



"Raising back Bluebirds for Future Generations!"

Bluebird News



Volume 22 Issue 2

March, 2011

POINTS OF INTEREST

Page1
SPRING IS ALMOST HERE

Page2
BLUEBIRD EXPO

Page3
BLUEBIRD EXPO
BY JENEAN MORTENSON

Page4
MESSAGE TO OUR
MEMBERS
BY FERN VESLEDAHL

Page5
BLUEBIRD EXPO
REGISTRATION FORM

Page6 & 7
GILBERTSON
CONDUIT/REBAR MOUNT-
ING SYSTEM

Page8
UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out our
new Updated
Website:
www.bbrp.org

Spring is almost here by Keith Radel

Today is March 1st. and it's partly sunny and will be 36 degrees this afternoon. I guess that means March came in like a lamb. The past two winters we have not plowed any snow in March in Faribault. Will that continue for the third year? We'll see.

Yesterday we had one common grackle on the sunflower heart feeder along with several cardinals. (The first one this winter, but I doubt he was a spring migrant). It's kind of funny because I was glad to see him, but when there's 30 of them on our feeder in May and they empty it in less than one hour, they lose their appeal. (We filled the feeder with straight safflowers and the grackles leave).

With the cold wet week in May last year many Bluebirders helped the Bluebird adults & chicks in many ways. Loren "Murph" Murphy had over 100 Bluebird chicks at that time. He & his wife Ardy fed many mealworms (some live & some reconstituted freeze dried ones - The birds like both). "Murph" also formed Bluebirds nests out of horse hay to replace the wet

nests. (The parents got the nests & chicks wet, when they went in & out of nest boxes on those rainy days). He also used the hand warmers, (that sportsman use) under the nest at night. To get ready for this Bluebird nesting season have some mealworms on hand about May 1st. Also, if you do not have access to horse hay, rake up & bag some dried grass clippings from your lawn mowing. Be ready just in case.

The Bluebird Expo is next month at Cambridge, MN. We have four speakers on Bluebirds & Bluebird trails. In addition, we have live birds from the Raptor Center, including an Eagle. To top off the program we have Jim Gilbert from WCCO Radio "Nature Notes" and from Southern MN, humorist & story teller Al Batt.

What a line up! Come join the fun!!

If you want an extra great start to the Bluebird Nesting Season make certain to attend the Bluebird Expo April 16, (details inside) We'll see you there!



Photo by Jake Langeslag



Photo by Doris Glander



2011 ANNUAL BLUEBIRD EXPO



Jim Gilbert

*Naturalist & WCCO
Radio Show (Nature Notes)*



Al Batt

*Southern MN Comedian
Al does thoughtful, clean and humorous
talks that will allow those in the audience to
laugh and learn.*



Raptor Center

*Live Birds
(Bald Eagle, Owls, & Hawks)*



Photo by Doris Glander

SATURDAY, APRIL 16
CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Registration: 8:00 am - 9:00 am
Program: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm



OTHER SPEAKERS:

Mary Roen - Wis. Bluebirder - Wren Guard, Pole Baffles & Pairing vs. Singles

Carmalita Nelson - Non-Game DNR - Bluebird Chicks in Trouble

Keith Radel - Beginning Bluebird Trials and Fledging Tips

Marilyn Suter - Dakota County Fair Grounds Bluebird Trails Renovation & Results

SALES – DEMONSTRATIONS – VIDEOS
EXHIBITS – SILENT AUCTION

WANT TO ATTRACT BLUEBIRDS?
THIS IS THE PLACE TO LEARN HOW!



