

Winter 2017  
Vol. 32, No. 4



# 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

## Bluebird Numbers for 2017 Down

see page 4



Eastern Bluebird - fledgling: Patrick Ready

**Inside this issue:** President Message - 2 • History of LCBS - 2 • Help at the Garden Expo 3 •  
BRAW 2018 Convention Notice - 3 • 2018 Data Report - 4 • Preserving a Keystone Species - 5 •  
Frank Zuern & Floyd Van Ert - 8 • NABS Style Box Plan - 9 • Membership Renewal - 10 •  
Van Ert Trap - 11 • Shop BRAW - 12

**IS THIS YOUR LAST ISSUE? MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS MAY BE DUE!**

## A Word from the Prez

The year is coming to an end. Thanks to all of you that kept your records and sent us your data for the nesting season. Steve Falon has put together some good information from the results he has received. Not a record setting year but that's to be expected now & then. See page 4.

I was reading an article about California Condors recently and how they probably will always need help from humans in order to stay wild in their natural environment because of all the hazards they face. In particular lead poisoning ingested from dead animals. It made me think about how Bluebirds are also dependent on humans in order to survive. If we quit monitoring nest boxes and tried to let Bluebirds go it alone I think we'd soon see a big drop in their population again. This is mainly because of the European House Sparrow that usually take over boxes that aren't maintained and monitored. Vice-president Steve Sample and I have been discussing this and think we may be facing a problem in the future because the younger generation has grown up with bluebirds being fairly



common. We need to impress upon them how important it is to get involved with our effort. Our Blues future is in their hands.

In late fall I usually go out to check on my trails to see what needs maintaining and fixing. Some of my county and state park trail boxes keep getting invaded by brush & trees so I need to move them. This photo is a perfect example of the dilemma I face. Over the years I have had to remove boxes entirely because they end up being better for House Wrens than Bluebirds. We need to do what we can to keep our Bluebird Trails productive.



Happy BLUE Year!!

Patrick Ready  
BRAW President

## History of the Lafayette County Bluebird Society, Inc.

**Carol McDaniel, President**

The Lafayette County Bluebird Society, Inc. is dedicated to the conservation of the Eastern Bluebird and other native cavity-nesting species. When the settlers came to Wisconsin in the early 1800s, the Eastern Bluebird was as common as the robin. In 1976, the Eastern Bluebird was reported on the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Survey with only four pairs in the entire state. Its dwindling numbers were troubling.

In the spring of 1981, an effort was made in Darlington to help bring back the bluebird. A few concerned local individuals met in the basement of the Methodist Church. Under the leadership of Carol and John McDaniel, the Darlington Bluebird Society was formed. A few years later, as the bluebird population began to grow, the organization's membership expanded to include people from around the county and the name was changed to the Lafayette County Bluebird

Society (LCBS). Over the years, LCBS has been successful in bringing back the Eastern Bluebird to the county and increasing the population of bluebirds to a very comfortable number.

Numerous bluebird trails are located throughout the county. The largest trails are at Yellowstone Lake State Park, Leadmine/New Diggings, Fayette, Darlington (a Bird City: [www.birdcitywisconsin.org](http://www.birdcitywisconsin.org)), and Blanchardville. The boxes on these trails are monitored regularly for bluebird activity.

The Society has placed Purple Martin housing near Argyle and at Yellowstone Lake State Park in an effort to bring the Purple Martin back to Lafayette County. Additionally, a population count was conducted on the Red-headed Woodpecker and the Pileated Woodpecker to determine how these species are doing in the county.

The Society was headquarters for the North American Bluebird Society from 1997 to 2002, when it moved to Ohio.



In 2014, LCBS opened the Bluebird Nest Nature Center in at 308 Main Street, Darlington. The Center, staffed by Volunteers, is equipped with educational and interactive displays for all ages. Programs are held monthly at the Center.

The LCBS works closely with the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW), is an Affiliate of NABS, and is a member of the Prairie Enthusiasts, the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, and the Darlington Chamber of Commerce.

Learn more about the LCBS at [www.bluebirdhouse.org](http://www.bluebirdhouse.org)



# BRAW Needs Help at the Garden Expo

By Pat Ready, BRAW President

Every February Wisconsin Public Television holds the Garden Expo at the Dane County Expo Center. For the past several years BRAW has had a double booth there to promote the word about bluebirds. We have hundreds of attendees stop by to talk to us about attracting Eastern Bluebirds. It's incredible. Everyone wants bluebirds!

We need help from experienced monitors to help explain to novices what they can do to have a successful box or trail. You don't need to be an expert or have a large trail. Just talk to folks about what you do and what to expect when trying to attract bluebirds to a yard or natural area. We also need help at the table taking money for box sales etc.

BRAW will pay for your ticket to get in and you will have ample time to go about wandering the show to enjoy the many vendors that display there. The Expo holds seminars all day long on a variety of topics and is well worth attending especially in the dead of winter here in Wisconsin.

If you are interested in helping or want more information call or email Mike Helgren. He's trying to get a volunteer schedule set up as soon as possible. The Expo times are Friday February 9, Noon - 8, Saturday 9-6, Sunday 10-4.

I'm sure we can work you into a shift on either day.

