

# BLUEBIRD NOTES

## STILL CONCERNED WITH BLUEBIRD CONSERVATION AT AGE 100



### MR. BILL SATTERWHITE OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

We are honoring a man who loves bluebirds very very much. He is affectionately known as “The Bluebird Man” in Wake County. These photos above, taken after the 100th birthday of Mr. Bill Satterwhite, are courtesy of his daughter, Billie Jeanne. Many of you may know him or heard of Bill’s devoted efforts to help our Blue feathered friends. Bill is a long time member of NCBS and an instrumental part of our organization. He served on our Board as Director, as well as the Wake County Coordinator for many years. He only scaled back on bluebird activities when health issues made it necessary. He still does all he can to help bluebirds.

What a milestone for Bill on March 7! We have recognized Bill’s bluebird work in many past newsletters, but want to give special acknowledgement at the time of his 100th birthday. We are dedicating this edition of *Bluebird Notes* to Bill for his long-time extensive support of bluebird conservation and education. We will share more photos and information regarding Bill’s effort to promote awareness of what bluebirds need to survive. One of Bill’s main concerns is that people will get complacent and think bluebirds do not need man’s help any longer. This is **not** so. They likely will always need human assistance. In addition to a heart-warming story, we will offer ways you can help bluebirds flourish, including many tips we have learned from this extraordinary bluebird enthusiast and expert, Mr. Bill Satterwhite.



**North Carolina Bluebird Society  
(NCBS)  
Mission Statement**

Our goal is to support activities that foster the resurgence of bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds in our home areas. NCBS is an affiliate member of the North American Bluebird Society. [www.ncbluebird.org](http://www.ncbluebird.org)

**Summer Report from Ken Kernodle**

What a joy it is to know Mr. Bill Satterwhite! He is truly an amazing man. His concern for bluebirds' needs and future is evident in so many ways. It is always a joy listening to Bill and his enthusiasm for bluebirds. His long-time active involvement in the NCBS, and home county of Wake, provides us all with a goal to strive for.

The bluebird environment he has established in the Raleigh area is just outstanding. It is uplifting how so many enthusiasts in Wake County have assumed care of the trails he monitored over the years. It is wonderful that Joye Stephenson and Bill's daughters, Billie Jeanne and Peggy, are so helpful and focused on keeping him involved with bluebird activities.

Let's all give "Mr. Bill" a round of applause - for his 100th (milestone) birthday and for his long-standing conservation work for the NCBS and bluebirds. Well done, Mr. Bill, well done!!

I would also like for us to give a huge "NCBS" thank you to Steve McDaniel, Durham County Coordinator, who is moving back home to East Tennessee. Steve has truly raised the level of bluebird awareness in Durham County (as well as Orange) in his 9 year stand. Not only through his educational programs, but through his engineering design, construction, installation and monitoring of numerous bluebird nest boxes. Not to forget his smooth, kind, "black snake" removals and relocation! Steve, we all look forward to your continuing efforts in our neighboring state. Thank You!

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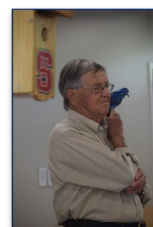
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# INSPIRATIONAL BLUEBIRD MAN (1 OF 3)

## MANY SING PRAISE OF EXTRAORDINARY FRIEND TO BLUEBIRDS

Amazing, inspirational, awesome are ways Mr. Bill Satterwhite is often described by so many people. His dedication and consistent concern for bluebirds in his golden years is phenomenal. People donate money and offer their time for the bluebird cause due to respect for Bill. Keep reading for some specific thoughts of Bill.

## WORDS FROM PRIMARY BLUEBIRDER ON BILL'S BLUEBIRD TEAM

"Pass it forward" comes to mind when reminiscing about this remarkable man. He not only encouraged me to join the NCBS and become active but also work with him with the Bluebirders of Wake group he started in 2006 (and is still going strong). He and I became a team as Co-coordinators of Wake County in 2008 and what a team we are! I was honored when he offered to be my Wake County Extension Master Gardener mentor. Most of my volunteer hours were doing bluebird presentations and events with him – not only did he share his knowledge and wisdom, it was lots of fun.



He not only built hundreds of nest boxes and placed them at schools, city and county parks, churches, golf courses, individuals' yards, etc. but also taught students at local public schools and a NCSU honors class to build, install, and monitor them. His love of the birds and nature was contagious. His daughter, Billie Jeanne Satterwhite, and other family members are monitoring these smaller trails now with Bill. **Contact Billie Jeanne (919-418-3406) if you would like to help.** She's fun also! And let me add, you could not buy a Bill Satterwhite box; he gifted them or suggested you donate to NCBS.

Because of his efforts in establishing so many trails, another thought comes to mind, "it takes a village" – to continue what this one person started, keeping these nest boxes and trails maintained and the blues thriving. It is to his credit that so many people have stepped forward to help continue his legacy. I'd like to give credit to some of these amazing people.

