



The President's Perch

by Stan Fisher

Greetings, fellow Maryland bluebirders. It has been a long, wet summer and our bluebirds are busily feasting on fall dogwood berries and pokeberries. We don't see them as often these days. The birds in our area tend to congregate in the areas where winter food/berries are plentiful. We have often seen them in the Audubon Christmas count in groups of 20 or so in hardwood forests. Perhaps they are better protected in these groups. So this winter, look for them in areas where you wouldn't expect them, in wooded areas, even in wooded urban areas.

As we clean out their boxes, we reflect back on the nesting season. This breeding season success was dependent on your area. In my area, the Piedmont, at least on my trails, the results were generally good, but with concerns. Perhaps the unusually wet season led to some of these concerns. In short, Bluebird fledgings were close to average, but the success of their competitors was better.

Many tree swallows fledged from my trails, more than usual. For the first time, some tree swallows nested twice. This affected bluebirds not only by producing a larger crop of tree swallows for next spring, but also, by nesting twice, the young of the first brood hung around, forming "mobs" and bothering bluebirds and other cavity nesters. I even saw tree swallows "mob" a pair of purple martins trying to establish a late nest at my Bluebird Hill farm.

A second unusual result was that our house wrens seemed to be more aggressive than usual. They quickly occupied many of my bluebird boxes and filled adjacent boxes with twigs. That wasn't so unusual, but I found that they were selecting and nesting in boxes that they usually leave for bluebirds, boxes located well away from trees and brush. I had house wrens nesting in boxes more than 100 yds. from the nearest tree or shrub.

I am not sure what this all means for our next nesting season, but I ask you to be aware of the arrival and activities of tree swallows and house wrens and report unusual observations to your county coordinators or on the MBS Facebook page.

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Male Eastern Bluebird in Washington County.
Photo by Jenny Hendershot

NABS CONFERENCE March 12th – 15th, 2020 SAVE THE DATE!!!!

Join fellow bluebirders as we migrate to the 2020 NABS Conference in Kearney, Nebraska. Hosted by Bluebirds Across Nebraska (BAN), the conference will coincide with the migration of the Sand Hill Crane and other species of water fowl. Amazing views, outstanding speakers, workshops, fieldtrips and entertainment will be featured. Details will follow in coming months at http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/event/nabs-conference/?instance_id=15

WHAT IS YOUR "SIGN"?!

By Dr. William Roberts, Jr.

The Maryland Bluebird Society now has MBS signs for sale! The size of a no parking sign, the MBS logo and website is proudly and colorfully displayed. A sample sign was displayed at the annual meeting and picnic and several were sold for \$25 per sign. There are many potential uses for the MBS sign. The most obvious is for a member to buy one and show pride in your Society by placing near your eastern bluebird nest box on your own private property. Next, several members maintain nest box trails on different types of government property. As with all such jurisdictions there are different approval processes. For example, the Montgomery County Parks and Planning Department does not permit any signs besides their own. However, they do allow temporary signs not to exceed 30 days as well as they allow a sign to be placed in their locked announcement bulletin boards. A third category of signs are non-profit organizations such as environmental organizations or churches. If a nest box trail is sponsored at these sites then the signs provide long-term marketing for our organization. Finally, there are several internal uses for the signs. Aside from being placed in the MBS store inventory, signs could be given by the MBS to its County Coordinators as part of their public engagement display and duties. The signs could also be given to major contributors or supporters of the MBS along with a Certificate of Appreciation. Our only limitation to using these signs is our own creativity! For my part, I will buy several signs to market our organization. I will place one sign on my own private property nest box trail; two signs on the Lois Green-Sligo (LGS) Chapter of the Isaac Walton League of America (IWLA) where I maintain a trail; one sign in the locked announcement board at the Lois Y. Green Conservation Park that has a trail; place two signs at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (CBEC) in Grasonville, MD that has a numerous and well established nest box trail; and possibly one at my church where I am thinking of establishing another trail. **MAY THE SIGN BE WITH YOU!**



2018 MBS Officers and Directors

Officers

President: Stan Fisher
V. President: Jodi Hewitt
Secretary: Beth Fisher
Treasurer: Bonnie Bell

