. He also picked up 55 boxes at school and dropped off more lumber for another 50 boxes

Over 20 boxes were temporarily removed from the Buckshuteum WMA so work can be done there. They will be reset. **Mike Golla** monitors this trail.

Boxes were added in Pittsgrove Township at Gail Sante-fede and Heide Thumlert's properties. 3 more boxes were added at Landis Sewage Authority and a box was added at Sandy McKenna's in Vineland.

Jim and Jen added some boxes at Woods Landing in Mays Landing.

GROWING THE PROGRAM



(Real Estate, continued)

Gail Fisher is adding boxes in Belleplain and maybe Town Bank.

Allen will continue to work with **South Jersey Transportation Authority**. They are having 20 boxes built for the exit ramps along the **Atlantic City Expressway**.

Allen put up 1 box at the Palmyra Cove Nature Park in Palmyra, **Burlington County**. Literature about NJBBS and NABS was included. 3 boxes were also erected at the Taylor Wildlife Preserve in Riverton, **Burlington County**.

Lori Jo Jamieson is putting up a box (maybe two) at Asbury United Methodist Church's cemetery in Egg Harbor Township, **Atlantic County** and exploring other cemeteries for possible nest box locations.

Dave Moyer's wood shop class in Middle Township, **Cape May County**, has used up the supply of wood provided last August and is asking for more wood. **Allen** has ordered another load for the class to continue making bluebird boxes. Over 100 boxes will be made before the school closes for the summer. This is such a great program!

Partnerships (activities with other groups)

As a result of the AWS talk, an alliance with AWS, Wild Birds Unlimited and the NJBBS has emerged to promote bluebird management in Camden County. Chuck Kanupke, VP of AWS, has also stepped forward to be our Camden County Coordinator. A recent news article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* resulted in a good response from the public showing interest in bluebirds. **Read Chuck's original press release that inspired the article on page 5 in this publication.**



Our partnership at Batsto has continued. Changes were made to the existing trail to improve nesting units for bluebirds by relocating boxes, pairing some boxes and using protective guards over the entrance holes. **An Atlantic Audubon Society partnership.**

Changes were made at the Forsythe NWR to both the Purple Martin colony and the bluebird trail. Land management changes has lead to vegetative succession, making it less attractive for bluebirds. **Mary Roche** is the trail monitor. **An Atlantic Audubon Society partnership.**

A partnership is ongoing in **Cumberland County** with Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries. Projects include the Landis Sewage, Sandy McKenna's, Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center.

Lori Jo Jamieson continues to monitor and improve a trail at four regional vineyards.

Our partnership with the **NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's** Wildlife Management Areas continues in **Cumberland, Salem, and Cape May Counties.**

Allen plans to establish a bluebird trail at the Palmyra Cove Nature Park in **Burlington County**. The habitat will be evaluated first to determine if it is suitable for bluebirds.

April Tarantino is working with a local girl scout camp in Somerset, **Somerset County** to evaluate and improve the bluebird trail that exists. **April also is our new Somerset County Coordinator.** Welcome aboard.

Informal partnerships are being worked on in **Ocean County** to improve bluebird management in the Ocean County Parks system. **Andrew Major, Laura Stone, Pat Trasferiri and Becky Hedden** are providing support in this endeavor.

**All members, please report your activities and let others know what you're doing!
Send your accomplishments written in an email to: lorijo.jamieson@gmail.com.**

SQUIRREL PROOF BIRD FEEDER ~ Plans for an inexpensive bird feeder - that is also squirrel proof!



MATERIALS: Materials can be purchased at a home center for a total cost of about \$30.

- one 4"x4"x10'
- one 4"x4"x8' cut down to 6'
- two 1/2"x8" galvanized bolts w/ washers & nuts
- one 50 pound bag fence post cement
- one 5"x5' stove pipe

LOCATION: Locate a place close to your viewing window at least 10' away from any tree limbs to prevent squirrels from jumping onto the feeder. That along with the 5"x5' stove pipe which goes over the wooden post, will prevent squirrels from climbing up the post.

