



Bella Vista Bluebird Society Volunteers Meeting October 8, 2022

The volunteers meeting was held from 1:35 to 3:15 PM at Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 1880 Forest Hills Blvd. Bella Vista. Snacks were provided by Jacqui Stockman.

I. Twenty (21) members were in attendance: Jerry Butler, Laura Claggett, Elaine Cobb, Tim Garton, Randy Hamm, Judy Jeffrey, Cynthia Marshall, Ray Matkowski, George Pickell, Andy and Susan Pilkerton, Buzz Schoenhard, Deb Shoemaker, Jim Sours, Jacqui Stockman, Leon Wehmeyer, B. J. and Marcia Westhoff, Brian and Susan Woodruff and Myrlene Zimmerman. Guest speaker was Will Kirkpatrick.

II. President Laura Claggett opened the meeting with a welcome to those in attendance and advised them to take any books and pamphlets about bluebirds on the table. If not a member of NABS, the cost is \$15.00 to become a new member. For more information on bluebirds, nabluebirdsociety.org is available for downloading on the BVBBS website.

III. New monitor volunteers are Adrian Berghamer (Edinburgh Rd), Bonnie Bohm (LL Marina), Marilyn & Steve Brown (Scottsdale), Amy Lease (Highlands), Becky Pratt (BVCC), Jim Richardson (Highlands), and Jayne Roth (Scottsdale).

IV. Service Awards for 2 years are Autumn Anderson (monitor), Ray Atkinson (builder), Tracy Girardi (monitor), Larry Hoogerhyde (builder), and Tami Moore (substitute monitor). Service Awards for 5 years are Tim Garton (builder/trail boss), Cynthia Marshall (monitor), George Pickell (trail boss & monitor coordinator) and Steve Skaggs (trail boss & trail boss/box builder coordinator).

V. Hot Temps in Bella Vista in 2022: We recorded 90-degree days starting in June with almost all of July 90 degrees and 2 weeks in July 100 plus degrees. All summer we had high humidity. Nest Box Hot Temps from quoted sources: Bluebird eggs & nestlings cannot survive temps exceeding 107 degrees, prolonged heat to nestlings causes dehydration & heat stress and temperatures inside a nest box can reach 120 degrees. What can we do? Suggestions included paint the top of box white, place boxes so they get late afternoon shade and/or use an umbrella.

In spite of the high temperatures, we had 14% more fledglings for the BVBBS nest boxes. Bluebirds fledged from the trail boxes increased from 1,433 to 1,643, but the home boxes decreased from 721 to 510 the past year. We now monitor & maintain 581 nest boxes in Bella Vista. From 1980 - 2022 we helped fledge 53,140 Eastern Bluebirds on our trails. All the 2022 Statistics are recorded on our website bvbluebirds.com under [Trails & Boxes/BVBBS Statistics](#).

VI. Odds and Ends:

- Adopt A Highway: Potential new program in March is now a reality! Jacqui Stockman & Becky Pratt worked with ARDOT to adopt a mile on Rt 71. First litter pickup – Saturday, Oct 22, 2022. Benefits are to help the environment, show our support of Bella Vista and increase awareness of BVBBS.
- Amazon Smile: Laura stated that the BVBBS is eligible to receive donations from Amazon. For those interested in having a portion of their Amazon purchases go to BVBBS, go to smile.amazon.com to select BVBBS as a benefactor. We expect to receive about \$100 in the first year on AmazonSmile.
- Google Sheets for Monitoring: The benefits include shared files online, good for monitors to collaborate with TBs & substitute monitors, no need to email Excel/Calc/PDF, easy to use,

data is saved automatically and you can use it on your phone. Laura took a hands survey and the majority of attendees approved of Google Sheets.

- Grant: Our 2nd Annual Grant will be \$1000 for research on bluebirds. It was announced to Arkansas universities and birding organizations on Sept 1, 2022 and it will end November 30, 2022. Our 2021 winner was Will Kirkpatrick, our guest speaker.
- The Research Project with Dr. Jennifer Mortensen and Butch Tetzlaff will be extended through 2023, the 4th year. Information on this project is located at the link.
- Stovepipe Baffle Project: We have had bad, maddening predation problems on certain trails. To help decrease predation, Steve Skaggs built 11 stovepipe baffles earlier this season. In March, Jim Sours installed 6 stovepipe baffles at Brittany Golf Course and Steve Skaggs installed 5 at the Oakford Trail (close to the MO border). As a result, Brittany had 46% increase in bluebird fledglings from last year and Oakford had a 86% increase! We are also having problems with flying squirrels on some of our trails. They are nocturnal and are small enough to fly into the slots and destroy the eggs and nestlings.
- Positions Needed: Monitors for Brittany Golf Course (11 boxes), BVCC Golf Course (14 boxes) and Dogwood Golf Course (16 boxes). We also need a Website Editor. All Position Descriptions are on the website.
- *The Bluebirder*: Laura asked if anyone read the publication and only a few raised their hands. We need ideas for articles or people who would like to write an article. The newsletters are located on our website About Us, Our Newsletter – The Bluebirder.
- Photo Contest: Jacqui Stockman received almost 30 photo entries for the 3rd Annual BVBBS Bluebird Photo Contest. Winners will be announced shortly and the pictures will be used throughout the year on our website and publications.
- Nature Expo: Jacqui Stockman reported that we had about 7 organizations display at the 1st Nature Expo that was held on Sunday, September 18th at the Lake Avalon picnic area. There was very good attendance from 10 AM to 12:30 which dropped off after that. The group would like to continue this event and will be searching for suggestions to improve the expo and to get more attendance.

VII. Randy Hamm, who was on the grant committee, introduced Will Kirkpatrick, the \$1,000 winner of our 1st grant for bluebird research. Will is a PhD student in the DuRant Lab at the University of Arkansas. His PhD project is Environmental Temperature Influences, Eastern Bluebird Breeding Behavior. His presentation was very interesting and timely, considering the very hot summer that we experienced in Bella Vista this year. He noted that his studies include how the birds respond to temperatures in the moment. He is studying altricial birds, or birds that are born without feathers such as the bluebird. He noticed that during this heat, many nestlings fledged within 15 days instead of 16 to 20. He stated that as the nest gets warmer the mom will do fluttering to keep the nests cooler. When she sits on the nest, the baby birds will cool down to the mother's body temperature. A copy of his presentation will be made available on our website.