



Jersey Blues

The Newsletter of The New Jersey Bluebird Society, an Affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society
~ Volume 7, Issue 1 - Spring, 2023



A New Look - or a Farewell?

As Editor of this newsletter, I'm possibly out of bounds just by writing this cover article. But I feel the need to speak about the matter of more involvement by our Members of NJBBS.

But first, a HUGE "thank you!" As I received articles and photos for this and other editions of *Jersey Blues*, I'm constantly amazed and grateful for the work and dedication given by many individuals and monitoring teams! Fantastic work!

However, I chose to use these vintage, old-fashioned illustrations to make a point. They may be a beautiful part of the past, but our organization can't afford to look backwards. If NJBBS is important to you, and you want to see it (and bluebirds) continue to grow and thrive, we need to do some soul searching and talk about that elephant in the room - **NJBBS still does not have a President.**

Allen put off retiring for many years because of his concern for NJBBS's future. Now it's someone else's turn, but just how can we move toward filling this Office? Does anyone have any suggestions or ideas? Should we send out a job description to our Members?

We still don't have County Coordinators in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, or Union Counties. Would anyone be interested in Co-Coordinating in the northern Counties?

NJBBS is one of the NABS Affiliates with the most members. How can we best retain our current members and gain new ones? Should we have committees, like NABS does? Maybe someone would be interested in becoming a Member of the Board. We could use new Members serving and sharing new ideas.

So many questions, and I certainly don't have the answers. Perhaps by putting it in writing, we can move forward. At the very least, let's think about how we can serve. Let's have the conversation. ~ Lori Jo Jamieson, Editor



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Allen Jackson Honored by NABS 2022 Awards Program

The 2022 Barbara Chambers Memorial Award was presented to NABS Director Allen Jackson of New Jersey. Allen was nominated by MaryAnn and Peter Manzelmann of the New Jersey Bluebird Society for “the many years that he has dedicated to bluebirds and other cavity-nesting birds.” They state further that “those who know Allen certainly know about his life-long efforts to conserve wildlife and to promote awareness through education and action.” Allen is a tireless bluebird advocate, traveling throughout New Jersey to band nestlings and to offer support and advice to “fledgling” bluebirders. Allen co-founded the New Jersey Bluebird Society and has served as its president for many years. He is a master bander for both bluebirds and Purple Martins, receiving the 2002 Purple Martin Landlord of the Year award.

The Barbara Chambers Memorial Award is awarded for work spanning at least two decades of mentoring and educating people of all ages regarding native cavity-nesting bird species, e.g., erecting new nestbox trails, reviving old ones with new monitors; introducing new people to bluebirds, making presentations to youth and adults; working with schools to present programs relating to bluebird and habitat conservation for all native cavity-nesting birds; acting as a liaison or support person for NABS with handling queries or problems bluebirders have on their trails. *Adapted from NABS' Spring 2023 issue of "Bluebird."*

Congratulations to Bernadine Visalli, our New Vice President, South

A Message from Bernie: “Hello everyone in Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties. As your newly elected VP, I am looking forward to meeting and seeing the diversity in habitat in these areas. County Coordinators, please set up a time for us to meet and take a walk on your favorite trail. Any members in my coverage area that needs assistance or would just like to say “hi”, please reach out to me via email at buttonwood61@yahoo.com. Thanks!”

Jersey Blues

The Newsletter of the New Jersey Bluebird Society ~ Spring 2023 Issue

Editor: Lori Jo Jamieson
bluebirdljj@gmail.com

Webmaster: Gary Pilling
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NJBBS OFFICERS

President: *vacant*

Vice President, North: *vacant*

Vice President, Central: Jonathan Hart

NEW Vice President, South: Bernadine Visalli
(See her message above)

Treasurer: Louise Cockey

Secretary: Jenyfra Nelson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All Officers above, plus Past Presidents
 Frank Budney and Allen Jackson

At Large: Harry Bratty, Shelly Cucugliello,
 Dave Gilcrest, Lori Jo Jamieson,
 Gary Pilling, Jim Priest,
 Laura Stone, Jim Watson

Are you a NJBBS Member who is interested in helping out with bluebirds? Please contact the NJBBS County Coordinator closest to your location.

