

Fall 2017 Edition



Photo by: Sue Catchings

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

Bluebird conservation offers an unusual opportunity for people who are truly concerned about our wildlife heritage to

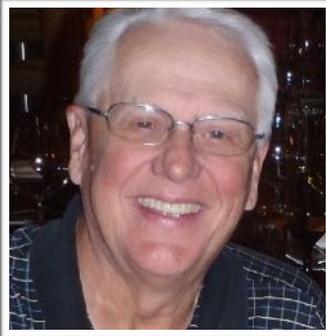


accomplish something by means of direct action.

- Larry Zeleny, The Bluebird, How you can Help Its Fight for Survival, 1976

PRESIDENT'S LETTER CHUCK JAMES

On August 21, 2017 we had a Total Solar Eclipse go over Loudon, TN. For two minutes and nine seconds it was dark at 2:33pm in the afternoon. It was certainly an experience I'll never forget. My wife's nephew and his girl



friend drove from Appleton, WI to share this event with us. He is an astronomy nut and he brought his telescope. Certainly seeing it get dark over a 10 second period was exciting. What I found more interesting is how the birds reacted just as the shadow of the moon started to cover the sun at 1:04pm. The birds came to our feeder as they would in the evening, but even more than usual. Once we were about 10 minutes before Totality, everything became very quiet. No birds chirping, no breeze, just a clear blue sky. Although we couldn't see any changes during the first contact with the moon, the birds must have somehow sensed the light level was changing. Very cool!!!

About a month ago Chuck Cruickshank and I travelled to Fairfield Glade in Crossville to visit with Don Hazel and Peggie Flierl of the Cumberland County Bluebird Club to see one of their nestbox trail on the Bear Trace Golf Course. Several weeks later they visited the Tanasi Golf Course in Tellico Village with us. No matter how long you have been bluebirding it's amazing how much we can learn from each other.

It's been a great summer for Bluebirds and other native cavity nesters here in Tennessee. Once our report for the year is published I'm sure we will see an increase in fledged bluebirds this year.

On Saturday, October 21, 2017 the Tennessee Bluebird Society will be holding its Annual Meeting once again at the Warner Park Nature Center in Nashville, TN. We certainly hope that many of you can attend. The following page has all the details and agenda.

In this issue I've written an article on establishing a nestbox trail on a golf course near you. We've had great success with the golf courses in Tellico Village and hopefully you will get some ideas on how to approach a golf course near you.

At our October Annual Tennessee Bluebird Society Meeting you will be electing a new President. I want to tell you the past two years has been very rewarding to see our small society grow in membership and to see new chapters formed. The unselfishness of our members is very rewarding. We all have a similar interest in protecting our native cavity-nesting birds and promoting good environmental stewardship. Thanks for letting me be part of this movement.

For more information or to join the Tennessee Bluebird Society, visit our website at: www.tnbluebirdsociety.org and read our past newsletters.

Happy Birding!!!!

Charles L. James

Chuck James

President

Tennessee Bluebird Society

Tennessee Bluebird Society Annual Meeting Saturday, October 21, 2017

Tennessee Bluebird Society

4th Annual

Membership Meeting

Saturday October 21, 2017-9:00AM CST

***Warner Park
And
Nature Center***

7311 HWY 100, Nashville, Tennessee

Remember the past Enjoy the present Plan the future

Tennessee Bluebird Society

Mission

- Develop public awareness, educational programs and workshops.
- Encourage and aid in the development of nestbox trails and collecting data for research.
- To provide social opportunities for members to share information and experiences relating to bluebirds, birding, conservation and related topics.

Tennessee Bluebird Society Annual Meeting Saturday, October 21, 2017

Agenda

9:00AM -- Meet and greet reception,
Nature Center Classroom
Refreshments available

9:30AM -- Welcome, Chuck James
President, Tennessee Bluebird Society

9:45AM -- 4th Annual Membership Meeting

Roll call

- Last Meeting minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Committee reports
- Trail Results
- Recognition and Awards
- Nomination report
- Election of 2018 Officers
- 2017 President's Update
- 2018 President's Remarks

10:30 AM—Morton Massey
"Tennessee Birds by the Numbers"

11:15 AM—Don Hazel
"Wildlife on a Tennessee Bluebird Trail"

12:00PM -- Join Us For Lunch At The Park

12:45PM – Heather Gallagher
"A Guided Walking Tour in Warner Park, Sights & Sounds"

Staying Safe On The Bluebird Trail, by: Don Hazel

In addition to the bluebirds, there are other great sights to see along a bluebird trail. I love to watch for other kinds of birds, deer, otters, mink, butterflies, and even snakes and turtles. But the 2 species that I try to



Don Hazel

avoid are ticks and

chiggers. With a little knowledge, you can avoid them too.

