



## Publication

### **Dedicated to Bluebird Enthusiasts**

The Florida Bluebird Society's mission is the conservation and protection of bluebirds and other federally protected cavity nesting bird species in North America. The FBS encourages a collaborative effort from its members and readers to provide information, ideas and articles to help collect and disseminate pertinent and relevant information pertaining to bluebirds in Florida.

The FBS is an affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society.

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The photo is courtesy of Nancy Price in Stuart, FL.  
-Sent in by FBS member Bev Poppke-

## Tales From the Trails



We would love to fly into your backyard and see pictures of your bluebirds or nesting cavity birds with informative and interesting stories you may have about them. Please keep pictures to a maximum of 5 for each submission and a short story if you have one. We may have to edit your submission to accommodate space or to complement other newsletter content for that issue.

We can use several submissions per monthly issue so we will save multiples received for future issues.

Please email your nature pictures and stories to Barbie Arms, FBS Corresponding Secretary at [Floridabluebirds@aol.com](mailto:Floridabluebirds@aol.com)

## Unexpected Bluebird Nesting Location

*This is a story submitted by Debbie Hogan of Palm Coast.*

I work at the Palm Coast Marina and in February of this year, we had a sailing catamaran on the floating dock just outside my office window. I watched small birds going in and out of the boom (which is a hollow horizontal metal tubular part of a sailboat mast). Then I noticed the bluebirds. I actually had to look them up on line to see what they were.

Later in February, the boat owner came and took his catamaran to St. Augustine. I saw the bluebird sitting up on the boat next to where the catamaran had been docked. I swear it looked like it was looking around for the boom where I felt sure there might have been a nest. The catamaran was gone for about a week. When it returned it was docked in a different location in the marina. A few weeks after that I noticed a bluebird back on the spreaders up on the mast. Then I actually saw the bluebird going inside the boom just as before on the floating dock. I was so happy because I am so sure that this is the same set of birds. I am also sure there is a nest inside the boom.

When the catamaran left to go to St. Augustine, I was having one of those yucky weeks. When I saw the bluebird sitting on another boat looking for its home going away it almost made me cry. I imagined, well maybe the bluebird will follow it to St. Augustine...or maybe it will hang around and when the boat comes back, it will find it. Well, my wish came true...somehow.

-Debbie Hogan, Harbor Master-



Scott Simmons Photography

Yesterday I was Driving down Aloma Ave in Oviedo and pulled over to photograph a Swallow-tailed Kite. The kite flew away, so I decided to drive back to see if I could find it. I accidentally turned onto a different street, but as I stopped to turn around I looked up and found two Eastern Bluebirds on a power line. These are the first bluebirds I've seen in Seminole County, so I checked eBird today, and very few have been seen here recently. I am very grateful now for wrong turns!

-Scott Simmons-

"This story by Scott indicates we still have more work to do to make people aware of bluebirds in Florida and the Florida Bluebird Society's efforts to educate folks about these beautiful birds."

-FBS President Bill Pennewill-

**Deadline for submissions for the June issue is July 12, 2012**



Photo courtesy of Jacquie Ott in Lutz, FL.

FLORIDA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT  
EASTERN BLUEBIRDS THROUGHOUT FLORIDA  
Florida Bluebird Society Partners with the USA National Phenology Network

The Florida Bluebird Society (FBS) and the USA National Phenology Network (NPN) have begun working together in an effort to learn more about the status of the Eastern Bluebird in the Sunshine State.

Through the efforts of Barbie Arms, representing the Florida Bluebird Society, and Theresa M. Crimmins, Partnerships & Outreach Coordinator of the USA-NPN, the two organizations have formed a partnership to post Eastern Bluebird nest box information on the USA-NPN web site.

Posting the nest box information on the USA-NPN web site will show the distribution and status of the Eastern Bluebird population in Florida.

Posting data about the Eastern Bluebird on the USA-NPN is not limited to members of the Florida Bluebird Society. In an effort to gather data about the Eastern Bluebird in Florida, any individual who monitors Eastern Bluebird nest boxes – whether one or 100 – in the Sunshine State is eligible to post information on the USA-NPN web site.

FBS encourages bluebird enthusiasts throughout Florida to share their bluebird observations. Instructions are available to sign up with USA-NPN and enter observations or retrieve data by visiting the FBS website  
<http://www.floridabluebirdsociety.com>

The Florida Bluebird Society was organized in August 2009 to help foster the conservation and protection of Bluebirds and other federally protected cavity nesting bird species in North America through educational programs and the collection and dissemination of pertinent and relevant information. Working with the NPN is another step in the FBS' efforts to collect more information about the Eastern Bluebird in Florida.

