

# TEXAS Blues



Texas Bluebird Society Newsletter • July 2019 • Volume 18. Issue 3

## Home Remedy For Itching - Bluebird Style

By John and Debbie Park

My husband and I were on a guided tour in Minnesota when he nudged me in the arm and pointed to the rooftop. When I didn't react he handed me his binoculars. I took a quick look and made a face at him. While the tour guide led us to the next display I whispered "thanks for sharing the dead bluebird with me!" "Dead?" he exclaimed. "No, it flew to the roof, spread his wings and tail flat against the roof, stayed motionless for a couple minutes, rose to its feet, ruffled its wings, gave a little shake then flew to a nearby tree."

Needless to say, after the tour we spent some time trying to figure out why the bluebird acted that way. Our friend Heather suggested "anting" or "sunbathing" behavior. After a little research on the topic, I believe she was right.



This male Eastern Bluebird is either sunbathing (which may help drive off mites or lice), or doing what is called passive "anting." They fly down onto the lawn and strike a possum-like pose, lying on the ground with their wings extended and fluffed out, and their heads cocked to one side. Sometimes they actually lie on their sides. They stay in this position for one to several minutes. Afterwards they may preen their belly and wing feathers.

I saw a [Black-capped Chickadee](#) doing this on a black shingle roof. I thought it was dead until it flew off. It was probably sunning or sunbathing. (House Sparrows have also been seen doing this on rooftops.) Sunbathing helps absorb solar radiation. The heat may cause feather parasites to mobilize, making it easier for the bird to locate and remove them during preening.

Anting has been observed in more than 250 species of birds (mostly passerines) worldwide. (It has not been seen in [Western Bluebirds](#). Whitaker, who did a resume of anting in 1957, listed all other North American thrushes except bluebirds as anting.) When birds (e.g., [Starlings](#)) engage in passive anting over an ant hill, they may first disturb it with their feet or belly. Apparently they want the ants to crawl on them. They don't eat them. Some people believe this is because the formic acid emitted by ants as a defense mechanism may affect mites which pester them. Bluebirds do not place ants on their feathers like other members of the thrush family (Krieg 1971.)



In other cases, birds actually pick up ants (called "active anting"), kill them, and then rub them on their [plumage](#). Researchers disagree as to why they do this. According to John Eastman in *Birds of Forest, Yard, and Thicket*: "The traditional view is that ants' formic acid acts as an insecticide or fungicide against feather and skin parasites. Anting often occurs during periods of high humidity, lending weight to the fungicidal theory. But other investigators find no correlation between anting and parasite or fungal presence; they speculate that anting, like

*sunning, is simply a comfort activity, stimulating the skin, especially during summer [molt](#). A recent theory suggests that anting forces the insects to expel their formic acid, thus making them more palatable to consume."* This article is reprinted from [sialis.com](#). An excellent resource! Photo by Debbie Leone of St. Francisville, LA

## Chili Pequin, *Capsicum annuum*

By Linda Crum, Master Gardener/Master Naturalist

All gardeners are looking for that plant that has blooms, is not invasive, produces fruit and is deer resistant. And, oh by the way, not too big in the landscape, preferably native with wildlife value. Chili Pequin, *Capsicum annuum*, is that plant. It has both ornamental and culinary value.



It is grown as an annual or a deciduous perennial with winter protection. Chili Pequin is a member of the solanaceae family – same as potatoes, eggplant and tomatoes. It has small white flowers and produces fruit that is green, turning red when ripe. The peppers are tiny in size but fiery hot and smoky in taste. The longer they stay on the plant, the hotter they become. The fruit has antifungal properties.

Chili Pequin can be grown in sun or shade. It will produce fruit under both conditions, although a friend (who eats these peppers like candy) says the peppers have a better flavor when grown in sun. Give the plants one to two inches of water per week. Irregular watering often results in rot or blossom drop. When soil temperatures reach 70°F, mulch the plant to conserve soil moisture and reduce stress. When plants are stressed they attract insects and disease. Fertilize the plant lightly with an organic fertilizer since too much fertilizer will result in a lot of green growth but few peppers. Bloom time and pepper production is May – October.

