

The Florida Bluebird Society

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



Volume 11, Issue 1

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FBS Awards Research Grant

The Grant Committee of the Florida Bluebird Society has selected a project entitled *Promoting Community Engagement in Eastern Bluebird Research in South-Central Florida* as the recipient of our 2020 Research Grant. The primary leader of the project Hance Ellington, Assistant Wildlife Ecology Professor at the Range Cattle Research and Education Center, of the University of Florida in Ona, Florida. He will be working with Bethany Wight, Research Biologist at the Center. The Extension Director and 4-University of Florida will also be involved.

The two goals of the project are:

- To determine if Eastern Bluebird nest success is impacted by nestbox design, and which design(s) are best for bluebirds in south-central Florida.

- To engage the local community in bluebird research and conservation.

Congratulations to Hance and Bethany. FBS will assist in any way we are able,. We look forward obtaining valuable information from this study.



Become a Bluebird Watcher Virtual Series

Hance Ellington and Bethany Wight, recipients of an FBS Research Grant mentioned above, are creating a Becoming a Bluebird Watcher Series. This eight-part series of virtual sessions with videos and live presentations began in December and will run through June 2021. In this series, participants will learn about bluebird biology and ecology in Florida. Participants will also learn about the importance of nest boxes for bluebirds and how to construct, monitor, and maintain nest boxes. Finally, participants will “ride along” with wildlife researchers as we conduct important research on bluebirds at the Range Cattle Research and Education Center.

Become a Bluebird Watcher Virtual Series Continued from page 1.

All sessions are free, but you must pre-register. Below is a brief summary of the sessions:

Schedule

All virtual sessions will be from 1:00-2:00pm unless otherwise stated

Session 1: Bluebird introduction and our research objectives - December 5th, 2020

Session 2: Constructing nest boxes – December 12th, 2020

Session 3: Deploying nest boxes/wildlife tour of RCREC – **January 9th, 2020**

Session 4: Nest box check/bluebird ecology – Late February 2021

Session 5: Nest box check/bluebird diet – Late March 2021

Session 6: Nest box check/role of birds in rangeland systems – Late April 2021

Session 7: Taking down and cleaning nest boxes – Mid-May 2021

Session 8: Wrap-up and research results – Early June 2021

To **register** visit https://uf_virtualbluebirdwatcher.eventbrite.com.

The previous sessions were recorded and are available for viewing at <https://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/virtual-classroom/>

OSPREY RESCUED IN HERITAGE PINES



On Saturday, November 14 a few observant golfers at the Heritage Pines Golf Course, Hudson, FL realized this Osprey was in need of rescue. It couldn't fly very well and appeared very lethargic. Someone called the Seaside Seabird Sanctuary, located in Indian Rocks Beach, and then someone else called me, Hope Botterbusch - I suppose because I manage the Heritage Pines Bluebird Trail. However, I am not a bird expert. I am always learning something new about our native birds. I asked Bob Johnson, our Bluebird Trail Co-Monitor and wildlife photographer, to snap this guy's photo for our archives. It's an amazing photo!

Unfortunately, this beautiful creature did not make it - it died that night. It had ingested something toxic.

The loss of this Osprey demonstrates why we need to make sure that we never use toxic chemicals on our properties.

For future reference, the Seaside Seabird Sanctuary can be reached at 727-391-6211. Their website is <https://seasidebirdsantuary.org/>.

Do You Have a Bluebird Story?

Have you had a special experience with a bluebird? Could you write a summary of your experiences during the last nesting season? We are always looking for bluebird-related stories to share with our members in this newsletter. Send your story and a photo, if possible, to FloridaBluebirdSociety@gmail.com.



Message From Our President



Joanne Q. Heinrich

A NEW YEAR!

Not your normal Happy New Year! This is more like “thank goodness it’s a new year!!! All of 2020 will go down in history books, the good, the bad and the ugly... And we will have lots to tell future generations.

So, we look forward to 2021 and a new Bluebird Nesting Season! I hope your bluebirds are checking out your boxes. Mine are, and more exciting to me, I get to still work from home and watch them through my home office window! AND I just installed a nestcam, the same one that Heritage Pines has. I hope to stream it at some point. For now, it is fun to watch the female poke her head in and the male got all the way in and started checking it out.

Projects on the horizon for the Florida Bluebird Society are our ever-popular Photo Contest and Calendar and we are starting bids for a new Website re-design. If anyone is interested in helping out, please contact me or one of our board members. We also hope to get back to doing either in-person speaking engagements or via Zoom meetings.

Newsletter HELP!!! A Special Thank You goes to Denise Palermo for volunteering to head up the membership duties that have been done by our multi-tasker, Faith Jones. Faith still needs help with the newsletter. ***This help can come from any member or volunteer.*** It can be in the form of writing an article, or formatting an issue or two. If you have a little extra time and are interested in helping Faith on the newsletter, please let us know and I’m sure we can find a good match for how much time you can lend.

Looking forward to a wonderful new year with you all!



Thanks to Jim Peters for this amazing series of images that illustrate the wing strength required for takeoff.



The Age of Apps!