SEED: Don't use bird seed with cracked corn or millet seed which attracts house sparrows. Recommended seed includes: black oil sunflower seed, niger thistle, suet nuggets and various types of suet cakes. A bluebird feeder with plexiglass on the sides and 1 1/2" holes in each end works well once the bluebirds learn to go inside. Hint: take out one side of plexiglass until bluebirds associate dried mealworms with the feeder. Bluebirds also like suet with peanut butter, raisins, and other types of feed sold at bird seed stores.



INSTRUCTIONS: Place the 6' post perpendicular to the top of the 10' post and drill two holes thru both posts to bolt the two posts together, forming a T-shaped setup. Bolt together. With a post hole digger, dig down 2' and place the post into the hole. Add dry cement (little by little), making sure the post is perpendicular to the ground. Use a rod to compact the cement around the post.

Mound/slope the cement so rain will run off, preventing water from puddling around the post. The top post will be 8' above the ground, preventing the squirrels from jumping up to the feeders.

Using a thin rope to hold the stove pipe together, gradually snap the stove pipe together around the post. The 5"x5' stove pipe will keep squirrels from climbing the post. Occasionally wax the stove pipe to keep it smooth and slippery. You can now add hooks to hang your bird feeders from. -*Concept Credit: Steve Wakeford, Rhode Island*

Were you there at just the right moment?

If you've captured great images of Bluebirds with your digital camera or phone, send them to me, attached to an email in jpeg form, to Lorijo.Jamieson@gmail.com

Please include who took the photo, where and when they were taken, and any background information, if desired. I will do my best to use them in an upcoming issue of "Jersey Blues." Thank you!



Lori Jo



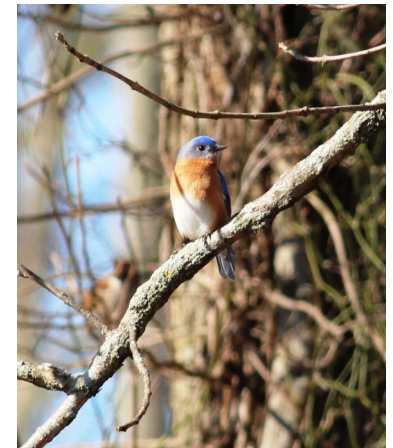
COUNTY COORDINATORS ARE VITAL!

We owe a lot to the people listed below. Not only do they monitor and maintain their own bluebird nest box trails; they also train, encourage and inform monitors in their county.

Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Passaic, Sussex, and Warren Counties are all VACANT.

As you can see, quite a few counties are still without a coordinator. Please consider stepping up if your county is listed as “vacant.” We are here to get you started in your new position, and you only spend as many hours as you can. For more information, or to volunteer, call Allen Jackson at (856) 327-4861.

County	Coordinator	Phone	E-mail
Atlantic	John Layton	609-927-5091	layton831@comcast.net
	Jim Watson	609-204-3358	wombat3287@gmail.com
Burlington	Nels Anderson	609-268-1817	nels.anderson@comcast.net
Camden	Chuck Kanupke	856-795-5810	chuckkanupke@verizon.net
Cape May	Gail Fisher	609-602-1976	gaildfisher@me.com
Cumberland	Allen Jackson	856-327-4861	aljxn@aol.com
Gloucester	David Gilcrest	609-238-8065	djgilcrest@aol.com
Morris	Jim Newquist	973-202-4637	papanuke@verizon.net
North & Central	Ed Zboyan	908-709-1162	eazyryder1@verizon.net
Ocean	Laura Stone	732-300-4604	Lauras36@yahoo.com
Salem	Shelly Cucugliello	856-696-5553	sccabincat@gmail.com
Somerset	April Tarantino	732-735-3511	apriltarantino@hotmail.com
Union	Frank V. Budney	908-687-2169	dbdown@aol.com



Photos by Bernie Visali



NEW MONITORS!

Meet John Caufield. He and his wife Nancy Cooney live in Cape May Court House, and are the newest **Cape May County** Monitors. Welcome, John and Nancy!

Photo by Gail Fisher





Photo by Jenyfra Nelson

FEEDING BLUEBIRDS

Besides bluebirds nesting in your back yard, feeding them during the winter months is especially satisfying. However, bluebirds that overwinter in New Jersey face a different set of challenges.