Chili Pequin is used to make Cholula hot sauce. When green, the peppers are used in fresh salsas. Scoville heat units are used to measure the hotness of peppers. Chili Pequin ranges from 40,000 to 60,000 Scoville heat units, slightly hotter than a cayenne pepper. Often called bird pepper because birds love Chili Pequin. Birds cannot detect the heat of the pepper; however, deer can. So this plant is highly deer-resistant.

Propagation is by seeds. Completely dry the mature fruit in a cool dry area. Break out the seeds and

store them in a dry, refrigerated setting until ready to plant. Chili Pequin will survive a mild winter but not a hard freeze. It should be pruned back in spring to encourage new growth.

Rarely bothered by insects, aphids may be a problem if the plant becomes stressed. Spray with insecticidal soap to eliminate these pesky insects. Often called bird pepper because birds love this pepper.

Even if the plant is not used for culinary purposes, it is a great little plant in the landscape especially when planted en masse. Very showy with white flowers, green and red peppers on the plant at the same time. The birds will thank you.



*Including native plants in your landscaping creates a beautiful environment for you while attracting birds to your yard. On the TBS website is a list of native plants that [attract insects and birds](#). Visit your local nursery to discuss suggestions on plants that are just right for your area.*

*Don't forget to check the web to find recipes using the fruit of the beautiful Chili Pequin.*

# A Tale Of Three Nestboxes

Article and photos by **Helen S. Munro**

I live next to LL Woods Park in Lewisville, TX. I had moved from NC and saw the park as perfect bluebird habitat. I asked permission to put up a couple boxes, but was limited to trees because the poles cause a mowing problem. At first, my boxes were on willow trees and, over a couple years, several clutches fledged successfully. Before the willows died and were cut down.

In the spring of 2018, I placed a box on a Chinaberry Tree on the edge of the park adjacent to a parking lot. Despite the location, the parents raised five offspring in April and I was delighted in May to find a second set of five eggs.

Unfortunately, one morning, as my dog and I finished our walk, this is what I found. (Figure 1) I considered what natural predator could this to a nest box and decided that some juvenile delinquent had taken a baseball bat and destroyed the box.

So, I put up a second box and within a week, a second box was reduced to pieces. (Figure 2)



**Figure 2**

No eggs had been laid, but another bluebird home had been smashed.

So, I went for the educational moment and posted this sign. (Figure 3)

The sign reads:

*"FYI*

*This was the home of an Eastern Bluebird couple and five eggs.*

*Someone smashed their home and then smashed the box put up to replace that home.*

*The eggs are protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Act which prohibits the destruction of native birds and their eggs.*

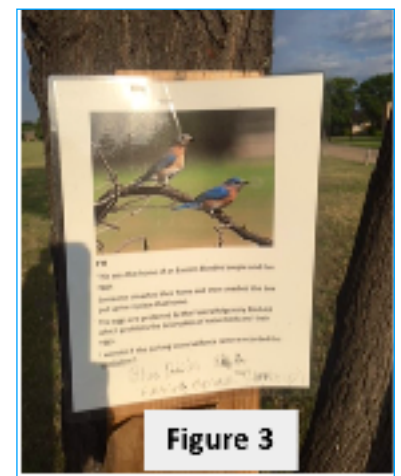
*I wonder if the parking lot surveillance camera recorded this vandalism?"*



**Original Box**



**Figure 1**



**Figure 3**

Someone had written in pen, "Blue Birds are a fxxking menace. Look it up."

Although I knew the police couldn't do anything, I called them, anyhow, because of the unacceptable language. The surveillance camera was not operational so I did what was obvious to me and put up a third house!

