

Summer 2019
Vol. 34, No. 2



Wisconsin Bluebird

Newsletter of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc.

BRAW is an affiliate member of the North American Bluebird Society (NABS), founded by Lawrence Zeleny.

Annual Convention Will Be Sept. 14

see page 2



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A Word from the Prez

Has Spring arrived yet? On some days and even weeks it sure is hard to tell. Another cold and damp start for our bluebirds in Wisconsin. Let's hope they fare well this summer and have several successful fledges.

Since the Spring issue was completed I started getting emails wondering where the Winter issue was? Most of the inquiries were from NE Wisconsin. I know in the past there have been times when my issue came about 3 weeks after I know the mailing was completed. So I wondered if there was some postal delay? Well I mailed out a few to those that contacted me and figured it was a small number that got lost. Then in early May Gene Birr emailed me to say his Winter WB was delivered to his mail box! A day or two later I got more emails from members asking why I mailed the Spring issue before the Winter issue?! THAT was not the case I assure you. Checking with the post office wasn't much help. They said the holiday mail gets overwhelming so anything not First Class may be delayed. It was mailed before Thanksgiving so I doubt it got lost in the holiday shuffle. But one thing for sure is a bunch of them did get



lost and apparently were discovered and then put through the mail system several months late. BRAW nor I have any control over this. All I can say if this ever happens again is to complain to your Postmaster so they hear it on the local level. I'm sorry that some of you were not aware of the Spring Thing that was held in March. That info was in the Winter WB. If this would happen when the Annual Convention issue with registration info inside it would be a disaster! Not a bad idea to check our web site and GroupWorks now and then to see what is going on and stay up to date.

Speaking of which the Annual Convention is well under way with speakers arranged and the date is set. So make sure you mark your calendars now for September 14 at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve near Lafarge in southwest Wisconsin. We have been there before, probably about 10 years ago I think. This should be a nice venue for our event. I'm looking forward to the presenters and hope you find them interesting as well. Hope to see you there!

Have a good bluebird season.

Patrick Ready
BRAW President

Save the Date!! September 14 BRAW Annual Convention at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve

S3661 State Highway 131

La Farge, Wisconsin 54639

More information and registration will be in the next *Wisconsin Bluebird*, GroupWorks or braw.org.

Catered lunch • Silent Auction • BRAW Awards

Chimney Swifts - The Mysterious Bird that Shares our Chimneys

By Sandy Schwab

Sandy Schwab, a Master Naturalist and a long-time volunteer at Dane County Humane Society's Wildlife Center in Madison, will talk about chimney swifts - their fascinating natural history and the challenges they face to survive. Sandy is Chair of the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group, a small but dedicated group of volunteers whose goal is to keep Chimney Swifts common in Wisconsin. Chimney swifts depend almost entirely on man-made structures for nesting and roosting sites, and their population is in decline. She will talk about this mysterious bird that most people aren't aware of, why they are an important species and what we can do to help them.



"Grouse in the Mist: What's Happened to Ruffed Grouse in the Driftless Region?"

By Scott Walter, WIDNR

Summary: Ruffed grouse populations have declined precipitously across the Driftless region in the past 30 years. I will discuss this decline in light of various potential causes, focusing on long-term changes to the area's forest community. The importance of both species and structural diversity will be discussed, as will opportunities for landowners and land managers to proactively implement activities that support long-term forest diversity and the health of our wildlife community.

Scott Walter:

•Currently, Large Carnivore Specialist (Bears, Wolves, & Cougars) with the Wisconsin DNR.

Live with my wife Erica and our 5 children on our 7-generation family farm near Viola.

Falconry through the Ages

By Abbey Krumrie, River Valley Raptors Inc.

Learn about falconry in medieval times and how falconry has changed throughout time. We will also talk about what it takes to hunt successfully with a bird of prey. Abbey will bring 2 or 3 live raptors for her presentation.



Monitor Data for 2018 Season

Steve Fallon, BRAW Data Director

The statewide total for bluebirds fledged in 2018 reports was 18,695. The total number of cavity nesters fledged reported this year was 34,700.

Name	County	Total boxes used	Bluebirds fledged
Myron Byers	Adams	56	158
Chelsea Sorbo	Adams	40	75
Carol and Rich Becker	Ashland	10	27
Warren & Julie Schultz	Brown	24	21
Melissa McNeil	Brown	36	92
Barbie Allen	Brown	122	110
Kathy Krouse	Brown	13	24
Sally Riemer	Brown	14	25
Phyllis Reedy	Brown	7	5
Jon Beckman	Brown	15	37
Thomas Schlueter	Brown	4	4
Susan Clairmont	Brown	6	5
Steve Mayer	Brown	20	44
Stephen Zimmermann	Brown	15	54
John Loehlein	Brown	47	43
Kathy Hardtke	Brown	5	8
Gerry/Della Clabots	Brown	1	7
Marcel Kulas	Buffalo	7	17
Bruce Schaffner	Buffalo	25	30
Joan Hoy	Chippewa	2	4
Debbie Anderson	Chippewa	40	186
Dan Behnke	Clark	6	9
David & Kelly Marwitz	Columbia	28	54
Mark/Sue Foote-Martin	Columbia	35	16
Jacquelin Komada	Columbia	40	0
Amy Ihlenfeldt	Columbia	9	0
Frank Iltis	Columbia	16	0
Mark/Jenny McGinley	Columbia	14	0
Lane Delaney	Crawford	3	4
Dennis Kirschbaum	Crawford	18	107
Patrick Ready	Dane	0	55
Kris Perlberg	Dane	6	16
Pam Heilman	Dane	5	12
Sylvia Marek	Dane	15	26
Jeanne Mawbey	Dane	7	12
David Roberts	Dane	9	3
David Roberts	Dane	25	0
Marianne Jensen	Dane	27	23
Waltner Kugler	Dane	3	13
Jack Saltes	Dane	22	54
David Lucey	Dane	36	78
Allisanne Apple	Dane	5	4
Katrina Anderson	Dane	5	9
Beth and Peter Rahko	Dane	2	13
Sharen and Richard Quam	Dane	2	8
Maddie Turner	Dane	3	0
Gail Smith	Dane	14	28
Steve Fallon	Dane	13	13
Lynne Haynor	Dane	10	11
Ann E S Wick	Dane	125	429
Gene Kroupa	Dane	1	4
Kyle Coker	Dane	7	0
Gail Van Haren	Dane	20	38
Paul Noeldner	Dane	12	9

