

Winter 2017 Edition



Photo by: Donna Dudley

Tennessee Bluebird Society
Honor Roll
(Life Time Members)

- Margaret Beasley
- Stan & Linda Colburn
- Chuck & Cecelia Cruickshank
- Mary Cushman
- Chuck & Terry James
- Rosalind & George Kurita
- John Langley
- Mort Massey
- Farrell & Jane Roe
- Donald Turner
- Dr. Heather Wilkins

Interested in becoming a Tennessee Bluebird Society Life Time Member? For more details see the application on the last page of this newsletter.

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BLUEBIRD QUOTES

Long after their associates have gone southward, they linger like the last leaves on the tree. It is indeed "good-bye to summer" when the bluebirds withdraw their touch of brightness from the dreary November landscape



at the north to whirl through the southern woods and feed on the waxy berries of the mistletoe.

Neltje Blanchan

PRESIDENT'S LETTER CHUCK CRUICKSHANK

Hello members of the Tennessee Bluebird



Chuck Cruickshank

Society. We had another busy and productive year in 2017! First, let me thank all the Tennessee Bluebird Society Board of Directors members for their service and dedication. Without your volunteer activities to move our agenda forward, we would not

have the results we'll communicate later in this letter. I would especially like to thank outgoing officers Stan Colburn (treasurer) and Chuck James (president) for their unselfish service. Along with Farrell Roe (another current Board member) their vision, tenacity and hard work have established the Tennessee Bluebird Society as a strong and contributing member of the North American Bluebird Society. I'd also like to thank Lou Miller for being our website coordinator, and Cecelia Cruickshank and Kathy Dooley for managing our Facebook page. We have over 500 followers from Tennessee and other states who have interest in our activities here in the Volunteer state. In addition, thank you to all our volunteers who monitor and report nest-box activity on our trails, and Jerry Rysticken, incoming Vice-President for accumulating your state-wide data, and reporting it to Cornell University.

On to 2017 results! In addition to our established nest-box trails, new activities can

be reported. Last spring, a partnership between the industrial arts and science classes at Campbell County Schools, the Indian Mountain State Park staff in Jellico, TN, and the Tennessee Bluebird Society led to a new trail at the park with 20 new nest-boxes. The first season yielded more than 135 fledglings, the majority being Tree Swallows the first year. In Cumberland County, new members of the TBS have added over 100 nest boxes on five golf courses heading in to 2018. I'd also like to thank Don Hazel for adding these trails to our growing program, and agreeing to serve on the Board for the Tennessee Bluebird Society. In Loudon County, 8 new nest-boxes were installed on a new trail at the Tellico Village Wellness Center. Elton Long and the monitors for that trail look forward to good results in 2018. Just a week ago, another partnership between the University of Tennessee Arboretum in Oak Ridge, Girl Scout Troop 21158 in Oak Ridge and the Tennessee Bluebird Society should yield another 20+ boxes in that location for 2018.

So what does all that mean?

Well, as you can see from the chart below, the Tennessee Bluebird Society can report an increase in the state over the last three years from 350 to 585 nest-boxes, from 945 to over 1,900 Bluebirds fledged, and from 1,360 to over 2,600 birds from all species fledged. Thanks to all the volunteers this success!

PRESIDENT’S LETTER CHUCK CRUICKSHANK

So where do we go from here? I believe it is important to build on our current success, and continue to add new members, new trails and new trail monitors to help our feathered friends here in Tennessee. This is also a good time for current County Coordinators to promote winter presentations to garden clubs, bird

clubs, youth leaders and science teachers. We have many counties who do not currently have coordinators, so that is another opportunity for volunteers to contribute without a huge time demand on your schedule. Its also a good time as we pause for the winter months to refresh ourselves on the mission of the Tennessee Bluebird Society. As a reminder here are our goals:

