

*Summer 2019 Edition*



# Such a welcome sight!!

So rewarding to see these little ones and know that the bluebird population in TN is growing!

5 bluebird babies, 8 days old  
Photo by Janet McDonald

## Tennessee Bluebird Society Honor Roll (Life Time Members)

- Margaret Beasley
- Sue Bradley
- Stan & Linda Colburn
- Shoshanna Cooper
- Chuck & Cecelia Cruickshank
- Mary Cushman
- Kathy Dooley
- Raymond Dunavant
- Roger Givens
- Chuck & Terry James
- Rosalind & George Kurita
- John Langley
- Mort Massey
- Bob & Judy Peak
- Farrell & Jane Roe
- Jerry & Dianna Rysticken
- Donald Turner
- Joanne Watson
- Dr. Heather Wilkins

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### BLUEBIRD QUOTES

How readily the bluebirds become our friends and neighbors when we offer them suitable nesting retreats!

- John Burroughs, *The Golden Book Magazine*, 1925



**PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Well, each year is different, and the timing of our nesting activity in Tennessee always rolls with the weather. We had fairly warm weather in late winter, but then cold spells seemed to retard our nesting activity. However, after the middle of March, things really warmed up, and nesting activity has been very active the past 2-3 months.

Thank you's go to all our County Coordinators, Board members and other volunteers who make everything happen for the Tennessee Bluebird Society. Without your help, we would not be able to move our agenda forward. On our last Board of Director's call, a lot of new activity in terms of boxes installed, and engaging with new groups interested in our mission have been reported around the Volunteer state.

We must remain diligent as the summer progresses, cleaning out old nests, monitoring and preventing predator activity, and repairing nest boxes. Many secondary cavity-nesters (tree swallows, chickadees, wrens and titmice) have vacated their nest boxes, and I am getting reports that there have been many second and now even third broods of bluebirds in those boxes. Please remember to keep vegetation clear of your boxes, and provide clean water and a food source to help the second and third broods.

**Save the date!** I am pleased to announce that your Board has selected November 16<sup>th</sup> as the date for our 2019 annual meeting. The University of Tennessee Arboretum at Oak Ridge has graciously offered the use of their wonderful facility for this meeting. We'll be lining up speakers and will have a formal agenda to distribute as additional plans materialize.

Happy Birding!

Chuck Cruickshank

**What Is The Best Type of Nest Box?**

There are many kinds of bluebird nest boxes out there. About the only constant is a 1-1/2 in hole. Here are a couple of observations from our monitoring in Cumberland County, Tennessee.

You can look on Sialis.org and find a number of box designs and any on that site should work well. I like the NABS design. It is easy to make, works great and has been around for many years. Lately, I have been modifying the NABS design to be more like the Carl Little design which open down instead of up, providing better protection against babies falling out.

Gilbertson's Gilwood box, and modifications of this design is favored in some areas. Peterson's slanted box used to be more popular and has proven successful. However, on one of our bluebird trails this year, a starling found the oval hole easy to enter to build a nest.

A few years ago, our bluebird club took over some existing boxes that weren't being monitored. That trail of 16 boxes had all different shapes and sizes of home-made nest boxes. Most had to be modified for easy opening and cleaning, but all have successfully raised bluebirds.

Shallow boxes can make it too easy for blue jays, hawks, owls, and raccoons to reach the babies inside, so I think deeper is better than shallow.

I recently read that some bluebirders think that bluebirds seem to prefer tighter dimensions for their home, so we are experimenting with boxes 4 inches x 4 inches, instead of the NABS design size of 5 1/2 x 4 inches.

In any box, we have learned to add a fledging ladder, or kerf, so baby bluebirds and weak footed tree swallows can easily climb out. Whatever design you use you are likely to get occupants. Try to always guards use predator guards so that the nest box doesn't become a lunch box!



Don Hazel



# Around Tennessee

## Sequoyah High School Students Love Bluebirds!

On May 14<sup>th</sup> Chuck Cruickshank and Michelle Campanis presented a bluebird basics class for Ms. Ruth Vallé's junior Spanish class. Ms. Vallé loves providing opportunities for her students to learn about ways they can be involved in environmental conservation. After the presentation Chuck helped the students install a bluebird nest box in the courtyard just outside their classroom window. The students had lots of great questions. Members of the girls' basketball team that are in Ms. Vallé's class agreed to monitor the nest box over the summer and make sure the bird bath is clean and filled with fresh water regularly. Three days later Ms. Vallé sent word that a nest was already in progress in the nest box and a few days later eggs were present! Chuck identified the nest and eggs as a Tufted Titmouse. We look forward to updates from Sequoyah High School.



Adrianna presenting to the Holston Rivers Virginia Master Naturalists. The chapter is interested in establishing and monitoring nest boxes in 2020.