Directors

Fawzi Emad
Ed Escalante
Anne Sturm
Diane Seward
Kathy Kremnitzer, Immediate Past President
Matt Storms
Jenny Hendershot
Bill Roberts

MBS 2018 Annual Membership Meeting and Picnic

The Maryland Bluebird Society met for our Annual Membership meeting and picnic on Saturday, September 15th at Black Hill Regional Park. 20 people were in attendance for the membership meeting which included updates on the newsletter (in progress), Website (updated last summer so check it out!), Facebook, County Coordinators (we have a new volunteer for St. Mary's County) and Events. The consensus was that 2018 was a busy nesting season, made complicated by the amount of rain received in Maryland, and successes were variable throughout the state.

Bill Roberts, Anne Sturm and Matt Storms all had their board terms renewed until 2021. The membership decided that MBS does not need to formulate a budget at this time. An issue arose regarding terminology in our by-laws about what constitutes a quorum. Diane Seward will draft a revision for circulation among the board for discussion. Any proposed amendments will be presented to the membership for a vote next fall.

MBS made donations to 3 wildlife rehabilitation organizations in support of their efforts on behalf of songbirds and other wildlife.

Proceeds from the event were as follows:

Silent Auction: \$193.50
Nestbox Sales (#2): \$30.00
MBS Signs (#5): \$125.00
Donation: \$6.00



President Stan Fisher presides over the membership meeting.
Photo by Ed Escalante



Matt Storms, working hard to prepare hamburgers and hotdogs for attendees while Karen Escalante takes a rare break from organizing. Photo by Ed Escalante



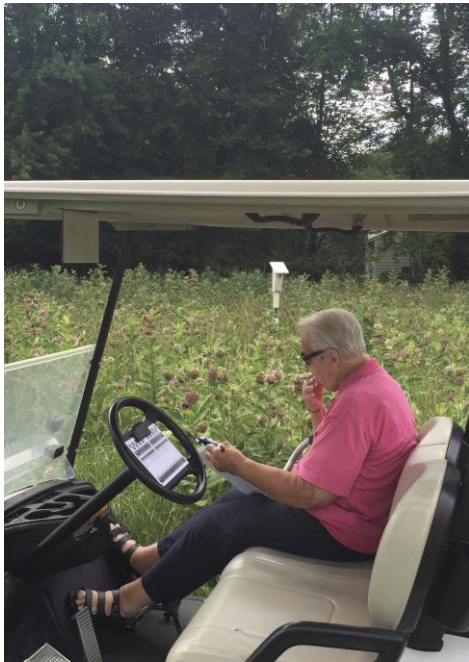
Bluebird enthusiasts share their nesting season experiences. Photo by Ed Escalante

Needwood Golf Course Trail

by Anthony (Tony) Laing

This year I finished my 13th season of monitoring 28 bluebird boxes around Needwood Golf Course in Montgomery County. This trail started as my son's Boy Scout Eagle Scout Project in 2003, and I have been monitoring the trail since 2006. For 2018, I counted 73 fledglings which was a slight decrease from 2017 when I counted 79 fledglings, but the total number was in the general ballpark count. We achieved a milestone in 2018 as we surpassed the 1,000 mark with a cumulative count of 1,045 fledglings.

Since my bluebird trail is around and within the Needwood Golf Course, I get to use a golf cart to visit my boxes. It is fun to drive the golf cart and invariably golfers will inquire what I am doing and they are generally happy to hear about our bluebird conservation efforts.



Every once in a while, someone will mistake me for a Course Marshall and come up to me as I am writing my fledgling count on my clipboard. They will complain about slow golfers in front of them and ask me to tell the slow golfers to speed up!

When she was in better health, my mother-in-law used to accompany me when she came to visit. She was my recording secretary and she enjoyed this special outing on a golf cart in the great outdoors and viewing the beautiful blue eggs and young birds. After every outing, we would stop at a local seafood takeout restaurant, buy crab cake sandwiches, and take them home and eat them on our deck. It was a special bonding moment. She liked to tell the story that one day she was waiting for me in the parking lot as I parked the golf cart and someone came up to her and asked her how her game went. She was in her late 80s and had never picked up a golf club in her life!

I always consider it a special blessing when I am leaving the course and I see bluebirds flying above me in my golf cart.



