

# The Florida Bluebird Society

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



Volume 10, Issue 4

July 2020



*Mama Bluebird likes to stick her head out of the box to get some air while the babies are sleeping.*

*The image to the left was captured on the camera inside the nestbox. The image to the right was captured at about the same time from the outside of the same nestbox.*



## The Heritage Pines Bluebird Trail: A Citizen Science Project

*by Hope Botterbusch*

The Heritage Pines Bluebird Trail is located along the edge of the Heritage Pines Golf Course in northwest Hudson, Florida. The trail was established in 2004 by the first residents of Heritage Pines, Herb & Paula Elliott. The Elliotts did an incredible job of maintaining our Bluebird Trail from 2004 – 2019 and we thank them for their dedication and generous spirit. As of April 2019, two other residents have taken over the monitoring and maintenance of the Bluebird Trail. They are Hope Botterbusch, Coordinator and Robert Johnson, Co-monitor. Bob is also our technology wiz, maintaining our cameras and live-streaming equipment, and doing all of the maintenance work. Hope keeps the nestbox data, writes the reports, and the newsletter articles. She also wrote the grant proposal to the Florida Bluebird Society and submits quarterly reports to them.

In 2019 The Florida Bluebird Society awarded the Heritage Pines Community a grant to upgrade our aging nestboxes and answer the following questions:

- 1) has the Bluebird population increased or decreased from 2019 to 2021 in the Heritage Pines Community?
- 2) What hazards are the most detrimental to the Bluebird population in the Heritage Pines Community?

Funding will also include data collection of all Bluebird boxes, thereby providing a more accurate count of our Bluebird population.

The Heritage Pines Bluebird Trail project has six other components:

1. Development of a training program for residents and staff members.
2. Trail Monitor training sessions for residents and staff and additional progress meetings.
3. Collection of data on the Heritage Pines Eastern Bluebird population.
4. Comparison and contrasting of the data collected between 2019 and 2021 to determine if the Bluebird population has grown or diminished.
5. Installation of a Geocache Adventure about Citizen Science and Eastern Bluebirds.
6. Evaluation of the over-all effectiveness of this project.

The progress made on this project has been to replace all of the aging nest boxes, install stovepipe predator guards at all nestbox locations, and reinforce the nestbox entrance to better ward off predators such as crows and woodpeckers. A nestbox camera was installed in one nestbox and is streaming live, 24/7 over a YouTube Channel since March 30. It can be seen here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obbq5Mu\\_CtM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obbq5Mu_CtM)

We monitor our nestboxes on a weekly basis and have found that our Bluebirds are thriving with new eggs and hatchlings each week. So far we've had many successful fledglings and have practically eliminated our predator threats. We still have woodpeckers trying to get into the boxes but with the reinforced guards on the entrance they have been deterred. On some entrances we've installed not only the thicker, hard wooden extended guard, but we've also added metal guards on boxes where there was evidence of woodpeckers pecking at them.

These photos and the ones on the previous page are from some of our nestboxes.



We'd like to thank the Florida Bluebird Society for our funding. We will continue our Project and maintain our Bluebird Trail for many years to come.



## ***Message From Our President***

*Joanne Q. Heinrich*

**It is truly amazing to me how our society** has adapted to the Covid-19 situation in such a short time. Of course, some good, some bad, but overall, I am feeling rather good about the coming recovery of our regular lives. In the meantime, we need to be diligent about social distancing. Therefore, the board has decided to move our annual meeting to Plan B, which is a virtual video webinar via Zoom. This will allow for viewing and/or audio listening of our presentations. All members will receive a link where you can simply click on it to get access to the meeting. If you do not have access to view it, there will be a call-in number so that you can listen in. We are also working on recording the presentation and posting it somewhere for you to view afterwards.



This will be the **first video webinar meeting** in the 10-year history of the Florida Bluebird Society and I am very excited about the possibilities it will open up to us in the next chapter of our group! I hope you can attend!

Our agenda will include a presentation by Hope Botterbusch (new board member; see bio in this newsletter) on the Heritage Pines Community Bluebird Trail in Hudson, Florida, with pictures and video. The other presentation will be from our Calendar Committee on the new 2021 photo calendar. Q&A and elections will follow. The meeting will be about an hour long, starting 10 minutes after gathering on the video site. Date and time are below:

***Saturday, August 22, 2020  
10 a.m. login or call in to Zoom webinar.  
Meeting will begin at 10:10 a.m.  
More information to follow...***

## Some reminders:

Membership Renewal: August is the month where all FBS memberships are renewed. Please look for our letter outlining the accomplishments for which your membership donation provides funds.