Atlantic - Jim Watson

609-204-3358
wombat3287@gmail.com

Burlington - Harry Bratty

856-630-6765
hnbratty@gmail.com

Camden - Chuck Kanupke

856-795-5810
chuckkanupke@verizon.net

Cape May - Rae Griffiths

413-695-8291
raegriffiths105@gmail.com

Cumberland - Allen Jackson

609-805-4073
aljaxn@aol.com

Gloucester - Bernadine Visalli

856-986-4502
buttonwood61@yahoo.com

Middlesex - Susan Meaney

732-213-6870
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Monmouth - Jean Montgomerie

646-808-5158
jmontperson@gmail.com

Ocean - Laura Stone

732-300-4604
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Salem Co-Coordinators:

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buttonwood61@yahoo.com
Allen Jackson
 609-805-4073
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Somerset - April Tarantino

732-735-3511
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Warren - McKenna Kels

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The following Counties still need Coordinators:

Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, and Union Counties. For more information, please call Jonathan Hart at 410-407-2128 or send an email to jon.c.hart@gmail.com.



The Mission, Goals and Methods of The New Jersey Bluebird Society

The New Jersey Bluebird Society (NJBBS) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the population of bluebirds in New Jersey. NJBBS is a state organization affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society (NABS).

Our Mission Statement: To educate, conserve and promote bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds in New Jersey.

Our Goals and Methods: The primary goal of the NJBBS 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.

To accomplish these goals our objectives are to provide expertise and guidance to trail monitors and backyard bluebird enthusiasts, to monitor yearly population trends by surveying the number of young fledged from nest boxes, and to provide public education about bluebirds to interested people in New Jersey.

If you are reading this newsletter and still aren't a member, you're missing out! Become a part of a community of people, of all ages, from all areas of New Jersey, who are all interested in bluebirds, like you are. Membership Has Its Rewards! Bluebirds are one of our most desirable species, and 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. 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.

So, now that you're thinking about it, why not go to www.njbluebirdsociety.org and become a member today?



About The North American Bluebird Society

NJBBS is a State Affiliate of NABS, and there are lots of advantages to being a member of both NJBBS and NABS. Only members of NABS receive *Bluebird*, their beautiful quality quarterly publication of interest to anyone who appreciates bluebirds and other secondary cavity nesters. The NABS organization supports and helps unify the work of state chapters across America. For a small membership fee, everyone in NJBBS is encouraged to also join NABS and get a better understanding of what our bluebird friends are doing in North America.

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 about getting started, nestbox 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. Please consider joining both NJBBS and NABS today!

SPECIAL FIRST-YEAR OFFER! If you become a Member of NJBBS (a NABS Affiliate) you can join NABS for only \$15. This is for your first year only. Details at www.nabluebirdsociety.org

Get Ready for Summer Vacation! Give those "I'm so bored" kids something to do!

The North American Bluebird Society (NABS) is proud to offer *Get to Know Bluebirds: A Guide for Young Nature Lovers*. Written by Myrna Pearman, retired biologist and nature writer/photographer, with the able assistance of Bet Zimmerman Smith and other members of the NABS Education Committee, the book is aimed at a younger audience. Its pages are graced with beautiful photographs by bluebirders from across North America, and is designed to make learning about bluebirds a fun and appealing adventure. With this book, NABS hopes to kindle a fire and a love for bluebirds in young people across this continent.

Get to Know Bluebirds: A Guide for Young Nature Lovers is [available at this link](#) as a FREE downloadable (27 MB) PDF file. NABS encourages you to download the book and share it as widely as possible! Their plan is to get the book printed - as soon as the funds can be raised - and include it as part of their excellent resource offerings.



Burlington County

Coordinator, Harry Bratty | 856-630-6765 | hmbratty@gmail.com

Here is an article written by former Burlington County Coordinator, Nels Anderson. It was included in "The Burlington County Natural Science Club" newsletter a dozen years ago regarding feeding Bluebirds in winter. The BCNSC has since ceased to exist, but Nels is still very active in "bluebirding."



Don't Bluebirds eat berries and bugs? Aren't they sight feeders dropping down to catch their insect prey and then fly back to their perch to consume whatever they caught? Don't they eat holly, cedar and dog-wood berries as well as other native berry species? Their soft calls are fairly easy to recognize and as they have become more common it isn't unusual to hear them calling to one another right through winter. I personally never thought of trying to attract Bluebirds to the feeders and certain family members refused to even consider mealworms as an attractant although others have had success.