Historic Oak View County Park, Bill's first trail of 16 boxes was established in 1993 when Bill was an active Master Gardener. It is being maintained currently by two Master Gardeners, Cathrine Evans and Cindy Hamrick. They have replaced many of the boxes through the years. Our Bluebirder and Master Gardener, Susan Wyatt, took care of the trail for a good while before she moved away.

JC Raulston Arboretum's trail is currently being supervised by Alexia Maneschi with the cooperation of the Arboretum staff and volunteers. The nest boxes are being repaired, replaced, maintained, and monitored. Bill started this trail of 18 boxes in 1994.

Lonnie Poole Golf Course on NCSU Centennial Campus: Where Bill put up 16 boxes in 2012. Alexia Maneschi took on this one also, replacing and repairing. **Contact her (919-387-9500) if you would like to help.**

Lake Crabtree Creek County Park's Assistant Park Manager, Colleen Bockhahn, has been maintaining this trail of 17 boxes Bill set up in 1996, including replacing and repairing as needed. She and her staff monitor and submit data to the Natural Resources Inventory Database. **Backup volunteers are needed if anyone can help, contact Colleen at 919-460-3390.**

# INSPIRATIONAL BLUEBIRD MAN (2 OF 3)

Mordecai Historic Park in downtown Raleigh: the trail which Bill started in 1998 was taken over by Suzy Spencer. Marti Kane is monitoring temporarily while Suzy is recuperating. John Myhre is temporarily handling Suzy's trail of 17 boxes at Oakwood Cemetery.

Wil-Mar Golf Course on Old Milburnie Road in Raleigh: Bill started the 25 box trail in 1994. Marti Kane took inventory in March and found that most of the boxes need to be replaced, repaired and relocated. She reports that it is a lovely location, ideal for birds, and the owner is enthusiastic about keeping the trail.

*Contact Marti (919-741-0654) if you would like to help at Wil-Mar Golf Course.*

As you can see by the number of people who have stepped forward to help, Bill has set the bar high. He has enriched so many lives, especially mine. I am proud to be part of Bluebirders of Wake. Thank you, Bill!

Joye Stephenson, Wake County Coordinator

## **BILL'S CHEERFUL PERSONALITY AIDS BLUEBIRD AWARENESS**

The wonderful thing about Bill is, in addition to bringing more awareness to conservation in general and bluebirds in particular, he is always pleasant, good-humored, and upbeat. Your day is just better when you have had a chance to spend some time with Bill. As a life-long learner and someone who loves to share knowledge, he was the perfect Master Gardener volunteer!

Jean Myers, PhD Soil Science Horticulture Agent, Wake County North Carolina Cooperative Extension

## **BILL MAKES GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION AT NCBS CONFERENCE**

My first meeting with Bill Satterwhite was at an Annual NCBS Conference at Haw River State Park. We lived in the far western tip of NC and had not known of his good work in Raleigh. Joye Stephenson introduced me saying, "Carol, I would like you to meet our North Carolina Bluebird Man". Bill was so friendly and eager to share his work for bluebirds. He was in his nineties. I felt so blessed to meet this inspirational man. He is truly a Bluebird Ambassador. He inspires us to do good work in our communities. His love of life shines through. He knows we live in a beautiful world. Thank you, Bill.

Carol Reid, NCBS Vice President, NCBS County Representative in Cherokee, Clay, Graham, and Wake

## **BILL'S NEST BOX KNOWLEDGE IS TOP OF THE LINE**

I first met Bill Satterwhite in 2011 at an event at the JC Raulston Arboretum. Mr. Bill and Joye Stephenson had a bluebird display set up in the lobby. I had starting making some bluebird boxes and Joye (whom I met at the 2010 Annual Meeting in Garner) shared I should talk with "Mr. Bill" if I wanted an expert opinion! Mr. Bill took my box and started pointing out "things" to me while sharing the "why" for bluebirds. These things were actually specifications for a successful bluebird nest box!

(1) correct size entrance hole, (2) minimum floor size, (3) proper cavity depth, (4) adequate ventilation, (5) necessary drainage, (6) correct roof overhang, (7) critical monitoring and clean-out door.

Wow ... what a wonderful learning experience from an awesome teacher!

Ken Kernoodle, NCBS Immediate Past President



# INSPIRATIONAL BLUEBIRD MAN (3 OF 3)

## WORKING WITH BILL FOR BLUEBIRD COMMUNICATION ONLINE

I met Bill in May 2007 at my first Bluebirder meeting, which was held at St. Mark's Chapel on the grounds of Mordecai Historic Park. Over the years I have had many phone, email, and in-person conversations with Mr. Satterwhite. Memories include coordinating with Bill regarding the club meeting dates, speaker announcements, and other content to post on the website, working with him and Joye on a bluebird article for *Triangle Gardener*, conversations while commuting with him on long journeys to NCBS Board meetings, and calling for his expertise and help when I received bluebird questions.