Photo by Doris Glander

Bluebird Expo! by JENean Mortenson

Here is March already, where does the time go? The registrations are coming in and it's always exciting to go to the mailbox and get these letters from you guys. I want to thank all of you who have sent in early and also for the nice donations you have offered for our Silent Auction and Raffle. The money raised from that helps with the education that is put on through out the year. There are some beautiful unique items and lots of variety. Lots of you love to make items and they go over really well. Mike Sandberg is making wooden box with a bluebird inlaid in the cover, my husband Carl and I will be making a stepping stone with a bluebird in that also. We have three different donations of home made maple syrup that goes over really well and is so appreciated. To you who send money donations I can purchase things from Wild Wings. There is a special line on the registration form to fill out what you are donating, if you are going to donate put down what it is so we can have the tickets all made out when it is brought in. It gets so very busy the morning of and it's so nice to have that all done. If at the time you are making out your registration form and you are unsure what you want to donate, you can email me and let me know.

For the sales table we are ordering a variety of flags with beautiful scenes of birds for the yard, the colors are so vivid and are true colors of the birds and flowers. We also ordered some beautiful clothing items with our Bluebird logo and have a great line of cards, something for everyone. Also, Wild Wings has donated a beautiful framed, signed and numbered picture with the authenticity document called "Holly Hocks and Bluebirds" by artist Susan Bourdet. It measures 20x15 and it will be a special raffle item. It is beautiful and hanging in our living room since November when it was delivered, oh how I hate to take it down. The colors are beautiful, with a male Bluebird sitting on a rustic fence post with Holly Hocks, she certainly captured the colors of the Bluebird perfectly.

As like last year we will not be accepting any nestboxes for the silent auction or raffle, out of respect for the vendors who sell BBRP approved nestboxes.

We had Marlene Gustafson cater the delicious lunch last year and we got so many compliments on it that her and her crew will be back again this year. There will be coffee and cookies at both the morning and afternoon coffees. If you can donate some of your great cookies let us know, it is so appreciated.

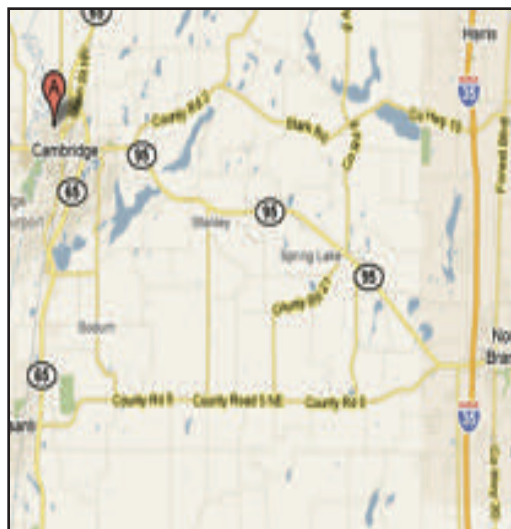
Again we have a great list of speakers. We are so lucky to be able to get Jim Gilbert of WCCO Radio Nature Notes, each year I get e-mails and calls about how happy they are we have him. Al Batt is so great with his wonderful humor and stories. Keith Radel will cover Bluebird beginning trails & fledging tips. Carmalita Nelson on helping Bluebird chicks in trouble. Mary Roen will be talking on pairing vs. singles, house wren guards and pole baffles. Marilyn Suter, who is on our State Committee, will be giving a great talk re-juvenating a trail at Dakota fair grounds and results of that. We are so lucky to get the Minnesota Raptor Center from St. Paul with a hawk, owl, falcon and the beautiful majestic bald eagle. It is such a wonderful amazing story about people bringing in these birds who have been shot, hit by a car, or other problems and are brought into the Raptor Center. Some can't be saved because the injuries are just too bad, but the ones that can be rehabilitated are given a chance in the wild and can be released. The ones that can't be are used in the programs such as we are offering. You will be so inspired by seeing and hearing about these magnificent birds and learn specific things that can be done to help protect raptors and the environment. The Raptor Center recycles used printer ink cartridges for income, if you have any please bring them that day.

