

Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project

AN AFFILIATE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY
A twice-yearly newsletter by and for volunteers

Vol IX No. 1 Spring 1999

PROJECT REORGANIZES IN '99

There has been such rapid growth in the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project in the past few years that at a meeting January 27, Pat, Brenda and Marilynne asked that a steering committee be implemented to help with some of the existing duties. That way, more time can be devoted to helping new monitors, and to expanding our monitoring territories.

The groups formed at the first steering committee meeting is a first step in giving volunteers a better feeling of ownership in the project - that means successes will be sweeter than ever before because it is evolving into a true group-effort. There's still a lot of room for participation in the committee groups, so if you are interested in making our conservation group even more effective, please contact the appropriate steering committee member listed on the next page.

Part of the success of the project is letting people know what we do and why. If you aren't the type to chat over the hood of your car while checking your route, consider writing down our website address and leaving it with your landowners. If you have a computer with a business-card program, put the website address on the cards and just pass them out when people ask you questions.

Public education should be in the front of everyone's mind during the field season. If we don't disseminate correct information whenever we get a chance, we've missed the opportunity to improve people's knowledge about the declining western bluebird - and about cavity nesting birds in general.



Have you seen our new website?

www.pacifier.com/~bluebird

This website is designed and administered by Mark Jager who has captured the spirit and letter of what we're all about. The photos are gorgeous and lots of people have accessed it since it was posted to the world-wide-web in February. Mark welcomes comments, suggestions and submissions to the site.

If you can view this on the website and can help us save postage by reading the newsletter there, please call or e-mail: bluebird@pacifier.com

Thank you Mark, for all your hard work!!!

STEERING COMMITTEE

Pat Johnston, President, Bander
7717 SW 50th Ave.
Portland, OR 97219
246-1337

Brenda McGowan, Sec./Treas., Bander
23340 SW Kruger Rd.
Sherwood, OR 97140
625-6786

Marilynne Keyser, Database Coordinator/Bander
32420 Armitage Rd.
Wilsonville, OR 97070
mtkeyser@aol.com
694-2738

Jenny Valdivia, Newsletter Editor
8203 SW 54th Ave.
Portland, OR 97219
231-6120
jenny_valdivia@fws.gov

Shelly Walker, PR Coordinator, Bander
Tygh Walker, Computer Consultant
12165 SW 124th Ave.
Tigard, OR 97223
Shellyw@spiritone.com
Tygh@spirit.com
590-4927

Jim & Barb Conroy, Fundraising Coordinators
31771 SW Laurelview Rd.
Hillsboro, OR 97123
uncletom98@aol.com
628-0330

Dan Brown, Nest Box Coordinator
1229 Creekside Ln.
Newberg, OR 97132
554-1283

Mark Jager, Web Site Coordinator
Ellen Stevenson, Bander
321 NW Overlook Dr.
Vancouver, WA 98665
Ellen_Stevenson@ccmail.columbia.com
Markjager@yahoo.com
360-695-9204 (Mark)
735-4512 (Ellen)

Fred Robinson, Bander
16105 NE Nelson Rd.
Newberg, OR 97132
Forester@open.org
538-7733

Everybody's pitching in!!!

More than 45 people attended our spring training session on February 27 at Champeog Heritage Area Visitor Center. Some of the new people were interested in learning how to monitor nest boxes on their own property; however, 20 of them will be monitoring bluebird trails.

Thirty-four veteran monitors attended the afternoon session. New committees were formed on which the following people will serve:

Help new monitors - Gail Bolstad
Data entry - Nancy Harvey, Ellen Stevenson
Field trips - Joanna Linsley, Michael Poe, Norine Dietrich, Roger Hirsch
Paperwork - Sue Burkhart-Kasch
Booths - Lynn Ahern, Roger Hirsch
Fundraising - Joanna Linsley, Michael Poe, Michael Terramin
Presentations - Michael Poe, Norine Dietrich
Public relations - Ellen Stevenson
Articles- Lynn Ahern
Web page - Michael Poe
Wherever needed - Sam Pointer, Laurie Hays, Nancy Harvey, Carl Constans

CNBN offered again in '99

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a program called the Cornell Nest Box Network (CNBN) in which participants send their nest box observations at the end of the season to Cornell. Researchers analyze the data so that we can all better understand and protect bluebirds and other cavity-nesting species.

Last year, four of our monitors participated in CNBN and found it to be a worthwhile project. We are hoping that a few more of you might like to give it a try this year. If you are interested, please call Shelly Walker at 590-4927 or Pat Johnston at 246-1337.

