

BAYOU BLUEBIRD NEST NEWS

Volume 21

Evelyn M. Cooper, Editor

June 2007

From The Perch
By:
Kenny Kleinpeter
President

Photo by:
Wendell Long
Waynesville, OH



Dear Bluebirders,

As I write this, the first nesting cycle is nearly finished and the second, well underway. Our main trail, in St. Helena Parish suffered a little from the drought, I think. The first cycle hatch rates were rather low. Already, however, it looks like the second cycle will be a very strong one to compensate for the first. This year's events remind me of the resiliency of nature and especially, our bluebirds. The energy that the females might "save" from a previous, low-production cycle can be "spent" on the next cycle.

LBBS had a wonderful time at Earth Day in Baton Rouge exposing hundreds of people to the wonders of bluebirding. Dorothy Gammel had some very engaging projects while Evelyn Cooper and Sheryl Bassi brought the nests and eggs display.

I gave a quick little talk on backyard birding to a small but enthusiastic group. Above all, we had a great time and look forward to next year. Focusing on festivals rather than spring meetings that included nest box workshops seems to be a good move. We hope to have a table for participants to put together their own nest box at next year's festival and with a few tweaks we will have a good model for expanding membership.

The prediction of an active hurricane season makes me pray for areas still recovering from Katrina and Rita. I urge all of us to prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

We hope to see many of you at our 2007 Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge on September 15th. We are planning on a shorter but more exciting program. We will return to the Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center at 10:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., so please mark your calendars!

Kenny



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The LBBS Board received names from the Nominating Committee to present to the membership in September for positions on the Board. These names are Yvonne Bordelon, Covington and Mildred Hyde, Monroe. Nominations from the floor will be accepted. The annual meeting is scheduled for September 15th, 10:00 a.m to 12:30 p.m at Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center in Baton Rouge. More details in next newsletter.

Children And Adults Enjoy Arts And Crafts At LBBS Booth Earth Day Festival April 22 ,2007



Some of The Things That Can Happen When You Do Not Monitor Your Nestboxes

You won't know when they have fledged and promptly clean out the nestbox so that the pair can start their next brood.

The female can build the nest over the old one making it too close to the entry hole. It can endanger her, the eggs or babies to climbing predators. Boxes that are not cleaned out will fill up and be of no use.

Ants can climb the poles and cause females to abandon eggs or can kill the babies.

You might decide to open the door not knowing how old fledglings are and cause them to fledge prematurely.

A fledgling may have perished and parents could not remove it and causes problems for the other babies. These are some reasons to keep records. and monitor your boxes.



Kleinpeter Farms Dairy, Baton Rouge, was chosen as "Conservationist of The Year" in the corporate category by Louisiana Wildlife Federation at their annual convention in Gonzales, March 3, 2007 for water recycling, irrigation and bluebird houses. Shown above is Ben Kleinpeter with members of the Kleinpeter family sharing this honor. Congratulations from LBBS!

SPECIAL THANKS

To **Mary Jo Wright, Many**, for all her efforts in helping LBBS to gain members and to be able to share our mission and educational goals with others. Through her efforts LBBS was able to give presentations and hold workshops gaining 46 members for the society.

Mary Jo monitored the Hodges Garden Bluebird Trail last year and has enlisted help from some of her garden club members for this year. Margaret Kemp will be in charge of the trail this season. Carolyn Martin of Many and Mary Jo will assist her.

Mary Jo says a check as of May 29th showed all boxes occupied except one. She said things were in great shape and going well for the trail.

Many thanks to you, Mary Jo, and to your people for taking care of the beautiful Hodges Garden Bluebird Trail that Dr. Shirl Brunell established.

DO GOOD, FEEL GOOD

By: E.A. Zimmerman

Certified Environmental Professional

Webmaster for Cornell University Bluebird -L Archives

www.sialis.org

Everyone has 24 hours in their day, with some control over how they spend their time. On average, an adult probably spends more than 3-4 hours a day watching TV or surfing the Internet. It's nice to unwind, but by volunteering you can use some of that spare time to benefit yourself, the community and the environment.

Here are some reasons why people volunteer:

Growth. Volunteering is an opportunity to learn a new skill or apply a rusting one. You can gain knowledge and training, challenge yourself, check out career options, and beef up a resume. Volunteering can also be an excuse to do what you love. You can tap into a passion that your job doesn't draw on.

