

The Florida Bluebird Society

**Dedicated to the Protection
And Conservation of Bluebirds in Florida**



Volume 5, Issue 5

November / December 2015

Regional Meeting Saturday February 6, 2016 Tallahassee

The Florida Bluebird Society will hold a Regional Meeting on Saturday February 6, 2016 in the meeting room of the Eastside Branch of the Leon County Public Library located at 1583 Pedrick Road in Tallahassee, Florida 32317. This will be our first meeting in Region 2.



Native Nurseries
THE STORE FOR NATURE LOVERS

Est. 1980

Our guest speakers will be Jody Walthall and Donna Legare, wildlife ecologists and owners of Native Nurseries, *The Store for Nature Lovers*.

Their presentation, “How to Change Your Landscaping to Benefit Birds, Bees, Butterflies, and other Wildlife” will commence at 11:00 a.m. It will be preceded by an informal *Meet & Greet* starting at 10:30 a.m.

After the program you are invited to visit the nearby home of Charter FBS member Glenda Simmons who has converted her suburban yard to a well-landscaped refuge for wildlife.

We hope you will consider attending this special meeting. Bring your bluebird questions and we will do our best to answer them.

Time to Clean and Repair Nestboxes

Nesting season has ended and now is the time to prepare for next season. We suggest you not only clean out your boxes, but take a good look at them. If you see anything about your box that might pose a hazard to birds now is the time to make repairs. Do leave your boxes in place as birds will take shelter in them during cold weather.

The Blue Angels

By Cheri Martin-Spray



When US Navy P-3 Flight Engineer, Jarrett Martin, arrived for pre-flight inspection, one Monday morning this past April, he spotted

a male bluebird sitting on the propeller of one of the P-3C ORION planes. Then he saw the bird fly into the nose cone of the propeller. He thought something might be up, and sure enough, during the pre-flight inspection some nesting material was spotted in the nose cone.

The cone was then removed, and inside was a partially constructed bluebird nest.



The plane had only been grounded since the previous Friday, but the birds had made a pretty good size

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2015-2016 Board of Directors

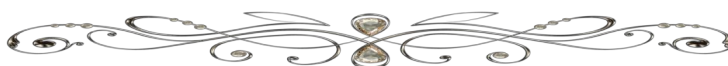
FloridaBluebirdSociety.com

FloridaBluebirdSociety@yahoo.com

Cheri Martin Spray
Ken Custer
Rhonda Ockay
Faith Jones
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Joanne Heinrich

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Director
Director, Duval Co. Coordinator

floridabluebirdsociety@yahoo.com
custerk@aol.com
rhondaockay@yahoo.com
floridabluebirdsociety@gmail.com
rsieron@comcast.net
floridabluebirds@yahoo.com
joanne.heinrich1@comcast.net



Meet Our New FBS Board Members

Rhonda Ockay



Rhonda has lived in the Jacksonville area most of her life, and currently resides in Fleming Island (Clay County) with her husband, two dachshunds and cat. She works full time as a paralegal at a prestigious nationwide law firm, and is taking classes part time towards the completion of her bachelor's degree. She enjoys spending time outdoors, including watching and photographing her backyard

birds.

Rhonda's love for bluebirds began July 2014 when a group of juveniles appeared in her yard searching for dinner. Before then, she had never seen a bluebird, so she researched the internet looking for ways to continue attracting them to her yard. She planted a holly tree which brought them back throughout the winter, and a pair took up residence the following

spring in a nest box she placed in her yard. Rhonda is thrilled to share her love of these special birds through the Florida Bluebird Society, and will eagerly talk bluebirds to anybody who will listen!

Joanne Q. Heinrich

Joanne grew up in Lakehurst, NJ (southern shore area, where the Hindenburg blew up) and moved to south Florida (Ft. Lauderdale area) in 1984. She has called Jacksonville home since 1993, living at first on the Southside, then at the beach. She now lives in the Mandarin area.

Joanne works at Deutsche Bank as an accounting manager, but her passion is watching bluebirds. She and her husband, David, love dogs and nature, and live with their beloved 16-year-old dachshund, Maverick.





Message From the President

Cheri Martin-Spray

It's hard to believe that we are at the end of another year. Time sure flies by fast these days. Especially when you're having fun.

2015 has been an active year for the Florida Bluebird Society.

We started off the year with presentations at 3 Citrus County libraries, by Faith Jones. There was an informal area meeting held in Orange Park in February. Record participation in the statewide bluebird blitz in April, and throughout the nesting season, there were many questions, and stories about bluebirds from all over the state. We ended the season with our annual meeting in August, in Penney Farms, FL.

Many of you came to listen to our guest speaker, Dr. Ann Harwood-Nuss, and to take a tour of a bluebird trail with founding president, Bill Pennewill. We saw some familiar faces, and met some new ones, and we welcomed two new board members, Joanne Heinrich, and Rhonda Ockay. In September, the FBS participated in Butterfly Fest, in Gainesville. What a busy year it has been. And we are not done yet! Through the dedication of our volunteers, we hope to reach a whole new group of people.

I would like to thank all of you who have renewed your membership in the Florida Bluebird Society. I am grateful for your interest in bluebirds, and for being a friend to Florida's Native Cavity Nesting Birds. Their future depends on special people like you.