Contact Mike Helgren at 920/885-4050 or email him at: [mhelgren@charter.net](mailto:mhelgren@charter.net) to volunteer for this important event.

The Blues are depending on you!!

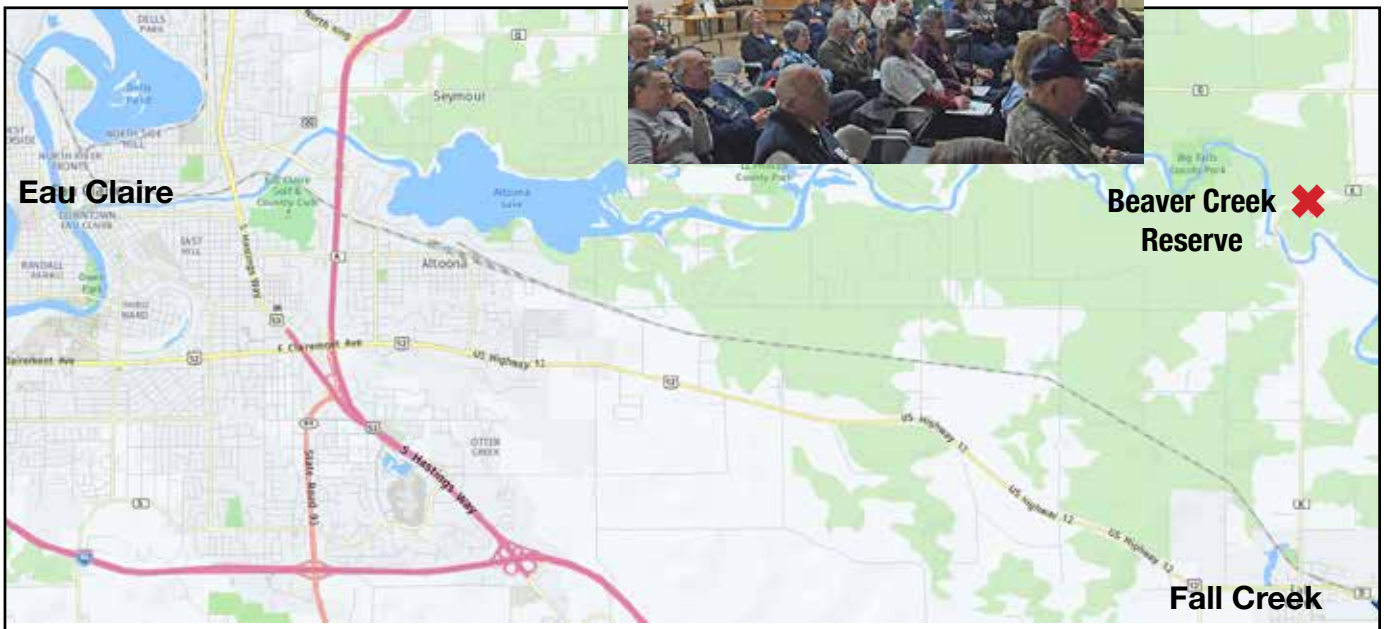


## The Next BRAW Annual Meeting will be at Beaver Creek Reserve, April 7, 2018

Save  
the date!!

- Steve Betchkal: Birding By Ear • Timber Wolves Information Network: Wisconsin Wolves
- BRAW Awards • Ask The Experts Q&A • Catered Lunch • Silent Auction

More details will be in the next *Wisconsin Bluebird*. We hope to see you there!



# Wisconsin Monitors Report Lower Bluebird Numbers for 2017

Steve Fallon, BRAW Data Director

As I take over duties from Steve Sample as the Data Director, I realize and very much appreciate how much effort and time he put into summarizing the information. He deserves our thanks for his work!

The statewide total for bluebirds fledged in 2017 reports was 23,156. The total number of cavity nesters fledged reported this year was 38,605. As a reminder the 2016 values were 26,440 bluebirds fledged and 44,336 for the total cavity nesters fledged.

The 2017 Fledging numbers are again lower than the 2016 values. Unfortunately, once again, the decline seemed to be weather related. Numerous monitors reported having a very tough year as cold and wet conditions came and then returned during the nest season, providing a double whammy to our feathered friends. Monitors mentioned eggs unhatched and dead chicks on many reports with hypothermia suspected as the main culprit.

Recently, I've been looking into some new tools that might be informative for you. I've always been fascinated with maps as well as data, so I think that the merging the two might be helpful. Doing so will allow us to see not only the numbers, but where, statewide, those numbers are coming from. Perhaps it will show where we're doing well and where we need help in terms of bluebird production and volunteer monitors, allowing us to target our efforts in the future.

Figure 1 shows the number of bluebirds fledged in comparison to the total number of cavity nesters fledged per county for 2017. The height of the bars gives a relative number of birds- with higher bars indicating higher numbers. In the comparison, bluebirds represented approximately 58% of the cavity nesters fledged statewide.

Figure 2, indicates the number of bluebirds fledged of per box by county in 2017. The intensity of the color indicates higher values as shown in the graph legend. This year, the statewide average is ~2.73 fledged bluebird per box. That color is in the greenish blue range.

Figure 3 shows a comparison of fledglings per county reported this year to the values reported last year, with bar height indicative of the numbers. One can see a drop-off in the number of fledglings in most areas, with some exceptions.