Socialize. Volunteering offers opportunities to meet new people that you might not otherwise come into contact with. You can make new friends, and be part of a team. It offers connections for people who may be isolated because they are new to town, work from home, or have become empty nesters, divorced or widowed. It can help develop mutual beneficial networks.

It's good for you. Edward Brown, author of "The Healing Power of Service", says "People who volunteer work are much less likely to suffer illness. "A number of studies have shown that volunteer work can reduce heart rates and blood pressure, combat insomnia, enhance immune systems, and less depression. People who engage in regular work actually tend to live longer.

It makes you feel good. This positive impact on health may be associated with the social support network and sense of well-being and accomplishment associated with volunteering. Volunteers often experience increased self-confidence and self-esteem. Getting out of the house and your head while helping
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(con't from page 4)

others also buffers stress and enables you to forget your own troubles for a while. It can also be fun to do something like assessing water quality by spending an afternoon by a stream, scooping up and counting the different kinds of creatures that live there.

Some tips:

- Consider attending a routine meeting before deciding to join up, to get a sense of the groups' goals, priorities, and members.
- Some roles have more flexible schedules than others. You can always start small by pitching in on a short term project.
- Don't spread yourself too thin—even though it may inconvenience others when you need to say no, you will avoid being stressed out and not being able to deliver.
- Don't bother volunteering for an organization that doesn't appreciate your contribution— there are plenty of others that will. One of the nice things about volunteering is that it's by choice.

There are volunteer opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. As they say, anyone who thinks they are too small to make a difference has never spent the night in bed with a mosquito. You can stuff envelopes; help maintain a trail; work on a research project; newsletter or fundraiser; or become a board member. Options related to environmental protection or nature include working with a local conservation commission, open space organization, land trust, wildlife management organization or public park. Most openings do not require any technical ability—just an interest and willingness to learn and contribute.

LBBS has many talented people. There is a place where everyone can serve. One example of how **LBBS** can grow is Mary Jo Wright's efforts in her part of the state. With the teamwork of our nestbox builders, **JIMMIE ORR and JACK HOOVER**, we have put up many boxes in that part of the state, educated people and helped **LBBS** to grow. Please contact us if you would like to work with us to help your part of the state grow. These builders along with **JAMES DEAN** have made many boxes for Earth Day Festival in Baton Rouge. If you can build nest boxes and would like to help, please get in touch with us.



Beth Stringer, Many Garden Club and LBBS member gave an excellent presentation on herbs at the Sabine Master Gardeners Seminar held on February 24th. Approximately 125 people were in attendance.

Homeowners' use of pesticides on lawns higher per acre than agricultural use

USE CAUTION, CONSIDER TIMING WHEN USING!

Most Americans think of pesticide use as primarily an agricultural issue. In terms of pounds applied, agriculture does not account for the majority of pesticide use. However, non-agricultural uses are extensive, and use per acre is significantly higher on average for homeowners, like brodifacoum for control of mice.

Local governments authorize the use of pesticides for park management and roadside management; conservationists and gardeners use pesticides for habitat restoration and insect control.

When used judiciously, pesticides can be important tools. Here are some useful tips for your own backyard and your community.
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* Consider a bird-friendly yard with trees, bushes, and some ground cover. In many areas, native grasses and plants provide a low-maintenance yard that give birds more opportunities for nesting, foraging and finding useful cover.

*If you must tackle a pest problem by resorting to pesticide, do so judiciously and responsibly. Buy products that are clearly labeled. Choose a more selective/target specific pesticide when possible. Read the label, note if there are any wildlife warnings and follow the instructions closely. Do not apply pesticides (including herbicides) directly underneath bird feeders or around bird boxes or primary nesting or foraging areas. Be aware that sprays can be carried in a slight breeze, so consider emptying and covering birdbaths before spraying. As an extra precaution, consider not using pesticides during seasons when the young are hatching.

* If you choose to hire a pest control operator, (PCO) talk to them about your concerns, and see if they are willing to consider least-toxic approaches.

Most PCOs are sensitive to customer concerns and have a variety of less toxic products and methods they can apply, if directed.

* If you are aware of an incident involving an injured live bird, contact a federally permitted wildlife rehabilitator in your area. If you notice dead birds, contact the nearest USFWS law enforcement office. If you have concerns about the application or use of farm pesticides, contact your state department of agriculture.