Phenology refers to recurring plant and animal life cycle stages, or phenophases. The USA National Phenology Network utilizes citizen scientists, government agencies, non-profit groups, educators and students to monitor the impacts of climate change on plants and animals in the United States. The network harnesses the power of people and the Internet to collect and share information, providing researchers with far more data than they could collect alone.

Additional information about becoming involved in this project is available from our website or from the USA National Phenology Website  
<http://www.usanpn.org>



American bluebirds are in the genus *Sialias*. They get their name from the Greek *sialis*, meaning “a kind of bird”. You would have thought they could have come up with something more interesting than that for such a beautiful and charismatic species.

## Welcome New Members



Margaret England  
Joy Rumans

LaBelle, FL.  
Ocala, FL.

**We are glad you joined our nest!**



## Bluebird Banding



Bluebird banded at Penney Retirement Community by Meret Wilson.  
Note band on left leg.





Meret Wilson records information on bluebird banded at Penney Retirement Community



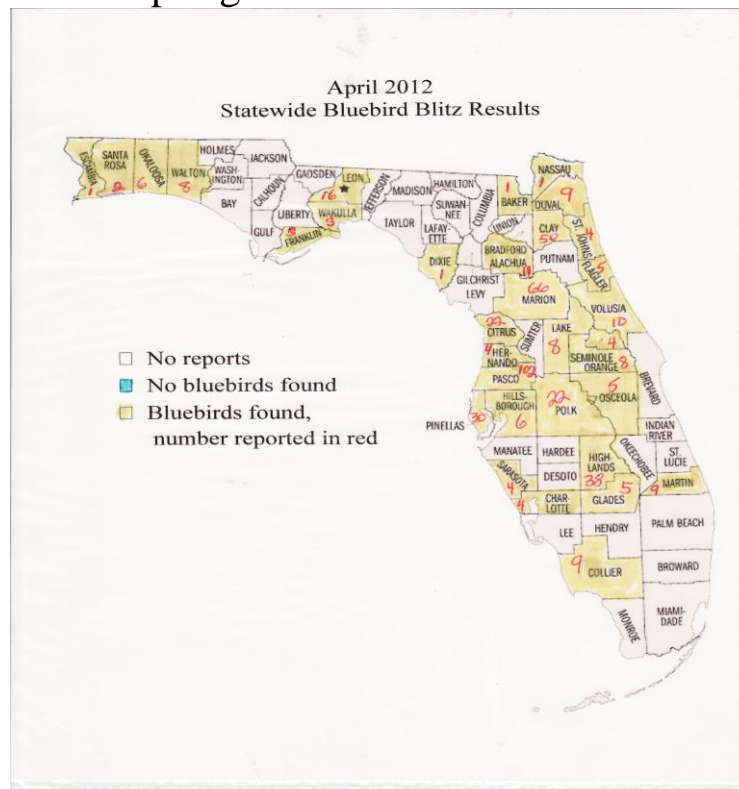
Meret Wilson takes photographic record of bluebird banded at Penney Retirement Community





Here is a recent picture of the banded bird sitting on the same nest box with an insect in beak to feed nestlings inside. This is the second nesting in this box.

## Spring Statewide Bluebird Blitz



I think the most exciting news from this Blitz is that Bev Poppke, from Martin County Audubon, finally had some bluebirds. She started a trial about the same time we were organizing the Florida Bluebird Society. Until this spring, no bluebirds had shown interest in her nest boxes. She finally has some tenants and we were very pleased to hear the news. It was thrilling to finally receive a Blitz report from Martin County with some numbers instead of the “no bluebirds found” we have received on all previous Blitzes. We actually had two reports from Martin County. Congratulations to Bev for persevering with the trial. I guess maybe it is true when placed in the right location, “if you build it they will come.”

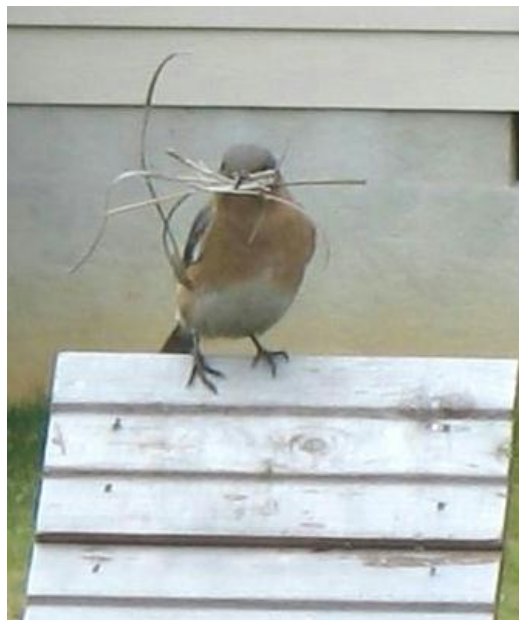
According to the reports sent to me plus those received via ebird.com, there were bluebirds documented in thirty-three (33) counties across Florida on April 13 and April 14. In addition to Martin County, we had our first reports from Okaloosa, Walton, Franklin, Wakulla, Baker, and Citrus Counties. A total of 477 bluebirds were recorded on 91 reports.