Name	County	Total boxes used	BBs fldgd	Name	County	Total boxes used	BBs fldgd
Bob Lucas	Dane	44	77	Mike Teff	Iowa	3	16
Sue Eagle	Dane	17	30	Dale/Doris Moody	Iowa	66	176
Ellen/Dan Mohs	Dane	4	5	Darlene Neisner	Jackson	18	101
Geri Leanio	Dane	1	2	Darrel Eberhardt	Jackson	135	745
Mary Sobol	Dane	12	13	Marilyn Eberhardt	Jackson	24	121
Sandy/Tom Schwab	Dane	41	43	Larry Casper	Jackson	67	294
Pam Duszynski	Dane	9	28	Jim Johnson	Jackson	3	11
Katherine Brock	Dane	15	35	Bill Schapfel	Jackson	20	69
James Mand	Dane	17	18	Greg Kruger	Jackson	17	43
Jim Goodno	Dane	9	22	Sheryl Gilbertson	Jackson	11	24
Jim Goodno	Dane	16	23	Andy Chickowski	Jackson	70	120
Joyce Burmester	Dane	14	5	Larry Casper	Jackson	67	295
Kristine Vaughn	Dane	16	8	Bonnie Hamer	Jefferson	28	14
Kristine Vaughn	Dane	4	26	Kathy Oleson	Jefferson	5	8
Steve Sample	Dane			Jerry Gerndt	Jefferson	14	40
Joni Crave	Dodge	21	16	John and Patricia Heiden	Jefferson	11	55
Jerry Gerndt	Dodge	11	24	Tammy Frey	Jefferson	11	36
James Kronenberg	Dodge	9	5	John Krerowicz	Kenosha	20	5
Holly Bartholmai	Dodge	21	52	Julie Milligan-Barr	Kenosha	1	5
Jack Bartholmai	Dodge	102	101	Deb Zierk	Kenosha	2	4
Susan Bastem	Door	7	22	Ray Palenik	Kenosha	25	100
Eric & Dennis Wickstrom & Bley	Door	0	41	Ray Palenik	Kenosha	19	79
Mike and Barb Madden	Door	6	9	Nathan Robertson	Kenosha	6	0
Wendy Lukes	Door	20	33	Valerie Mann	Kenosha	8	18
Glenna Peters	Door	6	19	Don Pritzl	Kewaunee	61	173
Ben Teich	Door	63	71	Dan/Gail Filzen	La Crosse	8	41
Marjorie Andrae	Door	8	19	Greg Olson	La Crosse	25	86
Brenda Keys	Door	17	50	Fred Schaldach	La Crosse	13	24
Nick Anderson	Door	15	46	Dave Fonger	La Crosse	42	153
Tom Michelsen	Door	18	28	Brad Foss	La Crosse	6	11
Barbie Allen	Door	5	8	Harry/Ellen Caulum	La Crosse	14	42
Sandy and Ed Miller	Door	18	28	Jan/Jim Brady	La Crosse	6	30
Carol Ann Osinski	Door	2	5	Leif Tolokken	La Crosse	41	161
Ken/Signe Onsrud	Door	100	248	Leif Marking	La Crosse	25	76
Mark Holey	Door	5	7	John/Louise Leary	La Crosse	8	21
Dean Kruger	Door	3	5	Morgan Jostad	La Crosse	11	22
Charlotte Lukes	Door	21	86	Ronald Parker	La Crosse	4	20
Raymond Osinski	Door	10	25	Louis Benchina	La Crosse	22	29
Sarah Bonovich	Door	1	10	Verdel Dawson	La Crosse	14	65
John Delwiche	Door	1	0	Steve Anderson	La Crosse	23	83
Cathy Eckers	Door	3	8	Kris Houck	La Crosse	4	13
Beth Bartoli	Door	13	23	Dick and Meg Olson	La Crosse	1	12
Charles Bergsten	Douglas	0	45	Rodney Lindell	Lafayette	3	10
Patty Scott	Eau Claire	10	21	CAROL MCDANIEL	Lafayette	5	23
Bernie Hoefgen	Eau Claire	13	32	Diane Jones	Lafayette	8	8
Phyllis LaPine	Eau Claire	30	40	Vicki Tollakson	Lafayette	8	10
Larry Liegel	Eau Claire	17	40	JIM HESS	Lafayette	26	85
Rita Gundry	Eau Claire	35	54	James Barth	Lafayette	64	257
Karen Schauer	Eau Claire	26	6	Janet Sue Cashman	Lafayette	26	79
Mavis Hermodson	Eau Claire	22	29	Dale/Doris Moody	Lafayette	10	34
Dorothy Messner	Fond du Lac	8	0	Karen Koebel	Manitowoc	7	10
Karen Kinziger	Fond du Lac	43	19	Keith Smith	Marathon	6	3
Tina Bartholomew	Grant	5	27	Jolie Wood	Marathon	9	10
Janet Willman	Green	4	3	Elizabeth Atwell	Marathon	35	97
Kathleen Dreikosen	Green	30	109	Claire Romanak	Marathon	25	68
Ronald Balsiger	Green	10	0	Joanne DeVetter	Marinette	6	30
Scott Shaver	Green	1	8	Karen Johnson	Milwaukee	12	22
David & Kelly Marwitz	Green Lake	158	589	Ralph and Dennis Konrath	Milwaukee	30	80
Kim Cates	Iowa	15	49	Barb Kellermann	Milwaukee	6	6
Marianne Jensen	Iowa	3	9	Corinne Palmer	Milwaukee	9	4
John Miller	Iowa	3	8	Lynne Crawford	Milwaukee	9	10
Renee Konczak	Iowa	1	8	Paul Stencil	Milwaukee	6	4

Name	County	Total boxes used	BBs fldgd	Name	County	Total boxes used	BBs fldgd	Name	County	Total boxes	BBs fldgd
Michael and Ellen Helgren	Monroe	38	161	Bill/Jan Seybold	Portage	35	97	Mike Fort	Waukesha	27	77
Bruce & Dr. Jerri Brewer	Monroe	35	199	Bill/Jill Ziehr	Portage	32	109	Don/Debbie Herrick	Waukesha	35	91
Jeff/Abby Duabler	Monroe	40	139	Marilynn/Ken Slezak	Price	19	46	Waste Management Orchard Ridge	Waukesha	28	14
Warren/Janet Evanse	Monroe	32	137	Helen Pugh	Racine	17	53	Bob/Jackie Tamm	Waukesha	33	66
Charlie Lautermilch	Monroe	47	164	Rick Fare	Racine	26	47	Anne Moretti	Waukesha	13	30
Bessie Kmiecik	Monroe	0	0	Ray Palenik	Racine	19	64	Shari Kastner	Waukesha	10	17
Cathy Malzacher	Monroe	48	218	Dennis & Heather Jense	Racine	21	15	Walter Jost	Waukesha	34	63
Sharon Teske	Monroe	0	0	Paul Klawiter	Richland	33	78	Randy Cooper	Waukesha	14	7
Gordy Weber	Monroe	80	471	Jon & Nate Straight	Richland	6	4	Melba Carey	Waupaca	33	113
Gene Birr	Oconto	110	206	Michael Johnson	Rock	18	57	Alice Chaney	Waupaca	0	0
Jerry Gerndt	Oconto	30	45	Cindy & Jim Schwisow	Rock	2	10	Ken/Megan Karth	Waupaca	37	74
Dick Paquette	Oconto	0	0	Jack Freeman	Rock	2	4	Ginny Rieves	Waupaca	10	9
Jerry Gerndt	Oconto	37	63	Robert Holtz	Rock	1	0	Joe Raboin			
Dick Hanson	Oconto	0	0	William Fruin Jr	Rock	14	76	(Tri-County School Forest)	Waushara	9	11
Jerry Gerndt	Oconto	37	97	Steve Fallon	Rock	10	9	Len Place	Waushara	31	64
All Powers	Oconto	14	9	Janice Kumlien	Rock	2	5	Bob Fox	Waushara	76	156
Virginia Behrend	Oconto	2	15	Rodney Courtier	Rock	65	132	David/Christine Misterek	Winnebago	37	55
Steven Heimerman	Oconto	6	9	Jacqueline Lindahl	Rock	9	51	Karen Haralson	Wood	27	68
Keith Smith	Oneida	2	5	Jack Freeman	Rock	2	4	Ruby Thomas	Wood	21	33
Steve Schleitwiler	Outagamie	5	0	Lori Ainsworth	Rock	9	31	Dale/Karen Jensen	Wood	35	118
Daniel Schultz	Outagamie	11	16	Sharon Stark	Sauk	7	0	Kim/Mary Ellen Marshall	Wood	17	45
Dragonfly Farm	Ozaukee	34	29	Larry Liegel	Sauk	35	123	Lauren/Craig Ontl	Wood	29	72
Jason Nickels	Ozaukee	39	57	Bill & Donna Stehling	Sauk	70	161	Tom/Amy Reitz	Wood	47	129
Ellen Lafouge	Ozaukee	26	124	John & Phyllis Feiner	Sauk	5	7	Penny Van Tassel	Wood	13	19
Mary Holleback	Ozaukee	27	26	Renee Pierce	Sauk	8	9	Terry Glanzman	Various	432	1443
Judy Kolosso	Ozaukee	0	0	Evonne Kraemer	Sauk	43	126				
Jim and Dorothy Beix	Pierce	41	151	Ruthann Meiers	Shawano	51	92				
John Hanson	Pierce	17	39	Lee & Mary Lou Curtiss	Sheboygan	48	123				
Ernie Schultz	Pierce	16	39	Therese Wilk	Sheboygan	34	63				
Rodger Meyer	Polk	55	141	Ellen Klusmeier	Sheboygan	47	37				
Jan Ronchetto	Portage	12	54	Janet Raddatz	Sheboygan	13	34				
Joe Schultz	Portage	18	88	Lowell Peterson	St Croix	26	107				
Kate Anderson	Portage	25	50	Jim & Dorothy Beix	St Croix	56	174				
Janice Rath	Portage	0	0	Kathy Fredrickson	St. Croix	5	9				
Jean/Mark Anhalt	Portage	33	97	Pat Cox	St. Croix	2	9				
Laurie Zichowski	Portage	0	0	James Higgins	St. Croix	35	65				
David/Patti Becker	Portage	27	46	Debby Walters	St. Croix	35	23				
Woody and Madge Bishop	Portage	30	71	Paul Wenzel	St. Croix	15	70				
Mary Bratz	Portage	31	115	Rita Gundry	Trempealeau	8	11				
Dick Stephens	Portage	0	0	Harry Peterson	Vernon	7	9				
Fred/Joyce Comacho	Portage	34	73	Eugene Lyons	Vernon	23	53				
Samantha/Wendy Carlson	Portage	31	99	Bob/Jackie Tamm	Vernon	6	18				
Konrad/Nancy Chojwacki	Portage	27	60	Robert Butzer	Vilas	17	13				
Mary Dahm	Portage	34	83	Brian Logan	Vilas	2	0				
Sharon Schabe	Portage	0	0	Thomas Ganfield	Walworth	1	0				
Karen Dostal	Portage	23	40	Mike & Jean Curran	Walworth	2	5				
Nad/Mary Grossnickle	Portage	21	79	John Scholtz	Walworth	2	4				
Kent Hall	Portage	149	398	Keith Klume	Washington	19	21				
Sue Hall	Portage	35	146	Ray Pinter	Washington	71	100				
Diana Mrozinski	Portage	0	0	Madelynn Miezio	Washington	16	5				
Wyleen/Clark Hugh	Portage	12	46	Authur Melilis	Washington	0	0				
Jim/Darlene Jakusz	Portage	37	87	Lora Schreiber	Washington	12	5				
Bob/Louise Juracka	Portage	3	4	Ilene & Paul Kronschnabel	Waukesha	35	43				
Jean Klein	Portage	16	27	Dan Savin	Waukesha	6	9				
Jan Konkol	Portage	30	64	Joni Frohling	Waukesha	9	37				
Ellen Dell	Portage	0	0	Waste Management	Waukesha	28	14				
Carla Struble	Portage	0	0	Jerry Gerndt	Waukesha	16	32				
Michael Moore	Portage	45	164	John & Patricia Heiden	Waukesha	51	5				
Joe Schultz	Portage	30	86	Amy Bachman	Waukesha	16	45				
				Melissa Bruder	Waukesha	28	130				