* In areas where mosquitoes are an ongoing problem, be vigilant in seeking out places where water can collect and provide breeding spots. Encourage local park officials and pest control agencies to search for least-toxic approaches to mosquito control and other municipal pest control problems.

Article provided by "Bluebird" Journal of the North American Bluebird Society Spring 2001 Vol. 23, No. 2

EARTH DAY 2007

**By: Sheryl Bassi and
Evelyn Cooper**

The following posts were sent to the Cornell University Bluebird List. Several LBBS officers and board members participate on the Bluebird List and share what they are doing for the bluebirds and the bluebirders.

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WOW! WHAT A DAY!

All,

We (myself, Evelyn Cooper, and my daughter, Nessa) returned home late last night from celebrating Earth Day 2007 in Baton Rouge, LA. Talk about a good time!

We spent the first part of our weekend playing "tourist", visiting the State Capitol, the Old State Capitol, the Arsenal Museum, The Myrtles Antebellum Home, and the Highland Road Observatory, (where LBBS sponsors a trail monitored by LBBS Pres. Kenny Kleinpeter), as well as enjoying some "good eats", i.e. oyster po-boys, (dressed, of course); gumbo, boiled crawfish, some of the best pie I've ever eaten, shrimp on a stick, etc,...well, I'm sure you get the picture....I've done a lot of these things many times before, but I always find something new and exciting in Baton Rouge, even doing "the same old things"!

Earth Day 2007 dawned bright and early. The weather could not have been better with temps in the low 80's and a few clouds to block the sun. The festival was held just south of the Capitol complex 'neath Baton Rouge's lovely old Live Oaks.

Pretty much picture perfect. With some great blues and zydego music in the background, we set about the purpose of our being there...to educate people about Bluebirds, as well as all of the other native cavity nesters found in Louisiana.

Our booth was a great success. Chaired by LBBS board member Dorothy Gammill, our booth featured a lot of great activities for the kids. With Bluebird themed pages to color, a word-search, and the big hitter, Bluebird Origami, all the kids wanted to join in. The above listed activities led to their interest in an exhibit of nests and eggs of Eastern Bluebirds, Carolina Chickadees, and Carolina Wrens. I've no idea how many kids came through, as we lost count early in the day, but it was so much fun seeing how much the kids enjoyed learning about all of Louisiana's native cavity nesters. We educated a lot of adults, as well!

I'd like to encourage all of you to look to local festivals and celebrations as a way to reach out to other birders and most especially to kids. These events offer a great opportunity to educate so many people about our native species, and offer an even greater opportunity to introduce future birders to the wonderful world of birding.

Just some "bird food" for thought...

Sheryl Bassi
Leland, MS
LBBS

I would like to add to Sheryl's nice post that our nest and egg display stole the show on one side of the table. It took someone there at all times answering many questions and keeping little hands out of the nest picking up the eggs!!!! Sheryl did a great job there also. Kenny had brought to me a clutch of white bluebird eggs and children and adults were fascinated with them.

Sheryl and I signed LBBS brochures for some students to take back to their teachers to show they had attended and visited our booth.

A little after two o'clock, LBBS President Kenny Kleinpeter went to a designated area and gave a wonderful talk on conservation and native cavity nesters.

What happy tired we were!!!

Evelyn
Delhi, LA
Articles from Cornell University Bluebird List

Please consider joining in the fun and helping us next year. We were able to introduce just a little of nature to our youth and also talk bluebirds and native cavity nesters to children and adults.



Shown at left is the beautiful work of one of Dr. Sam Scurria's, Delhi, nest boxes. You will note the pair of bluebirds on top of the box which is located at their camp on Lake Bruin.

Dr. Scurria and his wife Joyce are new LBBS members.

Not only does he make such gorgeous boxes, he incorporates requirements the box should have to meet the needs of the cavity nesters. He did state that he would make the roof overhang larger which is desirable. He is to be commended. Many of the ornamental boxes you see do not have the welfare of the tenants inside in mind.

Kudos to you, Dr. Scurria!



Shown at left is Joe Cleveland of Zachary as he joins LBBS at Earth Day Festival and receives his Cypress nest box.

EARTH DAY FESTIVAL APRIL 22, 2007

Top picture: Dorothy Gammel, Denham Springs Chairs the LBBS booth



Earth Day
Festival 2007
parade par-
ticipants
march by
dressed in
gorgeous at-
tire.

Early bird participants at the children's table at Earth Day



The children's section of LBBS booth stayed busy at Earth Day