I feel I've gone a little overboard. There are so many apps out there, sometimes, I don't know where to start! There is the **iNaturalist app** which is extremely useful identifying non-native plants and species. It even identifies photos which is useful when they don't have a caption.

And then a 2nd app for one of the things I'm pretty lousy at, bird calls. Faith has talked about this app, the **BirdNET** app from Cornell Lab, and I finally figured out how to download it (it wasn't available for iPhone, but is now) and how to use it! Now, if my birds will stay singing while I get the phone out, start the app, before they fly away, I'll be good!

Then there is the nestcam **iCSee app** that is used with the Green-Backyard bird camera kit. I just installed the camera in my box and can't believe how clear it is! I had a male bluebird checking it out recently and snapped this screenshot. (I installed the app on my phone as well as on my laptop.) I'll be viewing it as I work, and hope to see bluebirds nesting this year!



The 4th item is what I bought myself for Christmas, a trail camera. I was fortunate enough to be walking my dog a few weeks ago at 6am and saw a red fox jump out of some ferns. When it saw me and my 100 lb lab, it quickly scurried back into the ferns (they are really big and dense). But then I put 2 & 2 together, I have a very deep burrow right outside my back porch under a peace lily plant. I showed it to Faith when she visited, an expert of course, and we saw tracks that were not armadillos. So, with her suggestion, I bought a trail camera. It didn't pick up anything the first night it was installed which was last night, but I'll be adjusting it often, as I know we get nightly critters walking through, usually racoons and opossums.

Announcements: Speaking Engagement:

Citrus County Audubon Society has invited the Florida Bluebird Society to present our program "May All Your Blues be Birds" on Jan 20, 2021 at 7PM. They have also graciously invited our members to view it. Please look for the Zoom invitation via email in early January.

Website Redesign:

The Florida Bluebird Society website will be getting a facelift in 2021!!! More details to follow, but please let us know if you are interested in helping with design, thoughts on improvements, or testing.

Board Member Spot Open:

We have a board member spot open. This is a very fulfilling role, and you can devote as much or as little (within reason), time to it as you would like. Please contact us if you are interested or would like more information.



Boone Park:

Jax Federal Credit Union donated a bluebird nestbox, pole system and predator guard to the Friends of Boone Park (in the Avondale area of Jacksonville), in June 2020. The Friends reached out to the Florida Bluebird Society for direction on placement, care and monitoring the box. They have also gotten the commitment from a volunteer to monitor the box. It wasn't long after they put it up that they saw a

male checking it out. We hope to have great news on the success in the area in the coming year.

Time to Prepare for a New Nesting Season!!

Have you inspected your nestboxes recently? If not, now is time to do so. The 2021 nesting season will be starting soon.

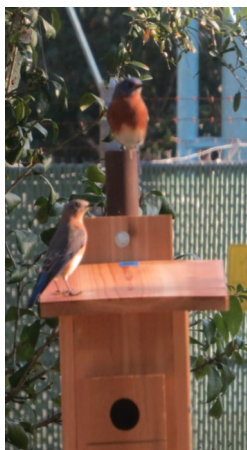
Check the integrity of your box and predator guard.

Is the roof still water-tight? Or has it cracked and is it in need of a little caulk?

If you open your box to monitor, does the box still open properly?

Is the box still securely fastened to the pole?

Is your predator guard still in place and functional. A cone baffle should be secured, but a stovepipe-type guard should swing freely.



Make certain no unexpected guests have moved into your box during the winter. If you find Cuban Treefrogs, do not set them free. They should be removed and disposed of properly. Visit https://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/cuban_treefrog_inFL.shtml For information.

Birds are already checking out potential nesting locations, so do get any needed repairs done soon so that you are inviting birds into a safe and cozy nesting location.

The nestbox in these images has been heightened to allow for a camera.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



The Binford Family—Lake Mary
Tim Burns—Orlando
Hance Ellington—Ona

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

Life Members

Madison E. Alderson - Williston
Jack Beery—Shalimar
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

2020-2021

Sponsors

Libby Beese—Palm Coast
Bluebird Pharmacy & Spa—Ponte Vedra
Candace Bridgewater—Ponte Vedra
Shannon Joyce - Clermont
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Wild Birds Unlimited—Jurlington Village, St Johns

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Ed Kawecki—Jupiter
Dave Keim - Clermont
Frances Nichols—Orange Park
Lynette Phillips—Monteverde
Beverly Poppke—Stuart
Jane Simpson—Fleming Island
John Smith—St. Augustine

Organizations

Cypress Business Communications—Jacksonville
Native Nurseries of Tallahassee, Inc.



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.
PO Box 532

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

2020-2021 Board of Directors

FloridaBluebirdSociety.org
fbs.inquiries1@floridabluebirdsociety.org

Joanne Heinrich*	President, Duval Co. Coordinator	joanne.heinrich1@floridabluebirdsociety.org
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Vacant *	At Large Board Member	
Vacant ***	At Large Board Member	
Bill Pennewill	Founding President	floridabluebirds@yahoo.com
Denise Palermo	Membership	
Terms: *2018—2021	** 2019—2022	***2020—2023

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