In the wintertime, bluebirds need food, water and cover. Southern NJ does not normally

get the deep and frequent snowfall or long spells of extreme cold temperatures, but this was not the case in the winter of 2014-2015. We repeatedly received snow storms which prevented the bluebirds from foraging in the litter for insects. The storms dumped snow that not only covered the ground but also the berries that bluebirds depend on during the winter months. Another limiting factor is frozen berries, which are less palatable to the birds.

Bluebirds group up in the fall and winter. People may observe 6-8 bluebirds using a feeder or using a box to roost in. While the use of winter roosting boxes is not yet totally known, there has been enough positive news for people to consider erecting a roosting box to aide overwintering bluebirds.

A regular nest box may also be "winterized" by reversing the door so the entrance hole is on the bottom. Because heat rises, none of it will be lost through that hole. Some sort of weather-resistant tape could also be used to seal ventilation holes or spaces.

Some thoughts to benefit your bluebirds:

~ a properly selected **feeder** can be placed close to a window, showcasing bluebird activities.

~ **shrubs** near your feeder provide escape cover from aerial predators

~ **water** is extremely important in the winter, (and all year round) and heaters are available to prevent icing in bird baths

~ **dried mealworms, suet nuggets, suet cakes** are all easy to feed in the winter. Be aware that live mealworms are calcium depleting to bluebirds. Some people make their own suet cakes, or find it easier to just purchase them!

Even with these efforts, prolonged cold spells may be limiting to our bluebirds. Pay attention to what is happening. Sometimes even the best intentions are not successful.



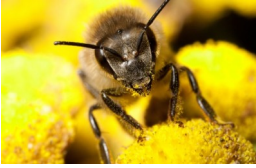
Photo by Jenyfra Nelson



Photo by LJ Jamieson



Photo by Bernie Visali



PLANTING FOR WILDLIFE? BEWARE OF NEONICOTINOIDS!

Many of us nature lovers plan our gardens according to the preferences of wildlife, including native plants that serve as a food source for birds, butterflies, and bees. Make sure when selecting your plants to avoid those treated with Neonicotinoid Insecticides. Neonicotinoids are systemic (get into every part of the plant, including pollen, nectar, *even dew*) pesticides that are applied to many commercially-available nursery plants and are harmful to bees, caterpillars, moths, and butterflies. To learn more read:

(1) Xerces Society's "Protecting Bees From Neonicotinoid Insecticides in Your Garden (includes list of products with neonics in them)" at: <http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/NeonicsInYourGarden.pdf>

(2) Xerces Society's "Neonicotinoids and Bees, and How Neonicotinoids Move Throughout the Environment" at: <http://www.xerces.org/neonicotinoids-and-bees/>

(3) Wild Ones' Journal article "Where have all the insects gone?" at: <http://www.wildones.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Neonics.pdf>.

Thanks to Pat Sutton for supplying these important facts and links. For Pat's list of "Some Sources of Native Plants" (updated annually and multiple times through the year), go to: <http://www.patsuttonwildlifegarden.com/some-sources-native-plants/>.

GAIL FISHER DISPLAYS NJBBS AT MEDFORD LEAS

I represented the NJBBS on March 3rd at the annual meeting of the **Native Plant Society of NJ** held at Medford Leas, a continuing care retirement community on the grounds of the Bertram Arboretum and Nature Preserve, in Medford, Burlington County, NJ.

Since members of the Native Plant Society attend this event from all over NJ, and are generally very aware of the need to support wildlife, there was much interest in the bluebird table. Hopefully, County Coordinators have received inquiries for more bluebird information generated from this event.

~ Gail Fisher, Cape May Co Coordinator



COMMON NEONICOTINOIDS TO AVOID

Neonicotinoid: Imidacloprid - Garden & ornamental uses: Foliar spray for turf and ornamental flowers, trees, and shrubs; soil drench for garden fruits and vegetables, and ornamental flowers, trees, and shrubs; trunk injection for trees; granules for turf and ornamental flowers, shrubs, or trees.