County Coordinator Report

By Carol McDaniel, CC Chair

A couple of weeks ago, I received a nice phone message from a gal by the name of Janette. She called to say that **Lee Curtis, Sheboygan County CC**, helped her install 15 boxes in north Kettle Moraine. She praised him for the good work he is doing in Sheboygan County and that we should be proud to have a county coordinator like Lee. Good work, Lee! You will see by the reports that the county coordinators have been busy spreading the word about BRAW and the bluebirds. They haven't allowed the snow, ice, rain and cold deter their efforts. As you read their reports, you will get ideas on how to encourage new people to get involved with bluebirding and to join BRAW. Happy bluebirding everyone!

Donna and Bill Stehling, Sauk County: Bill and I enjoy monitoring Bluebird trails. We monitor 70 houses at the Badger Lands and we have three individuals monitoring at three other sites - much smaller numbers of houses: 3 houses at Culvers Franchising HQ, 8 at the hospital with reports in the hospital newsletter, 2 at a rural school where this is reported during summer school - maybe in Spanish. Some will soon be installed at Moely Prairie which is next door to residential developments, across from Mueller Sports Medicine and the Sauk Prairie Airport. We also know we have year round Bluebirds which winter at houses in the Town of Merrimac and Town of Prairie du Sac. At one house we heard that the birds in winter come to the kitchen window over the sink, tap on the window and they get warm food served. Other residents tell us they have warm bird baths and serve all sorts of good stuff



which includes houses. We clean out houses in March/April and also in September/ October. Grass in the houses would confuse the mice. We disturb the mice in April but not in September/October. We really clean out the houses with bleach water spray. Some houses come home with us to get sides repaired or replaced. The birds select houses for various reasons we don't fully understand. They appear to like some houses for nesting and other houses for wintering. Recently, we were invited to a state park to talk about Bluebirds.

Stan Rosenstiel, Kenosha and Racine Counties: This Spring, Rick Fare has given 2 talks on the Eastern Bluebird. One was at the Seno Center in Racine Co. where we recently put up a 15 box trail. The other was at Gateway Tech. College in Kenosha. A new trail was installed at a local cemetery and a new monitor will be trained. One activity of the newly formed Racine Nature Club will be a bird walk along with checking an existing trail along the Pike River Pathway in Racine. A new section of this trail has just been completed and Rick will be placing a few boxes in the new area.

Mary Holleback, Washington & Ozaukee Counties: 2/21/19 Lisa Timm conducted a bluebird workshop for roughly 20 boy scouts in Farmington (Washington County) using props borrowed from Mary Holleback. 3/12/19 Home Depot in Grafton donated to Riveredge Nature Center (both in Ozaukee County) the lumber & other materials to construct 20 NABS bluebird boxes. Riveredge staff & volunteers cut up the wood & assembled 20 kits. 3/16/19 County coordinator, Mary Holleback, conducted a bluebird workshop at Riveredge for 9 people during which bluebird boxes were built. 4/6/19 Purple Martin expert, Paul Wenzla, and Mary Holleback presented a cavity nester workshop for 29 people at Riveredge during the Ozaukee County Memory Café. 4/16/19 Retired teacher, Laura Schreiber, presented a bluebird workshop for 5th grade students at Farmington Elementary School in Washington County to train them to monitor the trail at the school. She

used props borrowed from Mary at Riveredge.

Jim Beix, Pierce County: I helped Mark Ritzinger, BRAW member and retired optometrist, develop his bluebird trail at Carpenter Nature Center's property in St. Croix county. I gave him literature on Eastern Bluebirds and encouraged him to take over nest boxes I had placed a few years ago at the nature center.

Gene Birr, Oconto County: Early sightings of bluebirds this spring have been very limited here in Northeastern Wisconsin. Just as they were beginning to return and begin nesting we received about 10 inches of snow on April 11. As of this writing on April 23, I haven't heard of any local monitor reporting any eggs laid yet, although several have reported seeing early nests beginning. I joined Jason from the local Barkhausen Waterfowl Preserve in giving our annual bluebird talk at the Wild Birds Unlimited store in Green Bay on March 11 to about 20 interested bluebirders. Several of them have followed up with me for help in sighting nest boxes on their properties. I also helped Jason place nest boxes on small trails on two Brown County parks, Fonferek Glen south of Green Bay, and Neshoto Park in the southeastern corner of the county. Most of my efforts this spring have been spent building new skylight boxes for use on my trails and offering them to several other monitors nearby. We are field testing the idea that these nest boxes with the additional daylight brightness are effective in limiting their use by House Sparrows. After experimenting with and explaining my limited use of them last season, Dr. Kent Hall and I are conducting a field study of them on our trails this season. BRAW monitor Jerry Gerndt is using them also, and he, Kent and I will be reporting our results of their effectiveness and any problems that arise in an article this fall.

Dale Moody, Iowa County: I toured our trail north of Belmont yesterday (April 26). 6 out of 10 with complete nest: 1 with 3 eggs, 1 with 2 eggs.

Craig and Sheila Beyer, Waupaca County: While waiting for the

bluebirds to arrive we made and donated 20 new houses to help people start their new bluebird experience. We've talked to a lot of people and are excited about the upcoming nesting season and some great photo opportunities like years past.