Our feeders do present a wide variety of bird food stuffs such as nuts, sunflower seeds/hearts, eggshells, suet, leftover baked goods, thistle seed, cracked corn, mixed bird seed, whole peanuts, peanut butter, peanut butter cakes etc. Over the years leftover corn bread was offered and many birds readily took to this food. So much, in fact, that we began making corn bread specifically for birds and place a limited quantity each day in and around a cage meant to keep squirrels at bay. Many birds enjoy this treat and some unusual customers have been Pine Warbler, Hermit Thrush, Red Belly Woodpecker and now Bluebirds. Whoever would have thought they would eat cornbread?

A pair was the first to visit soon joined by another couple. Cornbread crumbs and water seem to be their favorite items. About this time we began to make suet cakes which included lard, a little sugar, cornmeal, peanut butter and small bird seed. They were an instant success and a Bluebird pair continued to visit right into the nesting season eventually bringing young with them.

This winter, perhaps due to the heavy snows or just an increase in numbers, there have been as many as eleven at one time at the feeders. They don't squabble much and seem very tolerant of each other. They do give way to larger birds yet hold their own and seem very adaptive. A foot long hanging



stick drilled full of half inch holes provides peanut butter for the woodpeckers. Several Bluebirds have learned to cling to it as they fuel up and don't seem to have any problem. They will eat peanut pieces, small bird seed, eggshells, beef suet and the other mentioned items. They love water, especially during extended cold dry periods and will line up waiting a turn for a drink.



The feeder area is adjacent to a deck with access through a slider which makes a certain sound when opening and closing. In bird language this translates into the sound of a dinner bell. Bluebirds picked up on this right away and even though none are visible once food is in place and the door slides shut they appear within ten to fifteen seconds. Cornbread remains their favorite food. When they have had enough they linger to preen or just hang around.

On a dreary winter day it's just so uplifting to see the flash of blue as they flit about. Their warbling songs, brilliant color, good behavior and promise of spring all make them very welcome visitors at our house. ~ Nels Anderson

Camden County

Coordinator, Chuck Kanupke | 856-795-5810 | chuckkanupke@verizon.net

Thank you, **Matthew Luketina** for sharing these fantastic photos on NJBBS's Facebook Page. He reached out when he saw one of his bluebird visitors wearing a band. New Jersey Bluebird Society participates in a banding program that helps gather data on bluebird movement. We love to hear from the public about their enjoyment of bluebirds.



Banded Bluebird Wyndam Hill, Winslow Township, Camden County. Photos by Matthew Luketina



If you would like to know more about bluebirds and how to become a member, please visit our website at <http://njbluebirdsociety.org/>



Photo by Chuck Kanupke.

New Brooklyn Park - Mike Chezik (L) and Jim Priest (R) were out inspecting nest boxes on March 27th at New Brooklyn Park. They were performing the maintenance, while County Coordinator Chuck Kanupke recorded their work.



Bluebird Nestbox Installed at Historic Camden County Location

Jim Priest and his wife, Priscilla installed a nestbox on April 11th at the Whitman-Stafford House in Laurel Springs, NJ.

According to Waymarking.com, "Between 1876 and 1884, poet Walt Whitman spent summers in his later life at a friend's farm house a few blocks from Laurel Lake in Laurel Springs, Camden County, New Jersey. Whitman converted one of the barn buildings into his summer home. Whitman said that Laurel Lake was the "prettiest lake in either America or Europe". He would walk to Crystal Spring near the lake. Much of Whitman's work for "Specimen Days" and part of "Leaves of Grass" were written here. He would sit by the spring, drink the water, and take mud baths near the spring to help his recovery after a partial stroke."

Whitman converted one of the barn buildings into his summer home. Whitman said that Laurel Lake was the "prettiest lake in either America or Europe". He would walk to Crystal Spring near the lake. Much of Whitman's work for "Specimen Days" and part of "Leaves of Grass" were written here. He would sit by the spring, drink the water, and take mud baths near the spring to help his recovery after a partial stroke."



Tell Us Your Bluebirding Story!

Write about your experiences, good or bad, and share them with other bluebird lovers and supporters.

Ask for advice | Recommend a technique | Brag! | Recruit monitors | Submit photos

Send your email (with jpegs attached, if applicable) to bluebirdljj@gmail.com. We're waiting to read all about it!