We were again fortunate that some newspapers across the State published stories about our Spring Bluebird Blitz. These stories not only help raise awareness of the Blitz, they also increase awareness of the Florida Bluebird Society.

We are appreciative of the hours that were spent searching for and observing bluebirds on our Blitz days. We look forward to another successful Blitz in the Fall.

-Faith Jones-

### **HELP WANTED**



The Florida Bluebird Society is looking for a few good people to help expand its efforts to conserve and protect bluebirds and other federally protected cavity nesting bird species in the Sunshine State.

Specifically, the Florida Bluebird Society is looking for a volunteer who has experience publishing a monthly newsletter. Barbie Arms, the current editor, is doing an outstanding job, but would appreciate a volunteer who would help share the monthly opportunity to publicize the activities of the Florida Bluebird Society. This would include assisting in the writing, editing and layout. Specific responsibilities would be worked out between Barbie and the individual volunteering to serve as co-editor.

The Florida Bluebird Society also is looking for avid and knowledgeable bluebird enthusiasts who would be willing to share their experiences and expertise with other interested individuals. These volunteers would have the opportunity to help provide the best available information on creating and maintaining bluebird nest boxes in Florida. Individuals serving as a regional county coordinator also would have the added opportunity of meeting other people from their area who share their interest in bluebirds.

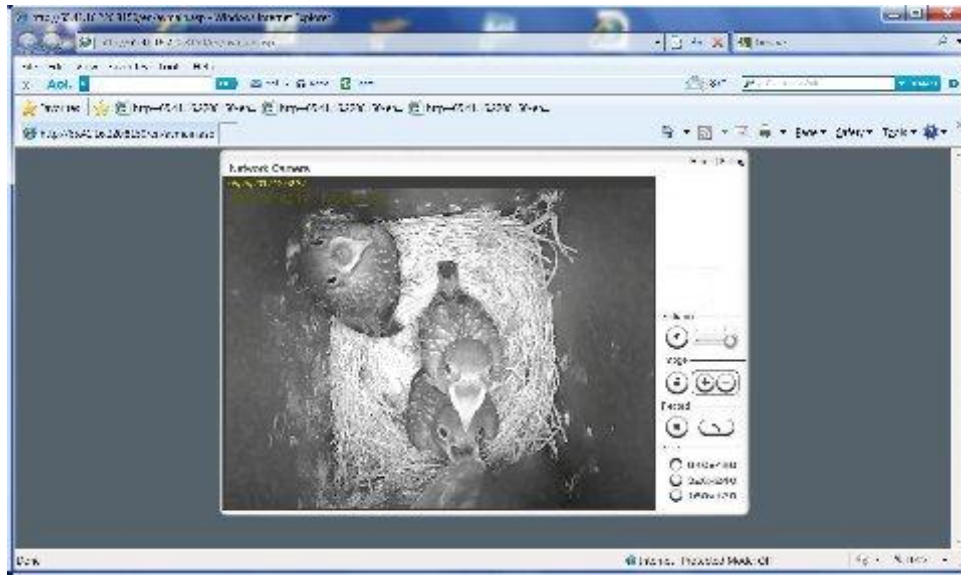
Of course, all volunteers would be expected to comply fully with the mission and policy guidelines of the Florida Bluebird Society.

Contact Barbie at email [floridabluebirds@aol.com](mailto:floridabluebirds@aol.com)



## 2012 Calendar of Events

No events to report this month, taking it easy for the summer.



Look at these cuties from Foxfire's nest cam sent in by FBS member Hal Dowell

## Annual Membership

It is now time to renew your annual membership. All memberships expired the month of August, 2011. To streamline our procedures, August is the month for all membership renewals. We offer a number of membership categories, and trust you will find one that fits your budget.

A big THANK YOU to all of you who have already renewed your memberships. We truly appreciate your continued backing. We are especially grateful to those of you who decided to renew at an increased level of support.