Since then, I have decided that even though there was a picture of actual bluebirds, the bat swinging youth thought that bluebirds were blue jays, also a native species. The law is the same for an eagle as for a bluebird or a blue jay. Nest boxes give people a chance to learn about birds up close and personal. I would like to think that, perhaps, because the third house was not destroyed, someone learned something. Bluebird Societies are important for this education.

It is now the first of May and a year later. The Eastern Bluebird couple has fledged their first five babies and I am waiting for the miracle of the next five eggs!

P.S. The box remains empty, but the one in my backyard has five beautiful blue eggs!

*Unfortunately, we haven't invented a predator guard for humans. In the meantime, follow Helen's lead; diligent nestbox monitoring and continually educating the public. Thanks for the example!*

# Predator Guards Help Bluebirds Thrive

In the last issue of Texas Blues, we reprinted a nation-wide study from NestWatch titled "Predator Guards Carry Their Weight." Our own expert, Keith Kridler "weighs in" on this topic with our Texas environment in mind.

There is a lot of advertising hype on the internet promising perfect protection from predators if you only use a specific product. You need to wade thru the hype and get back to basics.

## PROPER NESTBOX INSTALLATION AND PLACEMENT IS NUMBER ONE ON THE LIST

Of course, you are installing a Texas-Tough nestbox built according to TBS specifications! Find a spot that is shaded from the late afternoon sun, overlooks an open area with short grass, and has a few trees nearby. Utility lines overhead provide an added bonus since the bluebirds will use the line as a perch. Don't place the nestbox in a thicket or in dense vegetation like cedars, junipers or shrubbery. Nestboxes should be 100 yards apart if you are hoping bluebirds will choose both nestboxes. Height should be 43-6 feet. You need to Nest-Watch so the rule of thumb is eye level. NEVER mount a nestbox on a fence or tree. Face opening away from prevailing winds. Purchase nestboxes from a TBS distributor or build your own using plans from our website.

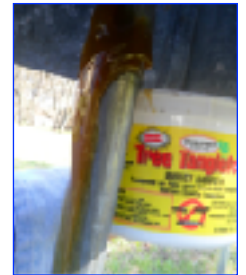
## ADD APPROPRIATE PREDATOR GUARDS

"You need to list the most important factors that create losses in your area!" For instance, Blowflies are a huge problem for bluebirds – but NOT in Texas. But, we have fire ants!



**Weather:** Heat in summer/cold in spring/ice and extreme cold in winter will top the list. Paint the outside of the nestbox a light color, add **heatshields**. Purchase heatshields online or build your own using plans from our website online or build your own.

**Imported Red Fire Ants** will be up near the top on some Texas properties. wrap garden tape around the pole under the box and/or under the baffle, then apply the **TANGLEFOOT INSECT/PEST BARRIER** to the tape. Old nests attract fire ants, so be sure to remove them from the nestbox as soon as the birds have fledged. Dispose of the old nest far away from the nestbox. If necessary, spot treat fire ant mounds. You can purchase Tree Tanglefoot online or at many local nurseries.



"In my area it is **Flying Squirrels** that top the list. Remember my 'area' for people putting up nesting boxes locally is about 1,200 square miles. Flying Squirrels have been known to prey on eggs, nestlings and adult birds in nestboxes. (Keith lives in Mt. Pleasant.) Beth Zimmerman from [sialis.com](http://sialis.com) recommends mounting nestboxes on metal pipe with grease on the pole and about 100 feet away from the nearest tall tree or power pole. Leave door open if you want squirrels to abandon **before** having young, then remove nest. Caution: Flying

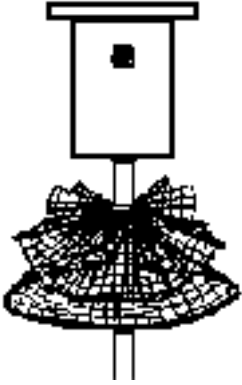
Squirrels may bite if you push your hand into nest.