Figure 1. Comparison of Bluebirds to All Cavity Nesters Fledged

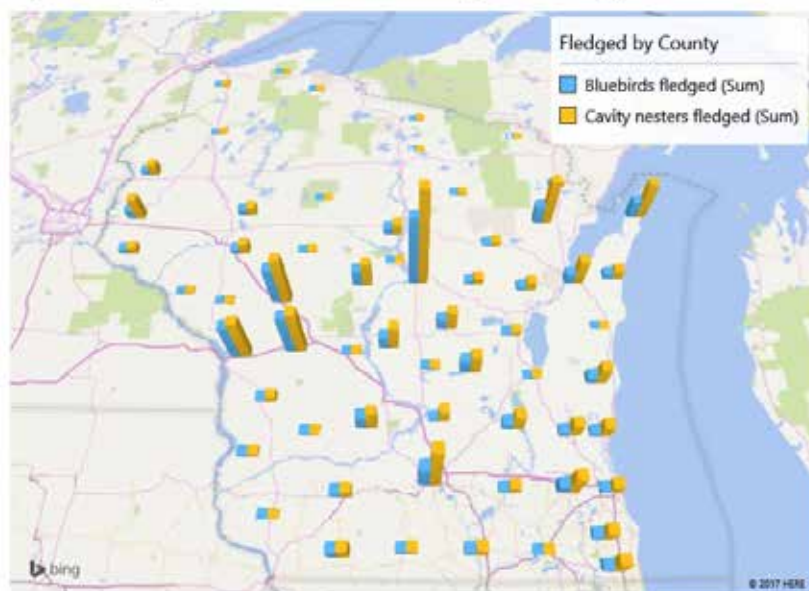


Figure 2. Average Number of Bluebirds Fledged per Box, by County

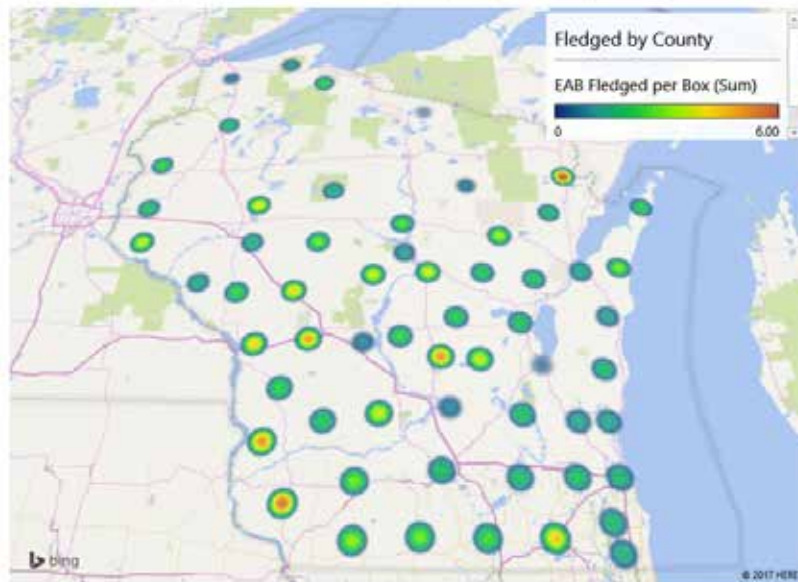
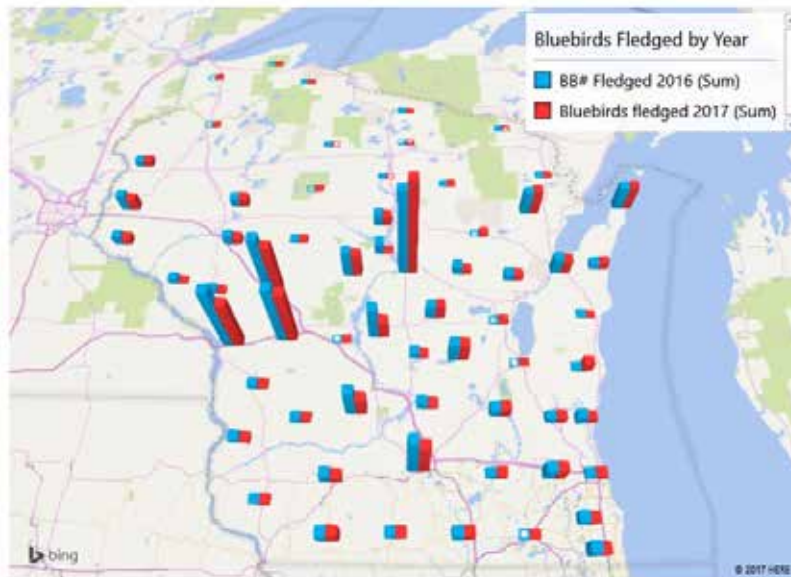


Figure 3. Comparison of Bluebird Fledge Numbers for 2016 and 2017.





As the data by county becomes more intimate, remember that the purpose of the data presented in this manner is to educate and to encourage. As you view it, please make sure that you consider the many factors that influence bluebird production across the state. These include, the number of monitors, the number of boxes, localized weather conditions, predator and competitive pressures and suitable bluebird habitat.