First, let's understand where ticks are and why they are there. Ticks are found on vegetation, knee high or lower. That is for two reasons. First that is where they are most likely to be able to attach to a passing host. And secondly, because they need high humidity to survive, or they will die. High humidity is near the ground. Ticks are not in trees, and they don't drop down on you from trees....ever. If you don't believe me, Google, "Do ticks fall from trees?" You will get pages and pages of reports from WedMD, universities, tick experts, wildlife professionals, etc., saying "No", they don't fall from trees.

If you can't avoid going through high weeds or grass to get to a bluebird box, you can still stop the ticks and chiggers. Just spray your pants and socks (not your skin) with Permethrin. Let it dry

completely, and you will be protected through a month's worth of washings. You can find Permethrin in the sporting goods section at Wal-Mart.

Chiggers. These invisible little guys are just getting more active later in the summer. They are also found on low vegetation, usually in the shade. Unlike ticks, chiggers don't transmit any diseases, but they can cause you to itch for a week.

Stay out of high grass or low bushes or use Permethrin, and you will avoid chiggers. If you do have to crash through the bushes to check that box, or walk through a field, take a shower when you get home and rub, especially your lower body, with a washcloth.

You will wipe off all the chiggers because they don't burrow in, they just sit on your skin.

So, as you check your bluebird boxes, try not to brush against low vegetation, or use Permethrin, and you won't give any tick or chigger a chance to hitch a ride on you.



Don Hazel is a member of the Cumberland County Bluebird Club and a candidate for the Tennessee Bluebird Society Board. He is often published in the Crossville Chronicle

Happening Around Tennessee

On Tuesday evening June 13th, Rosemary Chamberlain gave a bluebird presentation to the members of the Dickson Gardening Partners in Dickson. She gave a 45 minute PowerPoint presentation of photographs that she and her husband had taken of bluebirds over the past several years, including various photos of their 31 bluebird nestbox trail at Montgomery Bell State Park.

She talked about a bluebird's diet and preferred habitat, various cavity-nesting birds, raising a bluebird family, the importance of being a good landlord and monitoring nestboxes, as well as using predator guards such as baffles, and not placing boxes on trees or wooden posts. Various bluebird boxes, baffles, sparrow traps, mealworms and mealworm feeders were brought to the meeting and discussed, with questions answered afterwards.

One of the members donated a beautiful bluebird box with baffle and pole as a door prize. NABS materials and TBS membership forms were offered to interested members.

The presentation was well received, and many members said afterwards they learned a great deal about bluebirds that they did not know and wanted to put up a bluebird nestbox.

Rosemary is happy to give presentations in and around the Nashville area. To contact her please email tnsialia@gmail.com.



Don Hazel (Left) Chuck Cruickshank (Right) look at a nestbox on the Bear Trace Golf Course in Crossville, TN. This was a sharing experience between the Cumberland County Bluebird Club and members of the Tennessee Bluebird Society Board out of London, TN. Not shown in the photo involved in this trip were Peggie Flierl of Crossville and Chuck James of Loudon.



Getting Started With A Bluebird Trail On a Golf Course By: Chuck James

One of the best settings for a bluebird trail is on a golf course. However, many fellow bluebirders tell me they have a problem getting permission to establish trails on golf courses. This article will provide you with our experience at Tellico Village in Loudon, Tennessee and hopefully provide you with some knowledge that will help you approach the Director of Golf or Golf Course Superintendent at a golf course near you. Here's what Wells McClure, Golf Course Superintendent of the Tellico Village, Tanasi Golf Club has to say about their bluebird trail, *"In my experience the blue bird nestboxes are a great foundation for getting started with ACSP program. They are very low impact on golfer experience and the look of the course, are easy to put out and shows that we are doing the right thing for the wildlife. Much like our nest tubes for mallards/ wood duck boxes, these bluebird*



boxes provide safe habitat for future generations for these birds which will help ensure their success."