Charlotte Lukes, Door County: I have 25 monitors on my group email. I sent them a note yesterday (April 28) after I did my third trail check and have heard back from about half of them. I was able to put up a box yesterday that I had taken down when our property was sold after I learned that the new owners were okay with my box being there. Of my 22 boxes, 15 have complete nests and 8 of them have bluebird eggs with a total of 22 eggs as of April 28. One week ago there were no eggs. The tree swallows arrived last week and I saw them near two of the empty boxes.

Carol McDaniel, Lafayette and Grant Counties: I am receiving weekly Bluebird Trail Reports from several people in southern Wisconsin and emailing the compiled results to members in this area. If you want to receive the reports, send me an email at bluebirdnest.org@gmail.com and I will include you in the group email. I have been busy giving bluebird talks. On March 23, I talked bluebirds to nearly 100 Grant County Master Gardeners at Vesperman Farms near Lancaster. My talk was on the *Passion for Bluebirds* and focused on why gardeners should encourage bluebirds



to nest near or in their gardens. They had a lot of questions and each took handouts. On April 13, the Lafayette County Bluebird Society had their spring meeting and the featured speaker was Andy Bingle from the International Crane Foundation. I presented a slide program on the *Birds and Prairies of Southwest Wisconsin* and pointed out the importance of our cavity nesting bird species and how their populations and the prairies have changed since the early settlers arrived in the early 1800s. On April 27, I gave a bluebird talk to eighteen wives of the Masons at the Bluebird Nest Nature Center. They traveled here from all over the state, one gal was from Superior. After the presentation, they put together Simple bluebird house kits. The kits were made by a shop class at the Shullsburg High School. We have Simple boxes and BRAW boxes for sale at the Bluebird Nest Nature Center and lately have sold several. One couple traveled from Lake Geneva to purchase three for their daughter who has a prairie in that area. On June 12, Pat Ready

will be speaking at the Bluebird Nest Nature Center in Darlington about *The Joy of Birding*. I am sure he will be telling us about the joy of bluebirding as well. His program starts at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome. There is no admission charge and we serve refreshments.

Lowell Peterson, St. Croix County: I have been busy these past weeks working on bluebird related topics. I have been receiving many requests for presentations, nest boxes, questions, etc. Listed here are some of my activities: On February 5, I did a slide presentation with displays and handouts for the Hudson Garden Club. 45 people attended. On February 24, I did a slide presentation again with displays and handouts at the Interstate Park. 32 attended. We assembled 24 nest boxes with parents and children. On March 7, I did another slide presentation with displays and handouts at the New Richmond Library with 18 attending. We assembled 12 nest boxes with parents and children. Still to come are: April 15 at St. Ann's School I will present the slide program to 4th grade students. And on April 20 at Clear Lake WI (Earth Day Celebration) I will have nest box displays and handouts. U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson was from Clear Lake. The rainy spring weather has delayed my scheduling other school groups. I have gotten out on my bluebird trail for nest box maintenance such as cleaning, repair, and relocating a few boxes. Mother Nature has been a little tough on us here in St. Croix County this winter and spring.

Rita Gundry, Eau Claire County: On March 28, 2019, Larry Liegel, BRAW member from Eau Claire, gave an hour presentation on the eastern bluebird to 30 chapter members of P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization) in Menomonie, Dunn County, WI.

Larry covered the questions most often asked about bluebirds, when they arrive, their preferred habitat, their chief predators of cats and raccoons, their diet, basics of monitoring and reasons why, their stages of rearing young during nesting season and where to locate nest boxes. Larry displayed 2 different types of



bluebird houses that he builds (the NABS and the Troyer sparrow resistant), materials used, and discussed how to protect the boxes/bluebirds from predation by use of PVC and Noel guards. Handouts were provided to all those interested regarding nesting schedules, locating and mounting nest boxes and monitoring logs.

During the late 2018 Fall, Larry built 10 NABS boxes for Judge Jim Isaacson, Circuit Court Judge for Chippewa County. The Isaacsons live on a farm in Chippewa County and have ideal habitat for bluebirds with lots of pastured acres. Judge Isaacson also gave some of these boxes to his adult children and grandkids for Christmas.

Patrick Ready, Dane Co: In March I met with Chuck & Linda Lucas of Sun Prairie who are taking over the trail at The Oaks Golf Course. In April I had 9 adults attend my class on Cavity Nesters at Olbrich Gardens in Madison. Everyone learned a lot



and were happy with the nest box they built to take home. I gave 2 Walk & Talks on bluebird trails in May. Several bluebird fans walked with me as I monitored a trail and showed them what we do and how we record data for each box on the trail. Lots of good Q&A from both adults and kids!

Unfortunately the 4H Week on the UW Madison campus was cancelled this year. I always look forward to working with kids on nest boxes and teaching them about bluebirds.

I am dealing with House Sparrows on 2 of my trails. Sparrows are losing the battle! Thanks to Van Ert Trap!

Get to Know Your County Coordinator

By Leif Marking/ La Crosse County

Leif Marking is a model of conservationism. Both his occupation and volunteerism have made him a true leader and respected authority in conservation. He uses scientific methods learned in his occupation to propagate Eastern Bluebirds, and he freely shares his knowledge with others to help them enjoy a successful proliferation of this beautiful species.

Born in Holmen, Wisconsin on a traditional dairy farm in 1935, Leif learned to know bluebirds, which often nested in cavities of wooden fence posts or dead trees. "Every day my brother Syl and I would bring the cows in from the pasture to be milked. The pasture fence line was between the field and the forest with open grassy areas for the cows to graze. The fence posts were mostly split oak, many with cavities created by woodpeckers that drilled to get insects. We noticed bluebirds nesting in these cavities and we counted them daily to keep track of the number of eggs and the number of young bluebirds



fledged from each cavity. This experience stimulated us and others to build artificial boxes to offer more opportunities for bluebirds to nest." This early exposure to bluebirds stayed with Leif throughout his life, and he would return after retirement to become a recognized authority and true leader in the field of bluebird reproduction.

After graduating from Holmen High School Leif worked on the family farm for a year, and then spent two years in the US Army. He attended La Crosse State University to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees in Chemistry and Aquatic Biology. He became an aquatic toxicologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in 1962 where the

emphasis in Fisheries Research was identification of useful chemicals for fisheries management. Leif became the Section Leader of Toxicology in 1964 at the Fish Control Laboratory in La Crosse WI, a position he held until his retirement in 1993.

While working for the National Fisheries Research Center, Leif and his wife Carol raised three children on Brice Prairie, a community along the Black River channel in Onalaska, Wisconsin. He and his family enjoyed a life of fishing, hunting, camping, and observing the ways of the river and the wildlife that inhabited it. He also learned the importance of balancing the needs of many groups with the needs of fish and wildlife. He joined the Brice Prairie Conservation Association and has achieved distinguished status as a 50 year member, serving at various times as President, Board Member, and Project Manager for wood duck and bluebird production. He also served as Troop 21 scoutmaster for 10 years, inspiring and teaching young boys the value of our ecosystem on Lake Onalaska and the awesome Mississippi River.

His scientific experience gave him the



cycles in early spring require non-venting. Leif's convertible box design is available www.briceprairieconservation.org.

Leif has been monitoring bluebird houses since 1992 and in 2012 alone his trail fledged 1,019 bluebirds. Brice Prairie Conservation Association efforts as a whole have reached as many as 5,000 successful fledges in a single year. They have totaled 55,752 fledges to date. He continues to study and come up with solutions to thwart predators and prevent other problems that threaten bluebird propagation. Many of these solutions are published on the BPCA web site. He has been featured in numerous newspaper articles, given numerous talks, and produced several videos on how to produce and place nest boxes for successful reproduction of this beautiful songbird species. He continues to be available to anyone who has questions or wishes to discuss bluebird production, getting calls from friends or strangers on a regular basis.

skills and scientific method to identify a problem and methodically test all options until a clear result was proven. These finely honed skills proved invaluable in his volunteer conservationism. Leif observed the decline of cavity nesting species (specifically Eastern Bluebirds and Wood Ducks) and sought to assist propagation of these species by utilizing man made nest boxes. He recognized the need for monitoring and documenting all aspects of Wood Duck and Bluebird propagation. The monitoring methods he developed count production of eggs, nestlings, and fledglings to measure the success of each attempted nesting. Environmentalists recognize these methods and technology both locally and nationally. In 1987 BPCA members began using discarded Freon canisters for construction of Wood Duck houses. Records show that over

2,000 ducklings were produced some years in these canisters, and more than 27,000 have been produced to date.