Although 2017 was a tough year as indicated by the numbers, weather challenges can be difficult to combat and may continue. Our hundreds of monitors work very hard, and I believe every fledged bluebird should be considered a "win". The thousands of bluebirds raised in this state with the help of our monitors, are enjoyed by tens of thousands of people, not only within our state, but well beyond its borders. I'm sure we all try our best to send as many as we can to our southern neighbors to take care of, until next year. Keep up the good work!

I hope that the use of these tools is helpful. If you have any questions or input on the data or how it's presented, please feel free to contact me.

---

## BRAW welcomes these new and returning members

Jack and Joan Freeman  
Nathan Robertson  
Kathy Lewis  
Marilyn L. Michalski

### Contribution \$100 or more:

Michael L. and Kathryn A. Swederske  
Mead Witter Foundation Inc.

### Give the gift of BLUEBIRDS!

A gift subscription to BRAW is a wonderful way to get friends into bluebirds and share your enjoyment with others.

---

## Woodpeckers – Preserving a Keystone Species

By Ray Pinter

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker was the largest of the North American woodpeckers. I use the past tense because, despite a non-conclusive sighting as recently as 2004, it is almost certainly extinct. Writing in his introduction to the 2014 tenth anniversary edition, Philip Hoose, author of *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird*, penned: "*The Ivory-bill's saga - perhaps unfinished - continues to give us a chance to learn and adapt. As we consider the native plants and animals around us, we can remind ourselves of the race to save the Lord God bird and ask, 'What can we do to protect them in their native habitats while they're still here with us?'*" Trying to find the answers to that question certainly pertain to all of us who strive to protect and enhance nesting habitat for the bluebird and other secondary cavity nesters. Hoose's book is both an enlightening and somber story of the search for and hoped for preservation of a species on the brink of extinction in the 1930s. The team was led by Dr. Arthur Allen, founder of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and produced the only known recording of the Ivory-bill's bleat-like tooting "kent." This sound recording can be heard on the Cornell Lab's website. The sound is a haunting reminder of what we've lost.

The Woodpecker Family, Picadae, is one of the most ancient and specialized bird families in the world. Their many unique adaptations have all evolved for the sole purpose of hammering tree trunks, both for finding food and excavating cavities for raising their young. They have been doing this work for a long time. Their cavities were discovered in 50 million year old petrified wood in Arizona and Wyoming. Although our modern day woodpeckers probably look somewhat different than their ancient ancestors, they have retained their distinctive morphological features: long, straight bill for hammering tree trunks; short legs and long toes for climbing trees; long, stiff tail for bracing against the



trunk; long, extensible tongue with barbed end for procuring insects and larvae from deep within the tree; tiny, hair-like feathers covering their nostrils to filter out flying dust and wood chips; and most significant, their unique skull, able to protect the brain from up to 1500 G forces (the survivable impact force in an auto crash rarely exceeds 100 Gs).

The Woodpeckers have often been labeled as the "keystone species" of the avian world. The term is derived from architecture. It refers to the critical stone at the top of an arch; if it is removed the arch will collapse along with the wall and possibly the entire building. Dr. Robert T. Paine was the first to apply the term to the natural world. His research in 1969 found that the sea starfish had a huge impact on the other organisms in a tidal plain on the west coast. The influence they exerted in their habitat was much greater than their biomass in the tidal zone ecosystem. He referred to them as a "keystone species."

Woodpeckers, as the primary cavity nesters, are a most critical and keystone species in the forest ecosystem. There are over 40 species of birds (secondary cavity nesters) which use cavities for nesting in trees excavated by woodpeckers. Many mammals (raccoons, bats, squirrels, weasels, fishers, martens, woodrats and chipmunks) are also the beneficiary of woodpecker construction. Woodpeckers have a huge influence, not only over the well-being of other birds and mammals, but also over the health of the entire

forest. Not only do they feed on the harmful bark beetle and its larvae, but most of the birds that depend on them as a cavity creator are also insectivorous, playing a crucial role in controlling forest insect pests. Take away the woodpecker and the subsequent falling population of other bird species could lead to a plague of tree killing insects.

There are 22 surviving species of woodpeckers in North America. Some have very narrow geographic ranges in the west or south (e.g., White-headed, Acorn, and Gila Woodpeckers and Gilded Flicker) and some have very broad ranges encompassing almost the entire U.S. and Canada (e.g., Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers and Northern Flicker). Most all species are non-migratory with the exception of the sapsuckers. Some species are on the decline as their forest habitat continues to be depleted or fragmented. Of particular concern are the Red-headed, Red-cockaded, and Lewis' Woodpeckers and the Gilded Flicker. These four species have all experienced at least a 70% decline in their population since 1966 and have been placed on the state of birds' watch list (birds at risk of becoming threatened or endangered without conservation action).

The Red-cockaded woodpecker is a prime example of how loss of habitat and forest fragmentation can affect the population of a species. This bird, a specialist among specialists, was once common throughout the southeastern U.S. The Red-cockaded is different than most all other woodpecker species in that it makes its cavities in live trees with no heart rot. They are the only North American woodpecker species to nest exclusively in live pines. It may take up to 12 years to complete a nest cavity in the "green" wood. The individual who begins the job may not be the one who finishes construction. They have very narrow requirements for their breeding territories: open pine forests that burn at regular intervals to keep an open understory. The break up of these large pine stands due to human settlement and the suppression of fires in recent times has led to an 86% decrease in their population since 1966. It was officially listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

in 1970.