In 2011 Pinehurst #2 golf course in Pinehurst, North Carolina, one of the top golf courses in North America, underwent a huge transformation to a more environmentally and economically friendly style course: More naturalized areas that required less, watering, use of fertilizers and maintenance.

Many golf course

professionals today are looking for ways to cut costs while maintaining an excellent environment for the golfer. This push to save money has actually been a blessing for those of us interested in more sanctuaries for birds and other wildlife. What once was two groups butting heads, environmentalists and golf course superintendents, has evolved into the two groups working together.

Getting Started With A Bluebird Trail On a Golf Course By: Chuck James

Tellico Village has three beautiful golf courses www.tellicovillage.org. In 2009 Claire Manzo started a bird club in Tellico Village. My wife and I joined with about 20 other people. Like most bird clubs we had people give presentations on different birds and we had outings. In 2010 an older gentleman, Dale Chapman, came to one of our meetings and said he had been maintaining a nestbox trail

on one of our golf courses. He and his wife were moving and he wanted to know if our club would be interested in monitoring his 35 nest boxes. Stan Colburn and I agreed to take over that nestbox trail. Fast forward seven years and we now have nestbox trails on all of our golf courses and around the community our team of about 36 people monitor 120 nestboxes on a weekly basis during nesting season.

In our case we met with the Director of Golf Jim West. He's a PGA Professional who is responsible for all aspects of the golf operations in Tellico Village. Reporting to the Director of Golf are the individual golf course teaching professionals and the

Golf Course Superintendents. They are responsible for maintaining the golf courses. Today many golf course superintendents have college degrees in Turfgrass Management.

Maintaining a golf course is a very complex process, some golf courses the Golf Course Superintendent may be independent from the Director of Golf. You should always determine who the decision-maker is before setting up a meeting.



First, a brief review of the game of golf for those not familiar with the game: Most golf courses have 18 holes to play. The typical course will have a front 9 holes that go out and back to the clubhouse and a back 9 holes that go out and back to the clubhouse. A hole consists of: A tee box (where the golfer hits their first ball), a fairway where the ball lands, short grass and a green where the player putts the ball into the hole where the flag is positioned. Par represents the number of shots it should take a good player to get the ball in the hole from the tee.

Getting Started With A Bluebird Trail On a Golf Course By: Chuck James

There are usually 2 par 3's, 2 par 5's and 5 par 4's per 9 holes. Typically it takes about 4 – 4 ½ hours to play a round of 18 holes.

White poles along both sides of the fairway represent the out-of-bounds markers. Red stakes indicate a lateral hazard

(Water). On most days the players will start on the front 9 holes. On some days there may be an event where they have a shot-gun start, that means the players are sent out as a group starting on all the holes at the same time. When monitoring nest boxes it's always wise to check with the pro shop to see where the golfers are starting and what is the first tee time. If you are not familiar with golf, take some time and watch the professionals on TV on the weekend, it will help you understand the game and learn some of the



terminology.

When you meet with the Director of Golf it is always wise to have a golfer with you that can answer many of the questions that golf course management might have regarding putting up and monitoring nestboxes. Here are a few of the questions you might encounter: Where will you place these nestboxes? The answer he or she will want to hear is “in non-mowing areas near the out-of-bounds stakes (out-of-bounds stakes are white and line both sides of the fairway).” We don't want non-golfers disturbing people while they are playing golf! The answer, “We completely understand your concern, and

would recommend placing 10 -15 nestboxes on the back 9 holes.

We would arrive and monitor those nestboxes before the golfers get to the back 9 holes.” We're concerned that you will drive the golf cart where you shouldn't, like on the greens. Answer, “We will keep the golf cart on the cart path.” These responses should diffuse many of the concerns.

Once you become established and build a relationship with the Director of Golf and the Superintendent, you can expand your trail and start a dialogue going forward about conservation.



Getting Started With A Bluebird Trail On a Golf Course By: Chuck James

Getting back to our experience at Tellico Village, we started with 35 nestboxes on one golf course and today after 7 years we have 88 nestboxes on all three golf courses. We monitor in the morning and sometimes during the day. Golfers see us coming and they often inquire about the nestboxes and the birds. The Golf Course Superintendents all know and regularly talk to our monitors as they are making their rounds.