Leif is a life member of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, www.BRAW.org, serving on their Board of Directors as La Crosse County Coordinator and Nest Box Design Chairman. Leif's region, Western Wisconsin, has consistently high bluebird production rates, and Wisconsin has led the nation in bluebird reproduction in four of the last seven years. The results are published in Newsletters or Journals or on www.briceprairieconservation.org. He also enjoys membership to the North American Bluebird Society. NABS published the results of Leif's nest box temperature research study in 2010. His temperature research demonstrates that heat cycles in summer require ventilation to prevent heat mortality, but the cold

Leif Marking is the recipient of numerous awards and citations, including the 2018 Director Emeritus Award from Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, the 2014 Outstanding Achievement for Environmental Awareness award from the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the 2010 Joe O'Halloran Lifetime Achievement Award from the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, the 2009 Wisconsin Garden Club Federation Bronze Award, and the 2005 North American Bluebird Society Conservation Award.



Trail Monitoring Field Trip

The Natural Heritage Foundation requested a field trip on Monitoring Eastern Bluebirds boxes so I obliged. For convenience I held it at the UW Arboretum in Madison. About 20 people of all ages showed up and we walked the trail. As we went along I explained why we do trail monitoring and how we record our information so we can report our final data after the nesting season. Lots of good questions came up especially from the younger ones. We found nests built by bluebirds, chickadees and Tree Swallows. I pointed out that any native species is allowed to use nest boxes and we only discourage non-native House Sparrows. We found one complete bluebird nest and 4 started in various degrees.

Turns out BRAW member Marianne Jensen has been doing this for the past 12 years and decided to retire.

– Patrick Ready, BRAW President

2018 Production of Eastern Bluebirds in Monitored Houses

By

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Introduction: Bluebirds are cavity-nesting songbirds that are unable to create their own nesting cavities. Natural cavity availability declined significantly when non-native House

Sparrows and European Starlings were introduced to this country over 150 years ago. They are victorious competitors for nest cavities and vicious predators of bluebird eggs and young. However, bluebird populations have been increasing since the birth of the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) in 1978 followed by many state chapters such as the

Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW). Our Brice Prairie Conservation Association (BPCA) members have recorded our bluebird production activities since 1992 and annually reported the numbers to the above organizations. Technical information and instructions for producing bluebirds are available from websites of NABS (www.nabluebirdsociety.org), BRAW (www.BRAW.org), and BPCA (www.briceprairieconservation.org). The purpose of this report is to summarize the numbers of bluebirds produced by club members this year, recognize increases or decreases over previous years, identify problems that influenced production, and evaluate procedures to increase future production.

Procedures: We have selected the

Consolidated Nest Box Summary 2018

Brice Prairie Conservation Association – Individuals

Monitor's Name	Nest Boxes	Bluebirds Fledged	Bluebird Production Rate	Other Species Fledged			Total Other Species	Total Birds Fledged	Overall Production Rate
				TS	CH	HW			
Steven Anderson	23	83	3.61	11	7		18	101	4.39
Fred Craig	56	298	5.32	23	17	82	122	420	7.50
Dan & Gail Filzen	8	41	5.13			12	12	53	6.63
Dave Fonger	42	153	3.64	29	11	10	50	203	4.83
Brad Foss	6	11	1.83				0	11	1.83
Leif Marking	25	79	3.16	12			12	91	3.64
Greg Olson	35	120	3.43	4		10	14	134	3.83
Leif Tolokken	41	161	3.93	50		9	59	220	5.37
Associates	92	253	2.75	9		16	25	278	3.02
	328	1,199	3.66	138	35	139	312	1,511	4.61

Species Key: TS - Tree Swallow, CH - Chickadee, HW – Wren

Consolidated Nest Box Summary 2018

Leif Marking Bluebird Associates

Associate's Name	Nest Boxes	Bluebirds Fledged	Bluebird Production Rate	Other Species Fledged			Total Other Species	Total Birds Fledged	Overall Production Rate
				TS	CH	HW			
Jan and Jim Brady	6	30	5.00	5			5	35	5.83
Louis Benchina	22	29	1.32			4	4	33	1.50
Harry & Ellen Caulum	14	42	3.00				0	42	3.00
Verdel Dawson	14	65	4.64	4			4	69	4.93
Ron Parker	4	20	5.00				0	20	5.00
Morgan Jostad	11	22	2.00				0	22	2.00
John & Louise Leary	8	21	2.63				0	21	2.63
Fred Schaldach	13	24	1.85			12	12	36	2.77
	92	253	2.75	9	0	16	25	278	3.02

Species Key: TS - Tree Swallow, CH - Chickadee, HW – House Wren

Bluebird Production in Houses of Different Types

By Members of Brice Prairie Conservation Association

Year	Number		Production Rate	Predominant House Type
	Houses	Fledged		
1992	29	62	2.1	Hill Lake
1995	42	80	1.9	Hill Lake
1996	54	109	2.0	Tree Branch
1997	65	145	2.2	Tree Branch
1998	78	212	2.7	Tree Branch
1999	91	265	2.9	Herman Olson
2000	101	324	3.2	Herman Olson
2001	142	544	3.8	NABS
2002	285	1,138	4.0	NABS
2003	506	2,001	4.0	NABS
2004	741	3,066	4.1	NABS
2005	880	4,233	4.8	NABS
2006	858	4,756	5.5	NABS
2007	916	5,399	5.9	NABS
2008	977	4,228	4.3	NABS
2009	1,019	5,252	5.2	NABS
2010	1,001	4,915	4.9	NABS
2011	936	3,294	3.5	NABS
2012	862	4,679	5.4	NABS
2013	796	2,884	3.6	NABS
2014	724	2,668	3.7	NABS
2015	657	2,938	4.5	NABS
2016	608	2,560	4.2	NABS
2017	470	1,927	4.1	NABS
2018	328	1,199	3.7	NABS

Total 58,878

NABS-style house to promote bluebird production because the design is practical, they are easy to construct, maintain, and clean, and bluebirds readily occupy them. These cedar houses are mounted on 7-foot steel T-type fence posts that are covered with a 5 ft. section of 1-1/2" PVC pipe treated with car wax for mammalian predator control. The houses are usually placed 200 yards or more apart to respect the territorial nature of bluebirds and to encourage maximum production of bluebirds. New houses are built with convertible air vents, so the vents can be closed on site to reduce mortality of eggs and young during sustained cold spells in early nesting and to avoid black fly mortality. Site and habitat selection favors bluebird ecology with large, open, grazed or mowed areas where bluebirds can forage for ground insects. House Sparrow competition was diminished appreciably by avoiding active farm and livestock feeding

operations. Houses were placed at least 200 feet from woods and thickets to minimize House Wren competition. Weekly observations were recorded in notebooks of choice, and those results were transferred to spreadsheets for calculations, evaluations, and presentations. These spreadsheets accumulate numbers of eggs, numbers hatched, and count of bluebirds and other cavity-nesting songbirds fledged. Finally, the numbers are consolidated for each member's totals as well as individual and total production rates for all club members and bluebird associates.