**House Sparrows** are still on the list even though their population is on the decline world-wide. Signs of House Sparrows White noodle shaped feces on nestbox roof, male HOSP perching on roof. Eggs suddenly disappear, or eggs are broken in nest or on ground near box or under bush. Small nestlings (few days old up to feathered) on ground near box. Nestlings or adults dead in box, with eyes pecked out or head wounds and small feathers may be pulled out, or nestlings with broken necks (from shaking?) .House Sparrow **nest** may be built on top of corpse. [More descriptions](#) (graphic).



Install Van Ert Universal Sparrow Traps or use Sparrow Spookers to discourage House Sparrows. Both products and plans are available online. family. Install correctly and monitor as instructed.. There are both passive and aggressive methods available to discourage House Sparrows. Remember it is legal our Federal law to eliminate House Sparrows. It is important to the health of the bluebird population to be diligent in predator control during nesting season.





We do have **snakes**, but again losses are dependent on type of habitat. You should be aware of which snakes can be found in our area. Remember, some snakes can climb vertical surfaces with ease.

To capture the snake, a hoop trap can be made with wire and a "tutu" of bird netting. A Kuger style snake guard is effective. Snakes over five feet long will probably defeat this type of baffle. Be prepared to deal with the captured snake. Snakes not removed will die. Be prepared to relocate snake. Be careful opening a nestbox as snakes have been known to be inside. The Rat snake in the photo is non-venomous and contributes to rodent control/. However, birds - adults, babies, and eggs are high on its list of favorite foods.



**Raccoons, mice, squirrels, cats** can easily climb a pole. This is where baffles (cone, Kingston, PVC etc.) can be used to deter access to the nestbox. Baffles that are **INSTALLED CORRECTLY** can be very effective. For example, the bottom of the nestbox should be 6" above the Kingston stovepipe baffle. Depending on the height of your pole, the length of a stovepipe baffle should be 24 to 36 inches. If the bottom is too close to the ground you have provided a ladder instead of a deterrent.

The design of the Kingston Baffle allows the pipe to wobble, which makes climbing more difficult. The long length is also effective to hinder snakes from reaching the nestbox. PVC baffles are often used instead of the metal stovepipe.

The width of the cone baffle, and the height placement on the pole, is critical as some mammals, like raccoons for instance have a long reach. The width and angle of the cone shield, properly placed can stop jumpers - cats and squirrels - from reaching the nestbox.



**Hole guards** are often touted as predator guards. "To me this implies that some how, this is going to stop all of the predators that people have when they lose eggs, babies or adult birds inside of the nesting boxes. This should be called a "repair block", to install on nesting boxes that had the entrance hole enlarged by a woodpecker and or one of the larger species of squirrels.

This repair block with a 1-1/2" or 1-9/16" round entrance will prevent larger species of birds and larger species of squirrels from using the bluebird nesting box to roost in and or nest in. However, the "Repair Block" does not even stop larger birds from reaching into these boxes that have blocks that are 1-1/2" thick. Raccoons. With their long arms and bendable paw, do not find these "guards"

a challenge. Can you name a single predator that this extra front will protect against 100% of the time? As a matter of fact, the block makes it more difficult for the parents to feed the babies, roughs up their feathers, and it makes the nestbox more appealing to House Sparrows."



"Furthermore, if the new "hole guard" is made out of Western Cedar/White Pine and or other soft materials, it only takes a day for a squirrel to chew the hole larger again, and just a few days for a woodpecker to hammer out a bigger hole in the hole guard. There are three or four species of woodpeckers here in Texas that only need to enlarge the entrance hole to 1-3/4" in order to nest or roost inside of our bluebird nesting boxes. Downy woodpeckers can enter 1-1/2" diameter entrance hole.

Bluebirds need our help. Know which predators are most prevalent in your area, pick the right predator guard, and be sure to follow directions and install it correctly.

Resources: [txblues.org](http://txblues.org) and [sialis.org](http://sialis.org), with contributions from Keith Kridler.