The Red-headed woodpecker was once a very common bird, described by Audubon in the mid 1800s as the most common woodpecker species in North America. It is declining at a 2% rate per year which could lead to its extinction in a matter of a couple of decades. The Red-headed is one of the few woodpecker species that caches its food, usually nuts, for later consumption. The decline in nut-bearing trees (oaks, hickories, beech and American chestnut) could be a prime factor in the petering out of this species.

But, it is not gloom and doom for all woodpecker species. The Red-bellied woodpecker has actually expanded its range farther northward over the past 50 years. It has moved into territory formerly occupied by the Red-headed woodpecker. Similarly, the Pileated Woodpeckers' population and range has increased steadily over the past 50 years. The closely related Downy and Hairy woodpeckers also have very widespread and healthy populations throughout the continent.

The sapsuckers are another species with stable populations. All four North American species are rated of least concern on the conservation index. They provide additional benefits



to other birds. The most widespread of the sapsuckers, the Yellow-bellied, is a long distance migrant traveling from their breeding range, as far north as the boreal forests of Canada and eastern Alaska to as far south as Central America each fall. In early spring, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird depends on the sap secretions from the holes in tree bark left by the returning

sapsucker. These "wells" of sugary sap are a critical early season food source for the hummingbird, since very few insects have hatched and most plants are not yet flowering. In my own yard when I hear the staccato drumming of the sapsuckers on the red pines in early spring, I know it is time to get the sugar water feeders ready because the hummingbirds will soon be arriving. Many species of warblers will also dine at the sap wells on their spring migration routes for a quick energy boost. A regular pattern of holes in the bark of a tree is a sign of the work of the Yellow-bellied sapsucker (see photos). Their rapping on the trunks of trees is like a Morse code message to the returning migrants: "Come and get it!"

Most woodpecker species will not use man-made boxes for nesting. One exception is the Northern Flicker, both yellow-shafted and red-shafted varieties, which may occasionally nest in an artificial box (the dimensions are larger than a bluebird nest box). The majority of their diet is ants, which they procure on the ground. They prefer more open woodlands and forest edges and forage for their insects in short grass habitats. Despite being relatively weak excavators, they are one of the most important woodpecker species in providing cavities for other bird species, mainly because of their overall widespread abundance. Even though they are still quite common, their population has decreased by 49% since 1966.

Evidence of the diminutive Downy Woodpecker's work is sometimes encountered by monitors on the bluebird trail. They will occasionally use a bluebird box for roosting in the winter months. They may enlarge the box opening and also try to "excavate" the





box from within. Some bluebird monitors, when checking their boxes for the first time in the spring, have discovered the Downy's work left behind in the bottom of the box: wood chips and gray, downy feathers from preening themselves.

The most common birds we encounter on the bluebird trail: bluebirds, tree swallows, chickadees and house wrens are all secondary cavity nesters. They were, at one time, almost exclusively dependent on the woodpecker for providing their nesting cavities before the advent of man-made nest boxes. The decline of the bluebird in the middle of the twentieth century was in large part due to the decline in dead trees, snags, and wooden fence posts. Dead trees on public lands were routinely removed both for safety concerns and esthetics. At present, it is safe to say, more bluebirds nest in artificial nest boxes than natural tree cavities, and their population has flourished along with the many bluebird organizations dedicated to their survival.

But, what about all the other bird species that depend on the woodpecker? Wood ducks, hooded mergansers, kestrels, many owl species, fly-catchers, titmice and nuthatches are just a few of the North American birds which use woodpecker cavities. The Pileated woodpecker is the main provider for the larger duck and owl species because they create a very large cavity. The wood duck population dropped significantly in many portions of its range due to the lack of suitable natural nest sites. Like the bluebird, its population has now increased due to the placement of artificial nest boxes.

As concerned citizen scientists



and property owners trying to do what's best for birds, sometimes the best action is no action. Leave the dead and standing trees alone. Snags are the best protection for the preservation of most woodpecker species and, in turn, the whole forest ecosystem. For many years I had a slowly declining non-native Russian olive tree which I inherited in my back yard. I debated taking it out, both because of its collapsing trunk and its invasive status, but since it was tucked away at the edge of the property line I let it stand to naturally decompose. The accompanying picture showed what it attracted. I was first made aware of the presence of the bird in the yard by the loud, regularly-paced thumping sound which I heard from inside the house with all the windows closed. The pileated woodpecker stayed around for almost an hour hammering away at the olive's trunk, feasting on beetle larvae. I watched in admiration as huge chunks of wood flew with each strike of its massive bill. I felt privileged to witness the sight and sound of this largest existing North American woodpecker in my own yard. But, I also began to think of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker (which in the past was often confused

with the slightly smaller Pileated) and how mankind is no longer able to feel the wonderment of this magnificent species of bird. What a loss! The removal of dead and declining trees is not a healthy remedy for any woodland (or backyard) and the benefits the dead trees provide go far beyond just providing food for the woodpecker. The death and degradation of trees is a natural and necessary process in a well functioning forest ecosystem.