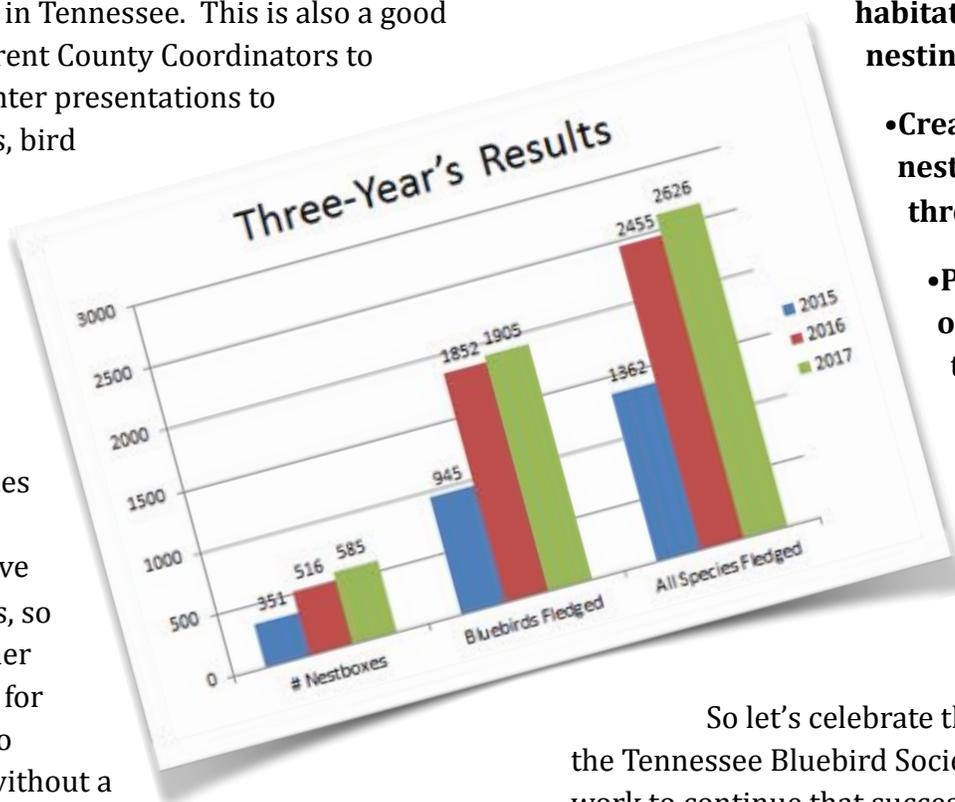
• Interest a new generation in conservation and protecting the bluebird and other native cavity nesting birds in Tennessee.

•Have mentors in each county In Tennessee willing to educate groups regarding conservation and the importance of creating a habitat for native cavity-nesting birds.

•Create and maintain nest-box trails throughout the state

•Provide social opportunities to those interested in conservation and protecting our cavity-nesting birds.

•Collect nesting data for research



So let’s celebrate the recent success of the Tennessee Bluebird Society, and diligently work to continue that success for the future.

Happy birding!

Remember the Past, Enjoy the Present, Plan for the Future

Chuck Cruickshank - President TBS

chuck.cruickshank@gmail.com

Tennessee Bluebird Society Annual Meeting Minutes**Tennessee Bluebird Society
Minutes of the October 21, 2017 4th Annual Board
Meeting**

The 4th Annual Board meeting of the Tennessee Bluebird Society was held on October 21, 2017 at Warner Park and Nature Center in Nashville, Tennessee. Those in attendance were Chuck James, President, Chuck Cruickshank, Vice-President, Stan Colburn, Treasurer, Stacey Roe, Secretary, and Board Members, Fred Robertson, Rosemary Chamberlain, Duane Rice, and Jerry Rysticken.

President James welcomed all Board Members and visitors to the 4th Annual Board Meeting and called the annual meeting to order. He recalled the mission of the Tennessee Bluebird Society and its history as well as the need to educate the next generation on nesting, monitoring and the purpose of these activities as well as continued conservation. Roll was called and a Motion was made to accept the minutes of the Board's previous meeting and the Minutes were approved by the Board.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Treasurer, Stan Colburn, stating that the Society's current balance as of the end of September, 2017 is \$2,025.00. The Board approved the Financial Report.

Jerry Rysticken presented the Trail Results Committee Report announced that the current trail list will have Indian Mountain State Park added. Indian Mountain will have 20 boxes by this spring. Also to be added to the Trail Results are the results of the trails monitored by Rosemary Chamberlain. For 2017, there were close to 3,000 fledged compared to 2,800 in 2016 and 2,400 in 2015. He reminded the Board that monitoring helps us to see how the trails are doing and that they continue to grow.