Above: Tony checking the progress of a nesting in one of the trail's Peterson-style nestboxes.

Left: Tony's mother-in-law/recording secretary logging nesting observations.

Bluebird Rescue

Calvert County Coordinator, Lori Sampson

On May 16, 2018, I received a call from Kathy Kremnitzer about an emergency request sent through the MBS Facebook messenger about a possible bluebird rescue. I was told that there was a baby bluebird in a nest and that the mother had not been seen in a while, so I phoned a friend to accompany me. It was evening and the rain was pouring down! When we arrived, we immediately saw a juvenile bluebird peering out of a nestbox. We opened the box and discovered 3 very thin, soaking wet, bluebirds approximately 9 days old. They were so hungry and cold! We removed the nest (which, by the way, was seated on top of 2 other old bluebird nests) and wrapped a towel around them. We transported them to a wonderful lady in Lusby, Maryland named Pat Tarrant, owner of Blue Angel Rescue Wildlife Rehabilitation.



Pat knew exactly what to do and immediately placed a warming pad underneath the towel in an attempt to warm the babies up so they would want to feed. Two of them were coming around and Pat was able to feed them. One bird was very lethargic. I attempted to warm him up with my own body heat, but to no avail. The little guy just didn't have the strength to hold on. It was an educational experience for me, however, in that I learned how to make baby bird food should I ever find myself in that position and am unable to immediately locate or reach a rehabilitator. I am happy to say that a week or so later I found out that the other two baby bluebirds made a full recovery and are flying about somewhere in southern Maryland. I commend Pat Tarrant and the work that she does with wildlife.

Pat Tarrant, Blue Angel Rescue Wildlife Rehabilitation, 1327 Bucks Lane, Lusby, Maryland 20657. The phone number is 410-610-6903.



The President's Perch

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We had an excellent Annual Meeting and Picnic on September 15th at Black Hill Regional Park. It was a great success, well planned and attended, mostly thanks to Ed and Karen Escalante. It was great to see so many Maryland bluebird lovers and to share our deep concern and affection for our bluebirds.

The bluebirds need us. It was mankind that removed lots of their nesting sites and introduced two aggressive species to take over what was left. It's up to us to keep on providing nesting and monitoring their trails. And please send your 2018 results to Kathy Kremnitzer.

Dear MBS Members:

Please check with MBS Membership Chair, Diane Seward, at trina65@verizon.net to be certain you are current with your membership. You can renew using the form at the end of this newsletter or online at www.mdbluebirdsociety.org. If you know of someone who is interested in bluebirds, please feel free to pass this newsletter on to them.

Thank you for your continued support!

Nesting News from Around the State

Nesting Season 2018 was a strange one, weather-wise. Many areas of Maryland received record amounts of rainfall which resulted in abandoned nests and the loss of eggs and young in many cases. Below are the results for some bluebirders in various parts of Maryland.

Susan Laessig and Sung Han report fledging 14 bluebirds from the 3 nestboxes in their Derwood home in **Montgomery County**.

From the **Button Farm Bluebird Trail's** 12 nestboxes in Germantown, **Heather Zindash** reports fledging 41 bluebirds and 12 tree swallows.

At the **Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC)** in Edgewater, **Anne Arundel County** **Coordinator Ann Johnson** reports that they were unable to routinely monitor all of their nestboxes due to the heavy rains received over the spring and summer. Though her records suggest the trail may have fledged 40 bluebirds, Ann feels the data should be considered unreliable.

Linda Sumpter of **Gaithersburg** was relieved to hear that others also experienced a strange nesting season. "I was able to visit all of the boxes. In past years if a bird hatched, then it appeared to always fledge. That was not the case this year. For example, a bluebird might lay 5 eggs and 4 would hatch. I would find 1 that had hatched in the box dead after all of the others had fledged. Same for tree swallows. I wondered if the extremely wet weather had something to do with it. Maybe the parents were having a hard time finding sufficient food for all of the young mouths. I would be interested to know if other people had the same experience."

