



# Season Kickoff Volunteers Meeting March 5, 2022



*Dedicated to increasing & protecting  
the Eastern Bluebird population  
of Bella Vista, Arkansas*

# NABS Factsheet

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## Getting Started with Bluebirds

Over the years, land has been cleared for housing and commercial developments, highways and agriculture, and many old trees have been cut down. Wooden fence posts that provided nesting cavities have been replaced with metal posts.

# NABS Factsheet

## Monitoring Bluebird Nestboxes

### WHY MONITOR YOUR NESTBOX?

It is very important that bluebird nestboxes be actively monitored (checked) at least once a week. Bluebirds are tolerant of humans, and will not abandon a nestbox that is properly monitored. All bluebird boxes should be built so that they can be opened either from the side, front, or top.

A box that is not monitored may do more harm to bluebirds than good. Monitoring increases the chances of success for bluebirds using the box. When good records are kept, it is also valuable for determining population trends.

Monitoring nestboxes will alert you to problems birds may be having with predators and competitors. **House Sparrows** (sometimes called English Sparrows) and **European Starlings** are non-native species introduced from Europe. Their aggressive seizure of cavity nest sites is a primary reason for declines in bluebird populations. Starlings nest in many of the natural nest sites but can be excluded from nestboxes by using 1 1/4 or 1 3/4 inch entrance holes. House Sparrows are smaller, so they can readily enter bluebird nestboxes. They frequently kill adult and nestling bluebirds, destroy their eggs, or drive them from their nests. At no time should they be allowed to successfully nest in bluebird boxes. Doing so will increase the House Sparrow population and further reduce the number of bluebirds. See the NABS factsheet on [House Sparrow Control](#) (available on our website at [www.nabluebirdsociety.org/bluebirdfacts.htm](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/bluebirdfacts.htm)).



A **paper wasp** or **mouse** nest will drive nesting birds away from the box, and should be removed. Take appropriate precautions to avoid breathing the dust from a mouse nest.



Knowing what species is using the box is also beneficial. Bluebird societies would like you to monitor and report all species using your nestboxes, not just bluebirds. Tree Swallows, titmice, chickadees, Carolina and House Wrens and nuthatches are all native, beneficial birds. Remember: It is illegal to remove an active nest of any native cavity-nesting bird. Keeping records on a weekly basis, and sending survey forms in at the end of the nesting season increases our knowledge of cavity-nesting birds.

After any nesting effort has ended, either due to nest failure or successful fledging of the young, remove the used nest from the box. When a bluebird nest is successful, re-nesting in the same box may be encouraged if the first nest is removed. This can be done as soon as all chicks have left the nest. Females usually build a new nest.

### WHAT TO MONITOR

When you monitor a box, determine which species is using it by examining nesting material and eggs. Record the date and the number of eggs or young observed. Knowing when the eggs were laid will help you determine if they are infertile, or when they should hatch and when the young would be expected to leave the nest. In the case of most cavity nesters, one egg is laid one each day until the entire clutch is complete. Incubation will then begin. For bluebirds, incubation typically lasts approximately 12-14 days. After hatching, the chicks will remain in the nest for about 17-21 days. Your monitoring should be limited to viewing from a distance after the 12-13th day, or the chicks might jump or fly from the box prematurely.





**nabluebirdsociety.org**



***Free download  
74 pages***

***On the BVBBS  
website  
About Bluebirds***



# North American Bluebird Society



***15 for first time  
1 year membership as a  
BVBBS Affiliate of NABS***



# Agenda

- 1) What's New**
- 2) New Volunteers**
- 3) Website Changes**
- 4) Google Sheets for Monitor Data**  
**~ Short Break ~**
- 5) Guest Speaker**



# Photo Contest



Mickey Arlow

***Prizes awarded***

***Rules & entry form on website & FB***

***Ends September 15***

***Jacqui***



# **Nature Expo**



***September at Lake Avalon***

***Raffle Prizes***

***Other Groups:***

★ ***BV Garden Club***

★ ***BV Fly Tyers***

★ ***The Bluebird Shed***

★ ***NWA Master Naturalists***

***Jacqui***







# ***Wood Bluebird Pudding Feeders***



***Mark or Steve***



# \$1000 Research Grant was Awarded

HOME RESEARCH UPDATES RESUME

WILLIAM KIRKPATRICK  
Behavioral and Physiological Ecology

## About Me

I am a PhD Student in the DuRant lab at the University of Arkansas, and I am primarily interested in the effects of climatic variability on wildlife behavior and physiology.

As a **2021 NSF Graduate Research Fellow** at UArk, I am using the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) to determine how changes in natural thermal variability affect nest choice, parental care, and offspring phenotype.