Watch the Heritage Pines Nestbox webcam: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obbq5Mu\\_CtM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obbq5Mu_CtM)

Please record your findings in Cornell's NestWatch so you can contribute to the scientific world that keeps us informed of the success of our beloved bluebird at <https://nestwatch.org/>.

**Board Positions:** We will have 1 open position for a new board member as Ken Custer, past president, has decided to retire from the board when his term ends in August. Please let me or any other board member know if you are interested and we can set up a call to discuss.

Ken has been the model board member. He has been highly effective in starting new projects and awareness programs. One of the biggest impacts he led has been the calendar project that we all enjoy. We are incredibly grateful to all that Ken has contributed through the years and thank him for his service to the Florida Bluebird Society!

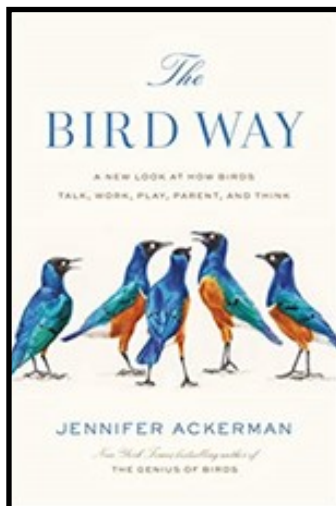
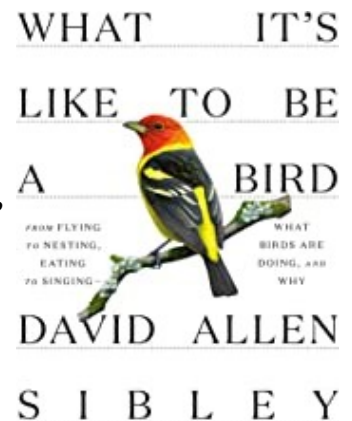
That's all for now. Please take care and stay safe. There will be more information to come regarding our annual meeting and membership renewal.

## Top Notch Books Released During Pandemic

*By Faith Jones*

Are you looking for something to fill your time while you are social distancing or self-isolating? Looking for some interesting reading? There were two impressive bird-related books released this Spring that are worth your time. The first is a new release by renowned ornithologist and illustrator, David Allen Sibley entitled **What It's Like to Be a Bird: From Flying to Nesting, Eating to Singing- What Birds Are Doing, and Why**. The book contains the answers to all sorts of questions about birds. It contains what many observable bird behaviors mean to birds. The author's 330 beautiful illustrations bring bird behaviors to life.

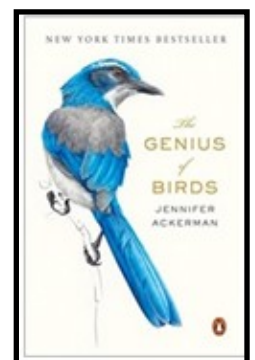
This book is appropriate for general and young readers, as well as an important addition to any birder's library. With bird populations plummeting, hopefully this book that is filled with fascinating information about birds will foster in its readers a greater appreciation for birds and a desire to protect them.



**The Bird Way: A Look at How Birds Talk, Work, Play, Parent, and Think** by award-winning science writer Jennifer Ackerman is another important bird book that was released this Spring. Recent research has revealed our traditional view of how birds conduct their lives to be off the mark. How birds communicate, forage, court, breed and survive may be far different than previously believed.

There are bird species that practice things like deception, manipulation, cheating, kidnapping, infanticide, but also intelligent forms of communication, cooperation, collaboration, altruism, culture and play. Drawing on her personal observations and the latest science the author shows there is no single bird way of being.

Ackerman's previous book, **The Genius of Birds**, explores the intelligence of birds and reveals that birds rival primates in their remarkable forms of intelligence. It is well worth your time if you have not read it.





# Finding Baby Azulito: A Rescue Story

By Rhonda Ockay

Florida Bluebird Society was contacted via Facebook by Dana Boyd in rural Central Florida on May 31<sup>st</sup>. A young bluebird, approximately 10 days old, appeared in her yard seemingly from nowhere. Dana's friend, Nancy, was staying with her recovering from a double mastectomy following months of chemotherapy. Nancy's recliner overlooked the front yard where she spotted the baby bird. There were no visible nest or nestbox in the area, and his means of arrival still remains a mystery.



Concerned for his wellbeing, Dana scooped up the young bluebird. She placed it in a small basket with a makeshift nest, and placed it on top of a garden table where she found it.