Sundown Park:

Bluebirds - there were 4 broods with a total of 12 fledged

Tree Swallows - there were 2 broods with a total of 6 fledged

Lois Green Conservation Park

Bluebirds - there were 6 broods with a total of 24 fledged

Tree Swallows - there were 7 broods with a total of 22 fledged

Linda's Home

Bluebirds - there were 2 broods with a total of 7 fledged

Tree Swallows - there was 1 brood with a total of 3 fledged

Don and Jackie Miller of **Laytonsville** experienced a very frustrating nesting season. "For years we always had Bluebirds in our yard but this past year our neighbor put up a Bluebird box and our group seemed to have moved into their house. We hope they will come back to us next year."

Nancy Taylor Evans, formerly of **Frederick, MD** and currently living in **Lanexa, VA** (near Williamsburg) reports that 14 bluebirds hatched and fledged from her nestbox in Frederick. The blues got a late start in Lanexa but began building as soon as the nestbox was up. 5 bluebird babies fledged from Lanexa. Nancy and family will be relocating to a small farmette in the near future and Nancy is over the moon because the former owners already have a bluebird trail started. Can't wait to see what nesting season 2019 holds for the Evans family.

"Like many others, the rain conditions kept me from monitoring the Linden Farm trail weekly - which is my comfort level," reports **Anne Sturm** of **Montgomery County**. "My fledged bluebirds are down on all my trails. Lots of House sparrow predation but they at least did not get to profit with any offspring."

Linden Farm had the following.

TS - 10 fledged out of five nests. (really low number)

BB- 22 fledged out of five successful nestlings. Quite a few failed nests - eggs just did not hatch.

4 Streams Golf Course

BB- 64 fledged out of 14 attempts.

TS 33 fledged out of 7 attempts

Anne's backyard trail: BB 18 fledged out of five attempts, TS 11 fledged out of two attempts.

Don Truitt of **Montgomery County** had 7 of 10 bluebird nestlings fledge from his nestbox. "Sadly, our yard fledged 0 bluebirds this year, down from 2 in 2017," reports **Robert Anderson** from **Rockville**. "Our fault. We built a 4' x 8' cedar raised bed tomato garden near the nest box. Wrens took over. They hatched 5 or 6 at least."

Pat Mills of **Brooke Grove Retirement Village** in **Montgomery County** reports that 46 bluebirds were fledged from the trail. 9 volunteers help to monitor the 24 nestboxes in the community.

Ruthann Zenk has been monitoring Bluebird boxes for almost 15 years, in York, Pa and now in **Manchester**, in **Carroll County**, MD. For the past 8 years or so she has been lucky enough to have a camera in a bluebird box near her home. This year she was able to observe behavior that she has never witnessed before. She writes, "In February and March, 3 bluebirds regularly came to my mealworm feeder. There was one male and two females. Very little aggression was shown by the females to each other which kind of surprised me. On April 10, egg # 1 was laid followed by #2 on 4/13 and #3 on 4/16. Very strange...3 days between eggs. One egg hatched on 4/29. Apparently the other 2 were either not fertile or were not incubated in a timely fashion, as the weather was very variable." During this time, Ruthann kept seeing all 3 adult bluebirds at her mealworm feeder. She continues, "We discarded the unhatched eggs when it was obvious they would not hatch. The baby grew well and we observed it on the camera being fed mealworms. On May 17, a female bluebird went in to the nest and I assumed it to be the mother of the baby. But the strange thing was, she was bringing in nesting material. How odd. The baby kept opening his mouth but no mealworms came in. He was 19 days old at this point and ready to fledge." After watching for a while, Ruthann and her husband realized that the baby was in some distress and, upon opening the nestbox, discovered that the baby had nesting material stuck in its throat. It also appeared that the female (who they thought was the mom) was actually building another nest on top of the baby! "My husband picked up the baby and had to manually remove the dry nesting material from its throat. At that point, the baby flew away to some bushes and we saw the male feeding it mealworms. We then

cleaned out the old nest and within 90 minutes, the female returned with more nesting material. This continued for several days until she built a new nest. On 5/20, the first egg was laid followed by another egg each morning through 5/25. Incubation began on 5/24 and 5 babies hatched on June 5 and all fledged from June 23-24. A new nest was begun on June 27, eggs were laid on Jul 2-6. Hatch occurred on July 18 and 19 with one egg not viable. That meant that 10 young fledged from that nestbox, from 3 separate nests. Our only conclusion is that they were 2 different females who nested there. Obviously, the first female could only lay an egg every 3rd day, whereas the second female laid the eggs in a more normal fashion. Ruthann and her husband are eagerly awaiting nesting season 2019.

