

BAYOU BLUEBIRD NEST NEWS

Volume 27

Evelyn M. Cooper, Editor

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An Affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society



JACK HOOVER, (left) WEST MONROE. LA LBBS “BLUEBIRDER OF THE YEAR 2008” is presented his award by Kenny Kleinpeter (right)

The Louisiana Bayou Bluebird Society held its Annual Meeting September 20, 2008 at Black Bayou Refuge Conservation Learning Center, Monroe, LA. The organization elected the following slate of officers for the 2008-2010 term:

President: Evelyn Cooper, Delhi, 1st V/P: Kenny Kleinpeter, Baton Rouge, 2nd V/P: Dorothy Gammel, Denham Springs, Sec/Treas.: John Tidwell, Monroe, Recording Sec/Publicity: Margaret Kemp, Many and Historian: Christy LeGuin, Covington. Members to the Board of Directors are: Tom Allen, Oak Ridge, Sheryl Bassi, Leland, MS and Alethea Brown, Mandeville.

Jack Hoover, West Monroe, was named “Bluebirder of the Year, 2008” in recognition of his outstanding dedication and service to LBBS. Hoover has given of

his time cutting nest box kits, assembling nest boxes for workshops, trails and membership drives. He also serves as a faithful monitor of the Leo Terzia Memorial Bluebird Trail located on the grounds of the LA Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry in Monroe. He installed guards on every box at the trail. Jack was on the team that went to Hodges Gardens, Florien, LA to refurbish the trail (established by Dr. Shirl Brunell) with new boxes and predator guards.

Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to Clayton Cooper, Jr., a founding member of LBBS who has served as a director for six years, Margaret Kemp, Many, oversees the monitoring program of the Hodges Gardens Bluebird Trail at Florien; Mildred Hyde, who monitors the trail at Black Bayou and a larger trail near

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Jonesville. She chaired the Refreshment Committee. Mildred gives bluebird presentations to other groups and organizations; and Dr. Sam Scurria, Delhi, who lends his artistic talent to constructing and painting bluebirds on nest boxes for fundraising activities that serve a number of worthy causes as well as giving bluebird presentations.

Mildred Hyde gave a brief demonstration of the tools needed while monitoring and maintaining a bluebird trail. Tom Allen Demonstrated a number of methods for House Sparrow control as he shared his experiences monitoring his trail in Oak Ridge.

Keynote speaker was Dr. Sam Scurria of Delhi who spoke on "Building The Proper Bluebird Nest Box". He demonstrated the many tools available to make the job much easier, but assured all that anyone can build a proper nest box using only a hammer, saw, ruler and nails. He also treated the audience to musical numbers with his saxophone rendition of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" and closed his program with "Wind Beneath My Wings" to remind all present that by providing nest boxes, habitat, and monitoring, bluebirders are a part of the wind beneath the bluebird's wings.

Out of town attendees included: Joe Herring, Kenny Kleinpeter and Cheryl Kirk of Baton Rouge, Margaret and Hill Kemp, Many, Jimmie Orr, Oak Grove, Tom Allen, Oak Ridge, Mark and Rosemary Chamberlain, Elm Grove, Libby Rushing, Charlotte Chandler and Hannah, Dodson, Gail Garrett, Winnfield, Becky and Tom Garza, Ruston, Karen Creel and Sandy Ratcliff, Jena, Dorothy Brown and Faye Bower, Bastrop, Dr. Sam and Joyce Scurria and Evelyn Cooper, Delhi, Danzel Cobb, Rayville, Sheryl Bassi, Leland MS and James Dean, Marion. Hometown

attendees were: Deb and Jack Hoover, Mildred Hyde, Marilyn Daniel, Leonard and Eva Colvin and Shirley Mallett.