If you have not already done so, we ask that you **please renew your membership today!**

<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 Single	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00 Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00 Student
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 Sponsor	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500.00 Life Member
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00 Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Mail your check to : Faith Jones, Treasurer  
Florida Bluebird Society  
763 Mallard Drive  
Sanford FL 32771

A membership form is also available on the website <http://floridabluebirdsociety.com/>

If you have any questions regarding your membership please contact Faith Jones at [puffin\\_fj@yahoo.com](mailto:puffin_fj@yahoo.com)



Here is a **new** Q and A section to help get your questions answered. Let us connect as members and help each other with our bluebirds!

Send your question so we can get the answer. Please let us know about any experiences you have regarding our questions. We will post your answers in the next newsletter.



**Question** from Bill Pennewill Do the same pair of bluebirds renest in the same nest box?

This is a question that I have asked myself numerous times when checking the nest boxes in the trail that I monitor at the Penney Retirement Community (PRC) in Penney Farms, in Clay County, just outside Jacksonville.

By the end of this season I hope to have the answer to at least one of the nest boxes through the efforts of Meret Wilson, bird bander at Tomoka State Park. Meret spoke at a meeting of the Penney Birders at PRC in March.

As part of her presentation, Meret put up some nets on the PRC to demonstrate bird banding. Meret was able to band both the male and female bluebirds nesting in one of the nest boxes. Since then both of the banded birds have been seen in the vicinity of the nest box.

At the time Meret banded both birds there was a completed nest in the box. By the end of April three eggs had hatched and the nestlings had successfully fledged.

The Scientific Collecting Permit issued by the Florida Wildlife Commission to the Florida Bluebird Society prohibits removing empty bluebird nests from a box until after the end



of the season. The nest box will be monitored throughout the season to (1) see if the bluebirds will build a new nest on top of the first nest and (2) if a new nest is build, will be it be the same banded bluebirds which built the first nest?

Only time will give us answer to these two questions.

**Question** From Faith Jones

Have you ever heard of a successful nest box on the side of a house? Linda Neale sent in this picture.



**Question** From Jim Anderson

We live in a golfing community and have 20 bluebird houses scattered throughout the course. Many of the houses that we checked yesterday are empty, but there seems to be a family of small frogs taking up residency in some of them and removing them does not seem to help they tend to return. Can you tell me if frogs in the bluebird house will dissuade the birds from using that house? We do have one house that has 4 eggs but also had 5 small frogs (tree frogs?) in it. Will the birds continue with their activities or is there a way to keep the frogs out. Thanks in advance for your help. We are proud bluebird watchers.

**Question** From FBS

Has anyone else tried using graphite grease on their poles? If so, let us know how this works out. We're always interested in learning new ways to deter "critters" from getting into a nest box.

**Answer** From David Kirk Naples, FL.

A solution to Jim Anderson's question would be to spread graphite grease on the poles holding the boxes, provided the poles are made of metal. This will keep out frogs as well as lizards, snakes, raccoons and other unwanted visitors.

**Question** From Deb Kuhnly in Ormond Beach, FL.

Where should the pole guard actually be placed on the pole, is this too high or just right?



Please send your Questions and Answers to Barbie at [Floridabluebirds@aol.com](mailto:Floridabluebirds@aol.com)



## Thank You

In 2011, the Florida Bluebird Society was fortunate to have Organizational Members, Sponsors, and a few generous contributors that we would like recognize. We acknowledge and thank the following special members for their support:

BASCA, Inc., Orange Park FL ([bascainc.org](http://bascainc.org))

Jeff & Marj Bryant

Bruce Darnell

David Foster (in honor of)

Fred Vroom

Gainesville Garden Club

Col. Burton Walrath

Wild Birds Unlimited, St. Johns ([jacksonville.wbu.com](http://jacksonville.wbu.com))

Wild Birds Unlimited, Tallahassee ([wbutallahassee@centurylink.net](mailto:wbutallahassee@centurylink.net))



Photo Courtesy of Deb Kuhnly

**\*\*Reminder\*\***

If **you** are planning to change **your** email address please inform us and send updates to Barbie. Also if you would like to receive any back issues of our newsletters please contact Barbie at email address [floridabluebirds@aol.com](mailto:floridabluebirds@aol.com)

**Want to communicate with the Florida Bluebird Society, or simply have a bluebird question? Please visit our website**

**Website** <http://floridabluebirdsociety.com/>

**Or**

**Email:** [floridabluebirdsociety@yahoo.com](mailto:floridabluebirdsociety@yahoo.com)

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Florida-Bluebird-Society/146994685328275>

The Florida Bluebird Society is a registered IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICE BY CALLING TOLL-FREE WITHIN FLORIDA 800-435-7325.

REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.  
REGISTRATION NUMBER IS CH292P

Goodbye and see you next month!



Bluebird baby peeking out, Photo Courtesy of Debra Kuhnly