## Bluebirds Discussed at 4th Annual Butterfly Festival at UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge

TBS Board President Chuck Cruickshank along TBS Board Member Chuck James displayed and talked about bluebirds at the 4th Annual Butterfly Festival at the UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge, TN. In addition to many lectures 300 Monarch Butterflies were released. Other TBS Board Members in attendance were Rosemary Chamberlain and Don Hazel.



Chuck Cruickshank, Ms. Valle' and her junior Spanish class

## High School Senior Busy Presenting for TBS

Adrianna Nelson, high school senior, has had a busy season making presentations about bluebirds to several groups in Sullivan County, TN.



Adrianna presenting to a group of 22 at Pleasant View Methodist Church



## Around Tennessee

### Germantown Garden Club Sponsors BB Trail

Madonna Learning Center is a school for the disabled, mostly Downs Syndrome, in Germantown, TN. At the dedication of a new garden for the students, the Germantown Garden Club also sponsored a 4 box Bluebird Trail. Within a month one box has 4 eggs !!!



From left to right: Madonna Learning Center student, Madonna Learning Center President, Lichterman Center President, Germantown Garden Club President and GGC member.



Madonna Learning Center teachers, students and parents

### The Bluebird Now the Official Cumberland County Bird

The bluebird is now official! Many people may have read in the *Crossville Chronicle* recently that the bluebird was named the official bird of Cumberland County.

It actually started with the city of Crossville last year. A local Crossville resident, Paul Shipley, presented a petition to the city to name the bluebird the official city bird. City manager Greg Wood agreed, and the Crossville city council passed the resolution. Greg Wood then worked with Cliff Wightman at the Tennessee College of Applied Technology and the woodworking class at TCAT. They built 40 new bluebird nest boxes to be placed in and around the city. Lowe's donated some of the materials to mount the boxes, and the Cumberland County Bluebird Club installed them at Meadow Lake Park, the Cumberland County Fairgrounds and at Roane State Community College. Nearly all of those nest boxes are now full of native bluebirds and tree swallows.

Crossville took the lead and it gave everyone the idea to then go to Cumberland County and Fairfield Glade. So three entities, Crossville, Cumberland County and Fairfield Glade have all listed the bluebird as their official bird. And see more exciting news below...

### Pleasant Hill Joining Bluebird Bandwagon

There are 3 official cities in Cumberland county. Crossville, Pleasant Hill and Crab Orchard. Pleasant Hill is a small community with a population of about 600. We have a bluebird trail in Pleasant Hill comprised of about 14 boxes in the yards of homeowners. Our Cumberland County bluebird club helped train the monitors and we helped residents build and install all of the nest boxes.

One of our monitors, Mary Schantz, was excited about Crossville, Cumberland County and Fairfield Glade naming the bluebird the official bird, and Mary approached the Pleasant Hill city council and proposed that they name the bluebird their official bird also. And now, the bluebird is the official town bird!

Thanks to Mary and the Pleasant Hill city council and all of the dedicated bluebird monitors in Pleasant Hill!

## Meet Your TBS Board Members



**John Martin**



**Michelle Campanis**

John is trained as a physicist with a graduate degree from the California State University System. Once completing graduate school, he began work with Northrop Grumman Corporation and worked for them for the next 40 years with assignments in California, Illinois, and Maryland. His work revolved around developing advanced sensor systems throughout the electromagnetic spectrum (from ultra-violet through radio frequencies). John retired at the end of 2012 and he and his wife (Deborah) moved from Maryland to Tennessee with the idea of building a home someplace in the state. They lived in Nashville and Chattanooga before deciding to settle in Fairfield Glade. They were attracted to Fairfield Glade because we enjoy hiking, kayaking, and biking and thought of it as a training ground for their international travel adventures. They have hiked in Spain, Ireland, and Scotland and are planning their next adventure to New Zealand. Once settled in Fairfield Glade, they connected-up with two hiking groups (Friends of the Trails and Tennessee Trail Association) and attended a Blue Bird information meeting. At the information meeting, they met Don Hazel and became active Blue Bird monitors. In that capacity, they monitor the Dorchester Golf Course in Fairfield Glade as well as Centennial Park and Soccer Field Complex in Crossville. In John's role as a TBS Board member, he has inherited the task of collecting and tabulating how the state is doing in growing the Blue Bird population for the current year and comparing that to prior years.

Michelle graduated from the University Of Tennessee Institute Of Agriculture with a degree in Plant Sciences. She then moved to Boston to work for The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. She received a one year fellowship from The Garden Club of American to study in England where she spent time at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and studied landscape design at the Chelsea Physic Garden. Upon completion of the fellowship she returned to Massachusetts where she taught horticulture to high school students. She spent 20 years in Nashville working for Belmont University while raising her daughter and twin sons. She returned to East Tennessee in 2017 to be the education coordinator for the UT Arboretum. One her favorite parts of this position is getting to work with the Tennessee Bluebird Society-with the help of TBS the arboretum installed a bluebird trail in 2017 and started a Bluebird Buddies nest box monitoring program. She is a facilitator for the Project Learning Tree program and completed the Tennessee Naturalist Program in 2017. Michelle is dedicated to helping people learn more about the benefits of utilizing native plants in our landscapes to help provide habitat and food for pollinators and wildlife. Michelle loves all things outdoors and when not at work can be found hiking, cycling, kayaking or wandering around in the woods.