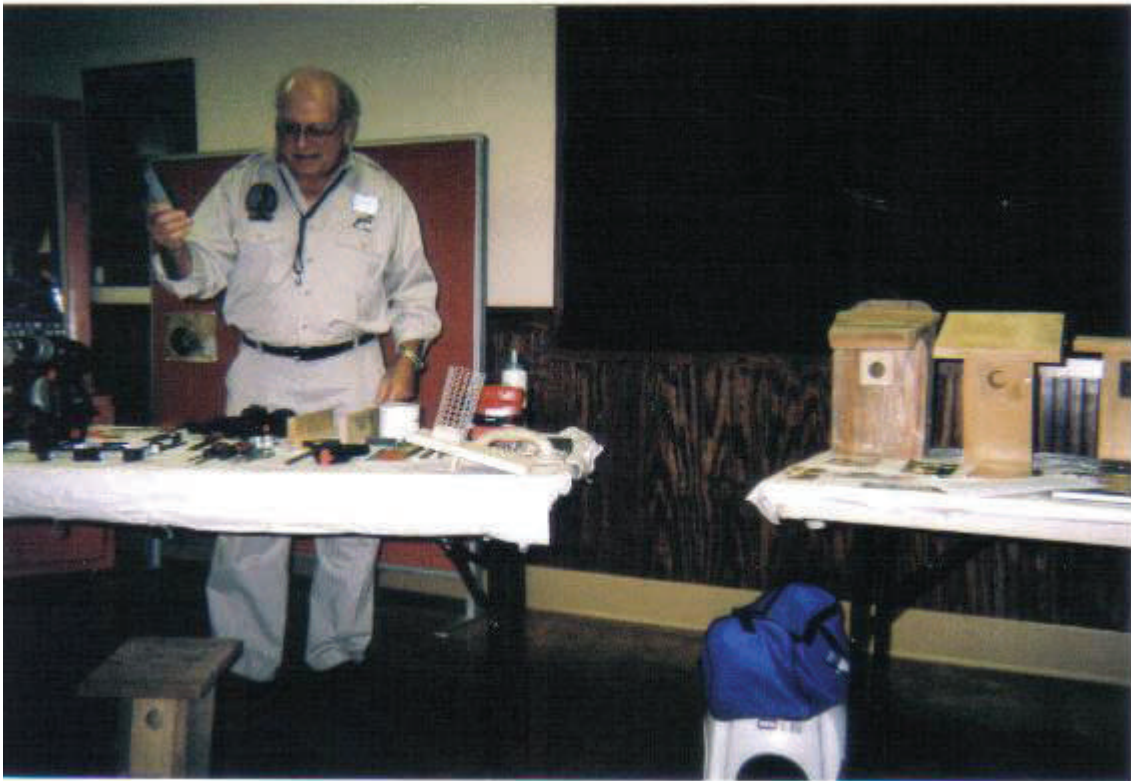
The day's activities were ended by the awarding of great door prizes.

BLUEBIRD TIDBITS

Now is the time to plug up the vent holes on the sides of your boxes and put a layer of foil and grass on the floor for birds that could use your box for roosting. Leave the side holes plugged on the first cycle to help keep out the cold air we usually have. Small pieces of foam stuffed in the holes does the job.

Get your boxes up now that you plan to add to your trail. The bluebirds are checking them out like it is springtime.

We will have some overwintering bluebirds so if you'd like to supplement feed during the cold months of winter and early springtime, there's some good recipes at www.sialis.org for those of you that have computers. For those of you that don't, you can try mine. It is very simple. I use half and half crunchy peanut butter and lard (cup of each), add dry quick cooking oats and corn meal to stiffen. I make a large ball of it and place it on the feeder beside the stewed, chopped raisins I offer them. If you feed mealworms, they will most likely pig out on them and snub the other stuff. There are many other birds that like to sample it too, so mealworms are too expensive to feed all of them. I feed the seed eating birds on the ground at least 50 ft. from the bluebirds. Three visitors that came last year to the platform feeder were the little Yellow Warblers. One flew down right at my hand as I was placing the food on the feeder and snatched a raisin. A Hermit Thrush came to my bluebird feeder to eat raisins.



Dr. Scurria shows many useful modern tools that make nest box construction easier, but says anyone can build a box with a hammer, saw, ruler and nails.



Mildred Hyde gives tips on tools monitors need to carry with them while checking their trails.

OFFICERS

President: Evelyn Cooper
1st Vice President: Kenny Kleinpeter
Past President
2nd V/P: Dorothy Gammel
Sec/Treas: John Tidwell
Recording Secretary/Public Relations:
Margaret Kemp
Historian: Christy LeGuin

BOARD MEMBERS

M.J. Shearer	Tom Allen
Sheryl Bassi	Bobbie Boykin
Jay McCallum	Mildred Hyde
Yvonne Bordelon	Alethea Brown



LBBS member, Danzel Cobb, Rayville, 91 years young September 30th, enjoying the annual meeting and fellowship at Black Bayou.



Tom Allen, Oak Ridge, shares with the group the seriousness of dealing with House Sparrows and using aggressive control. He tells and shows how the ground and inbox traps and the sparrow spooker helped to get the House Sparrows under control and his bluebird trail was very productive.



From The Perch

By:
Evelyn Cooper
President

Photo By:
Wendell Long
Waynesville, OH

What a great meeting we had! Our speakers did an outstanding job. Our attendance was good also. You really missed an enjoyable morning if you were not there.

I want to thank Kenny for his service as president for the last term. His new position at the Dairy Farm Wildlife area is more time consuming, so he will step back a bit, but is still there serving and helping the bluebirds. Kenny secured the LSU Museum of Natural Sciences for our annual meeting last year and it was outstanding. Maybe we can do it and the tours again at our 2009 meeting and give more people a chance to see it.

Thanks go to Clayton Cooper, Jr. a faithful board member that goes off the board this year after serving six years. He is one of the founding members of our organization.

We welcome our new incoming officers and board members. Dorothy Gammel accepted the position as 2nd Vice President, John Tidwell, Sec/Treas. and Margaret Kemp, Recording Secretary/Publicity and Kenny will serve again as 1st V/P. New board members are Tom Allen and Alethea Brown and Sheryl Bassi will serve on the board also. Welcome to all and we are thrilled to have these energetic, talented people on board.