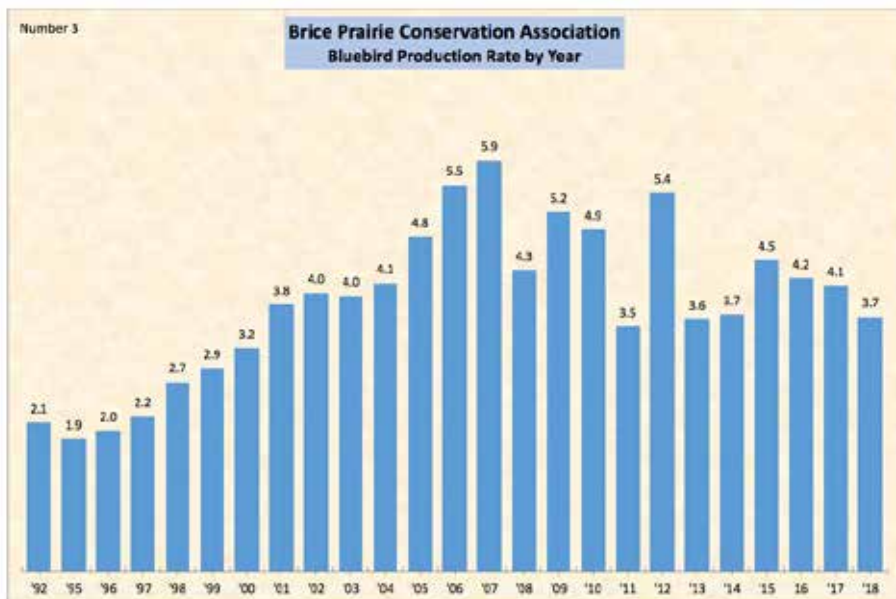
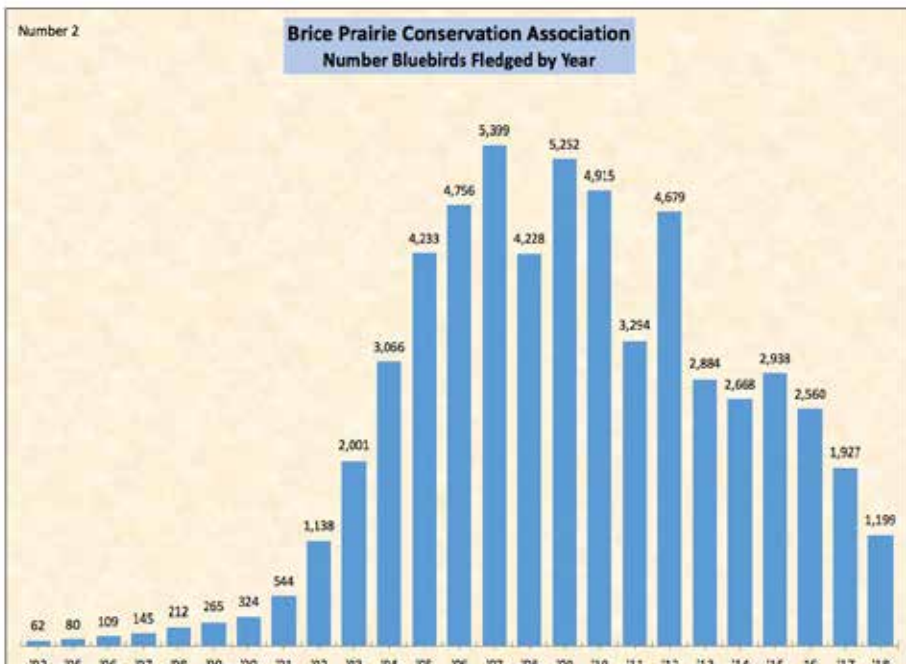
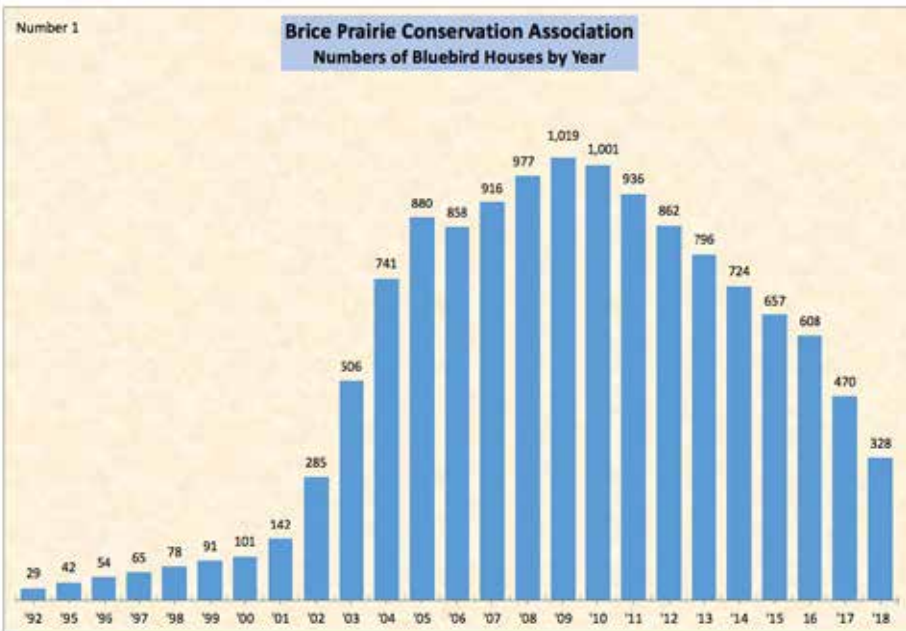
Results and Discussion: We monitored 328 bluebird boxes this year, 142 fewer than last year. Those boxes produced 1,199 bluebird fledglings, a decrease of 728 compared to the previous year. Our bluebird production rate also decreased this year (3.66 fledglings per box), primarily due to the late spring season that delayed nesting activity

and discouraged third nesting later in the year. Cold temperatures in early spring interfered with first nesting that resulted in poor hatch rates and nestling mortality. This delay offered competitive House Sparrows, Tree Swallows, and wrens opportunities to dominate boxes normally used by bluebirds. Some nestling mortality was due to Black Fly gnat infestations. A dilute solution of Permethrin spray was used with good success to combat the black flies.

We also produced a total of 138 Tree Swallows, 35 Black Capped Chickadees and 139 House Wrens. These cavity nesting species readily occupy the bluebird boxes, especially if they are located on the edge of bluebird habitat. House Sparrow attacks were more numerous for many trails and restricted bluebird production. The bluebirds prefer diversified agriculture, mowed, or grazed areas, and if the boxes are properly located and spaced the bluebirds will occupy them before the swallows (serious competitors) are capable of nesting in early spring.

In addition, the Marking bluebird associates produced 253 bluebird fledglings, 9 Tree Swallows, and 16 House Wrens as identified in the second table. These folks are not members of BPCA, but they like bluebirds and our technology for producing them, so they are willing to monitor and contribute to our efforts. They realize their efforts also benefit the bluebird population so we are thankful. This associate concept encourages more people to get involved in serious monitoring and keeping good records. Associates also reported more competition and predation with House Wrens and House Sparrows this year.

We attribute our success for producing bluebirds to providing a box with a cavity size and shape that appeals to them, selection of ideal habitat for box location, spacing the boxes at least 200 yards, providing predator prevention for every box, moving boxes that failed to attract bluebirds after one year, and monitoring weekly to ensure the cavities are available to bluebirds that are searching for a home. House Sparrows interfered with bluebird nesting in many locations. Van Ert sparrow traps were used to eliminate



House Sparrows on the trails. House Wrens again were important predators and competitors on many bluebird trails. Our technology for bluebird production is effective, and we feel satisfied and rewarded with the bluebird responses to our efforts with 58,878 fledges reported since 1992.

BRAW welcomes these members

Pamela Ruscham - Mequon
 Tammi Hasselquist - Centuria
 Dominique Magermans - Middleton
 Sue Eagle - Oregon
 Anne Siebold - Two Rivers
 Sara Sonntag - Cascade
 Al Lancaster - Mosinee
 Patty A Czys - Mauston
 Tim Stoffel - Kewaskum
 Amy Chamberlin - Sauk City
 Eunice Wyleen - Amherst
 Carol Johnson - Ogdensburg

Summer 2019 donations:
 Kim Marshall & 5th Grade Class at Washington Elementary - \$100
 Michael Gotthardt Jr - \$100
 Michael Morgan - \$100

Spring 2019 donations:
 Margaret & Gerald Roth - \$75
 Bob Ross - \$100
 Richard Albert - \$80

BRAW Joins Amazon Smile!