~ **Garden product trademark names:** Bayer Advanced 3-in-1 Insect, Disease, & Mite Control, Bayer Advanced 12 Month Tree & Shrub Insect Control, Bayer Advanced 12 Month Tree & Shrub Protect & Feed, Bayer Advanced Fruit, Citrus & Vegetable Insect Control, Bayer Advanced All-in-One Rose & Flower Care concentrate, DIY Tree Care Products Multi-Insect Killer, Ferti-lome 2-N-1 Systemic, Hi-Yield Systemic Insect Spray, Knockout Ready-To-Use Grub Killer, Monterey Once a Year Insect Control II, Ortho Bug B Gon Year-Long Tree & Shrub Insect Control, Ortho MAX Tree & Shrub Insect Control, Surrender Brand GrubZ Out

Neonicotinoid: Clothianidin - Garden & ornamental uses: Granules for turf, and ornamental flowers, shrubs, or trees.

~ **Garden product trademark names:** Bayer Advanced All-in-One Rose & Flower Care granules, Green Light Grub Control with Arena

Neonicotinoid: Thiamethoxam - Garden & ornamental uses: Foliar spray for turf and ornamental flowers, trees, and shrubs; granules for turf and ornamental flowers, trees, and shrubs.

~ **Garden product trademark names:** Amdro Quick Kill Lawn & Landscape Insect Killer, Amdro Rose & Flower Care, Maxide Dual Action Insect Killer

Neonicotinoid: Acetamiprid - Garden & ornamental uses: Foliar spray for garden fruits and vegetables, and ornamental flowers, trees, and shrubs.

~ **Garden product trademark names:** Ortho Bug B Gon Garden Insect Killer, Ortho Bug B Gon for Lawns, Ortho Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Insect Killer, Ortho Rose and Flower Insect Killer, Ortho Rose Pride Insect Killer

Neonicotinoid: Dinotefuran - Garden & ornamental uses: Granules for turf and ornamental flowers, shrubs or trees; soil drench for ornamental flowers, trees, and shrubs.

~ **Garden product trademark names:** Green Light Tree & Shrub Insect Control with Safari 2 G, Ortho Tree & Shrub Insect Control Plus Miracle Gro Plant Food

Information courtesy of <http://www.xerces.org> via Pat Sutton.

New Jersey Bluebird Society Summary Form: Submitted Data

County	2017 Reported # of Bluebirds Fledged	2016 Reported # of Bluebirds Fledged	Change
Atlantic	536	514	22
Bergen	0	0	-
Burlington	320	142	178
Camden	0	0	-
Cape May	235	75	160
Cumberland	603	407	196
Essex	0	0	-
Gloucester	261	208	53
Hudson	0	0	-
Hunterdon	0	0	-
Mercer	0	0	-
Middlesex	50	55	-5
Monmouth	88	162	-74
Morris	286	291	-5
Ocean	730	219	511
Passaic	0	0	-
Salem	222	112	110
Somerset	55	43	12
Sussex	0	0	-
Union	0	0	-
Warren	0	0	-
Total	3386	2228	1158

A big thank you goes out to Dave Gilcrest for compiling, updating and submitting these important statistics!



Sometimes we just need nature to get us motivated. In this case, we hope your concern for the well being of our native Eastern Bluebird has motivated you to join the New Jersey Bluebird Society. Bluebirds are one of our most desirable species. If you are reading this newsletter and still aren't a member, here's why you should be: Many factors impact bluebird survival, including weather, food/cover, predators, nest competition, pests, and disease. Proper management can be the key to maintaining a healthy and productive bluebird population. By joining the NJBBS we can provide you with that up to date information. As members we can:

Provide education about bluebirds to interested people like yourself.

Provide expertise and guidance to trail monitors & backyard bluebird enthusiasts.

Provide data forms to help document the bluebird activities in your boxes.

We encourage you to submit the number of young bluebirds fledged from your boxes at the end of each season. This precious data is used to monitor early population trends in New Jersey.

Now that you're thinking about it, why not go to www.njbluebirdsociety.org and become a member of both NJBBS and NABS?