# Bluebirds In A Texas Tornado

Article and photos by **Kim Roulias**

I hope you guys find this story to be uplifting, as I did. When I left home to do some errands on May 18th, there were four tiny eggs in my bluebird nest box, and it was a bright sunny day. Little did I know what the rest of the day would bring. I stopped in at Lowe's to get some mosquito netting for my porch, and ended up getting locked in with all the other shoppers, while three tornadoes were on the ground nearby. Very scary. I wasn't too worried when I headed home, about 15 miles away, but worry came on quick when I drove down the gravel road leading to my farm.



*It started out as just another pretty spring day*

There was a 100-foot tall tree splintered, laying across my drive. As I looked further into the yard, it didn't look good. My first thoughts were with my little dog Chocolate in the house, and of the course the bluebirds.



*This is the trees iust 70 feet from nest box*

In February I had put up two nest boxes: a cheap Pennington bluebird house in the front yard, and one very solid WBU bluebird house in the back yard. I could not seem to attract a nesting pair to the front yard, but it was in the back yard that a family was growing -- their second family of the year. When I got home after the tornado, the unoccupied nest box in the front yard had a bent pole, and the box was smashed in pieces on the ground. I looked around, and saw four huge trees down in my yard, just 70 feet from where my bluebird family was. Miraculously, that box looked fine from a distance, but I was very worried as I approached it. I tapped on the side of the box, got no response, so I peeked in from the top. The mom was sitting on the side of the nest, and the eggs were fine. Perched nearby was the ever-vigilant daddy bluebird. I breathed a sigh of relief. I went in the house and got some mealworms for their bowl. As I looked at my porch... 30 feet away almost all of my patio furniture and everything else was GONE! The table which held their mealworms was intact.

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*If you look in the blue circle, you can see the daddy bluebird sitting on the fence. Also you can see where their meal worms were on the table. The porch support is actually blocking the nestbox, which is a shame, but I did not realize at the time that I would be writing this article.*

Even though everything looked fine in the box, I wasn't sure if the eggs might have been shaken up, and might not hatch. But they did! Six days ago the nestlings flew the coop. They say that His eye is on the sparrow. If you look at the photos, you'll see how devastating this damage was, but it could have been worse. My neighbor's house was almost demolished. My little dog Chocolate was shaking when I went in the house, and I can only imagine how scared he was when he saw all the ob-jecflying by the windows. I'm not sure how little birds make it through severe storms like this, but they do.

So, speaking of sparrows ... we know that the non-native house sparrow is not a friend to the bluebirds. Two days after the nestlings fledged, I noticed daddy bluebird chasing a house sparrow around the yard. Not good. The next day I noticed that the house sparrow was starting to build a nest in the box. So I cleared it out and immediately put up my version of a "sparrow spooker," but this did not deter the house sparrow from perching on the back fence, looking at the box, and trying to approach it. I'm not sure how this little drama is going to play out, or if the bluebirds will be wanting to make another family this year. I hope they do, but I couldn't blame them if they don't. After a tornado like that, as well as some bad winds we had the week after that, and the severe thunderstorm, with 70 mile-per-hour winds we had just today, I could see how they might be discouraged from building a nest again this year. Not sure what's going on with this weather!



*Three survived the storm*

*Kim will be sharing her nestbox monitoring experiences at the symposium in August.*



(sneak peek) **Symposium Schedule**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 2**

**Friday Evening Social, Dinner, and Monarch Presentation**

*Silent Auction FUNdraiser open)*

**6:00 Social Hour, NO BYOB (state law)**

**6:30 Fajitas Dinner** (Deadline: July 20 \$18.00)

Followed by **Carol Clark, Monarch Waystations**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 3**

**2019 Bluebird Symposium and Silent Auction FUNdraiser**

Advanced registration deadline: July 20 \$25.00

**8:30 Registration and Silent Auction opens**

**9:00 Morning Session 1**

Paul Nelson, *Welcome*

Kevin Corwin, *NABS (North American Bluebird Society Regional Representative)*

Jessie Huth, *Birding in Texas*

Recognitions

**10:05 Morning Break**

**10:35 Morning Session 2**

Errol Candy, *NestWatch with Wildlife Tax Valuation*

or Carol Clark, *Planting for Bluebird Success*

Pauline Tom, *Bluebird Basics*

or Nestbox Building Workshop (\$15)

**11:55 Lunch**

with **optional** Nestbox Building Workshop (\$15)—at beginning of lunch hour

Morning action ends at the end of lunch.

