

TBS Needs Two Volunteers With Specialized Skills

Admin Assistant with Advanced Microsoft Word skills

Edits on event program, membership form, and other publications require *advanced* Microsoft Word experience. TBS opted several years ago to “go back” to Microsoft Word, rather than a graphics program, so that edits do not require a volunteer with specialized software.

Website Editor with DreamWeaver experience

Major work on our website (DreamWeaver) is done by our webmaster. But, we need someone to edit our events listings, home page articles, email forwarders, and such and to create our online RSVPbook registration form for each event.

Interested in either opportunity? Please send resume or simple list of related experience to execs@txblues.org

New Changes In Event Planning Schedule

Summer Symposium 2014 will be the last semi-annual TBS event. The Board recently made decision to make a transition to one event per year, in order to conserve human resources. It is likely the events will be somewhat centrally located in Texas. The upcoming schedule for events:

Summer Bluebird Symposium 2014, August 23rd
Summer Bluebird Symposium 2015, August
Bluebird Season Kickoff 2016, March

In the future the plan is to continue with a Season Kickoff each year, eliminating the Summer Symposium.

Reminder -

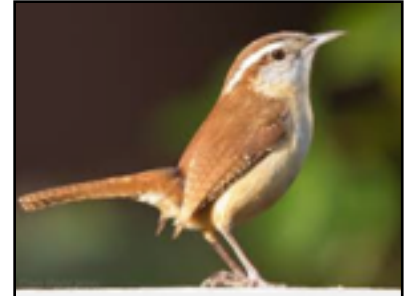
2014 Summer Symposium will be held August 23rd in Mansfield (near Arlington). Symposium registration, hotel, and numerous other details will be covered in the next newsletter. Details will also be available starting June 1st on our website txblues.org.

TEXAS Blues



Texas Bluebird Society Newsletter May 2014 • Volume 13. Issue 2

Other Cavity Nesters: **Carolina Wren**

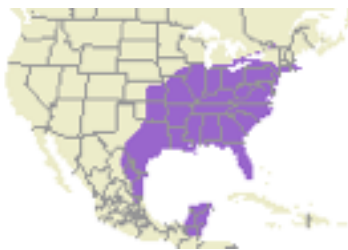


By **Debbie Bradshaw Park**

In summer it can seem that every patch of woods in the eastern United States rings with the rolling song of the Carolina Wren. Often considered to be a shy bird in the forest, I have no trouble spotting him frolicking in our backyard. Diving through the lattice into the surrounding shrubs, his loud “teakettle, teakettle, teakettle” is delivered at an amazing number of decibels for its size!

Carolina Wrens usually go about their business alone or in pairs; after nestlings have fledged, you may see family groups feeding together. Feeding on or near the ground, the wrens run, hop, and flit around leaf litter and tangled vegetation; they dodge in and out of dark spaces created by downed trees, decaying logs, old stumps, and upturned roots. They climb up vines, trunks, and branches, poking into squirrel nests and probing nooks and crannies in search of insects. Carolina Wrens use their curved bills to turn over decaying vegetation and to hammer and shake apart large bugs. They roost in bird boxes, abandoned hornet nests, hanging plants, garages, barns, old nests, and other shelters. A weak flyer, this wren makes brief, quick aerial forays over short distances. Pairs stay bonded year-round, with no vacation from singing or defending territory.

■ Year Round



Carolina Wrens frequent vegetated habitats such as brushy thickets, lowland cypress swamps, bottomland woods, and ravines choked with hemlock and rhododendron. They gravitate toward shrubby, wooded residential areas, overgrown farmland, dilapidated buildings, and brushy suburban yards.

The Carolina Wren is sensitive to cold weather, with the northern populations decreasing markedly after severe winters. The gradually increasing winter temperatures over the last century may have been responsible for the northward range expansion seen in the mid-1900s.