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**Tennessee Bluebird Society  
Board of Directors**

**Eastern Region:**

Michelle Campanis - Oak Ridge

Chuck Cruickshank - Loudon

Kathy Dooley - Loudon

Peggy Flierl - Crossville

Don Hazel - Crossville

Chuck James - Loudon

John Martin - Crossville

**Central Region:**

Rosemary Chamberlain - Dickson

Andy Ecton - Lebanon

Beth Ecton - Lebanon

Rosalind Kurita - Clarksville

Duane Rice - Chapmansboro

**Western Region:**

Fred Robertson - Collierville

Farrell Roe - Jackson

Stacey Roe - Jackson

Joanne Watson - Collierville

Scientific Advisor: Dawn Wilkins,  
PhD, UT Martin

Email: [tnsialia@gmail.com](mailto:tnsialia@gmail.com)

Website: [www.tnbluebirdsociety.org](http://www.tnbluebirdsociety.org)

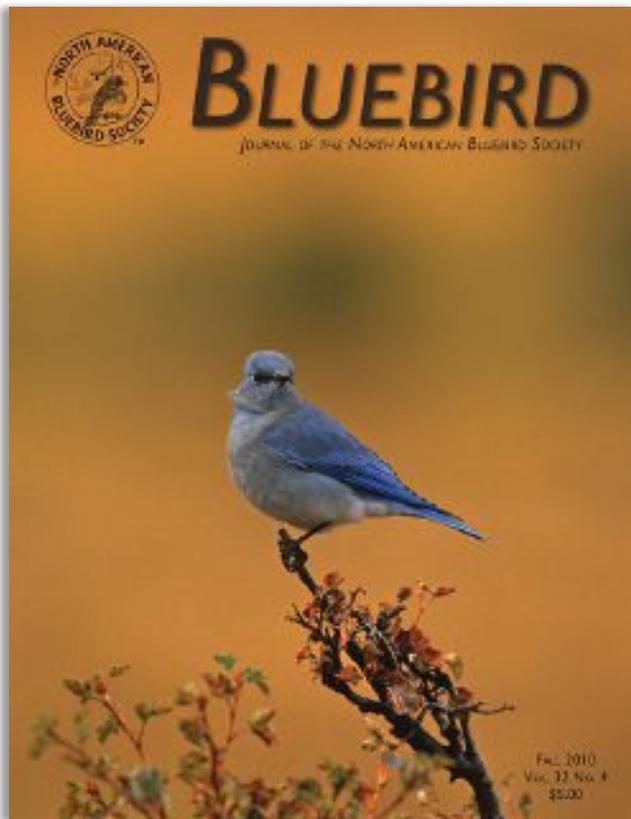
Facebook: Tennessee Bluebird Society

**TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Did you know that when you become a member of the Tennessee Bluebird Society there is an additional benefit? Once you become a TBS member, for an additional \$15 you qualify for your first membership into the North American Bluebird Society at a 50% savings. Only \$15 instead of \$30. Fill out the Tennessee Bluebird Society application on the last page of this newsletter. Indicate that you want a TBS Household Membership for \$15.

Then by the NABS circle (Y) and add \$15 for a total of \$30 and send in your application. We will submit your membership to NABS.

In addition to receiving our four TBS newsletters you will receive four issues of Bluebird from the North American Bluebird Society.



Websites  
Tennessee Bluebird Society  
[www.tnbluebirdsociety.org](http://www.tnbluebirdsociety.org)  
North American Bluebird Society  
[www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)

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TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY APPLICATION

<u>Category</u>	1 Year	3 year	Lifetime
Household	\$15	\$35	\$150
NABS	\$15 (First Time Member with a TBS Membership) \$30 Value		
Corporate	\$150		

Add only \$15 to a household membership and become a member of the North American Bluebird Society a \$30 value. For first time NABS Members. You will receive four issues of The Bluebird Journal of the North American Bluebird Society.

Please send your application and payment to the address at the bottom of this form

Name/ First: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address/ Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Membership Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NABS \$15(Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_  
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I have interest in helping the following areas: Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_,  
 Membership \_\_\_\_\_, Education \_\_\_\_\_,  
 Website Management \_\_\_\_\_, Data Collection \_\_\_\_\_,  
 Becoming a Board Member of Tennessee Bluebird Society \_\_\_\_\_

**Send your application and check to:**  
**Tennessee Bluebird Society**  
**206 Chota Landing View**  
**Loudon, TN 37774**

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