Summary of species fledged 1997 and 1998

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>
Black-capped chickadee	47	76
Bewick's wren	5	7
Chestnut-backed chickadee	0	10
House wren	92	172
Red-breasted nuthatch	0	4
Tree swallow	452	570
Violet-green swallow	700	991
White-breasted nuthatch	12	18
Western bluebird	972	1046



JOIN/RENEW NABS TODAY

Name _____
Street Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone () _____
Fax () _____
Credit Card charges are accepted (circle one) VISA MC
Card # _____ Exp. Date _____
Signature _____

Regular \$15
 3-year Regular \$42
 Family \$25
 Sustaining \$30
 Supporting \$50
 Student (under 21) \$10
 Senior (over 60) \$10
 3-year Senior \$28.50

Send completed form and payment to:
NABS
PO Box 74
Darlington, WI 53530

(PBRP is an affiliate of NABS, our national organization. Members receive the publication "Bluebird" which is published quarterly. PBRP does not derive financial benefits from NABS.)

Contributing \$100
 Corporate \$250
 Life Membership \$500

Additional Research Contribution for bluebirds and other cavity nesters \$ _____

Hats off!!!

Thanks to everyone who made contributions \$50.00 or more in 1998!
We couldn't do it without you!!

Backyard Bird Shop -
Beaverton
Backyard Bird Shop in
Hillsboro
Sandra Lockwood
Darlene Philpott
Joe Yesenofski
Paul & Patricia Garstka
Michael & Darlene
McArthur
Laurel Hays
Carl & Joan Constans
Ann and Frank Groman
Patti Seitz & Sid Freidman
Marshall Page &
Fran Fulwiler
Bruce & Jan Anderson

We also wish to thank Jack Stennet and Jack McNalley for making so many wonderful nestboxes; Dick Caverder for the metal mounting posts; Craig Nies for the box-front

PBRP plaques; Louis Gay for planing redwood nestboxes; Brad Kahlbach & his class at J.B. Thomas Middle School for making nestboxes; Champoeg Heritage Center for letting us use their meeting rooms and for donating the redwood picnic benches which we are recycling into nestboxes! And thanks to everyone we forgot...you are greatly appreciated!

NABS e-mail network up and running...

There is an e-mail network for people interested in bluebirds that is sponsored by the North American Bluebird Society.

Messages sent to this network are distributed automatically to all members of the network. It is anticipated that it will be a popular place to exchange information about bluebirds. To subscribe to this network known as BLUEBIRD-L, send an email message to: listproc@cornell.edu containing this single line of text:

SUBSCRIBE BLUEBIRD-L your name

Fund raising campaign hopes for \$10,000 in 1999

The Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project is a volunteer organization working to restore the western bluebird to its former native habitat. In 1998 there were more than 1100 nestboxes on 446 properties which resulted in 1146 successful fledglings. This is a 200% increase over the past three years.

It has been difficult to ask for money in the past. However, reality beckons — there are costs involved in running a hands-on conservation organization. Its time for the steering committee to raise financial awareness by asking for contributions.

Our 1999 campaign goal of \$10,000 would equal the combined three prior years' operating budgets, and is in line with the continued growth in the number of bluebird fledglings. As we grow in volunteer numbers and expand our coverage of Western Oregon, there is an increasing need to provide funds for nest boxes (300 new in 1999!), mealworms, newsletter, monitor & tracking results. Here is the 1999 budget:

Nest boxes & bird supplies \$ 4,000

Newsletter & Training \$ 3,000

Database reports \$ 2,000

Community development \$ 1,000

TOTAL \$10,000

We are asking everyone to help us reach our goal. We need your tax-deductible contributions and your fund raising ideas or a referral to organizations that support projects like ours.

Please send your contributions to PO Box 1469, Sherwood, OR 97140-1469, visit our website at www.pacifier.com/~bluebird or speak to your monitor. Remember...your contributions are tax-deductible (Tax ID# 93-1021520).

Thank you for your continued support, and good luck in the upcoming nesting season!

Bluebird Walks

You are invited to join us as we visit nesting bluebirds! Call the sponsoring organization/store ahead of time to reserve your place. Dress for the weather and bring your binoculars. All walks are concluded by noon.

- ◆ **May 22** -- Backyard Bird Shops, 626-0949. Meet at the Beaverton store at 8:30 a.m.
- ◆ **May 30** -- Audubon Society of Portland, call Pat Johnston, 246-1337. Meet at Champoeg State Heritage area at 9 a.m.
- ◆ **June 5** -- Wild Birds Unlimited, 292-3190. Meet at 9 a.m., or at Champoeg at 10 a.m.
- ◆ **June 5** —Wild Bird Nest, 655-8001, meet at 9 a.m. at Champoeg (led by Marilynne).

Mealworm alert!