Carolina Wrens are common across their range and their populations are increasing. The North American Breeding Bird Survey estimates a range-wide increase of 1.4 percent per year from 1966-2010. Partners in Flight estimates the global breeding population at 14 million, with 89 percent living in the U.S. and 10 percent in Mexico. They rate a 7 out of 20 on the Continental Concern Score and they are not on the 2012 Watch List, although they are a U.S.-Canada Stewardship species. The Carolina Wren thrives over much of the eastern United States. Icy, snowy winters can abruptly reduce local populations, but they soon recover. In fact, the Carolina Wren has been pushing northward with rising average winter temperatures over the past century or so. The species has probably benefited from forest fragmentation in some areas and from reforestation in others—both processes create the tangled, shrubby habitat these birds use. In recent decades the Carolina Wren has also profited from a proliferation of backyard bird feeders. This is especially true in northern por-

Carolina Wren

(continued from page1)

tions of the bird's range, where natural food sources can disappear beneath winter snow and ice. The Carolina Wren was included on the National Audubon Society's Blue List in 1980–1981 and Special Concern List in 1982–1986 because populations were considered low in some parts of its range. Overall, though, this species is prospering.

Insects and spiders make up the bulk of this wren's diet. Common foods include caterpillars, moths, stick bugs, leafhoppers, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, and cockroaches. Carolina Wrens occasionally eat lizards, frogs, or snakes. They also consume a small amount of plant matter, such as fruit pulp and seeds from bayberry, sweetgum, or poison ivy.

They're here—they're there—they're everywhere—so take care!

My husband needed to refill the propane tanks on the travel trailer before we left on our trip. When he removed the cover he discovered a Carolina Wren's nest wedged between the two tanks. How they love a protected corner! We have discovered their nests in various places in our garage, on the seat of an up-side down canoe, in the decorative wreath hanging on the front door, and in our dilapidated barn.



Eggs are white/pale pink or rosy tint/light gray; usually with heavy brown/reddish-brown flecks often concentrated at larger end.



Male and female Carolina Wrens build their nests together. One member of the pair may stay at the site while the other gathers material. The first nest can take a week or more to build, but later ones take shape in as few as 4 days. The bulky nest is cup-shaped, usually domed, with a side entrance and often a woven extension like a porch or entrance ramp. It's loosely constructed of a great variety of materials such as bark strips, dried grasses, dead leaves, pine needles, hair, feathers, straw, shed snakeskin, paper, plastic, or string. The female lines the nest's inner bowl and may add nest material after incubation has begun. Nests may be from 3 to 9 inches long and 3 to 6 inches wide.

(photo on left) Carolina Wren built this nest during the week of Valentine's 2009 outside Ron & Pauline Tom's bedroom door. It is stuffed all the way to the top, more than 10 inches tall. The eggs and nestlings could not be counted. It was built in a "hooded" fashion, with the birds descending into the nestcup through the entry hole. Photo by Ron Tom.

Carolina Wrens nest in open cavities 3–6 feet off the ground, in trees, overhangs and stumps. The first nest is sometimes built on vegetation-shaded ground. Near homes, they're versatile nesters, making use of discarded flowerpots, mailboxes, propane-tank covers, and a variety of other items. Their nests have even been found in old coat pockets and boots. Males often build multiple nests before the pair makes a final selection. (courtesy of allaboutbirds.org; sialis.org)

Carolina Wren Measurements

Both Sexes

Length
4.7–5.5 in
12–14 cm

Wingspan
11.4 in
29 cm

Weight
0.6–0.8 oz
18–22 g

Unlike other wren species in its genus, only the male Carolina Wren sings the loud song.