County Coordinator Janice Ward reports the following data from her two **Worcester County** trails:

Nassawango Creek Bluebird Trail-- 28 boxes

93 bluebirds fledged
12 tree swallows fledged
7 Carolina chickadees fledged
5 tufted titmice fledged
5 Prothonotary warblers fledged

Notes:

Earliest bluebird egg--4/5, 5 boxes with 2 bluebird nestings, 1 box with 3 bluebird nestings

Cedartown Bluebird Trail--15 boxes

52 bluebirds fledged
26 tree swallows fledged
13 house wrens fledged
Notes: Earliest bluebird egg--4/11, 4 boxes with 2 bluebird nestings

Jim Demetrios of **Frederick** reports that the 6 nestboxes at Clover Hill Park Trail, monitored by **Boy Scout Troop 470**, fledged 10 house wrens, 3 bluebirds and 2 tree swallows. He further reports that there were some instances of predation; most likely by snakes and that the scouts will be upgrading their trail's predator baffles.

Tony Laing of **Olney** reached a milestone with his bluebirds this year. Monitoring since 2006, Tony fledged his 1,000th bluebird during the summer,

ending with an overall total of 1,045 by the end of nesting season! Congratulations, Tony!

Louis Soule, of **Gaithersburg** reports the following for 2018:

Home: 4 Boxes; 5 Broods; 17 BBs fledged.

Ovid Hazen Wells Park, (Red Wiggler): 26 Boxes: 23 Broods, 62 BBs, 33 Tree Swallows fledged.

Little Bennett Park, (Rt. 121 Campground Area): 9 Boxes: 13 Broods, 47 BBs, 9 Tree Swallows fledged.

Susan Moran of **Gaithersburg**, has been monitoring bluebird nestboxes 35 years. She began in 1967 under the tutelage of Dr. Lawrence Zeleny, founder of the North American Bluebird Society. With assistance from **Dale Thornton** of Virginia, the trails fledged 145 bluebirds, 10 tree swallows, 15 Carolina wrens and 14 House Wrens.

Diane Seward of **Potomac** reports the following from her trails:

Carolina Chickadees: Just 1 unsuccessful attempt, early on. Two eggs were laid, then dumped and there was no further nesting activity by that pair. The box was subsequently used by House Wrens, but not immediately, so I am not sure who did the egg dumping.

Tree Swallows: 3 nesting attempts, 11 eggs, 9 nestlings, 3 fledglings, 3 nesting attempts. One nest of 5 14-day old nestlings suffered predation in a vicious attack by another tree swallow! It happened very quickly, and the adults constantly monitored this box, always one inside peering out. So very odd, the predation. The owner of the property where the box was located saw it happen. I found four dead nestlings in the box, no adults. Possibly one nestling survived, but day 14 seems quite early to fledge.

House wrens dumped an egg in an attempt by another pair. The third attempt produced five eggs, four nestlings, and three fledglings.

Bluebirds: Finally, some good news. Best Eastern Bluebird season our neighborhood has had. 16 nesting attempts, 65 eggs, 49 nestlings, 46 fledglings. 12 attempts with at least one fledgling. The four unsuccessful attempts were early on, house wren egg dumping in each case. Nestboxes with at least one active attempt: Eight

Izaak Walton League farm in **Poolesville**:

Tree Swallow: Eight nesting attempts, 39 eggs, 32 nestlings and 25 fledglings. Five nests had at least one fledgling. One nest of five nestlings, plus an adult, was lost to avian predation, possibly a kestrel or tree swallow competition (as happened on my neighborhood trail).

Bluebird: 20 attempts, 81 eggs, 72 nestlings, 64 fledglings. 15 attempts had at least one fledgling. At least two of the unsuccessful attempts were due to snake predation.

Purple Martins: Six nesting attempts, 22 eggs, 19 nestlings, 15 fledglings. Four attempts had at least one fledgling. One unsuccessful nest (eggs) must have lost the adult female, because the eggs were cold. The second failed attempt (four nestlings) was due to black snake predation.