**12:55 Afternoon Session 1**

Linda Crum, *House Sparrow Control*

or Nestbox Building Workshop (\$15)

or Lonnie Castleman, *Tales of my Nestbox Trail*

and

and

TBA, *Growing Mealworms*

TBA, *My Backyard Nestbox*

**1:35 Afternoon Break**

Afternoon auction closes at the end of afternoon break.

**2:00 Afternoon Session 2**

Keith Kridler, *A Naturalist's Reflections*

**3:00 Symposium Closing Remarks**

Auction payment begins

**JULY**

**20**

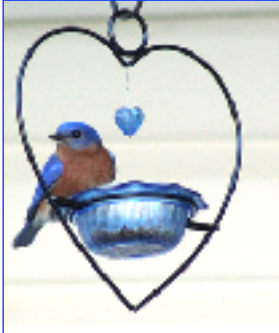
**Final Advance Registration Deadline**

**On-line registration: [RSVPbook.com/2019event](https://RSVPbook.com/2019event)**

## In Memoriam

## Danny Seale

**Danny Seale (12/25/46 - 4/20/19) loved bluebirds. He was member #71, joining in February 2002 as a charter member of Texas Bluebird Society. Danny was an active TBS member the remainder of his life. In fact by the year 2013, Danny was maintaining 55 nestboxes in West Orange. His devotion to bluebird conservation certainly had an impact on hundreds of bluebird families. Danny will be missed.**



*His nephew, Jason Seale, joined TBS as a life member, influenced by his uncle. When Danny provided notification of his uncle's death to Pauline Tom, he commented, "Uncle Danny loved the organization."*

*In 2012, Jason shared, "My Uncle Danny has been a bluebird enthusiast as long as I can remember. As a child, we would constantly make trips checking and monitoring our boxes."*

*Co-founder and President Pauline Tom had a connection with Danny, once Ron Tom heard his name. Ron and Danny were classmates at Texas A&M in the mid-60's in Unit B1. Danny was the first person Ron knew from Orange.*

Photo by Jess Price

*Danny was constantly, year after year on his membership form, suggesting that TBS offer embroidered caps. Eventually, TBS found a company that embroiders them one at a time (see TBS' Sales "Tab" on website.)*

*Danny put together Texas Bluebird Society and his friend, renowned fine artist, Ann Haufpaur. Several years Ann donated oil-painted bluebirds for our FUNdrising Silent Auction.*

*Texas Bluebird Society is honored that the family of charter member Danny Seale included our website for memorial donations.*

TBS has now made it very easy for you to make a donation by adding a personal donation option to the home page. Whether it is to celebrate a special occasion, in memory of a loved one, or just because you love bluebirds - just click on the donation link and enter your information. All donations are used to purchase nestbox building supplies.

Click to Donate for  
Nestbox Lumber  
or to  
Memorialize Someone  
or to  
Celebrate Event



**There will NOT be a TBS Symposium event in 2020**

We recommend the following North American Bluebird Society event

### North American Bluebird Society 2020 Convention

**March 12 - 15 2020**

**Kearney, Nebraska**

Hosted by the Nebraska Bluebird Society, this conference is scheduled during the peak time for the migration of the Sandhill Cranes and many other waterfowl species. Amazing viewing opportunities will be available. Outstanding speakers, workshops, field trips, and entertainment. [Details](#) to follow in the coming months on the NABS website.