Our immediate concern was whether the parents would find the young bird and continue to feed it. Dana was given the contact information for a wildlife rehabilitator as well as her local Audubon Society chapter in the event the parents abandoned the baby and she needed immediate assistance. However, much to our delight the parents began feeding the nestling inside of the basket! Survival rates for

nestlings that leave the nest early are greatly increased if their parents are still in the area as in most cases the parents will continue to care for their young.

Dana brought the nestling inside at night to keep it safe from nighttime predators, returning it very early in the morning. The parents resumed duty in the morning feeding and watching over the young bird, as well as cleaning fecal sacs from the nest.



*A small disc was placed to partially covering the basket to protect the nestling from heat, rain and predators.*



On the evening of the fourth day, the curious young bird decided to hop out of the nest, although it was still too young to fly. Dana and Nancy placed the youngster back in the basket and decided to move it into a slightly deeper basket, hoping to give it a few extra days to develop the wing strength required to fly. This routine continued for a total of seven days. The chick kept Dana and Nancy on their toes with several escape attempts and worry of predators, including the neighborhood owl. Nancy named the chick Azulito, meaning "Blue One" in Spanish.

By the eighth day, Azulito was strong enough to flit up to the tree branches with its parents. Dana and

Nancy continued to check on Azulito and found him safe in the tree on the next morning.

As Nancy recovered from her surgery, Baby Azulito gave her purpose. It was fate that brought Baby Azulito to Nancy's window. Azulito needed Nancy as much as Nancy needed Azulito.





## Evelyn's Bees

Evelyn McManus Cooper found quite the surprise when she was monitoring her bluebird trail. For the first time in her 22 years of bluebird monitoring, she encountered a swarm of honeybees utilizing one of her nestboxes.



This was only a temporary rest stop

for a few days while the bees searched for a new home. When Evelyn returned three days later to check the box, she found they left behind a cone in the area they swarmed. Luckily the nestbox was not active during the time the honeybees took up temporary residence.



Evelyn is the founder of the Louisiana Bluebird Society organized in 2002, and serves as an officer after 6 years as president. She is the editor of the quarterly newsletter "Bayou Bluebird Nest News". At 86 years old, she monitors and maintains a bluebird trail of 21 nestboxes. Thank you, Evelyn, for your service to our beloved bluebirds!



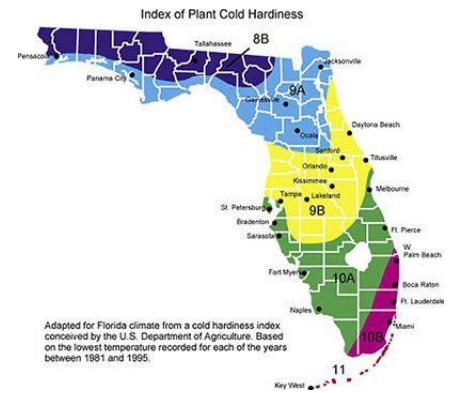
All Florida Bluebird Society annual memberships renew are due for renewal on August 1st every year. You can renew using the form on the last page of this newsletter, or online at <https://floridabluebirdsociety.org/membership/>



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# FLORIDA NATIVE PLANTS FOR BLUEBIRDS



<b><u>Trees</u> Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Type, Fruiting Season</b>	<b>Hardi- ness Zone</b>
Cedar, Eastern Red*	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Tree to 40 ft, evergreen. Fall and winter blue fruit. Moist to dry soil, full sun. Dioecious (female fruits).	8a-10b
Cherry, Black	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Tree to 70 ft, deciduous. Summer and fall black fruit. Dry soil, full sun.	8a-9b
Dogwood, Flowering*	<i>Cornus florida</i>	Tree to 30 ft, deciduous. Summer, autumn, winter red fruit. Drier soil, part sun. Struggles near southern end of range.	8a-9b
Hackberry, Georgia	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Tree to 20 ft, deciduous. Winter brown fruit. Drier soil, part sun to full shade.	8a-8b
Hackberry/Sugarberry*	<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	Tree to 80 ft, deciduous. Fall brown fruit. Moist-wet soil, full sun to part sun.	8a-10b
Holly, American	<i>Ilex opaca</i>	Tree to 60 ft, evergreen. Winter red fruit. Drier soil, part sun to shade. Dioecious (need male & female). Fruits poisonous to humans.	8a-10a
Holly, Dahoon	<i>Ilex cassine</i>	Tree to 30ft, evergreen. Fall and winter red fruit. Wet soil, full sun to full shade. Dioecious (need male & female).	8a-11
Holly, Yaupon	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	Tree to 25 ft, evergreen. Summer red fruit. Drier soil (drought tolerant), full sun to part sun. Dioecious (need male & female).	8a-10b
Magnolia, Southern	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	Tree to 100 ft, evergreen. Fall red /brown fruit. Moist soil, full sun to full shade. Suitability of cultivars varies.	8a-9b
Mulberry, Red*	<i>Morus rubra</i>	Tree to 50 ft, deciduous. Summer, autumn red fruit. Moist soil, full sun to part sun.	8a-10b
Redbay	<i>Persea borbonia</i>	Tree to 60 ft, evergreen. Summer dark blue fruit. Drier soil, full sun to part sun.	8a-10b
Sassafras, White*	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>	Tree to 60 ft, deciduous, thicket forming. Summer, fall blue/black fruit. Moist to dry soil, full sun to part shade. Leaves a litter problem.	8a-9b
<b><u>Vines</u></b>			
Virginia Creeper*	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Vine to 40 ft, deciduous, fall color. Fall/winter blue fruit. Drier soil, full sun to full shade. Aggressive.	8a-11
Also poison ivy & grape			