We have 20-2 Queen Standard non-smoking rooms reserved until March 16th. at the Crossing by Grand Stay at Cambridge for \$74.99 plus tax per night, 1-4 people. Their phone number is 1-866-936-STAY, 1-763-689-0542, CAMBRIDGE@CROSSINGSINN.COM

We hope to see all of you at the Expo, after this long snowy (that doesn't want to quit) winter, treat yourself and join us for a fun filled day. There are so many friendships that are made at the Expo, we are all out trying to help our beautiful Gems of Blue and other birds and wildlife in general. It will be so nice to have warm weather again and start seeing our beautiful Gems of Blue.

(We will set up Friday afternoon at 4:30 at the school with dinner at 7 p.m. - Perkins Restaurant, come and join us.)

Thanks again, **JENean Mortenson, Conference Co-Chair • Phone 507-332-7003 • clmjmm@ll.net (2 lower case L's.net)**



BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT & RENEWAL

Enrollment in the Bluebird Recovery Program includes: initial Information Packet containing a full color Trail Guide, Top Ten Tips including colored Nest Guide, Record Keeping booklet, Pole Assembly instruction sheet, yearly Report Form & quarterly Newsletter. There are also annual informational meetings and a yearly Bluebird Expo. Consultation and advice are available by phone, e-mail, correspondence or in the field.

Enrollment contributions are tax deductible.

_____ New Member Renewal _____

Membership periods are:

_____ 1 year \$12.00	_____ 2 years \$23.00
_____ 5 years \$55.00	_____ Lifetime \$150.00
_____ * Gift Membership * - indicate amount & period of gift _____	



*Bringing back Bluebirds
for Future Generations!*

Member Name _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone(optional) _____

* If giving a Gift Membership, please provide your name so that the recipient can be informed of your generosity. _____

Send to:

Bluebird Recovery Program, c/o Shiela Smisek
705 W. Welco Dr. • Montgomery, MN 56069

Message to Our Members by Fern Vesledahl

This seems to have been such a long winter. Will it ever end? All of the seed catalogs that have come in the mail are a good reminder that a warmer, greener season soon will be here. As I plan my flower and vegetable gardens and dream of fresh vegetables and fragrant smelling flowers, I'm ready for spring!

Before springs' arrival however, it's time to review my Bluebird Trail Notes. One of the first things I noticed in my notes is to move some of the boxes to a new area. One can forget that all plants are growing each season and what once was a good location may not be now. Some of the boxes can simply be moved a few feet away from their current location for a pair of bluebirds to safely raise their family. Others I'm considering a new site because, for whatever reason, the bluebirds have not utilized them in the last couple of years. Whenever I'm out driving the roads close to the area where I have my trail, my eyes are automatically drawn to new sites for boxes. With possible new sites I will need to contact the home/land owner(s) to get permission for putting up nest boxes. I have never been turned down, as it seems everyone enjoys having the bluebirds in their yards. Plus, I get to meet others living in my area. Also, it is wise to contact Gopher One (811 then press 1 for Minnesota) to mark the locations of underground utility lines before placing the poles into the ground. If I have mul-

tiple locations I try to have them mark all of them while in the area.

To get ready for my first trek out on the trail I need to check my supplies in my toolbox to make sure everything is there. I know during the off season some of my tools get used for other things. Usually my husband has borrowed them. Now is the time to round them up and put them back into the box. I'm going to have to replenish some very important staples, steel wool and a new container of car wax for polishing the poles. This of course helps to deter climbing predators. I also need some silicone sealant to seal any cracks to keep the water out and the nests dry. We all know how important it is to have the nest boxes watertight to keep the chicks dry and safe. Investing your time by doing all of these simple preparations will keep the bluebirds safe and hopefully have a very good nesting season.

With great enthusiasm we are all waiting to welcome that first streak of blue across our yard signifying spring and the return of the bluebird and a new nesting season. Good luck bluebirders, may you have lots of bluebirds this season.

HAPPY SPRING EVERYONE



2011 ANNUAL BLUEBIRD EXPO

CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

430 – NW 8th Ave.