The Oct. TX Blues newsletter will provide available information on conference plans, registration, lodging, etc. Great birding area!



Sandhill Cranes converge upon the Platte River



**Great NESTING VIDEOS on our Facebook page —  
go take a **LOOK!****



Mountain Bluebird. Photo by John Park



Photo by Dale Cunningham "The Hunter"  
Mom hard at work.



Photo by David Kinneer



Photo by Lynette Dobbins

**Just a sample of the great  
photos shared by our  
members on the  
TBS facebook page!**

## Another Happy Nesting Season



Photo by David Kinneer



Photo by Lisa Lee



Photo by Albert Wiersch

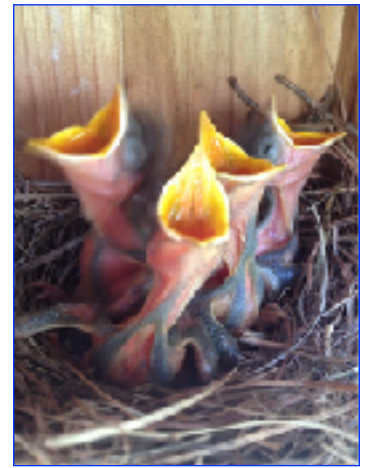
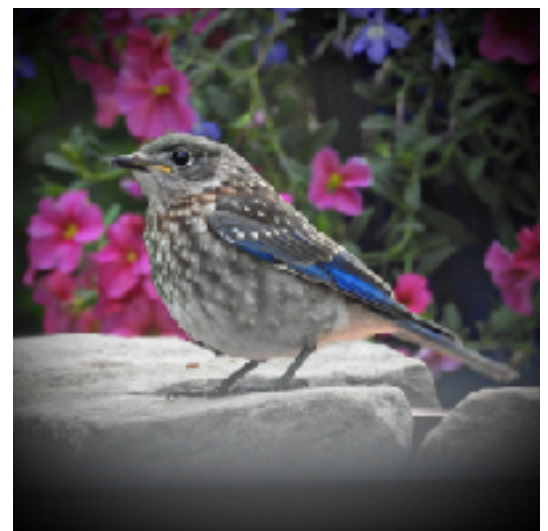


Photo by Jennifer Fleming



Both photos shared by Boyd's Birds. His photos are also on his facebook page.



## Board of Directors

### Pauline Tom

President  
Executive Committee  
EventPlans Team  
(Mountain City)

### Lonnie Castleman

Vice-President  
Executive Committee  
EventPlans Team  
Nestbox Const. Coord.  
(Trinity)

### Linda Crum

Treasurer  
(The Woodlands)

### Benni Konvicka

Executive Committee  
Fundraising Auction  
EventPlans Team  
(Stephenville)

### Pat Nail

Executive Committee  
EventPlans Team  
(Clayton)

### Beverly Davis

Fundraising Auction  
EventPlans Team  
(Conroe)

### Brian Sinclair

New Member Welcome  
(Conroe)

### Jane Jenkins

(Conroe)

## Advisory Board

### Harold Latham

Event Speaker Support  
(Ivanhoe)

### David Smith

Nestbox Inventory  
(Bexar)

## Contact Us:

tbs@txblues.org,  
PO Box 40868  
Austin, TX 78704  
512-268-5678 (Pauline Tom)

## Volunteers Are Appreciated!

Caryn Brewer  
Lonnie Castleman  
Linda Crum  
Beverly Davis  
Benni Konvicka  
Archie Manning  
Jim Marshall

Roberta Marshall  
Don Mitchell  
Jerald Mowery  
Dee Myers  
Stan Meyers  
Pat Nail  
RolandNail

John Park  
Shannon Ramsey  
Pauline Tom  
Ron Tom  
Vanessa Vosinett

## TBS Needs YOUR Help!

### Critical needs for 2019 Bluebird Symposium

1. Supply video of each presentation so we can share event on our website (even an iPhone video will be better than nothing.) At two points in day we will need two people for concurrent sessions.
2. Provide media services so that full day of PowerPoint presentations flows smoothly. This requires availability on Friday for trial runs.
3. Prepare silent auction itemized invoices, created during afternoon sessions, using a Microsoft Access process developed by Rex Reves. (Rex is on a 2-year intensive project at work.)