\* Preferred

<b>Shrubs Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Type, Fruiting Season</b>	<b>Hardiness Zone</b>
Beautyberry, American	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	Shrub to 8 ft, deciduous. Fall and winter purple berries. Drier soil, full sun to shade.	8a-10b
Blackberry, Sawtooth	<i>Rubus pensilvanicus</i>	Shrub to 10 ft. Summer black fruit. Moist to dry soil, full to part sun.	8a-10a
Blackberry, Sand	<i>Rubus cuneifolius</i>	Shrub to 3 ft, stalks tend to fall over giving sprawling appearance. Summer black fruit. Drier soil.	8a-10b
Dewberry, Southern	<i>Rubus trivialis</i>	Shrub with low, vine-like growth forming thickets. Summer black fruit. Moist soil, full or part sun.	8a-10b
Blackhaw, Southern or Rusty	<i>Viburnum rufidulum</i>	Shrub to 18 ft, deciduous. Winter blue/black fruit. Showy flowers. Drier soil, part sun to full shade.	8a-9b
Chokeberry, Red	<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i> or <i>pho-tinia pyrifolia</i>	Shrub to 12 ft, deciduous. Fall/winter red fruit. Moist soil, full to part sun.	8a-10a
Elderberry, American or Common*	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Shrub to 15 ft, deciduous, thicket forming. Summer/fall purple/blue/black fruit. Moist soil, full to part sun.	8a-10b
Hercules Club or Devil's Walkingstick	<i>Aralia spinosa</i>	Shrub to 12 ft, deciduous, thicket forming. Summer, fall purple/black fruit. Drier soil, full to part sun.	8a-9b
Highbush Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	Shrub to 12 ft, deciduous. Fall blue/black fruit. Moist acidic soil, part sun.	8a-9b
Inkberry or Gallberry	<i>Ilex glabra</i>	Shrub to 12 ft, evergreen, thicket forming. Fall/winter black berries. Drier acidic soil, full to part sun.	8a-10b
Lantana, Wild or Buttonsage	<i>Lantana involucrata</i> (other native species in South Florida)	Shrub to 6 ft, evergreen. with purple berries. The berries can be toxic to people and leaves are toxic to animals.	8a-11
Pokeweed, Common (pokeberry, pokeroor, inkberry)*	<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	Shrub to 10 ft, winter dormant. Fall purple/black fruit. Drier soil, full sun. Considered a weed.	8a-11
Possum Haw	<i>Ilex decidua</i>	Shrub to 20 ft, deciduous. Copious red fruit. Moist soil, full to part sun. Dioecious.	8a-9b
Sumac, Winged*	<i>Rhus copallina</i>	Shrub to 15 ft, deciduous, thicket forming. Winter orange/red fruit. Drier soil, full sun.	8a-11
Wax Myrtle	<i>Morella cerifera</i>	Shrub to 15ft, evergreen. Winter white/green fruit. Moist to dry soil, full to part sun.	8a-11



**Make your shopping a force for good.**  
**Turn Shopping into Donations for FBS- No Cost to You**  
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Shop at [smile.amazon.com/cb/80-0358854](https://smile.amazon.com/cb/80-0358854) and Amazon donates to Florida Bluebird Society Inc. AmazonSmile customers can now support Florida Bluebird Society Inc in the Amazon shopping app on iOS and Android mobile phones! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
2. Go into the main menu of the Amazon Shopping app and tap into 'Settings'
3. Tap 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process

If you do not have the latest version of the Amazon Shopping app, update your app. Click [here](#) for instructions this link into our browser. <https://www.amazon.com/gp/browse.html?node=15576745011&ref%5F=pc%5F732550%5F495707060&pldnSite=1>



# WELCOME

## NEW MEMBERS



Tamara Allen	Naples
Charles Arenholz	Naples
Kim Farrington	Palm Coast
Dave Keim	Clermont
Marie Leonard	Gainesville
Caroline Murphy	Tampa
Earl Simms	
Paul Smith	Safety Harbor
Barbara Surman	Oldsmar

# WELCOME

## NEW BOARD MEMBER



We would like to welcome our newest Board Member, Ms. Hope Botterbusch, who will serve a 2-year term replacing Cheri Martin-Spray who is unable to complete her term.