Amazon has developed a way to support non-profit organizations such as **BRAW**. If you use Amazon, log into "http://smile.amazon.com" instead of just "amazon.com". You will need to select **BRAW** as your intended organization that you support by typing **Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin** in the appropriate line. **ALL ORDERS USING THIS LOGIN WILL GENERATE A PORTION OF YOUR PURCHASE TO BRAW!** The products purchased will cost you the very same as if you just log into their standard site. However, BRAW will receive 0.5% of your total purchase. It is easy and you will be supporting us without any additional cost to you.

Body Temperature and Incubation of Birds

By James Biex, Pierce Co.

High Body temperature of Birds

Unlike amphibians and reptiles, birds need a higher body temperature to ensure dependable muscle contractions and greater endurance. The high body temperature of birds is directly related to their metabolism. Passerines have the highest metabolism of all vertebrate animals.

Endothermy, the metabolic heat of biochemical reactions, produces a core temperature of 37-43 degrees C (99 — 109 F). At about 40 degrees C (104 F) this higher body temperature enhances intrinsic reflexes and power, allowing birds to be fast moving. Most physiological processes increase with temperature: with every increase of 10 degrees C, nerve conduction speed increases by 1.8 times and muscle contraction speed and strength are tripled. But higher body temperatures associated with endothermy are expensive, energy-wise. It requires plentiful food intake to drive the metabolic machinery of biochemical reactions that give off heat, so birds have a variety of adaptations that enable them to gather food efficiently and regulate body heat.

The brain's hypothalamus is the thermostat for temperature control. Homeothermy is the ability to keep the body temperature within boundaries even when the surrounding temperature is very different. Over-heating has a risk, especially in hot weather. A temperature over 46 degrees C (115F) destroys most proteins in living cells. Birds have no sweat glands so respiratory panting and puffing the feathers away from the skin help cool the birds. Gular flutter (movement of upper esophagus) is another mechanism to reduce body heat in birds. Splashing in water and seeking shade also contribute to cooling.

In cold weather, less blood flows to the extremities saving body heat for the rest of the body.

Shivering occurs by contracting muscles repeatedly to generate heat. The puffing of feathers allows more air to contact the skin where thermal conductance is lessened. Birds sit to reduce heat loss by tucking their feet under wings or body feathers. They seek shelter out of the wind, rain and snow.

Temperature and Incubation:

After mating, the female prepares a nest and usually lays one egg a day until the clutch is complete. An incubation or brood patch will have developed on the breast of the male or female bird, depending on the species, that will incubate the eggs. The skin of the featherless brood patch comes into contact with the eggs and warms them to continue development. However, birds like Pelicans, Penguins and Gannets and a few other birds incubate their eggs by transferring heat through the top of their webbed feet. Their lower abdomen positions the egg on their feet. Megapodes of Australia heat their eggs by depositing them in a large mound of decaying vegetation. The birds open and close the mound as needed to regulate the heat of decomposition, replacing the parental body heat of usual incubation.

All species of birds lay eggs and, with few exceptions, incubate their eggs with their own body heat. The bare skin of the brood patch is engorged with blood vessels while all feathers on the abdomen where the patch develops are lost (apterium). The skin is thickened with edema and increased vascularity. Characteristic "settling movements" by the incubating bird bring the brood patch into contact with the clutch. Eggs are turned periodically to warm them evenly and to prevent embryonic membranes from sticking to the shell. Placement of brood patches differ among groups of birds as shown in the diagram below.

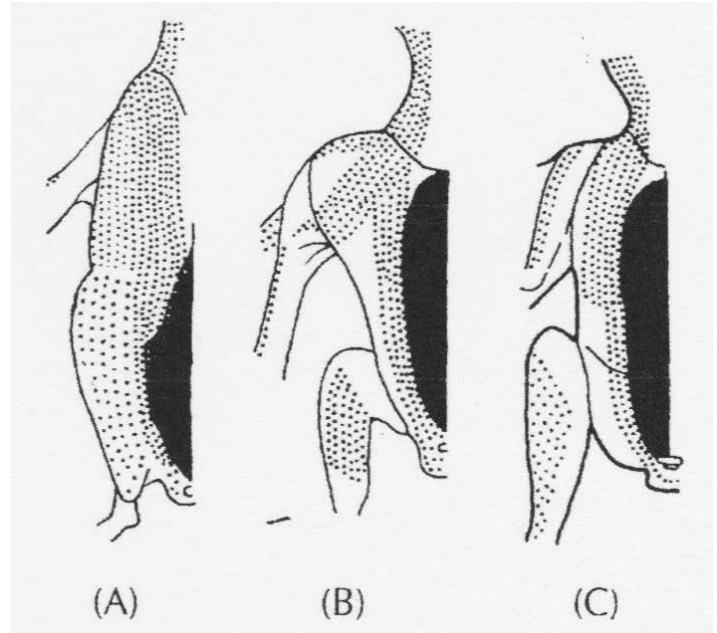


Figure 16—8 Incubation patches (in black) of (A) a grebe, (B) a hawk, and (C) a passerine bird. Stippling indicates feather tracts. Clear areas indicate areas without feathers—called apteria.

(Adapted from Drent 1975)

Hormonal control causes development of the brood patch. Sequential estrogen, progesterone and prolactin in the female is felt to cause patch development. It is also caused by tactile stimulation by the clutch of eggs. In Phalaropes where the male incubates the eggs, androgens and prolactin lead to patch development. Prolactin levels decline when incubating and brooding are no longer necessary, and the skin of the patch returns to near normal.

The developing embryo is very sensitive to high ambient temperature. Heat developed by the embryo in the unhatched egg and parental incubation increase the internal egg temperature.

However, egg cooling below 26 degrees C (79 F) results in cessation of growth and development.

Nearly continuous warming is necessary unless the ambient temperature becomes too hot. In order to shade their eggs, ducks with open nests pluck their down feathers and other species stand over the nest. Killdeer and other shorebirds soak their belly feathers in water to wet the eggs before shading them. Evaporating heat loss cools the eggs.

Critical egg temperature is maintained by the incubation rhythm of the species, involving incubation sessions and incubation recesses (for food or drink). Sessions on the eggs are longer when ambient temperatures are cooler.

When foraging for food becomes difficult and when reserves dwindle, the incubating bird may abandon the eggs. Male birds of some species may relieve their mate by sharing incubation and providing them with food. If a male without a brood patch covers the eggs, warming is less efficient but at least heat and water loss from the eggs are lessened.

Many birds apparently sense the egg temperature with receptors in the brood patch which helps regulate incubation sessions more accurately. Because the embryo itself increasingly generates heat as it develops, periods of incubation generally decline as incubation progresses.

Eggs are turned periodically by the incubating bird to warm them more evenly and prevent embryonic membranes from sticking to the shell. If a male without a brood patch covers the eggs, warming is less efficient but at least heat and water loss from the eggs are lessened.

It is interesting that the Brown-headed Cowbird, an obligate nest parasite, develops no brood patch in response to administered female hormones and prolactin. No apterium occurs. These hormones are present during the bird's breeding season but no patch develops. Evolution has made the abdomen refractory to hormones.

In precocial birds the insulating feathers of the abdomen grow back after hatching of the clutch. In passerines and presumably other altricial birds, the feather regrowth is delayed as the patch functions through early brooding.

After hatching, nestlings require heat, protection from rain and predators.

Homeothermy, temperature control, is the ability to generate metabolic heat (endothermy) and maintain a high, constant body temperature. Homeothermy is what releases

a bird from its absolute dependence on brooding by the mother bird. This property to control its own body temperature begins at the midpoint of nest life. Skeletal muscle is the main source of heat production. As the feather coat thickens down enhances thermo-regulation.

Requirements for this high, constant temperature are 1. High resting metabolism, 2. High peak metabolism, 3. Adequate insulation and 4. Neuro-wiring to drive the endothermic response to cold.

Homeothermy is nearly completely developed in precocial birds as they are feathered and walk about after hatching. The ability to control body temperature is barely started to develop in altricial, young nestlings who require brooding for at least a week more. Even after a week, altricials need continued support and care in feeding and flight development before fledging.