Nomination Committee Report was given by Jerry Rysticken and reminded the Board that last year the By-Laws were amended so that there would be six (6) people per class. Nominations were handed out to Board Members as follows: West Region – Class of 2018, Joanne Watson and Fred Robertson; Class of 2019, Stacey Roe; Class of 2020, Farrell Roe; Middle Region – Class of 2018, Duane Rice; Class of 2019, Rosemary Chamberlain and Rosalind Kurita; Class of 2020, Andy Ecton and Beth Ecton; East Region – Class of 2018, Kathy Dooley and Jerry Rysticken; Class of 2019, Chuck Cruickshank and Stan Coburn; Class of 2020, Chuck

James and Don Hazel; Officers for 2018 – Chuck Cruickshank, President; Jerry Rysticken, Vice-President; Kathy Dooley, Treasurer; and Stacey Roe, Secretary. Motion was made by the Nomination Committee Member, Fred Robertson, for a vote on the election of Board Members and Officers and nominations were unanimously approved

In conclusion of his term as President, Chuck James, reminded the Board why bluebirds are so important. We remember the loss of habitat and the history of the conservation effort that began in 1977 with Dr. Larry Zelneg that eventually lead to the organization of the North American Bluebird Society. Remember that during that time due to conservation efforts the bluebird population went from 2,000,000 to 19,000,000 today. That the Tennessee Bluebird Society now has more than 140 members and is working with children to educate them on conservation. There are 262 new nestboxes and 17 trails in Tennessee in just four years. And, that coming this year, the Oakridge Arboretum will be up and going and all trails will be monitored. He then turned the meeting over to incoming President, Chuck Cruickshank.

2018 President, Chuck Cruickshank, thanked Chuck James and Stan Coburn for their hard work and dedication. He called upon the Board to work with the new generation for conservation to protect bluebirds and other native cavity nesting birds in Tennessee. He urged all members in each county to create next box trails, collect data, and search for opportunities to educate others on the conservation efforts of the Tennessee Bluebird Society

The 4th Annual TBS Board Meeting for business concluded and the program continued with lunch and presentations given by Morton Massey ("Tennessee Birds by the Numbers"), Don Hazel ("Wildlife on a Tennessee Bluebird Trail") and Heather Gallagher ("A Guided Walking Tour in Warner Park, Sights & Sounds").

Our next Board Meeting will be in January, 2018, by telephonic conference.

Adjourned.

Minutes prepared by:
Stacey Roe
Secretary

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OUTGOING PRESIDENT REMARKS AT ANNUAL MEETING

The most Frequent question I get is: Why such an interest in Bluebirds?



Chuck James

Early on in the 20th century there were concerns about the loss of habitat for the 3 species of bluebirds in North America. Not only were they losing habitat, non-native

birds would kill bluebirds: The English House Sparrow and European Starling would take their nesting sites.

It was in 1978, 40 years ago when Dr. Larry Zeleny, wrote the article, "Song of Hope for the Bluebirds" in the June 1977 issue of National Geographic Magazine. He attempted not to start a separate conservation organization. Larry had been alerting people to the plummeting bluebird population in his monthly column in the Purple Martin News of Griggsville, Illinois (now the Nature Society News). Each late winter he had also been sending out press releases to newspapers under the auspices of the Maryland Ornithological Society. He supplied nest box plans and instructions along with a brief summary of the bluebird's problems, and an explanation of how individuals could help. The National Geographic article was the first in a large, general-interest publication to highlight the bluebird's plight. Because American Nature Society had been the sponsor of Larry's book, his "bluebirder" friends tried to get that organization interested in spearheading a "bluebird conservation movement" continent wide, based on the

interest generated by the article. All efforts were to no avail. The prevailing opinion of the national conservation organizations seemed to be, "Why concentrate on just one bird? Our organization exists for all species!" That is when a small group got together to form the North American Bluebird Society. For a complete history you can go to the NABS website.

Since 1978 through the efforts of NABS and backyard birders, like you, we have seen the population of bluebirds recover from about 2 million in 1978 to 19 million today.

Looks like a success story, so why must we continue this conservation effort? We must continue to educate individuals on being good nestbox landlords: where to place a nestbox, removal of non-native nests, cleaning, etc. With just one bad winter we can see the bluebird population plummet, as was the case in the winter of 2014-15. As you will recall we had bad ice storms in February and it was much worst north of I-40 and on the Plateau. Don Hazel from the Cumberland County Bluebird Club, a Chapter of TBS reported, on the Bear Trace Golf Course in Crossville, that nestbox trail of 25 nestboxes yielded 90 bluebirds in 2014, the following year, 2015 after the ice storm that trail had 20 bluebirds a drop of almost 80% in just one bad winter. In 2016 there were 40 bluebirds that fledged and in 2017 they had 84 fledge almost getting back to where they were in 2014. We had similar reports from Bob & Judy Peak during this same period at Land-Between-the-Lakes.