Albinism occurs when melanin is not produced by melanocytes. Albinism is easily identified by the striking red yes. Eyes appear red or pink because without melanin in the iris, the capillaries inside the eye show through. The coat or feather color will be a creamy white

Unusual Albino Wrens Come to WCT

The lady told their story. Carolina Wren's had made a nest in her yard and she happily watched the parents go in and out of the nest feeding their babies. Finally the fledging day arrived and out popped three brown colored babies and left to follow their parents. Then out popped two more wrens and they were white. The lady waited for several hours but the parents and other siblings never returned. The babies were very vulnerable and would never make it through the night left where they were so the lady bought them to the Wildlife Center. The little wrens immediately adjusted to being hand fed and enjoy the company of another little wren who was at the Center before they arrived. <http://www.wildlifecenteroftexas.org>

Bringing Beautiful Bluebirds By Building Better Boxes



TBS volunteers **Brian and Judy Hetherington** have built over 1250 nestboxes this year. **Bob Houck** and **Jimmy Shipp** volunteer to help with the assembly. Judy decided to figure out what it takes to cut, drill, brand, sand, and assemble the 508 nestboxes they have just finished.

- 124 cedar boards, 1"x12"x12' - cut into 5 pieces for 620 – 26.5" pieces and 124 – 3ft+ boards
- Each 3ft+ piece is then cut into 4 tops – 496 pieces
- Each 26.5" piece is then cut into the front, back, side, door and bottom – 3100 pieces
- Each of these pieces are further cut to size and trimmed.
- Each front has 6 screw holes drilled, 1 door hole drilled, the holes for the Van Ert trap screws marked, branded, and door holes routed and sanded.
- Each back has 8 screw holes drilled.
- Each top has 2 screw holes drilled.
- To assemble, each nestbox requires 14 primeguard screws and 2 small screws for the Van Ert trap.

Four nestboxes average 13.5 pounds. Total loaded weight for 508 nestboxes is 1,714.5 lbs. Rex Reves transported nestboxes from Bronte to Waxahachie, TX. Total time? **115 hours.**



(Left) Bob and Jimmy always help!(Center) Judy tallies the count before loading. (Right)Rex drives nestboxes to the distribution site.

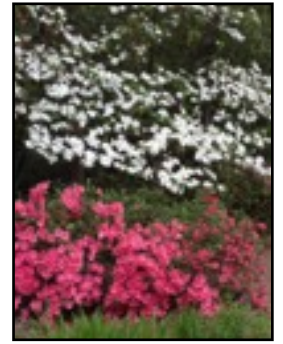
Nestbox Craftsman Needed (need 4, already have two volunteer) Fabricate 250 or more nestboxes during one month each year, per TBS' specs. TBS will provide lumber, jigs, branding iron, drill bits, router bits, sand paper, and fasteners. Interested? [Email execs@txblues.org](mailto:execs@txblues.org)



Not Too Big — Not Too Hot — Make It Just Right!

I do not think anyone can dispute the fact that Texas is HOT in the summer! We can escape to air conditioning but bluebirds don't have that option. TBS members, and other researchers, have given us a few pointers on how we can help. First of all, TBS has optimized the nestbox design to help fight the heat. A large overhanging roof, side vents, and corner vents help shade and ventilate. 2011 heat studies conclusively revealed that as a nestbox darkens with age, the interior temperatures jump dramatically. Using a light colored acrylic paint on the outside of weathered nestboxes helps reduce internal heat. "Heatshields" designed by TBS member, David Shields, cools the interior by a few degrees. (Critical for those third/fourth broods.) TBS nestboxes can be purchased from a Nestbox Distributor. Need to find a distributor? Build Heatshields? Interested in a great DIY project? Complete plans/instructions to build the TBS Texas Nestbox is available online. Go to www.txblues.org click **Building Plans** or **Nestbox Distributor** or **Resources/Nestbox Recommendations**.

Native Plants Of Texas For Bluebirds: **Flowering Dogwoods**



Article and photos by **Linda Crum**,
Master Gardener/Master Naturalist

Flowering dogwood, *Cornus florida*, is perhaps the most beautiful of the native flowering trees in Eastern North America. A small deciduous tree growing only 15 to 40 feet tall, dogwood is native from Maine to southern Ontario to Illinois to Kansas, south to Florida, eastern Texas and Mexico. Perhaps it is named dogwood because it was once used to cure mange in dogs. The wood is very hard and has been used to make golf club heads, mallets, wooden rake teeth, tool handles, jeweler's boxes and butcher's blocks.