Cambridge, MN 55008

SATURDAY, APRIL 16th, 2011

REGISTRATION: 8:00AM – 9:00AM

PROGRAM: 9:00AM – 4:30PM

WE HAVE A VERY FULL DAY PLANNED FOR ALL TO ENJOY.

OUR FEATURED SPEAKERS WILL BE:

JIM GILBERT OF WCCO RADIO “NATURE NOTES”

AL BATT WITH HIS WONDERFUL HUMOR

KEITH RADEL – “Beginning Bluebird Trails and Fledging Tips”

MARY ROEN, WISC. BLUEBIRDER - “Pairing vs. Singles, House Wren Guard & Pole Baffles”

CARMALITA NELSON – NON-GAME DNR “Bluebird Chicks in Trouble”

MINNESOTA RAPTOR CENTER FROM ST. PAUL WITH SEVERAL BIRDS

MARILYN SUTER - Dakota County Fair Grounds Trail Renovation & Results

Coffee and Cookies served for morning and afternoon breaks

PRE - REGISTRATION FEE - \$8.00 PER PERSON BEFORE APRIL 9th - \$10.00 AFTER

LUNCH –\$11.75, Parmesan Chicken Breast, Relish Tray, Cranberries, Beverages,

Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans, Caesar Salad, Glazed Carrots, Rolls & Butter, Cake

2011 Bluebird Expo Registration

I am (we are) coming. Please print name tags as: _____

Name: _____ Email/Phone: _____

Address: _____

I would like a table for display _____

I can bring a dozen store bought or homemade cookies _____

Do you have an item to donate for the silent auction? Yes _____ No _____

If Yes, Please provide description _____

Number of registrations _____ @ \$8.00 each before 4/9 \$ _____

_____ after 4/9 @ \$10.00 each \$ _____

Number of lunch reservations _____ @ \$11.75 each \$ _____

I would like _____ tables for sales @ \$15.00 each \$ _____

Cash donations are welcome to purchase items for the silent auction \$ _____

donations are tax deductible

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Questions: Call JENean Mortenson 507-332-7003 clmjmm@ll.net

Keith Radel 507-210-0961

Please detach and send to:

Bluebird Recovery Program, c/o JENean Mortenson, 2343 - 166th St. E., Faribault, MN 55021.

Pre-registration Deadline is April 9th



*Bringing back Bluebirds
for Future Generations!*

GILBERTSON CONDUIT/REBAR MOUNTING SYSTEM

Gilbertson Conduit/Rebar Mounting System Bluebirds Across Nebraska

Bluebirds Across Nebraska (BAN) believes the Gilbertson conduit/rebar mounting system is the best system available for mounting a lightweight bluebird box. This system was developed by longtime bluebinder Steve Gilbertson of Aitkin, Minnesota, in the late 1980s. Thousands of boxes have been successfully mounted on this system by bluebirders in Nebraska, Minnesota, and many other parts of the country.

The conduit/rebar system is almost 100 percent predator proof. For added protection, the conduit can be rubbed with coarse steel wool and a coating of caruba car wax or furniture polish can be applied. This should be done at the beginning of the nesting season.

This system can be easily used on any of the three boxes BAN distributes — the Gilbertson PVC, the Troyer, and the Gilwood.

Materials

CONDUIT: Use 1/2-inch EMT electrical conduit (available in 10-foot lengths). The Gilwood and Troyer boxes require a piece 4 1/2 feet long, while the PVC requires a 5-foot length. Using these lengths places the boxes at a height for easy monitoring.

REBAR: Use a piece of the 1/2-inch rebar with a minimum length of 4 feet. Sandy or loose soil may require a 5-foot length of rebar, with 3 feet in the ground. The rebar must be cut, not sheared. Shearing will create a burr on the end of the rebar, which will prevent the conduit from slipping over it.