So what has the Tennessee Bluebird Society accomplished over the past 4 years. We are a membership of more than 140 people working to continue the success of the

OUTGOING PRESIDENT REMARKS AT ANNUAL MEETING

bluebird in Tennessee. We put on numerous education programs to civic groups. We've worked with children getting them more aware of our natural world, and conversation through experiential learning building nestboxes and monitoring.

Recently Mort Massey asked me how many nestboxes and trails has the Tennessee Bluebird Society established over the past 4 years? I wasn't sure: Here are the numbers: We've installed about 262 nest boxes on 17 trails throughout the state of Tennessee. We also will have a new trail at the Oak Ridge Arboretum this coming spring of 20 nest boxes. In addition we have several other projects on the drawing board. All of these trails have been built, and include nestbox monitors.

For all our board members and members I think we can say, job well done!!! I am very excited about the future of the Tennessee Bluebird Society. Chuck Cruickshank has been a very active VP for the past two years and has shown us a very high level of professionalism. I know through his leadership over the next two years you will see TBS grow and have many exciting conservation projects and programs.

Chuck C, thank you for stepping up and taking on this challenge. We are looking forward to your leadership.

Thank You!!!
Chuck James

HELP OUR BLUEBIRDS THIS WINTER

The most important thing we can do for our bluebirds, and all birds is supply them with a fresh supply of water, daily. If you have a heater on your bird bath great! If not, make sure you get out there each day with fresh water. They need to stay hydrated. Just one or two days without water can kill a bluebird.



Why do bluebirds follic in the water in the winter? They may bathe more to remove excessive oil from their feathers. Most birds have a preen gland or uropygial gland at the base of the tail. With their beak, birds realign the barbs correctly, remove any dirt or parasites, and sometimes apply preen oil. Robins and bluebirds seem to produce more preen oil than other birds.

Fluffy feathers provide proper insulation against bitter winds. Too much oil on the feathers can cause the feathers to clump and lower the body temperature to dangerous levels. Most birds have one main molt a year, so birds have to maintain their feathers carefully for a year until they go through another molt.

TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY PARTNERS WITH THE UT ARBORETUM

The University of Tennessee Arboretum in Oak Ridge and the Tennessee Bluebird Society are partnering to establish a formal Bluebird nest-box trail at the facility in Oak Ridge. There have been some Bluebird boxes at the arboretum, but there has not been a management and monitoring program as has been established at other facilities in the state. Michelle Campanis, UT Arboretum Education Program Coordinator is spear-heading this project in Oak

Ridge. She has engaged the TBS for feasibility, and has also engaged with Girl Scout Troop

21158 in Oak Ridge to move this project forward. Jerry Luckmann, scout leader for the Oak Ridge group, and fourteen girls participated in a nest-box building event at the Oak Ridge elementary school on November 14th. The girls were engaged in an overview presentation about Bluebirds, and a video highlighting nesting activity. They then assembled four nest-boxes which were donated to the UT Arboretum to be included in the new trail. Michelle Campanis said, "The UT Arboretum is very excited to be partnering with the Tennessee Bluebird Society to establish a Bluebird Trail here and provide educational workshops for the community about bluebirds.



Our UT Arboretum Society is putting together teams to monitor the houses. Every time I say "bluebird trail" people say "where and how can I get involved?"

Seeing how excited and eager the Girl Scouts were to learn about bluebirds made me realize this is a subject all ages want to

learn about and become involved in. Programs about bluebirds are a great opportunity to teach about how we each have a role to play in protecting our birds and pollinators." Training for volunteers will take place early in 2018.



Pictured here are Michelle Campanis, Stan Colburn, BOD member from the Tennessee Bluebird Society, Jerry Nicholson, scout leader, and scouts assembling and displaying their completed nestboxes

TENNESSEE BLUEBIRD SOCIETY RECEIVES A GIFT FROM ETF

On November 28, 2017 Tellico Community Foundation through the East Tennessee Foundation, presented a check to the Tennessee Bluebird Society to support the Society's efforts working with the Tellico Village Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Certification Program.

50 signs will be placed along the naturalized areas encouraging golfers to respect the wildlife sanctuary on all three golf courses.

In addition to the Tennessee Bluebird Society, receiving funds were the Tellico Village Volunteer Fire Department and the Smoky Mountain Service Dogs.

As outlined in last month's Tennessee Bluebird Society Newsletter, TBS was instrumental, along with the Tellico Village Golf Advisory Board in seeking Audubon International Sanctuary Certification for the three Tellico Village Golf Courses: Toqua, Tanasi and The Links at Kahite. A committee was formed of 15 Tellico Village residents of varying backgrounds to work on the certification process. This committee has been meeting regularly since February working on all aspects of the application for each of the three Tellico Village Golf Courses.