Shortly after the redbuds bloom in early spring, the blooms of flowering dogwood appear, usually late March or early April in Texas. The dogwood's true flowers are tiny, yellow-green in color, having four petals, occurring in compact clusters. Surrounding each cluster are four showy, white, petal-like bracts giving the appearance of a large, white four-petal flower. The outer edge of each bract is notched and rusty brown in color. Cultivars with pink bracts can be found in the nursery trade. The leaves of dogwood turn beau-

tiful shades of red in late fall. Bright red fruits mature in late summer and are loved by birds. Flowering dogwood is the host plant for the Spring Azure butterfly.

Flowering dogwood grows best in an acidic, sandy to medium loam soil that is high in organic matter and well-drained. Alkaline soil or soil that has poor drainage will not support the growth of flowering dogwood. Even in well-drained soil, flowering dogwood benefits from being planted on a slope to facilitate drainage. I have had better success planting small (one-gallon size) trees rather than a large specimen tree. Dogwood prefers part shade but will grow in full sun if well-mulched and adequate moisture is available. Flowering and fall color increase with sun exposure.

Propagation is by seed. Sow the seeds outdoors immediately after collection. Or stratify the seed at 41 degrees and sow the following spring. Cuttings can be made, but growing from seed is easier.

Flowering dogwood is susceptible to a number of disease problems, particularly

when stressed. The most serious problem is dogwood anthracnose that occurs in the northeastern states down into Georgia and Alabama. Shady sites in higher elevations tend to favor this disease. Other leaf fungal diseases, cankers and root rot can infect flowering dogwood. The best remedy is to grow this tree in ideal conditions making sure it has adequate moisture and perfect drainage to avoid stress.

Legend says that the dogwood once grew large enough to compete with oaks and other mighty trees. Because of this, it was chosen for the cross used to crucify Jesus. The dogwood felt so bad about this that Jesus agreed to make the tree slender and easily bent so it could never again be used for this purpose. The bracts, again according to legend, are two long and two short, in shape of a cross. Each bract has a nail print, rusty brown and stained with red. The center, the actual flower cluster, is shaped like a crown of thorns.

I grew up in Alabama where dogwoods abounded like weeds. I loved them, not only for their flowers, but because my Mom let me go barefoot after the dogwoods bloomed.

Cold Impacts Everyone

Last winter, unusually warm; this past winter, unusually cold! Unpredictable weather is another reason to grow native plants in your backyard. The berries provide nutritious food on a cold winter day.

Late ice storms in The Woodlands on March 4th caught this bluebird by surprise. Member Patti Marshall shared this photo. Unfortunately, only one egg out of 4 hatched.



Annual TBS Award Nominations Are Open

Each year TBS honors members who have demonstrated outstanding endeavors as a volunteer, birder, etc.. Do you know a fellow member deserving of one of the awards this year? Please send nominations to awards@txblues.org

Bluebirder of the Year - individual whose outstanding endeavors dramatically improved bluebird conservation efforts.

Lifetime Achievement Bluebird Conservationist - in recognition of a lifetime commitment and dedication to the promotion and protection of bluebirds. (need not be a member and may be given posthumously)

Fellow Eagle Scout Congratulates TBS Hornaday Award Recipient



Award winner Luke Hoag in 2011

In our March 2011 newsletter feature "The Story of Luke," you were introduced to our youngest (at that time) TBS member, Eagle Scout Luke Hoag. The article followed the impressive achievements Luke had made in the area of bluebird conservation, including establishing bluebird trails, monitoring, and educating fellow scouts on bluebird habitat. Luke had just been awarded the Hometown USA Award from the Boy Scouts. The Hometown U.S.A. Award is a joint program between Keep America Beautiful Inc. (KAB) and the Boy Scouts of America. It is designed to give recognition to the outstanding efforts of Scouts in their communities in regard to citizenship and environmental improvement.