Cape May County

Coordinator, Rae Griffiths | 413-695-8291 | raegriffiths105@gmail.com

Updates from Cape May County - Cape May County is very happy to welcome new monitors Larry and Powell, Jessica Pitolycky-Harmen and Family, Jennifer Mercado and Family, Kurt and Heather Williams, Larry and Alyce Williams, Kiersten Keating and Family, Tom Considine, and Bill & Carol Stuempfig.

On March 1st, Cape May County Coordinator, Rae Griffiths, gave a presentation about bluebirds to 40 members of the Gardening By The Sea Club in Villas, NJ for their monthly meeting. The group was very engaged and interested and made a lovely donation to NJBBS for Rae's time. Rae is excited to present a bluebird program for youth members of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension 4H Science Rocks Club on Sunday April 16th.

New CMC monitor Tom Considine, in cooperation with staff at the Cape May Point State Park, is helping reactivate the monitoring program at the park this spring. Several of the old boxes were removed and new boxes were placed in more promising bluebird habitat in the park. Time will tell if the bluebirds frequently seen in the area choose to nest in the park! - submitted by Rae Griffiths



Photo by Bevin O'Grady

Robert Hudson, who helps monitor a trail on the Middle Township bike path, removes winter material in preparation for spring nesters.

Ornithology - *Slow Birding* - by Dr. Roger Lederer - posted on Dec 25, 2022

Recently, *Slow Birding*, a book all about enjoying the birds in your backyard, was published. The author, Joan Strassmann, an accomplished scientist in the field of evolution and microbes, writes about her hobby of birdwatching and offers some good advice: rather than traveling far and wide to see and list birds in new locales, the author stresses the joys of birding in the most familiar of haunts, your backyard. In the same vein as *What the Robin Knows* by Jon Young, the advice is basically to take your time in watching birds rather than just checking them off on a list.

No doubt many birdwatchers miss the subtle moves of birds as they move along branches, creep up or down the bark, probe among the leaves, or pick through the various seeds in the feeder. Robins and towhees have different ground feeding styles, sparrows handle seeds differently than jays, and birds other than hummers feed at hummingbird feeders. On a day-to-day basis, do you see differences in the number and kinds of species your backyard? Are they in the same places eating the same food? Can you recognize any individuals within a species – that's a real challenge. (Do you see any differences between the two Northern Cardinals below?)

All Strassmann and Young are doing is asking you to pay close attention. Like lots of things in our lives, we tend to move too quickly rather than savoring whatever satisfaction we can get out of the activity. This is just, I think, a form of "forest bathing" - consciously connecting to the environment around you.

Approximately 83% of the U.S. population lives in urban areas, up from 64% in 1950. By 2050, 89% of the U.S. population and 68% of the world population will live in urban areas. In the U.S. the average person spends 93% of their time indoors. Going outside and paying attention to the natural world, even if only a small part of it, can be a boon to your mental and physical health.

I was interviewed by a young aspiring journalist the other day and suggested that she views the natural world much differently than I do. In my time, vast natural areas of the world and the U.S. have been destroyed for housing, manufacturing, roads, etc. or mined or logged or grazed. Since 1950 the population of the U.S. has tripled. To support that population growth, habitat has disappeared and the population of birds, in the U.S., has declined by 50%. What the journalist sees today is a vastly depleted natural world from 70 years ago. But that's normality to her. If she sees a 5% decline in bird populations over the next ten years, it may not seem like much, but to people my age, that's continuing a drastic decline. Today, 13% of all bird species are in danger of extinction.

Getting to know the natural world will also help the environment as one will appreciate it more. The more people go outside, pay attention to nature, and understand what's happening, the better the chances are of saving some of it.

Cumberland County

Coordinator, Allen Jackson | 609-805-4073 | aljaxn@aol.com

Cumberland County News ~ *By Allen Jackson, Cumberland County Coordinator*

News Flash! The eggs in my back yard nest hatched on April 5th. It will be interesting to see if they all fledge.

New Installations - I recently installed 3 boxes at the Morello's property in Vineland. They have bluebirds nesting in old boxes that need replacing and did not have predator guards installed. They showed a great interest in improving their setup to benefit bluebirds in 2023.

I also added another box in Leesburg as a result of good monitoring. The management by **Doty Dayton** has helped increase the bluebird population there. Repairs have been made to all boxes for this season.