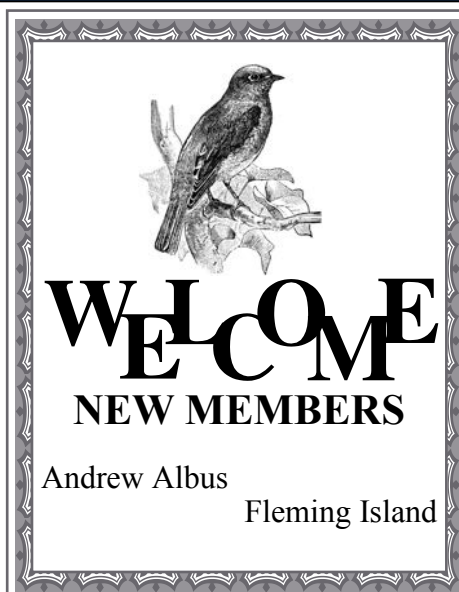


Photo by Andrew Albus

FBS's Newest Member

Andrew Albus is a 7th grade homeschooled student who discovered his love of photographing birds and wildlife about a year ago. Fortunately his recent move to Fleming Island has given him lots of new subjects for his photography passion.

Andrew moved next door to the Pace Island neighborhood's most prolific bluebird box! Andrew captured these pictures right

from his back yard and enjoyed watching his blue bird neighbors progress from building their nests, to laying their eggs, feeding their babies and sending them into the world!



Photo by Andrew Albus

Andrew is part of a Navy family and was born in Washington State. He has also lived in Virginia, Rhode Island and most recently Hawaii. He has always loved animals and birds. Andrew and his family RV'd across the country, coast to coast, with Andrew bird watching the whole way! His favorite bird is an adult breeding mountain bluebird, but he also loves our Florida bluebirds!

Nancy Stokes

Share Your Bluebird Story

Have you had an interesting interaction with bluebirds that you are willing to share? If so, we would like to hear about it. Please send your story with any related photos to floridabluebirdsociety@gmail.com.

Things that go bump in the night

Cheri Martin-Spray

It's the time of year when some people might think about ghosts & goblins, and things that go bump in the night.

Well, at my house, I hear all kinds of noises all throughout the year, but for the past 8 months, I have been hearing more noises than usual.

Recently, while watching television early one morning, in my living room, I kept hearing a "tapping" sound. It seemed to be coming from the spare bedroom down the hall. When I took a peak inside the room, I didn't see anything. Kinda weird. Especially when I'm home alone.

So, finally, one morning a couple of weeks ago, I found out what the noise was. It's my papa bluebird tapping on one of the bedroom windows. He sees his reflection in the glass, so he hangs on the screen, and taps on the window with his beak.

He was doing this at my kitchen window all throughout the nesting season, but I had never seen him at the bedroom window.

Glad to know it was a friendly "ghost"



One Man Makes a Huge Difference

Robin Sieron

How could one man in one neighborhood literally be responsible for the births of thousands of bluebirds in the span of about 8 years? That man is retired attorney **David Foster** and we can credit him for a true blue bird explosion in the Deerwood neighborhood of Jacksonville.

David and his wife Bonnie are avid bird lovers, and in 2007 David built his own nesting box following the specs approved by the Florida Bluebird Society. Of course the old adage "if you build it they will come" rang true and the blues immediately started nesting and laying eggs.

David wanted to share the joy and started building nesting boxes for his neighbors. Then those neighbors spread the word and the next thing you know bluebird

boxes started popping up all around Deerwood. With approximately 3 broods a year, 4-6 eggs per nest, now in 2015 we estimate that there were well over two thousand blues born all thanks to David Foster. And the number of bluebird fans just keeps growing every year.

In addition, there are now neighborhood carpools to purchase live worms and constant sharing of information, pictures and plenty of good old fashioned bluebird camaraderie.

Thank you David for truly being a father to so many beautiful blues!

Blue Angels

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nest in those few days. The nest had to be removed, and fortunately, there were no eggs yet. No birds were harmed.



This pair of "blue angels" had to find another, more grounded, place to start their family.

I have to add that had it not been for my constant chatter about bluebirds to my dear family, Jarrett may not have given any thought to the pretty little blue bird that was sitting on the propeller. Jarrett is my nephew, and he is stationed at the US Naval Base in Jacksonville, FL.

Hooya!

FLORIDA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY'S STATEWIDE BLUEBIRD BLITZ

November 6 & 7



What is a Bluebird Blitz?

A Blitz is a concentrated effort on a specific target date to locate as many Eastern Bluebirds in your locale as possible.

Why a Bluebird Blitz?

The Blitz, November 6 & 7, 2015, will help us to know where the Bluebirds find food and survival habitat between the end of the breeding season and migration time, until breeding activity begins again

How to participate

Simply choose a location, count the number of bluebirds you see, and send us a report of your sightings. We offer three ways to submit your sightings.

1. Enter your data on a spreadsheet and email it to floridabluebirdsociety@gmail.com. The spreadsheet is attached to the email with this newsletter.
2. A report form can be downloaded from our website. Record your results on the downloaded form. Immediately after the Blitz either email the completed form to floridabluebirdsociety@gmail.com, or mail it to: Faith Jones, FBS Statewide Bluebird Blitz Chair, 763 Mallard Drive, Sanford FL 32771.
3. Enter you sightings at ebird.org. If you are a Cornell NestWatch participant, you will use the same login and password to access ebird.org.

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