Phillip Hoose writes in the concluding chapter of *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird*, that because of the work of concerned ornithologists, "we're lucky to have at least a documented memory of the Ivory-bill and the race to save it. Because they wrote down, photographed, and recorded what they did, these activists and scientists left us a good manual for how to fight skillfully and well. Now it's our turn to do all we can to keep other species from sharing the ghostly fate of the Lord God bird." It's a formula that bluebird organizations have been following for almost half a century. Collecting data on population trends is important for assessing the overall health of the species. I wonder if the Ivory-bill would still be here today if there were citizen scientist groups dedicated to their survival a century ago?

The eloquent words of American naturalist William Beebe (1877-1962) bring home the stark reality of extinction: "The beauty and genius of a work of art may be reconceived, though its first material expression be destroyed; a vanished harmony may yet again inspire the composer; but when the last individual of a race of living beings breaths no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can be again."

## The BRAW Perpetual Fund

The Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW) is solely responsible for the significant increase of bluebird populations in our state. You have been a force in this achievement. BRAW is setting up a program where you can establish your efforts permanently within our organization by making a monetary gift anytime or as part of your will or estate plan. This contribution will have a strong and lasting impact for the Eastern Bluebird in Wisconsin and you will be listed as a member of this fund. This listing will be found in each edition of the Wisconsin Bluebird. Any question can be directed to wisconsinbluebirds@gmail.com or by contacting Pat Ready or Steve Sample who are listed in the newsletter. On-line contributions can be made at our web site (BRAW.ORG) or sent to the BRAW treasurer.



**Got questions about  
Bluebirds?  
Check out  
[www.braw.org](http://www.braw.org)**

# Remembering Frank Zuern

By Carol McDaniel

Frank Zuern (90) passed away last summer in Oshkosh. He was known by many of us in BRAW.

Frank was born in 1927 on a small family farm in Pembine, Wisconsin, in the Dunbar area not far from Oshkosh. He became acquainted with nature and the environment when, as a youth, he roamed the forests, meadows and swamps and rowed the surrounding lakes. The outdoors entertained him with its endless sights, smells and sounds. Fishing, hunting and building bird houses were pastimes he enjoyed.

Over the years, Frank has been a teacher, wood carver, birder and environmentalist. Around 1960, he became interested in bluebirds. In 1980, he and his wife, Jane, were touring a Civil War battlefield in Georgia when they saw a bluebird leaving the mouth of a cannon that



it was nesting in. Frank contended that maybe bluebirds would nest in boxes with horizontal cavities as well as vertical ones. It took many building attempts until in 1993, Frank settled on the unique bird house design called the Tree Branch. One theory was the bluebird would nest in the back of the box and the long entrance would serve as a safe area from the long reach of a raccoon. BRAW published the design in the *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletter and the boxes were built by individuals, organizations and school groups throughout the state.

Frank was a long time member of BRAW and served on its board.



---

# Inventor Floyd Van Ert (1934-2017)

By Bet Zimmerman Smith

Floyd Van Ert passed away peacefully at home in Elgin, Nebraska, on June 3, at the age of 83. Floyd was a farmer, WWII veteran, dancer, businessman, and family man. He was also a bluebirding hero.

Floyd invented the Van Ert Universal Sparrow Trap to deal with that nemesis of native cavity-nesting birds—“those pesky House Sparrows.” From 2000 to 2012, he handmade over 20,000 traps. His simple, inexpensive live trap works on any style bluebird nestbox. Later on, Floyd created variations for kestrel, Wood Duck, and PVC boxes, and also came up with unique nestbox mounting bracket designs.