BLUEBIRD BOX AT VETERANS HOME - I had the honor of placing a bluebird setup at the Veterans Home in Vineland, NJ. It all started back in May 2022, when I gave a talk to the Garden Club of New Jersey, Inc. at the Millville Library. That was followed up with a few on-sites, one of which **Carol Deuber** (Club Vice President) suggested locating a box at the Veterans Home.

The Garden Club planted and maintains a beautiful Blue Star Memorial Garden flower garden. Since I am a veteran with a service connected disability, it was a special opportunity for me. While the box was not located until June 28, 2022, time will tell if the box attracts bluebirds. A second box was added in the spring of 2023. While there may be house sparrow issues, we are hoping the bluebirds will be attracted to this habitat.

New Monitors - **Kassandra Kopanyi** is now monitoring the 19-box bluebird trail in the **Buckshutem WMA** in Millville. We monitored the trail on April 4th, and discovered that 12 of the 19 boxes are productive. Highlights included a box with 6 eggs, and another box with white eggs. She is monitoring a very special trail! Welcome, Kassandra!

Trudy and Jeff Pomerantz are now monitoring seven boxes at the Holly Farm property in Millville. Every box has been productive every year, and 3 boxes have white eggs. They are also monitoring two boxes at Holly Heights Elementary in Millville. Welcome Judy and Jeff!



These new monitors are all members of [Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries](#). CU has been a huge supporter of our bluebird effort, not only in southern NJ, but throughout the State. They have provided financial assistance, participated in promoting our bluebird program, and found people to monitor trails. Our partnership with CU has been a major reason for NJBBS' success. **Joe Moore, CU's Program Coordinator**, has played a big role in identifying potential trails (i.e., Ft. Mott, Holly Farms, Landis Sewerage Authority) and finding CU members to monitor and manage existing trails. There is a long list of CU members who are now or have participated in our bluebird program.

Speaking of CU...after a couple of years of not happening due to Covid restrictions, the **Eagle Festival in Mauricetown** resumed on February 4, 2023 under improved conditions. Jim Watson and I manned a table representing NJBBS at the Mauricetown Fire Hall. This event attracts many people (~2,000) interested in wildlife. We talked with people from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware and many counties in NJ (Cape May, Cumberland, Atlantic, Burlington, Salem, Gloucester, Somerset, Middlesex, Monmouth, Warren). Talks were given in a separate room by various field experts. Outdoors, there were birding experts stationed with spotting scopes for viewing eagle nests at various locations, and experts also led several wildlife walks to areas where eagles could be seen.

The event was open from 8 am until 4 pm. We had a continuous flow of people stopping by, seeking technical assistance about bluebirds or showing interest in having NJBBS install a box on their property. We answered many questions and provided literature for NJBBS, NABS, and keeping cats indoors. We displayed a box setup representative of what we normally place for bluebirds, including a full length PVC drain pipe used as a baffle to prevent predators from climbing the pole.

Of note: we made contacts with the Cape May Point State Park, the Pineland Preservation Alliance, and residents in Monmouth County who want bluebirds. This event is the major event in NJ that attracts bird enthusiasts from the surrounding area. Besides Jim and I, many NJBBS members also attended the event including: Lori Jo Jamieson and her husband Peter, Gary Pilling and Mary, Priscilla and Jim Priest, Mary-Anne and Peter Manzelmann, Fred Hundt, and other active NJBBS "bluebirders."

Gloucester County

Coordinator, Bernadine Visalli | 856-986-4502 | buttonwood61@yahoo.com

A Note from Bernie: There is lots of activity going on in the County. Monitors are reaching out for advice and help with repairs. This past winter was hard on the boxes. From what I have witnessed, the wind storms really caused havoc and most need to be reset. Jim Priest has a bunch of new monitors he is assisting in our county and his help is much appreciated! Looking forward to a great nesting season!

New Group Crosses County Lines to Promote Bluebirds - I would like to welcome our new group members Greg S., Harry and Cristina B. (Williamstown, Gloucester County) Sue C. from the Winslow Wildlife Management Department and Jennifer W. from Elm (both Camden County) who will be checking the new boxes in Hammonton. We have added 16 new boxes so far this year, giving my little group 100 + boxes for this season.

Good news from Allen Jackson! The 2 boxes he put up on March 31st with Bev Urbano both have eggs. By now, the chicks may have hatched and flew off to college.