If you would like to observe on the board (we do all our business by e-mail) please contact me and you will get the opportunity to observe and hopefully, you will do as others have done and join the board or become an officer.

ONE FOR THE BOOKS

By: Bruce McDonald
SW Ontario, N. shore of Western Lake Erie

Here's one for the record books!! I think????

Just a few days ago, I was proudly telling everyone how my House Sparrow (HOSP) trapping was and how few I'd seen lately.

Friday morning, I noticed a pair of HOSP harassing a family of Tree Swallows (TRES) in a two-hole box that Linda Violet (of CA) had sent me years ago. Why the HOSP went after that box??? There are three other vacant nest boxes within a 150 foot circle, all plainly visible.

I chased the HOSP away repeatedly. They persisted. When I came home Friday evening, I noticed that something was amiss. After checking, I found the TRES female dead in the box with her five one-week old hatchlings. Her head had been badly pecked by the HOSP. The babies seemed to be OK, vigorous active and hungry.

It is now late Sunday afternoon. The babies are still vigorous, active and hungry.

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ATTENTION!
A gentle reminder if you have not paid your dues. They are due in September. This will be the last newsletter for those not paid up. A special thanks to those that have renewed!
Thanks.

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ONE FOR THE BOOKS

The male TRES stayed around for the next 12 hours, but did not appear to be feeding or caring for the babies. He disappeared yesterday, midday. I haven't seen him since.

It is now late Sunday afternoon. The babies are still vigorous and active. When I open the box, they are alert, peeping, sitting up to be fed, they look just fine to me. How long will they remain viable if they're not being fed and cared for?????

Now for the surprise!!! Unless I am badly mistaken, the HOSP female appears to be feeding the TRES babies!!!! She is in and out of the box, carrying food in and fecal sac's out. I trapped a male HOSP, but cannot be certain if he is the female's mate. Anyone ever witnessed anything like this??

The saga continues this morning!!! I can't figure it out. The TRES babies appear to be OK, very active. The female HOSP is in and out of the box exactly as any parent would be during feeding a brood of young. I've seen a male HOSP around the box, but have not yet witnessed him actually entering. I trapped a male on Saturday. At the time, I believed he was the other half of the HOSP relationship. Apparently not!

I'm wondering, do HOSP feed their young insects or seeds?

Good Morning

Update: Mrs. HOSP kept the five TRES babies going until fledging. Three of the chicks made it out of the box. Two did not. Upon investigating, the two that didn't make it may have been overcome by the hundreds of tiny ants inside the nest...?

The three who fledged were fed for three days by Mama HOSP.

It was at that point that I lost track of them. I did see other TRES in the area. The babies may have joined them...??

I thank Bruce for contributing his most unusual story. If you have a story you'd like to share, you can e-mail or send it snail mail. Pictures make it even nicer. Bruce took a video of it and put it up on youtube, but it had a limited stay.

FROM THE PERCH (con't from page 5)

We are thrilled to have new people join our board and serve on the executive committee. The only way LBBS can grow and survive is for people to step up to the plate and give a little of their time. The majority of the people on the board are not retired. It amazes me how they give of their time and I know first hand just how busy some of them are. You do not have to have had prior experience to be on the board, learning is very easy! I had none.

On another note, I would like to promote nest box cams for your enjoyment for the upcoming nesting season. Santa Claus brought me mine, and we thoroughly enjoyed it! Many of my family and neighbors got to enjoy it too! One of the most memorable events was when the female came in to feed the babies and the baby that got the grub worm she brought got it hung in his throat. She made several attempts to get it out. It would not come out and I was about to stroke out. I ran out to the box, but by that time he had spit it out. You can go to www.cooperseeds.com and purchase one for \$60.00. I have no stock in this company! I just found it on-line. I have not checked in stores, but feel sure they are offered there.

Evelyn



LBBS Members and guests enjoy the Annual Meeting at Black Bayou Conservation Learning Center, Monroe, September 20, 2008.

Below is our LBBS Mission Statement taken from our By-Laws. Positive results are being seen from the dedication of our members to the Mission of LBBS. Many people that are not members have been made aware of our organization by our hard work and the excellent publicity given to us by newspapers and other organizations. Leaders in our organization are contacted by many of these people for help and they are also helping in the propagation of the Eastern Bluebird and all other *native* cavity nesting birds.

Keep up the good work and please send in your nesting summary reports! They will appear in our March issue of the newsletter.

LBBS MISSION STATEMENT

“The purposes and objectives of LOUISIANA BAYOU BLUEBIRD SOCIETY shall include the following:

- To take all actions deemed by LOUISIANA BAYOU BLUEBIRD SOCIETY to be beneficial to the protection, enjoyment and propagation of the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) and all native-cavity nesting birds in Louisiana and elsewhere.**
- To monitor and increase production of Eastern bluebirds and all native-cavity nesting birds through a statewide nest box program.**
- To educate or inform the people of Louisiana on the ecology and management of Eastern Bluebirds.”**