The East Tennessee Foundation recognized TBS for its conservation efforts. The money received will be used for signage of areas protected as "Protected Wildlife Sanctuary Areas." The artwork for the sign is pictured to the right. Once certified,

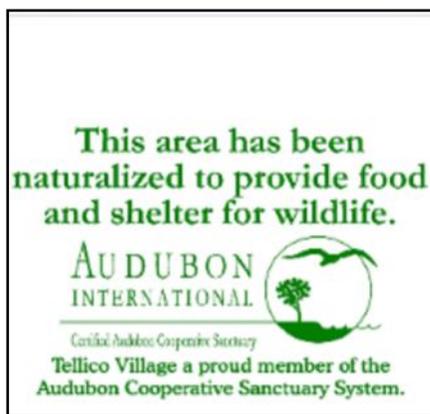


Pictured L to R Judy Hughes ETF, Joe Beyel & Terri Bordelon Tellico Community Foundation, Chuck Cruickshank President Tennessee Bluebird Society, Jan Smith Chair Elect Tellico Village ACSP Certification, Chuck James Chair Tellico Village ACSP, Sarah Havens Chair Tellico Village Golf Advisory Committee.

In East Tennessee there is currently only one ACSP approved golf course. Achieving approval by Audubon International for the three Tellico Village Golf Courses will be a statement to the community and the surrounding area that Villagers, along with the golf course superintendents are very serious about being environmentally responsible and respecting the natural beauty of East Tennessee.

Remember this accomplishment started with putting up nestboxes on the golf courses 7 years ago, and monitoring those nestboxes.

For more information on ACSP program go to their website at: www.auduboninternational.org



We need help in the following areas

** **County coordinators** - Give presentations to local civic groups and organize one community project per year.*

** **Data Collection** - Must have strong spreadsheet skills. Collect trail data and collate for research.*

** **Woodworkers** - Willing to build nest boxes.*

** **TBS Board Members** - We need people interested in taking a leadership role in TBS.*

** **Newsletter Publisher** - Must have past experience putting together newsletters.*

Email us if your interested in the above opportunities to:

tnsialia@gmail.com

Tennessee Bluebird Society Board of Directors

Eastern Region:

Stan Colburn - Loudon

Chuck Cruickshank - Loudon

Kathy Dooley - Loudon

Don Hazel - Crossville

Chuck James - Loudon

Jerry Rysticken - Farragut

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

Website: www.tnbluebirdsociety.org

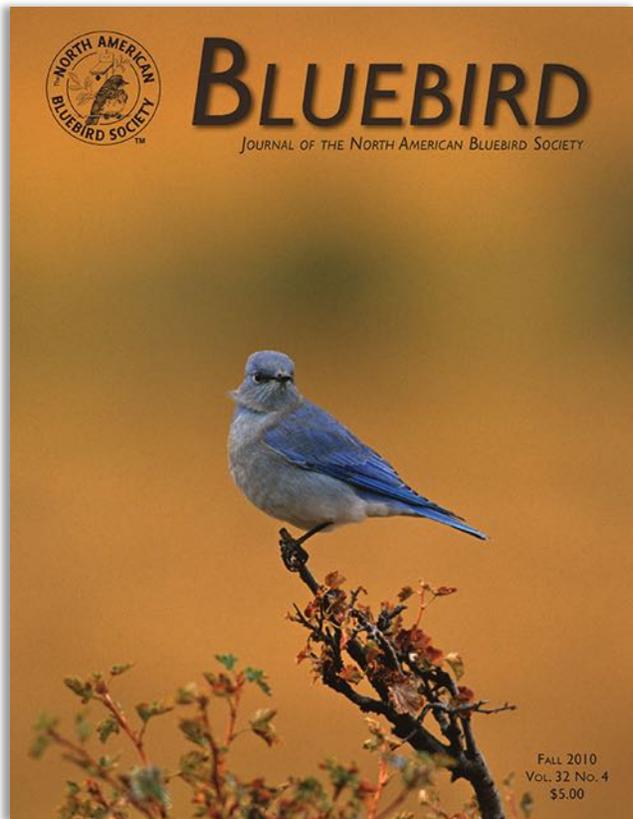
Facebook: [Tennessee Bluebird Society](https://www.facebook.com/TennesseeBluebirdSociety)

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.




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Websites
 Tennessee Bluebird Society
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