Ms. Botterbusch is the Coordinator of the Heritage Pines Community Bluebird Trail in Hudson, Florida. She, along with her Co-monitor, Bob Johnson, maintains a 35-nesting-box Eastern Bluebird Trail on the west coast of Pasco County. This Bluebird Trail was established by the first residents of the Heritage Pines Community, Herb and Paula Elliott, who managed the trail from 2004 -2019. In 2019 Hope and Bob took over the management of it.

Ms. Botterbusch is a retired K-12, college and university educator and administrator with many years of her tenure coordinating environmental education programs for teachers and their students.

The Florida Bluebird Society thanks the following individuals and organizations for their generous financial support.

### Life Members

Madison E. Alderson - Williston  
David Foster—Jacksonville  
Ann Harwood- Nuss - Jacksonville  
Joanne Heinrich - Jacksonville  
Louis Nipper – Hernando (dec.2017)  
Pam Overmyer - Panama City  
Beth Reed—Lutz  
Billi Wagner - Vero Beach  
Richard Yeager -Penney Farms

### 2019-2020

### Sponsors

Libby Beese—Palm Coast  
Susan Beittel—Sanibel  
Candace Bridgewater—Ponte Vedra  
Shannon Joyce - Clermont  
Jean Middleton—Amelia Island  
Teri Pollard—Callahan  
Joanne Weinman—Gainesville

### Patrons

Ulla Benny—Gainesville  
Mattie Harms—St. Augustine  
Shirley Hearn—Marianna  
Dave Keim—Clermont  
Keith Lavery—Ormond Beach  
Jane Simpson—Fleming Island  
Nancy Stokes – Fleming Island  
Barbara Walker—Venice

### Organizations

Bluebird Pharmacy—Ponte Vedra Beach  
Cypress Business Communications—Jacksonville  
Native Nurseries of Tallahassee, Inc.  
Wild Birds Unlimited - Julington Creek, Jax

In 2019, she submitted a grant proposal to the Florida Bluebird Society to upgrade their Trail and provide education and outreach programs for the residents of Heritage Pines. Ms. Botterbusch is a member of the Florida Bluebird Society, the North American Bluebird Society, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is a certified NestWatch Monitor, and is a Cornell Lab K-12 Ambassador providing training programs for classroom teachers. We know she will be a great asset to FBS.



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



**JOIN the Florida Bluebird Society**

Visit ***FloridaBluebirdSociety.org/membership***

**OR**

Select your desired Membership type:

- ☐ \$15.00 Membership (single)
- ☐ \$25.00 Family Membership
- ☐ \$50.00 Patron/ Organization
- ☐ \$100.00 Sponsor
- ☐ \$500.00 Life Membership
- ☐ \$10.00 Senior (62 and older)
- ☐ \$10.00 Student

Mail this Membership Application and your check made out to **Florida Bluebird Society** to:

Faith Jones, Treasurer  
Florida Bluebird Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 532  
Penney Farms FL 32079

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently monitor a bluebird nest box trail?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, # of boxes \_\_\_\_\_

Location of trail \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Willing to actively participate in FBS

☐ Willing to serve as County or area coordinator

## 2019-2020 Board of Directors

FloridaBluebirdSociety.org  
fbs.inquiries1@floridabluebirdsociety.org

Joanne Heinrich**	President, Duval Co. Coordinator	joanne.heinrich1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
Ken Custer*	Immediate Past President,	ken.custer1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
Jim Nichols**	Vice Pres., Flagler Co. Coordinator	jim.nichols1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
Rhonda Ockay**	Secretary, Clay Co. Coordinator	rhonda.ockay1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
Faith Jones*	Treasurer, Membership, Newsletter	floridabluebirdsociety@gmail.com
Hope Botterbusch***	Director, Pasco Co. Coordinator	hopebotterbusch1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
Pam Overmyer***	Director, Bay Co. Coordinator	pam.overmyer1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
Bill Pennewill	Founding President	floridabluebirds@yahoo.com

Terms:

\*2017—2020

\*\*2018—2021

\*\*\* 2019—2022

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