At the same time Luke was also nominated for the William T. Hornaday Award. (The fundamental purpose of the Hornaday Awards program is to encourage learning by the participants and to increase public awareness about natural resource conservation. Luke had not been notified he had won the award at the time of publication. If you recall from the May newsletter, member and Eagle Scout David Pruitt, had just accepted the William T. Hornaday Award.

What an honor to have two young TBS members win such prestigious awards for their bluebird conservation efforts! Luke is attending college but still finds time to keep an eye on TBS activities. He was excited to hear of David's award and wishes to convey the following message to him:

Congratulations, David. As a Life Scout and Hornaday Award Winner, you already know goals take hard work and commitment. I know you will also be successful in making Eagle Scout, and I wish you success in your future. Being a member of the Texas Bluebird Society and Bluebirder of the Year for 2011 was one of the best experiences of my life and led me to my career path studying environmental science at Concordia University in Austin. Zoology and field biology are lots of fun, and I highly recommend them. I am sorry I cannot be there this weekend to wish you congratulations in person.

Your Fellow Scout, Luke Hoag, Eagle Scout

Generous Donors Help Raise \$3,208 at Kickoff FUNdraiser

Alamo Birding Services, L.L.C.
Aspects, Inc
Caryn Brewer
Clark Haven Farm
Susan Crowson
Linda Crum
Walter and Beverly Davis
Louise Demasi
Droll Yankees Inc.
John English
Greg Grant
Grubco Incorporated
Sara Harrod
Judy Hetherington
Hill Country Nature Ctr, Utopia
Ann Hoffpaur
Ingredients for Lovely
Jabebo
Just for the Birds, Spring
Mark Klym
Jimmie and Benni Konvicka
Greg Lavaty
Don Lawrence
McCoy's
Lysle Mockler
Helen Munro
Nature's Way
NestWatch



THANKS EVERYONE!
Your donations and purchases raise funds for the materials and supplies needed to continue building Texas nestboxes; allowing us to continue our conservation efforts.

Out on a Limb Carvings and Castings
The Pendant Emporium
The Promise in Glen Rose, Inc.,
Ken and Judy Ray
Cynthia Reid
Rio Frio Lodging
Mike Scarbrough
Keith and Selena Schindler
Margaret Springer
Dorothy Szepesi
Texas Bluebird Society
Ron & Pauline Tom
Van Ert Enterprises
Wild Birds Unlimited, Arlington, TX
Wild Birds Unlimited, The Woodlands
Linda Wolf
Jenny Wren of Wren House
(**Bold** indicates repeat donors)

Special thanks to Bennie Konvicka, auction chair, and her crew for another great success!

2014 Kickoff In Bastrop Is Informative And Fun For All



MANY volunteers help set up Friday.



Friday social is great fun for everyone.



Paul and GeorgeAnn Kyle share their knowledge and love of Chimney Swifts at the Friday night social.

What lives in a tower in a tiny nest that clings to walls; returns each year to the same place; has courtship behavior like ice dancing; cannot perch; has behavior similar to a Hummingbird; and you may hear them from inside your house from March through October?

Give up? It's the Chimney Swift. We learned about them at a wonderful presentation by GeorgeAnn and Paul Kyle at the Friday night Social Dinner before the 2014 Season Kickoff. On Sunday morning, 12 of us also had the opportunity to tour the land around their home in the Chaetura Canyon near Austin to see the towers they have built to accommodate these interesting birds.

Paul Nelson, our Emcee for the Kickoff, opened the meeting with a delightful video of Texas Bluebirds In The Snow (now on the TBS Facebook). Who would have imagined seeing so many Bluebirds in one yard?