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What BRAW Does

By Gene Kroupa

BRAW members generously donate thousands of hours annually to ensure that bluebirds and other cavity nesters survive and thrive in Wisconsin. Here are key things that BRAW does:

1. Creates awareness of the challenges faced by cavity nesting birds. In 1964 there were only an estimated 600 nesting bluebird pairs left in the state due to habitat loss. Each year BRAW members' nest boxes alone fledge over 20,000 bluebirds, plus numerous tree swallows, chickadees and other birds.
2. Educates state residents about building, locating, maintaining and monitoring nest boxes. BRAW members who maintain 8,000 nest boxes throughout the state bring a wealth of experience to those wanting to learn how to do it.
3. Coordinates statewide conservation efforts geared to sustaining bluebird populations and creating habitat for all cavity nesters. BRAW county

coordinators facilitate these efforts, plus serve as "go to" help sources

4. Serves as an online resource for organizations and individuals to obtain information about bluebirds. Our website www.BRAW.org supplies a wide array of useful materials.
5. Conducts seminars and workshops to promote building, monitoring and maintaining nest box trails. From garden expos to seed store seminars to school workshops,

BRAW members spend hours in face-to-face contact with the public.

6. Keeps members informed via a quarterly newsletter *Wisconsin Bluebird*, GroupWorks emails, and an Annual Meeting that features informative speakers. Networking focuses on sharing best practices for nesting success and practical experience.

Next time someone asks, please share with them all the things above that BRAW does for cavity nesters.



BRAW VP Steve Sample conducts a seminar about cavity nesters at Wild Birds Unlimited store in Madison.

Membership Renewal Information

By Mike Ray, membership services

It may be time to renew your annual membership to the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW), so that we can update our mailing list with the least cost and effort.

Most BRAW memberships are on a calendar year basis, which means that regular memberships expire on December 31, **except for Life Members.**

Look at the address label on your newsletter. The number group following your name indicates the month and year of expiration. If your label reads Summer 19 your membership will expire with this issue.

You will also be able to join as an Online Paperless member and get the newsletter by email. We will send you the issue via an online link. This will save us money, reduce printing cost and conserve paper. You can print it if you desire.

Fill out the membership renewal form below and send it with your check or money order to BRAW Membership, c/o Mike Ray, 1120 N. Pleasant View Rd. Apt 204, Middleton, WI 53562.

If we did not receive your renewal when due, your membership will begin with the next issue after payment is received. *We will no longer mail out back issues and back date memberships.*

The basic \$25 Individual / Family membership covers the cost of printing and mailing the quarterly *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletter.

The next issue of the *Wisconsin Bluebird* goes into production in August and is mailed to arrive the first week in September. I need time to process membership renewals and prepare the mailing list so the sooner I receive your renewal the better. Please renew because we want you!!

Consider a onetime \$300 Life Membership in BRAW. **Life members do not have to renew.**

Please complete the membership renewal form provided here and return it to BRAW as soon as possible. **Now you can renew your membership at www.braw.org and use PayPal or a credit card and you don't need to mail anything in.**

All renewals received now will begin with the Summer issue.

New members use the form below to join BRAW.

**A BRAW
subscription makes
a great Anytime gift!**

Give the gift of Bluebirds!

.....

Wisconsin Bluebird Subscription and BRAW, Inc. Membership

Yes! I would like to renew my membership with the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc. and receive its newsletter *Wisconsin Bluebird*. Enclosed is my check/money order (do not send cash) made out to BRAW, Inc. for the following:

Subscription/Membership contribution:

- \$15 Student (email link - online)
- \$20 Online paperless issue via email link -NEW!**
- \$25 Individual or Family Annual (hard copy mailed)
- \$100 Corporate Annual
- \$300 Life Membership Perpetual Fund

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: () _____

County of residence: _____

- \$15 to nest box construction with post & predator guard
- \$100 for nest box trail
- \$_____ for educational research (Master's thesis)
- In addition to my membership contribution, I wish to contribute: \$_____
- (Contributions to BRAW are tax deductible)*

Check appropriate boxes:

- This is a renewal.
- This is a new subscription/membership
- This is a GIFT subscription.
- Enclosed please find my check \$ _____

Mail this membership/subscription request to:
BRAW, Inc.
Mike Ray
1120 N. Pleasant View Rd. Apt 204
Middleton, WI 53562

Please note: This form appears in this newsletter as a convenience for all who wish to obtain membership. Most membership renewals (Life members excluded) are due as of January 1 each year. If you renew or join during the year you will be on a quarterly membership and will not receive back issues.

BRAW ELECTED & APPOINTED OFFICERS

President Patrick Ready, 815 Sky Ridge DR., Madison, WI 53719 • 608/239-0791 • birdsready@gmail.com (term to 12/19)

Vice President Steve Sample, 422 Shepard Ter. Madison, WI 53705 • 708/606-8070 • ssample@gmail.com (term to 12/19)

Secretary Claire Romanak, 7175 Nehrbass Rd.; Athens, WI 54411 • 715/257-1905 • ribriver2@wildblue.net (Term to 12/19)

Treasurer Dan Schroeder, N4028 Morgan Drive, Waupaca, WI 54981 • 920-475-8525 • brdanjoe@gmail.com (term to 12/19)

Director Fred Craig, 3308 Nathan Lane, Holmen WI 54636 • 608/783-2225 266marycraig@gmail.com (term to 12/21)

Director, Steve Fallon, Oregon, WI • 974 Halcyon Days Ct., Oregon, WI 53575 • stevefall50@gmail.com (term to 12/21)

Director, Dave Lucey, Cross Plains, WI • 53528 • dklucey@chorus.net (term to 12/19)

Director Gene Kroupa, 1010 Tumalo Trail, Madison, WI 53711 • 608/238-3571 • gkroupa@tds.net (term to 12/19)

APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:

Data Collection Officer: Steve Fallon (see above)

County Coordinator Chair: Carol McDaniel, 9320 Wicks Rd., Gratiot, WI 53541 • cjmc_d_98@yahoo.com • 608-922-2473

Funding: Dan Schroeder (see above)

WI Bluebird Editor: Patrick Ready, (see above)

Membership: Mike Ray, 1120 N. Pleasant View Rd. Apt. 4 Middleton, WI 53562 Email: mike.joseph.ray@gmail.com

Nest Box Designs: Fred Craig, (see above)

Student and Youth Outreach Committee:

Co-Chairpersons: Lowell Peterson, 1860 45th St., Somerset, WI 54025 • 715/247-3243; and,
Mary Holleback, 720 Madison St., West Bend, WI 53095-4136 • 262/335-9843

Website: Mike Ray, 1120 N. Pleasant View Rd. Apt. 4 Middleton, WI 53562 Email: mike.joseph.ray@gmail.com

BRAW LIAISONS:

Bureau Of Endangered Res. Liaison: Sumner Matteson, DNR, 101 S. Webster St. PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53701 • 608/266-1571

WSO Liaison: Jennifer Wenzel, miloloki@wi.rr.com, 262-488-8077

Use the Van Ert Trap to solve Your House Sparrow Problems



Install the trap and set it per instructions. Watch to see if you catch a House Sparrow or return to the box after a short time to check to see if the trap was sprung. You don't want to trap a bluebird and leave it trapped. To check caught bird use a large, clear plastic bag over the box and slightly open the side. The trapped bird will fly to the top of the bag for you to see what you have. Release bluebirds and remove House Sparrows.

Figure 1-- Installation is quick and simple provided there is a screw intact.



Figure 2-- The visible red bulls eye invariably suggests a trapped sparrow.

Order traps online from Van Ert Enterprises at vanerttraps.com \$9.50 + Shipping

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The mission and purpose of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc. is to monitor and increase the production of Eastern Bluebirds and other native cavity nesters through a coordinated statewide nest box construction and monitoring program.

Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin

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Life cycle of the Tree Swallow (*Iridoprocne bicolor*)

Photos by Pat Ready & Jack Bartholmai.



Once they pair up, a nest site is picked. Tree Swallows will use a natural cavity as well.



Within a few weeks, 4-6 white eggs usually appear in the feather lined nest.



Males stand guard while the female incubates the eggs.



After 13-16 days of incubation, the chicks hatch.



After 18-24 days old, the chicks fledge the nest.

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The chicks grow quickly, being fed by both parents.