CONDUIT COUPLER: Use a 1/2-inch conduit coupler. The bottom screw provided with the coupler will have to be replaced by a slightly longer screw in order for the conduit to make contact with the rebar (see photo 1). This will keep the conduit from twisting on the rebar.



Assembly

Using a hammer, drive the rebar approximately 2 feet into the ground (see photo 2).



Place the conduit with the coupler attached over the rebar and tighten until snug. Do not over-tighten as the coupler can crack (see photo 3).

Place the box over the conduit with the entrance hole facing the desired direction. A 47/64-inch hole is provided on the underside of the roof of the PVC and on the base of the extended back of the Troyer box. The Gilwood box has a conduit coupler attached to the base of the box (see photo 4).

Use a cordless drill to insert a self-tapping screw to secure a Troyer (photo 5) or PVC box (photo 6) to the conduit. To use a conventional screw, the hole must be pre-drilled. A screwdriver is all that is needed to attach a Gilwood box to the conduit.



GILBERTSON CONDUIT/REBAR MOUNTING SYSTEM PART II

In addition to providing superior predator protection, the conduit/rebar system has the benefit of being easy to move or remove as your trail needs dictate and it can be made or purchased for a reasonable price. After a period of time, the rebar may rust into the ground and a pair of vice grips may be needed to remove it (see photo 7).

This article appeared in the Fall 2010 issue of The Banner, the newsletter of Bluebirds Across Nebraska; it is reprinted here with permission. BAN works to increase populations of bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting birds, and is a NABS Affiliate. For more information about BAN, visit their website at www.bbne.org.



Bluebird Recovery Program
Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis



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Faribault, MN 55021

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tax-deductible donation of \$12.

Check Your Expiration Dates

Just a little reminder to check the expiration date of your membership. The date is printed on your newsletter label. The 4 numbers above your name indicate the Month and Year that your membership will expire. For example: 06 09 would indicate an expiration of June, 2009. If the last 2 numbers are 99, this indicates a Life-time membership. If your membership is nearing expiration (or has already expired), please renew so that your subscription to Bluebird News is not interrupted.

Upcoming Bluebird Events

Tuesday, March 29th, 7 p.m. - BB Info meeting, History Center of Olmsted County, 1195 W Circle Dr. SW, Rochester, MN - Contact: Jan Podolske - 507-282-9447

Wednesday, April 6th, 7 p.m. - BB Info meeting, Hiawatha Valley Audubon Society monthly meeting, Tandeski Center, SE Technical Campus, 1200 Storr's Pond Rd., Winona, MN - Contacts: Steve & Toni Sherwood - 507-454-6227

Saturday & Sunday, April 9th & 10th, - BB Info Booth & Program, Dundee Nursery Spring Expo, 16800 Highway 55, Plymouth, MN - Contact: Kim - 763-559-4016

Saturday, April 30th, 1:30 p.m. - BB Video, BB Info, & BB Field Trip, Camden State Park, Lynd, MN - Contact: Elizabeth Murray, S. Lyon County Coordinator - 507-865-4530 (*Come Join the FUN!!*)

Saturday, May 7th, 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. - BB Info. Booth - Trout Day - Forestville State Park, just South of Spring Valley, MN., Contact Jim Wernimont - 507-261-9816

Saturday, June 18th, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. - BB Info. Booth & program - Earth, Wind & Water Day - Camp Courage, 8046-83rd St. NW, Maple Lake, MN. Contact: Paul Schutte - 612-968-3034



Photo by Doris Glander

Save This Date
Sat. April 16th, 2011
State Wide Bluebird Expo
Cambridge High School

Our Mission:

"To encourage, inspire, educate and assist individuals and organizations to become actively involved in the restoration and preservation efforts to sustain a healthy and expanding population of bluebirds and other native cavity nesters."

www.bbrp.org

Only current BBRP paid members continue to receive the newsletter. Please check the expiration date of your current membership on the address label.