Antietam National Battlefield in **Sharpsburg, Washington County** the following totals were reported from **John and Judy Lilga**:

Total fledged:

Bluebirds - 359 (last year's total was 431)

Tree Swallows - 75

Incidents of Vandalism/Predation - mice 10, House sparrow 9, snake 3, wasp 1

Total lost or dead 23

Total number of successful Bluebird clutches 94:

71 Bluebird pairs had only one clutch

21 Bluebird pairs had two clutches

2 Bluebird pairs had three clutches

Maureen Lawson of **Hollywood**, in **St. Mary's County**, fledged 8 bluebirds from her yard. The blues chose one box for their first nesting of 4 which hatched on May 4th, and chose the 2nd box for the second nesting of 4 which hatched on June 22nd.

Kathy Kremnitzer, Coordinator for **Frederick County**, reports nesting season 2018 as being one of the strangest she has ever experienced. Many of the nestboxes on two of her Frederick trails remained unmonitorable for most of the nesting season due to the heavy rains the area received over the spring and summer. "When nestboxes cannot be monitored on a regular basis, it is impossible to accurately report data", she says. Of the 21 nestboxes she was able to monitor weekly, 32 bluebirds and 25 tree swallows were fledged. As Kathy is also a part of the

monitoring team at **Antietam National Battlefield** in **Washington County** near her home, she reports that both bluebird and tree swallow fledging numbers were down this year. Young of both species were lost during extended periods of rainy weather most likely due to hypothermia and to the adults' inability to find adequate food to feed. Kathy also noted that the bluebirds were later with their first nestings this year and that there were fewer tree swallow nesting attempts overall.

Doug Smith of **Montgomery County** reports nesting success from **Seneca Creek State Park's** bluebird trail. This year the trail fledged 100 bluebirds, 10 tree swallows and 6 house wrens.

Connie Majka of **Parkton, MD** in **Baltimore County** reports that there were 3 bluebird nestings in her nestbox in 2018.

1st attempt: 5 eggs, 5 fledglings

2nd attempt: 5 eggs, 1 fledgling

3rd attempt: 4 eggs, 0 hatched

"This is the first year we had a major problem with House Sparrows and also a House Wren", Connie says. "The 2nd nesting hatched all 5 eggs, but a House Sparrow attacked the day-old nestlings. Only one

survived and was injured so I took it to Phoenix Wildlife Center to be cared for. The one survivor wasn't injured too badly and eventually released into the wild again."

Connie is a new member of MBS. Welcome, Connie!

Ed Escalante, **MBS Coordinator for Montgomery County**, monitors 32 nestboxes at Little Bennett Regional Park in Clarksburg, MD. Ed has monitored this trail since 1997, starting with 6 nestboxes and the trail has grown over the years to its current size. Ed reports that "it was a below average year in number of bluebirds fledged, which I attribute to a wet/cold Spring, and problems with House Wrens removing bluebird eggs and young from three of my sites." The trail fledged 77 bluebirds and 43 tree swallows this year.

MBS President Stan Fisher reports the following from his **Montgomery County** trails:

Model Airplane Park- 7 boxes, 29 bluebirds fledged

Bluebird Hill – 12 boxes, 22 bluebirds fledged

Little Bennett Regional Park near golf course – 7 boxes, 23 bluebirds fledged

Black Hill 121- 8 boxes, 21 bluebirds fledged

Chestnut Orchard - 10 boxes, 29 bluebirds fledged

Total: 44 nestboxes, 115 bluebirds fledged

MBS board member Diane Seward monitors a trail of nestboxes at an IWLA conservation farm in Poolesville. While some of the nestboxes on the trail are of the traditional NABS style, Diane has worked to phase in more boxes of the Peterson design. She began with 3 Peterson boxes and the trail now has nearly a dozen in service. The nestboxes are built by MBS board member, Matt Storms, are made of pine and have proven to be long-lasting and durable. They are loved by bluebirds and tree swallows alike and are never empty during nesting season.