Pauline Tom, our TBS President, introduced Share.TXblues.org – a great new resource on our website for us to make promotional presentations about “our favorite bird.”

Robyn Bailey from NestWatch detailed the history of NestWatch as well as the method of setting up our records as “citizen scientists” on their website. It is remarkable what WE can do to add to the knowledge database of nesting birds. Members who committed to keeping records of their nestbox inhabitants also received a free TBS nestbox.

Bill Lindemann spoke on ways to attract more Bluebirds to our yards and property through the planting of native plants to provide the specific foods that Bluebirds thrive on in the ideal Bluebird habitat.

Linda Crum gave her traditional presentation on House Sparrow Control with graphic photos of the detrimental treatment (and death) caused by these nasty predators. She featured various sparrow traps and deterrents.

David Pruitt (16-year-old Life Scout, and approved for the William T. Hornaday Award) updated us on his Bluebird Trail at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center in San Antonio and gave helpful tips to keep wasps away from nestboxes.

Sara Herrod (“Effects of Landscape Characteristics on Nesting Ecology of Cavity-Nesting Birds”) explained the effects of habitat characteristics on the survival of bluebirds. Sara is a Master’s student at Texas State University.

Dr. Patty Gowaty (UCLA Professor), a renowned specialist on Eastern Bluebirds and co-author of the Eastern Bluebird profile in *The Birds Of North America*, spoke to us via GoToMeeting on the “Natural History of Eastern Bluebirds.” She focused on the genetic development of bluebirds, as well as nesting behavior (male vs, female) and “bluebird sex.” This scientific presentation was favorite of most of the registrants.

Another great meeting is planned! **Join us August 23rd in Mansfield** for the 2014 Summer Symposium. More details in next newsletter. See you in August!



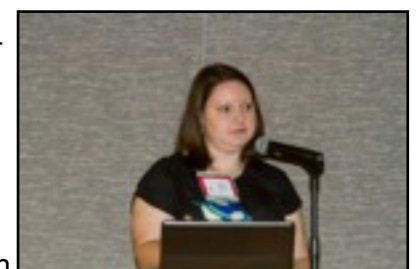
Our emcee Paul Nelson keeps the meeting running smoothly.



Kevin Nelson keeps presenters on track with time reminders.



Silent Auction FUNdrising activity is always a highlight at our meetings.



Sarra Harrod presents her Master's thesis bluebird research activities.



What goes up, must come down. After a wonderful day of presenters, shopping, and networking, many volunteers “unset up” the meeting.

Volunteers are APPRECIATED!

Julia Akin	Miriam Hall	Kenny Munoz	Judy Santerre
Audrey Ambrose	Holly Hallmark	Roland Nail	Meg Scamman
Barbara Carstens	Judy Hetherington	Pat Nail	Selena Schindler
Katy Couvillion	Brian Hetherington	Paul Nelson	Keith Schindler
Jane Crone	Al Koerig	Kevin Nelson	Jim Sherrill
Susan Crowson	Jimmie Konvicka	Nick Nichols	Norm Shoemaker
Fred Crum	Benni Konvicka	Barb Olham	Nelda Tandy
Linda Crum	Harold Latham	John Park	Ann Thames
Bev Davis	Kathy Latham	Debbie Park	James Thames
Walter Davis	Glenda Marsh	Judy Ray	Ron Tom
Jo Ann Duman	Cat May	Ken Ray	Pauline Tom
Jim Estes	Frank May	Sherry Ray	Mary Weir
Penny Friedman	Marsha McLaughlin	Rex Reves	Andy Wier
Charlie Grindstaff	Lisa Munoz	Kelly Russell	



Thanks For Your Financial \$upport!