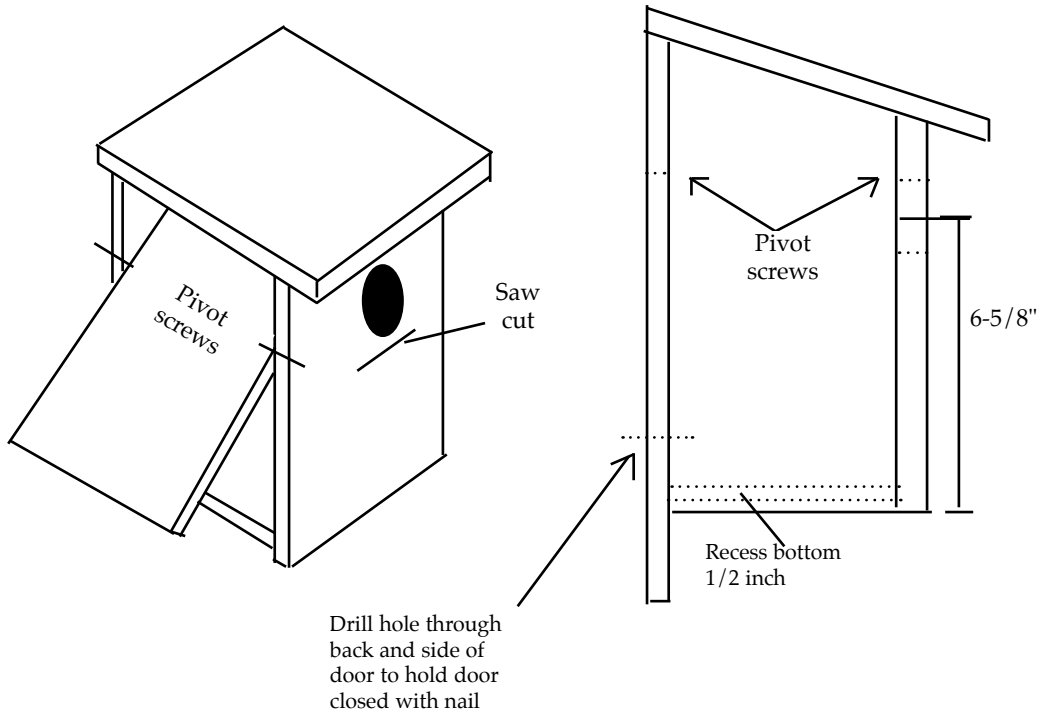
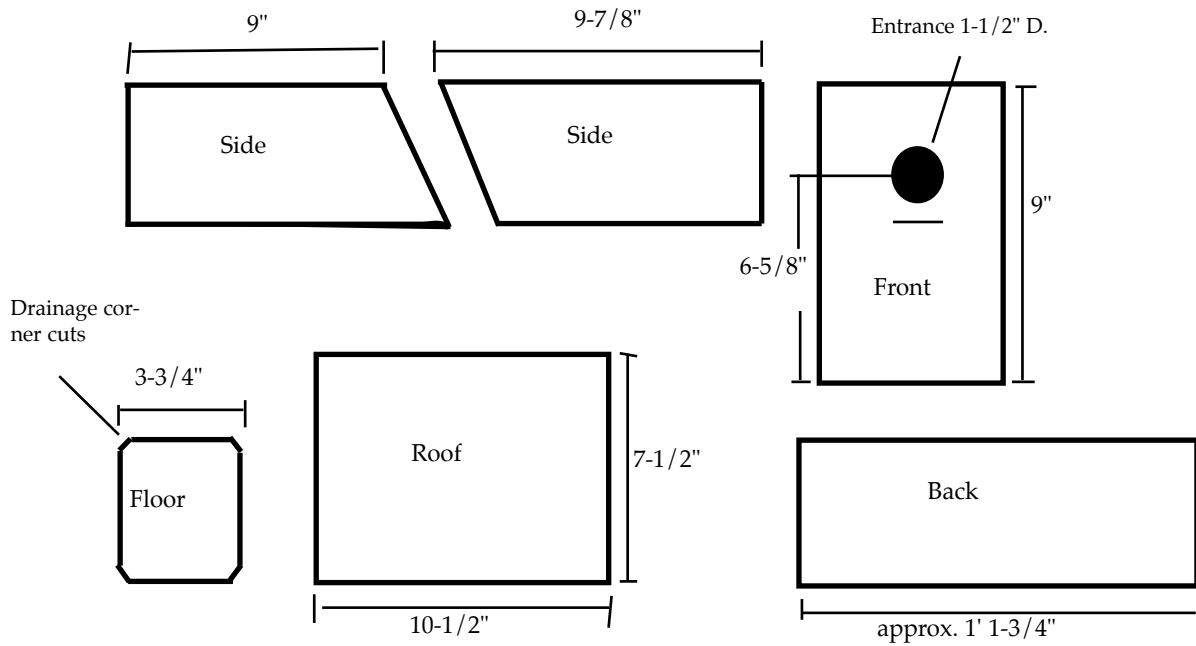
Floyd never patented his inbox trap design. Some have imitated it, but in my opinion, his is still the best. I've caught House Sparrows within a minute or two of setting it, and never hit the trail without several in my bag.

Like most bluebirders, Floyd was little bit crazy and somewhat omery. But he sure was fun, and he loved bluebirds. He also thought ahead. In 2012, he trained Aaron Perkins to take over product manufacturing. Floyd's original design is still available at [www.vanerttraps.com](http://www.vanerttraps.com), and is always sent with a warning about the importance of frequent monitoring when trapping. His clever invention has saved countless bluebird lives. Even though Floyd's gone, he continues to help us fill the skies with blue.



In 2013 BRAW presented Floyd Van Ert with a lifetime membership for his valuable contribution to Bluebirders in the fight against House Sparrows. Dr. Kent Hall presented it to him in Darlington at the BRAW annual convention.

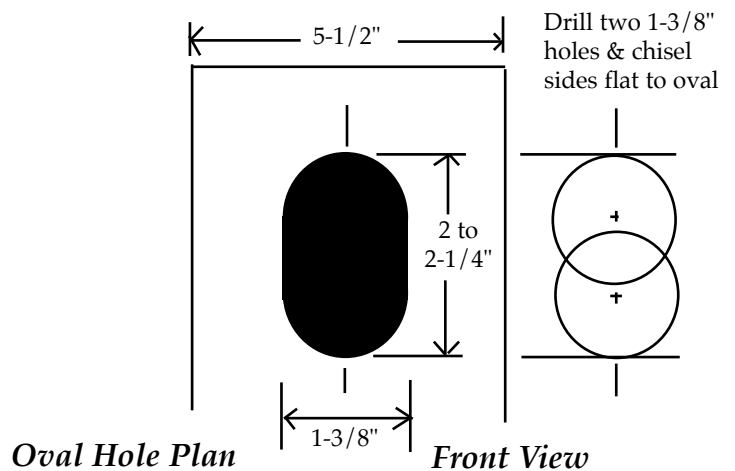




**NABS style Bluebird Box**

- Cedar, 7/8 " lumber preferred.
- 8" wide for top
- 6" wide for back, front, sides & bottom
- All angle cuts are 10 degrees
- Roof is 7-1/2" wide x 10-1/2 " long
- Sides 9-7/8" long x 5" wide
- Floor is 5" x 3-3/4"
- Back & front 5-1/2" wide