On April 23rd, at Red Bank Battle Field's **Earth Day Celebration** in National Park, NJ, NJBBS will be represented by my wife Priscilla and I, Susan Meany (Middlesex County Coordinator) and Karen Stafford. Come visit our table between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. - *submitted by Jim Priest*



Blue Barn Farm Adds Bluebirds to Its List of Residents - Four new nestboxes were installed recently at Blue Barn Farms in Williamstown, NJ, including a specially made box to be fitted with a camera. The farm is owned by Christine Baughman, monitor Greg Stamen's next door neighbor. The first egg of the season was reported here at Blue Barn Farms. Congratulations! **Christine Baughman shares what Blue Barn Farm is all about:**



Inspired by the Social Care Farming movement, Blue Barn Farm is result of experience and a desire to make a place for everyone to enjoy nature, learn something new, and improve quality of life through social interaction, regardless of ability, age, social skills, or background. Social Care Farming is the therapeutic use of farming practices for promoting healing, mental health, social, or educational care. It involves animal husbandry, agriculture, woodland management, crafts, and gardening.

With a long history of owning horses, growing vegetables, and working in the medical field, it made sense to create a space where we could provide a way of living to our family members who are living with disabilities and share it with the community. By doing so, we can encourage others to learn the joy and benefits to growing food, sitting quietly in nature, and discover the mental health benefits of unplugging and spending time on the farm. Please contact us to discuss how we can help you or your loved one. No request is too small. **Open by appointment only.**



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Monmouth County

Coordinator, Jean Montgomerie | 646-808-5158 | jmontperson@gmail.com

My Bluebird Adventures in Monmouth County ~ Submitted by County Coordinator, Jean Montgomerie

Photo by Han Nyugen



Guess the Nest!

Photos by Jean Montgomerie



Preventable Tragedy in Jackson NJ 4/14/2023: I discovered these old boxes last year and observed bluebirds using them. This year I came back to see if the birds had returned. Metal sign posts with no predator guard.

Photos by Jean Montgomerie



Great News about An "Oldie but Goodie" found in Allaire State Park - I knew that the four boxes at Allaire were not being monitored by anyone in NJBBS. Thanks to the "Miracle of Facebook", I was able to recruit **Rita English** to monitor the boxes at Allaire for 2023.

Back in February, Rita and I saw an overwintering pair - with no supplemental food! This nest could belong to that pair of bluebirds. On Sunday, April 2nd, we discovered their first egg!

Photos by Jean Montgomerie



4/16/23 - An existing, screwed shut, unmarked nestbox at Howell's Bear Swamp Natural Area. Look what I found! Perhaps this is the place for a Nestbox Trail?

Tree swallow at Durand Park Freehold Township

Ocean County

Coordinator, Laura Stone | 732-300-4604 | Lauras36@yahoo.com

A Blast from the Past! Posted on Facebook by The New Jersey Forest Service - May 22, 2015

“Cheer up, grumpy bluebird! Allen Jackson from the New Jersey Bluebird Society and Laura Stone, bluebird monitor, banded bluebirds at the Forest Resource Education Center in Jackson yesterday to help further research of the species.”

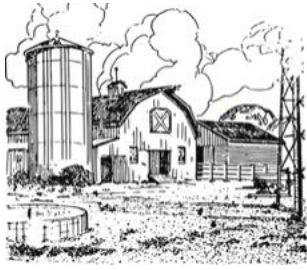


And the one and only comment, left four years ago:
Does either Allen Jackson or NJ Bluebird Society have a FB page?
YES, WE DO, and [Here's a link!](#)

Salem County

Co-Coordinator, Allen Jackson | 609-805-4073 | aljaxn@aol.com

Co-Coordinator, Bernadine Visalli | 856-986-4502 | buttonwood61@yahoo.com



Good news! – A few more farms in Salem County have reached out to me regarding getting a bluebird trail started. With farms, I like to wait until their first ground tilling is done to see how and what they will be planting before considering a trail.

Allen Jackson also has **good news** - that the 4 boxes he added to Parvin State Park last fall are all productive. Eight out of nine sites are active. What a great way to start the season! Watch for a full report in the Fall issue of “Jersey Blues.”

Warren County

Coordinator, McKenna Kels | 908-878-7077 | mckennakels@gmail.com



The Woodpeckers of Wattles - Last year I wrote about finding enlarged entrance holes and woodchips in the five boxes at NJ Audubon’s Wattles Stewardship Center. I sent photos to Allen Jackson, who advised me that it was the work of a woodpecker, probably a Downy, harvesting nesting material.