We also need volunteers to assist Board Members and a few others with full day of set-up on Friday, 8:25 - 4:30. "Somewhat heavy tasks" and "not heavy tasks" are available.

Can you help? Please sign up as soon as feasible with  
Pauline, [ptom5678@gmail.com](mailto:ptom5678@gmail.com).

## Thanks For Your Financial \$upport!

Sarah Anderson  
Carol Ann Broaddus  
Bill Carter  
Kathy/Terry Colston  
James Cummings  
Jasmes Ellender

Sue Franks  
Rachel Garrison  
Karen Harrell  
Dorothy Hoffman  
Joe Jimenez  
David/Ora Keetley

Sarah Schilling  
Althea St Romain  
Ryanne Vaughan  
Glen/Gwenda Vinkler  
Carolyn Williams

## Welcome New Members!

- Patti Berkstresser
- Janet Byars
- Jeff Calvin
- Rick Campbell
- Cherie Correro
- Traci Cromwell
- Dale Cunningham
- James Ellender
- Sandy Farrar
- Brad Fennen
- Danny Finley
- Celena Flores
- Wilma Garrett
- Mark Hamilton
- Lark Harlos
- Gary L Henry
- Lisa Hickey
- Joe Jimenez
- Karen Johnson
- Jerry Jordan
- Sue Kapetanakis
- James Kroll
- Mark Lacy
- Kathy Lewis
- Genie Lindberg
- Jeanette Masek
- Jeff McCoulskey
- Judy McDonald
- Maria Mears
- James Lee Miles
- Sandi Patrick
- Lindsay M Porter
- George Prall
- Richard Scheide
- Patricia Shimek
- Terry Simms
- Theresa Tolf
- Alfred P. Valero
- Mary Beth Weaver
- Lisa Wheeler
- Carolyn Williams
- Mike Wise
- Linda Wright
- Peggy Young

*\*New members who give us permission to print their name. Plus an additional 19 members!*

## Bluebirds Across Texas ... one nestbox at a time

The Texas Bluebird Society newsletter, *TX Blues*, is published four times a year: March ■ May ■ July ■ October  
Debbie Bradshaw Park, Editor  
Send stories/photos to editor@txblues.org

TEXAS BLUEBIRD  
SOCIETY  
PO BOX 40868  
AUSTIN, TX 78704

### Moved?

Send email/address changes to records@txblues.org

Return Service Requested



**Federal law protects all native nesting birds!**

- Do not disturb birds or collect nests/eggs.
- Monitor and report activity to NestWatch.

***It's been said before - but it is worth repeating!***

## Help To Combat Texas Heat



Texas Bluebird Society recommends the addition of white or light-colored paint and/or a set of HeatShields, to weathered nestboxes, unless they are shaded from late afternoon sun. 2011 heat studies conclusively revealed that as a nestboxes darkens with age, the interior temperatures jump dramatically.

Discarded political signs with a white back side can be recycled as Heat-Shields. With a pen knife, trim rectangles identical in size to the top, sides, and back of the weathered nestbox. Affix to nestbox with screws using tubing to create one-half inch (approximately) of air space. You can see plans for the HeatShield under the Nestbox Recommendations. You can also buy pre-made heatshields at our Summer Symposium. Click on the "Nestbox Recommendations" tab on the [Resources](#) page.

Visit our webpage txblues.org for more information on building plans, nest box placement and installation, heat shields and predator guards. Don't forget a water source for the birds!

**Texas has the highest number of reported EABL nestings to date.**

**Keep On Counting!**

# NestWatch

Where Birds Come to Life