Female Eastern Bluebird. Photo by Jenny Hendershot

What Will Happen to the Bluebirds?

by Kathy Kremnitzer

Like many people, I have been monitoring bluebird nestboxes and trails for a long time. I put up my first nestbox when I was 30 years old and am still enjoying this great adventure 29 years later. (Yes, that makes me 59 and no, I am not one of those women who don't like to tell their age-I've earned every scar and wrinkle and I'm proud of them!) However, the subject of age is my main reason for writing this article and I'm really in search of not 1, but 2 solutions: 1) Who will monitor the bluebird trails when current volunteers are no longer able to do so and 2) Who will be willing to step in and carry on for MBS when the current board is no longer able to.

All of our MBS board members have been involved with bluebirds for many years and, while we are still going strong, there is a concern among our group as to who will take over for us when we are no longer able to fulfill our responsibilities both as board members and as trail managers. Like many other organizations, including the North American Bluebird Society (NABS), the majority of our board members are approaching that "certain age" and sooner rather than later we will need to figure out how the job gets done when we can no longer do it. Yes, we can recruit bluebird lovers from younger generations and we could certainly use some suggestions from our membership in this area. Giving presentations and encouraging student groups helps to open the door for interesting children in how to interact with nature, but many of our youth are so involved in other activities that they don't have the time for Mother Nature. (This is a shame, really, because spending a couple of hours a week walking a bluebird trail is an excellent way to not only get some exercise, it's a great stress reducer and also a wonderful way to renew the spirit.) While today's children are tomorrow's adults and thus a possible long-term solution for us, and while some adolescents are interested in learning about the aspects of monitoring a bluebird trail, I feel that what we need now is to cultivate more adult and middle-aged volunteers who are already in the midst of a love affair with bluebirds. Could this be you? Do you find yourself pulled outside at the sound of a bluebird's call? Do you feel the wonder when you check a nestbox and see those beautiful blue eggs or newly hatched chicks? Do you beam with maternal or paternal pride as you document the growth of young nestlings in your monitoring notebook? Do you experience rapturous joy when you witness baby bluebirds fledging the nest? Do you love talking to others about your bluebirds and find yourself confused when they don't share your enthusiasm? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, you are very likely someone who would be a natural fit for MBS.

I often find myself wondering what will happen to my bluebird trails when I am no longer able to manage their monitoring and maintenance. What will happen to the bluebirds if they can't depend on these safe nesting sites in which to raise their young? I can't abandon the boxes and allow them to either fall into disrepair or have them become house sparrow "factories" and I don't want to think about that day, honestly, but if no one steps up, the only responsible solution would be to take the boxes down. All bluebird landlords and monitors think about these things and worry about what will happen to the bluebirds?

Whether you monitor a single nestbox or a trail of nestboxes, won't you please consider joining our group to help ensure the future of our beloved bluebirds? If so, please contact us by visiting our website at

www.mdbluebirdsociety.org .

Maryland Bluebird Society's County Coordinators

MBS's County Coordinator Program is an important aspect of what our society is all about, helping bluebirders throughout the state when troubles arise. These volunteers accept phone calls and e-mails and are ready to assist with information and resources on the spur of the moment. Do you need help figuring out how to set up your nestbox? Maybe you have an abandoned nesting and don't know why. Perhaps house sparrows are plaguing your neighborhood and you don't know what to do. Well, an MBS County Coordinator is always willing to listen and share whatever knowledge and experience they can with you.

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If you do not see your county in the above listing, it is because we do not have a volunteer from your county. Please contact us if you would like to serve as County Coordinator from your area of our beautiful state.

**THE MARYLAND BLUEBIRD SOCIETY, INC.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Mail to: Maryland Bluebird Society
20809 Bell Bluff Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Instructions: Print and complete this application and mail to the above address. Please remember to enclose your check payable to the Maryland Bluebird Society.

Memberships and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Note: Membership is effective for the calendar year (s) in which the dues are paid, except that new member dues paid in the fourth calendar quarter cover the following year.

Date _____

Please check the appropriate boxes below:

New Application Renewal Application

Individual One year - \$10.00 Three years - \$25.00

Household One year - \$15.00 Three years - \$40.00

Lifetime: Individual - \$250.00 Household - \$300.00

Student – age 23 or under One year - \$7.00 Three years - \$20.00

Corporate/non-profit One year - \$30.00 Three years - \$85.00

Corporate sponsor (non-voting) One year - \$100.00

Make a tax deductible donation, amount \$ _____

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