For more nest box plans go to [braw.org](http://braw.org)



# Membership Renewal Information

By JP Lafouge, 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 G12/17 your membership will expire with this issue. If your label reads F12/18, that means you are paid through December 2018, and so on (The letter before the date number is used by the computer for sorting purposes.)

Fill out the membership renewal form below and send it with your check or money order to BRAW Membership, c/o JP Lafouge, 9154 N. Fielding Rd., Bayside, WI 53217. If we do not receive your renewal by February 1, 2018, your membership will begin with the Summer issue of the *Wisconsin Bluebird*. **We will no longer mail out back issues and back date memberships.**

The basic \$20 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 February and is mailed to arrive to you the first week in March. I need time to process membership renewals and prepare the mailing list so the sooner I receive your renewal the better.

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](http://www.braw.org) and use PayPal or a credit card and you don't need to mail anything in.**

*By renewing now you will receive all four issues of the 2018 Wisconsin Bluebird newsletter.*



.....

## 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:

- \$20 individual or Family Annual
- \$25 Contributing Annual
- \$100 Corporate Annual
- \$300 Life Membership       Perpetual Fund

Print clearly

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
  - This is a GIFT subscription.
- Enclosed please find my check \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this membership/subscription request to:  
BRAW, Inc.  
JP Lafouge  
9154 N. Fielding Rd.,  
Bayside, WI, 53217

**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 (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**, PO Box 133, Waupaca, WI 54981 • 920-475-8525 • brdanjoe@gmail.com (term to 12/19)

**Director Mike Helgren**, 1013 Georgetown Circle, Beaver Dam, WI 53916 • 920/885-4050 mhelgren@charter.net (term to 12/18)

**Director Fred Craig**, 3308 Nathan Lane, Holmen WI 54636 • 608/783-2225 266marycraig@gmail.com (term to 12/18)

**Director, Brad Zinda**, Stevens Point, WI • 3416 Soo Marie Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54481 • (715) 570-9587 • brdzinda@charter.net (term to 12/18)

**Director, Steve Fallon**, Oregon, WI • 974 Halcyon Days Ct., Oregon, WI. 53575 • scfallon@charter.net (term to 12/18)

### 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: JP Lafouge**, 9154 N. Fielding Rd.,

Bayside, WI, 53217, brawwebmaster@braw.org

**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: JP Lafouge**, 9154 N. Fielding Rd.,

Bayside, WI, 53217, brawwebmaster@braw.org

### 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.



**A big thanks to the late Floyd Van Ert for this invention.**

**Wisconsin Bluebird** • Volume 32, Number 4 • Winter 2017

Published by the **Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**

Editor, Designer, Photographer  
Patrick Ready, 815 Sky Ridge Dr., Madison WI 53719  
608-239-0791 • birdsready@gmail.com

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** Contact Membership Chair **JP Lafouge**, 9154 N. Fielding Rd., Bayside, WI, 53217, brawwebmaster@braw.org

*Wisconsin Bluebird* is published quarterly by the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (BRAW) 815 Sky Ridge Dr., Madison WI 53719. Subscription price is included in membership dues. Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to JP Lafouge, 9154 N. Fielding Rd. Bayside, WI 53217. Issues are dated Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. Deadlines for submissions to the editor are due the 15th of January, April, July, and October.

Except for material with a copyright notice, permission to reproduce material printed in *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletter is granted providing credit is given to *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletter as the publisher and to the author(s) or photographer(s) whose bylines and photo credits appear with the story or photographs.



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

JP Lafouge  
9154 N. Fielding Rd.,  
Bayside, WI, 53217  
www.braw.org



NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 1027  
MADISON, WI

**Next Annual Meeting  
set for April 7, 2018  
See p. 3**

**Is this your last issue?  
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL!  
See p. 14**

## Shop the BRAW Online Store for the holiday!

By Julie Milligan-Barr, Store Manager

### Give the gift of Bluebirds!

Check out the store for T-shirts, tank tops, sweatshirts, hats, mugs, aprons, bumper stickers, and lots more all with bluebirds on them.

Items can be ordered online at [www.cafepress.com/braw](http://www.cafepress.com/braw) or by calling toll free at 1-877-809-1659 Monday through Saturday from 8am-8pm CST. As always, a portion of the purchase price of items goes directly to BRAW to help fund bluebird conservation programs.



Check out the wide variety of sweatshirts and T-shirts in sizes from kids to adults. Pets too!

Cards now available in packages of 10 or 20.

[www.cafepress.com/braw](http://www.cafepress.com/braw)