Mike Arriens	Lois Heckart	Bobbye O'Quinn	Cecil Settle
Marcy & Greg Brazaitis	Jere Hill	John Park	Tim & Patricia Simpson
Tom & Cindy Brisko	Sam Jeffery	Roy Payne	Marlene Stidston
Kerry Clark	David & Ora Keetley	Gene Prejean	Janet Stockard
Slyvia & Michael Cooper	Royceanna Kendall	Cristina Rangel	Tarsco Heirloom Bluebird Nestboxes
Patti Culter	Sharon Lane	Deborah & Dan Rayfield	Peyton Taylor
Dr. Patty Gawaty	R. L. Langley	Rex & Amy Reves	David & Edwina Thomas
June Estes	David Lemier	Grant Robinson	Phyllis & Ben Tobias
John & Catherine Finnell	Bill Lindemann	Kelly Russell	Jerry Tumlin
Delton Foley	Susan Lipka	Debra Schreiber	Glen & Gwenda Vinkler
Jeannie Furlong	Lori Merlino	Danny Seale	Barbara Vinson
Bill & Ginny Griffith	Vivian & James Miller-Boylan	Jennifer Seale	Ricky Walker
Sam Habib	Pam Moes	Scott Setzer	Anita Wren

Welcome New Members!

New members who give us print permission on Membership Form

• Linda Alexander	• Barbara Despres	• Lisa Griffin	• Patsy Lepper	• Joe Pass	• Christy Spiegel
• Jim & Nancy Allen	• Pam DiFazio	• Travis Guinn	• Sally Light	• Roy Payne	• Robin Stevens
• Elrey Ash	• Gabrielle Dorais	• Beverly & Phil Guthrie	• Saadia Mai	• Linda & Max Pischel	• Lisa Taylor
• Albina Beckett	• Michael Eckenfels	• Sam Habib	• Karolyn Mau	• Marvin & Trudelise Rathke	• Judith M. Telford
• Helen Boram	• James Edwards	• Raymond Harmon	• Melanie McDaniel	• Betty & Larry Rennell	• Laurie & Rob Tranchin
• Marcy & Greg Brazaitis	• Linda Evans	• Glenda Hartsell-Shelton	• Greg McDonell	• G. Murray Richardson	• Linda Treibly
• Elle Bruhn	• Virginia Falcon	• Sandra Henderson	• Pam McGee	• Jack Roberts	• Michelle Welch
• Ellis Burkhardt	• John Fiedler	• Tina Hendon	• Janet & Rodger Mentz	• Claire Roche	• Jim West
• Sterling Burns	• Gerald Forrest	• Alton Higgins	• Mike Mullins	• Fred Rohm	• Linda Whitehead
• Barb Carey	• Steve Forrester	• Norma Horton	• Jorge Munoz	• Mike & Dianne Rohm	• Ann willis
• Guy & Becky Celano	• Debbie Frederick	• Claudia James	• Willaim & Betty Nance	• Molly Zedlite Scofield	• Sherri Wilson
• Carol Childres	• Penny Friedman	• Eileen M. Jenkins	• Paul R. Nelson	• Jennifer Seale	• Lois Wood
• Jeanette Coffield	• Jeannie Furlong	• Liz Johnson	• Maria Nightingale	• Scott Setzer	• Mike & Thelma Woodruff
• Lisa Courtin	• Retha Gadus	• Linda Johnson	• Aurora Northern	• Shiela Shallcross	• Gerry Woodruff
• Cindy Cox	• Anthony George	• Susan J Kaufman	• Norma & Kylie O'Neal	• Amy Shea	• Laura Susan Zedlitz
• Pamela Dehnel	• Phyllis Gerdes	• Cindy Kirtley	• Layne Ober	• Jose Short	
• E.J. DeLeon	• Carol Girocco	• Jim Kramer	• Joseph Ordner	• Joan Simonsen	
• Justina Dent	• Cindy Goodrum	• Sherry Kremer	• Kathy Park	• Annie Spade	
• DA, West Columbia	• EC, Rosharon	• MG, Lake Jackson	• GM, Red Oak	• MO, Dallas	
• JB, San Marcos	• KC, Bryan	• AH, Brookeland	• LM, Cedar Park	• KP, Waxahachie	
• JB, Dallas	• KD, The Woodlands	• SH, Brokeland	• JM, Angleton	• NR, Klondike	
• LB, Ovilla	• NE, Waxahachie	• HH, Spring	• RM, Lake Jackson	• BR, Dallas	
• BB, Dallas	• CF, Houston	• CK, Ennis	• PN, Waxahachie	• GR, Round Rock	
• JB, Midlothian	• JF, Waxahachie	• SK, Fort Worth	• JN, Midlothian	• KR, San Marcos	
• BB, Pearland	• WF, Waxahachie	• LK, Midlothian	• CN, Lake Jackson	• PR, Houston	
• CC, Ennis	• BG, Red Oak	• VL, Brownwood	• JO, Lake Jackson	• RS, Alvin	
	• RG, Dallas	• JM, Brazoria	• DO, New Braunfels		