My undergraduate work focused on how climate change will impact the breeding behavior of the dung beetle *Phanaeus vindex*, and I contributed to a project investigating the breeding behavior of *Lathrotriccus griseipectus*, a rare flycatcher in Ecuador. This work was done in the Sheldon Lab at the University of Tennessee.

whkecology.com

Randy



# ***Potential New Programs***

***Grants for Arkansas Trails***

***&***

***Adopt a Highway***



***Jacqui or Ray***





# *Refresher for Monitors*



## Bella Vista Bluebird Society

Bluebird Eggs, Bluebird Chicks &  
Birds That Use Bluebird Nest Boxes



Tony Pratt

***Laura  
or  
George***





# New Volunteers

## Monitors

***Adrian Berghamer (Edinburgh Rd)***

***Bonnie Bohm (LL Marina)***

***Marilyn & Steve Brown (Scotsdale)***

***Becky Pratt (BVCC)***

***Jim Richardson (Highlands)***

***Jayne Roth (substitute)***



**New Treasurer**

**Mark Richardson**

**New Trail**

**Highlands Methodist Church**



# **Positions Wanted**

***Trail Boss for Highlands Church & Glasgow Road***

***Website Editor***

**Position Descriptions on Website**

***Steve or Laura***



**We now monitor & maintain**  
**582**  
**nest boxes in Bella Vista**

**From 1980 - 2021 we helped fledge**  
**51,497**  
**Eastern Bluebirds on our trails**





[bvbluebirds.com](http://bvbluebirds.com)



# Google Sheets for Monitoring

- ***Benefits:***
  - ***Shared files online***
  - ***Good for collaboration with TB & substitute monitors***
  - ***No need to email Excel/Calc/PDF***
  - ***Easy to use***
  - ***Data is saved automatically***
  - ***Use it on your phone***



# Google Sheets

- *Next week I will email link to your monitor sheets & training for new monitors*
- *A slightly new way of working:*

*Keep up to date weekly*

Bella Vista Bluebird Society		Monitor	Cheryl Sialis										Year	2022							Site Name	Berksdale, Holes 1, 2, 3							TB	Jim Feather						
		1 - Click on a cell to add data																							Bluebird	Tree Swallow										
		2 - To set bird color in a cell use <b>A</b> in the menu above, see colors to the right.																							Chickadee	House Wren										
		3 - For dates use month/day (3/20 for example)																							House Sparrow	Titmouse										
		4 - Scroll down to see Sample sheet																																		
HOLE #	BOX #	DATE																							2022 TOTALS	2021 TOTALS										
		3/19	3/27	4/3	4/11	4/17	4/24	5/2	5/9	5/16	5/22	5/29	6/6	6/13	6/20	6/27	7/5	7/10	7/19	7/24	7/31	8/7	8/14	8/21	8/28											
1	1				NC	NC	4E	6E	6E	6C	6C	6F														6	0									
1	1A		NC	4E	4E	4C	4C	4F		NC	5E	RN	RN		NC	NC	NC	AB								4	3									
1	1B	NC	1E	4E	4C	4D		NC	4E	4E	4C	4C	4F			NC	4E	4E	4E	4E	AB					4	4									
2	2		NC	NC	1E	3E	3E	3C	3C	3C	3F															3	5									
2	2A		2E	5E	5E	3C	3C	3F	NC	1E	NI			NC	4E	4E	3C	2C	2F							5	0									
3	3	NC	3E	4E	4E	3C	3C	3C	3F					NC	4E	4E	4C	4C	4F							7	0									
3	3A	4E	4E	4C	4C	4C	4F				NC	2E	2E	NI				NC	3E	4E	4E	3C	3C	3C	3F	7	4									
3	3B	NC	2E	2E	NI		NC	4E	4E	4C	4C	4F														4	7									
3	3C			NC	4E	6E	6E	6C	6C	6C	6F															6	8									
3	3D				NC	4E	4E	4E	AB																	0	10									
TOTAL																						10	26	6	4	see left	29, 12									
AB	Abandoned: after 21 days, clutch of eggs not hatched OR nest not used										E	Eggs – 1E, 2E, etc. remove clutch after 21 days if unhatched										Nest building: 1-10 days, remove after 21 days if unused														
NC	Nest Completed – use bird colors to identify nest										C	Chicks – 1C, 2C, etc.										Egg laying: 1 per day														
NI	Nest Invaded*										F	Fledged (left nest) – 1F, 2F, etc.										Incubation: 11-19 days after last egg is laid														
FL	Flooded										D	Dead – 1D, 2D, etc.										Brooding: 15-18 days after hatching														
* For NI – make notes below of the type of predator, known or suspected, include Box #:																																				
2A, 5/22, nothing disturbed, maybe a snake? 3A, 6/13, same as 2A. 3B, 4/11, nesting material pulled out, raccoon or cat, Jim put guard on box.																																				





# If You Are Unable to Monitor Your Boxes

- ***Stuff Happens – Life Happens***
- ***We don't need to know why***
- ***Loss of data is **TOTALLY PREVENTABLE** using Google Sheets & subs***

***Keep up to date weekly***





Lisa Fulton





# **Giving Thanks**



***★ Jennifer & Butch***  
***The Bluebird Shed***

***T.H. Rogers***

***Lowes***

***Bella Vista POA***



***Our Amazing Volunteers***

A horizontal yellow scroll graphic with a gradient from light yellow to a darker yellow. The scroll is unrolled in the center, with the top and bottom edges curling upwards and downwards respectively. The text "THANK YOU" is written in a bold, black, serif font across the center of the unrolled portion.

**THANK YOU**