In 2012 in an effort to save money Tellico Village golf course management decided to start naturalizing many non-playing areas on the golf courses. This change in course maintenance was similar to what had transpired at Pinehurst #2 golf course in Pinehurst, North Carolina in 2009 and was an opening to take our program one step forward.

In 2015 we approached our Director of Golf about seeking Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program Certification (www.auduboninternational.org/acsp). The Superintendents were busy and the paperwork seemed overwhelming so the program didn't advance. At the beginning of 2017 we approached our Director of Golf, Jim West, again about the ACSP program. This time we suggested putting a team of residents together along with the superintendents to work on this project, after all, we already have nestboxes and naturalized areas on our golf courses. Wells McClure Superintendent of the Tanasi Golf Club has the following to say about the ACSP program, "*The ACSP certification is important to us at Tanasi and all the Tellico Village courses because it allows us to showcase what we have been doing for years. We have been managing these golf courses and the environments within them with this in mind. 1. Provide the best playing conditions possible for our guests. 2. Be responsible with how we spend our money managing this property and do so in a way that has little impact as possible on the wildlife. 3. Do not over maintain areas that are out of play that*

we do not need to maintain. 4. Keep fertilizer and other pesticide inputs as low as possible and only when needed. "

Our team today consists of about 14 members of the community. Members include individuals from the Golf Advisory Committee, Garden Club, Golf Course Beautification Committee, Tennessee Bluebird Society, Clean Water Group and Photography Club. Since the beginning of the year we have completed the first 27 pages of the application for all three golf courses and have been recognized by ACSP for our work. We are currently working on our case studies and future plans which will include: Wood Duck and Mallard Duck nest boxes, wild plants such as milkweed to attract Monarch Butterflies, bee structures, etc. We hope to have the ACSP application for all three golf courses complete by November, 2017.

Why did we want our golf courses ACSP certified? For several reasons: First and foremost, to protect our birds from harmful insecticides and fertilizers, providing a safe environment. Secondly, to demonstrate to our community that our golf course staff are good stewards of our natural surroundings and environment. Lastly, it's a very good marketing tool for golf operations and the Tellico Village Community.

We hope this article will inspire you to approach a local golf course regarding establishing a nestbox trail. We started simply by taking over an old trail on one golf course and it evolved into an environmental movement involving many members of the community.

If you have questions regarding this article you may contact Chuck James

chuck3185@gmail.com.

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

Chuck James - Loudon

Jerry Rysticken - Farragut

Central Region:

Rosemary Chamberlain - Dickson

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

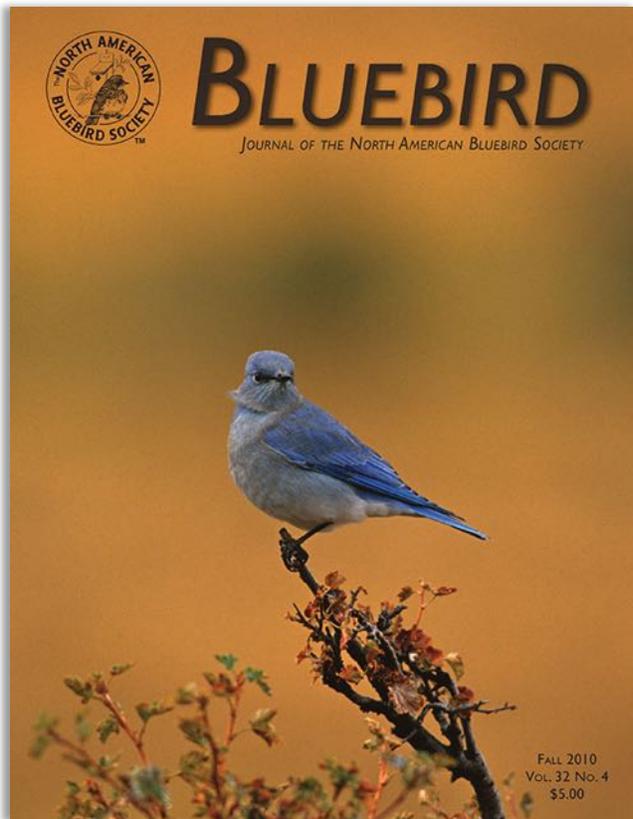
Facebook: [Tennessee Bluebird Society](#)

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
North American Bluebird Society
www.nabluebirdsociety.org



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