Board of Directors

President

Executive Committee

Pauline Tom

Mountain City

Vice President

Exec Committee serves as VP

Treasurer/AP

Ken Ray

Ovilla

Secretary

Executive Committee

Pat Nail

Clayton

Technical Designer

Executive Committee

Rex Reeves

Waxahachie

Event Speaker Support

Harold Latham

Ivanhoe

Fundraising Auctions

Executive Committee

Benni Konvicka

Stephenville

New Members

Don Lawrence

Whitesboro

Norm Shoemaker

Garrison

*Linda Crum

Bookkeeping Advisor

Contact Us:

tbs@txblues.org

PO Box 40868

Austin, TX 78704

512.268.5678 (Pauline Tom)

Females Fighting?

At the Kickoff Meeting in March, presenter Dr. Patricia Gowaty, shared a little known fact to most of us — female bluebirds fight, even to the death on occasion. Wow! A week later I received an eyewitness account from member Suzanne Bell describing her unusual sighting

“I have been watching the bluebirds this season, in Plantersville, Texas. On Feb. 15th thru the 20th, There have been 2 males and 1 female very interested in the same bird house as last year that a couple nested in. Each male kept showing it off to the 1 female in a sweet ritual. Then I stayed home Friday - Feb. 21st and saw the most incredible thing.

There were 4 pairs of bluebirds that had come to my backyard around 10:30a.m. and starting actually fighting over the same bird house on and off for over 3 hours! What a scene that was—even the females were fighting each other to the ground and pinning themselves down. Never saw anything like that before.

Mind you I have set out 2 more new bluebird houses thru out my 5 acres that were new this Spring. Obviously, they have not seen them yet :) Here it is March 6th and I have not even seen my first pair that won out on the Feb. 21 trist over the one old bird house. Hopefully that bad freeze we had on March 3rd and 4th, didn't deter them away.”



This photo was taken by Harry Moran on February 12, 2012. He was able to capture the unusual, but not rare, occurrence of two female bluebirds fighting, including a male spectator.

Bluebirds have been known to attack Robins, House Sparrows, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Brown-headed Nuthatches, Blue Jays, Northern Mockingbirds, Great Crested Flycatchers, Starlings, Carolina Chickadees, Tree Swallows, etc. over food or nest sites (BNA). There are anecdotal reports of attacks on squirrels or chipmunks. Photo courtesy of sialis.org.

**All cavity-nesting birds are protected by federal law.
Do not disturb birds or nest. Monitor and report to NestWatch.**



Mountain Bluebird



Need Nestboxes?

Go to www.txblues.org
click *Nestbox Distributor*
tab for nearest location.

The Texas Bluebird Society
newsletter, *TX Blues*,
is published four times a year:
March ■ May ■ July ■ October

Debbie Bradshaw Park, Editor

Send street or email address changes to John Park at: records@txblues.org
or send to: P.O. Box 40868 Austin, TX 78704