What remained a mystery were the black marks in the box. Then, I started seeing damaged boxes on other trails, including a box at Merrill Creek Reservoir and several just over the border in a PA trail. They all had enlarged entrance holes, woodchips, and those mysterious black marks.

I feel safe in assuming that woodpeckers were responsible for the black marks and made the decision to put metal hole reducers on all my nestboxes. They are easy to install, and Amazon sells 18 lightweight brass reducers for \$14.99 - well worth the price and trouble of repairing or replacing a ruined nestbox.

P.S. - Kaycee Lichliter wrote an article for NABS’ Spring *Bluebird* entitled *Red-headed Woodpecker Nests in an Eastern Bluebird Nestbox*. She describes her observance of the woodpeckers enlarging the entrance hole and making woodchips for a nest. The box is part of the Shenandoah Audubon Blandy Bluebird Trail at the University of Virginia’s historic Blandy Experimental Farm and field research station. ~ by Lori Jo Jamieson

The Wattles Stewardship Center is a 51-acre wildlife sanctuary and is also the location of **New Jersey Audubon’s** northern Stewardship Program staff. Acquisition of the property was made possible by Mr. Gurdon Wattles, who donated the house and barn, and through NJ Green Acres funding. The center is located at 1024 Anderson Road, Port Murray, NJ 07865.

This peaceful sanctuary is open sunrise to sunset, seven days a week for passive recreation and is flanked by a state wildlife management area to the southeast and preserved farmland to the northwest. Visitors wishing to access the trail system of nearby Point Mountain Reservation, a Hunterdon County Park, can park at the Stewardship Center and hike through the adjacent Wildlife Management Area along the scenic Musconetcong River to Point Mountain Road. There is also access to the Musconetcong River that offers an opportunity for wildlife viewing and river access.



House and barn circa early 19th century

Warren County

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A Washington Woman's Club Presentation ~ submitted by Lori Jo Jamieson

Thanks to a special Warren County NJBBS Member and friend, **Grace Kocher**, I had an opportunity to tell this group all about "The Joy of Bluebirds" on March 21st. Grace is the organization's Co-Vice President and had made the suggestion months back.

Grace lives in Warren County, and has a nestbox which produced 4 chicks last season. She is gifted at recognizing potential partnerships that could promote NJBBS and bluebirds. Currently, she's been working on a possible source of nestboxes at a local school woodshop.

Through **Ruth Braid**, a Woman's Club Member, I learned about **The Washington Community Garden**. There are bluebird fans in the group, and I met them today at their community work day and offered a few suggestions based on NABS specs.

Here I'm explaining why a nestbox predator guard is so crucial to a safe setup.

Bluebirds on the Line - On April 5th, I installed two nestboxes on the Musconetcong Watershed Association's River Trail in Asbury, Warren County, NJ. Although this path opens up as it follows the river, it is still a wooded area, with lovely old sycamores and decaying fallen trees. Walking here last month, I saw a flock of bluebirds in the trees, and heard them calling to one another. It was a magical moment! These lovely birds must've continued to nest in a group of old, broken-down boxes, none of which had a predator guard.



Bluebird nest w/5 eggs
in Maple Avenue box.



Before



New Setup

Many thanks to Ryan Jiorle, Community Engagement Coordinator at MWA for helping me with this project, and for seeing how new setups would properly protect their bluebirds. Ryan had already helped me install a good setup along Maple Avenue, in more open habitat.



CLICK THE LOGO to find out what this organization is doing for wildlife, clean water, and environmental education, including a summer "Camp Musky" for kids.



The Musconetcong River forms the dividing line between the two Counties. Asbury is an historic town, with its Hoffman Grist Mill now preserved and restored. To learn more, go to <https://lvhistory.org/historic-sites/asbury-grist-mill/>

Musconetcong Island Park - Making safer public access to enjoy the river

We are thrilled to announce the completion of the Musconetcong Island Park project, which has opened up safer public access for people to enjoy the Musconetcong River.

The quarter-acre island in the Musconetcong River contained an abandoned former mill building donated by Asbury Carbons to the Musconetcong Watershed Association in 1999. The building was deemed unsafe, and while there was a stairway to the island, public access had been barred by a guardrail.

Thanks to the NJ Green Acres Program and the National Park Foundation, the MWA was able to secure funds to remove the abandoned building, allowing the public to access the island for recreation safely. [Click here](#) for more information.