Mealworms continue to be available at cost through Sunshine Mealworms (503) 873-8989 for \$5.00 per 1000. You should ask for the 10% Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project discount when placing your order.

You can order them on your own, or through your monitor. You also can buy mealworms in small quantities at pet shops and wild bird stores.

Champoeg Bluebird Festival upcoming

On Saturday, June 19, 1999, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Champoeg State Heritage Area will hold the first Champoeg Bluebird Festival to celebrate the park's signature birds. In 1998, seven pairs of bluebirds nested in the park, successfully fledging forty-seven young from eleven clutches. Most of these birds are easy to see as the majority of nest boxes are placed along roads and bike paths.

The festival will offer bluebird video/slide shows and field trips to see nesting bluebirds. A nestbox building workshop will be offered along with bird-related activities for children.

Champoeg will be unveiling a new permanent exhibit on the western bluebird during the festival. The exhibit will be located in the Visitors' Center, and the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project will have a table nearby where volunteers will hand out information about the program and answer questions. Bluebird nestboxes will be sold, as well as specialty items featuring the western bluebird.

Participants will have an opportunity to "adopt a box" at Champoeg for a \$25 contribution to the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project. Maps locating individual nest boxes in the park will be available at the festival. Information about the birds that used the "adopted" nest box during 1999 will be sent to contributors at the end of the breeding season.

Directions to Champoeg State Heritage Area:

- ◆ Take Hwy. 219 south from Newberg. After crossing the Willamette River, take the first road on the left (Champoeg Road), and follow it about six miles to the park.

or

- ◆ Take I-5 south to Exit 282B, turn right onto Butteville Road and follow it for about six miles until you see signs for Champoeg.

You will need to buy a \$3.00 parking pass at the machines in front of the visitors' center.



Blueblurbs

For the first time, bluebirds are nesting at Oregon Golf Club on Pete's Mountain in West Linn. The area is certified through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System as an eco-friendly golf course using waste-water management techniques and integrated pest management, as well as other practices. Dave Phipps, assistant superintendent at OGC says he put up nestboxes five years ago and has had a lot of swallows around, but was thrilled to see bluebirds claiming the boxes this year.

The Audubon Society of Portland's Wildlife Care Center cared for an injured male bluebird last April. He was found on Westfall Road in Wilsonville with an injured wing. Bob Sallinger and the crew at the care center nursed the bird back to health for almost a month before he was returned to his natal site. Upon his release, he was enthusiastically greeted by a pair of bluebirds -- possibly his parents. Thanks to Bob and the care center for (yet another) job well done!

Notes from the field —

This is the time to check out your bluebird nest boxes to be sure that they are adequately insulated. If the nest box has been leaking, you can use amclear outdoor caulk to seal the seams, especially where the top attaches to the back. Plugging vents along the top of the box is very important during the critical first nesting. "Caulking rod" (foam rope) works great. It comes in a 3/8-inch and a half-inch thickness, and the proper length can easily be torn off by hand. Just stuff the strip of foam rope into the vent. After the first nesting, the material can be removed and saved for the next year. Some of the older nest boxes have very large vents. For these, you can use "air conditioner weather strip" that is 1-inch thick, but compresses easily to slip into smaller spaces.

— Marilynne Keyser

We all know that our western bluebirds are insectivores, but did you know that in the fall and winter 21%-26% of their diet comes from berries? In that our bluebirds do not migrate south in the winter, native berries play an important part in their winter survival. Perhaps even playing a part in where they choose to nest in the spring. Planting native trees and shrubs not only help our bluebirds make it through the winter months but are ornamental and fit in well with home landscaping. Some of the plants eaten by bluebirds are: Oak mistletoe (though I don't know how you would plant it on tree limbs), Common Juniper, Trailing Blackberry, Elderberry (Red & Blue), Cascara, Dogwood, Huckleberry, Cotoneaster, Black Raspberry and High Bush Cranberry.

Sources of information on planting with native plants:

"American Wildlife & Plants A Guide to Wildlife Food Habits " Martin, Zim & Nelson

"Gardening with Natives Plants" by Arthur R. Kruckeberg.

The Berry Botanical Garden, 11505 SW Summerville Ave. Portland 636-4112

Leach Botanical Garden , 6704 SE 122nd Ave. Portland 761-9503

Nurseries that deal in NW natives;

Wallace W. Hanson Native Plant Nursery & Gardens 2158 Bower, CT. S.E., Salem (503) 581-2638

Boskey Dell Natives, 23311 SW Boskey Dell Lane, West Linn 638-5945

Alder View Natives, 28315 SW Grahams Ferry Rd., Wilsonville 570-2894

— Sam Pointer

Prescott Western Bluebird Recovery Project
PO Box 1469
Sherwood, OR 97140-1469