His positive attitude and cheerful voice always add warmth to any discussion. The passion regarding bluebirds and care about their future has been amazing during Bill's presentations. His great fondness for bluebirds shines through brightly. Talking about bluebirds just brings a sparkle to his eyes. I am so impressed and inspired by the accomplishments and dedication from Mr. Bill and his continued concern for ensuring the future for bluebirds.

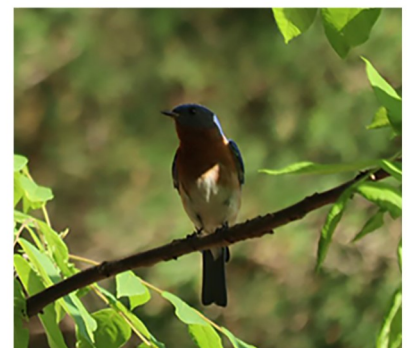
In graduate school I was able to do research for marketing plans for NCBS for course work. Mr. Bill Satterwhite was the main one I turned to for assistance, which he gladly provided. I was able to complete class projects, as well as brainstorm useful ideas to help the mission of NCBS, with assistance from Bill. Improvements to the NCBS and Wake County Bluebirder websites are always on my agenda. Bill helped me streamline content to offer optimum online communication to assist those interested in bluebirds.

Educating others about the needs of bluebirds has been one of Bill's favorite activities. Bill, Joye, and I worked together to get the word out about the Wake County quarterly Bluebirder club meetings. We also had help from various local news organizations that helped increase attendance at our meetings.

I would like to give a shout out of appreciation to *WRAL Out & About* ([wral.com](http://wral.com)) and *The News & Observer* ([newsobserver.com](http://newsobserver.com)) for listing club meeting dates in their online events calendars. Additionally, thanks to Sarah Nagem, our club has also been mentioned several times in the printed version of *The North Raleigh News & Observer*. Beverly Hurley, Publisher/Editor of the *Triangle Gardener*, has listed a website link to [bluebirdersofwake.org](http://bluebirdersofwake.org) on [trianglergardener.com](http://trianglergardener.com), as well as posted club dates and meeting summaries in their online calendar and printed publication for many years. Thanks to all very much.

Joye and Bill ask new attendees at the meetings where they learned of the event and we do hear that the listings in these news resources are bringing people to the club. Bill is always pleased to see new faces at the meetings and ensures they feel welcome and are supplied with bluebird knowledge and tips.

I have been blessed to know Mr. Bill Satterwhite for so many years and have the opportunity to spend time helping him help bluebirds. The sightings of bluebirds flourishing at Mordecai Historic Park, where Bill started a 7 nest box trail, is a great example of how Bill's efforts continue to pay off. Photo to the right was snapped May 16, 2020. See more pictures on page 16 from this location in Raleigh.



# LONGTIME NCBS BLUEBIRD SUPPORT

## HELPING BLUEBIRDS ALL OVER NORTH CAROLINA

Bill Satterwhite became a member of NCBS in 1996. He has been working tirelessly ever since to help the bluebirds and help others learn how to help. He began serving as a NCBS Director and Wake County Coordinator in 2006. Bill fielded questions in the Capital City area, as well as for other parts of the state. When a county did not have a representative, Bill was one of the team that NCBS turned to for extra help. Bill has been a big supporter of the annual NCBS meetings. He was a part of conferences in various places over the years. At age 96 he attended the conference and gave a presentation at Haw River State Park!

## BLUEBIRD ACTIVITIES IN TRIANGLE AREA FLOURISH

November 2006 *Bluebird Notes* has a photo of Bill Satterwhite explaining bluebird nest boxes to visitors at Lake Crabtree County Park *Walk For Wildlife* event. A May 2006 *Bluebird Notes* article mentions that Bill spoke in an excellent manner about bluebirds for the Knightdale Two Green Thumbs Garden Club meeting. Wake County is the location in North Carolina with the most NCBS members. We can thank Bill Satterwhite for a lot of awareness of bluebirds and facilitating their well-being in the place of his residence.

## INSPIRATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL BLUEBIRDER CLUB

July 2006 was the kickoff for the Bluebirders of Wake Club. Bill managed this organization as a dedicated leader until a couple years ago. Joye Stephenson joined forces with him in 2008. Bill had to slow down with bluebird activities around his 97th birthday, but he hasn't stopped. The quarterly meetings are still held, with Bill now an attentive audience member. He still gives bluebird advice and shares interesting stories. Carol Reid, Vice President of NCBS, is currently assisting Joye with hosting the club meetings. These two Bluebirder Ladies work together as a Wake County Coordinator Team of NCBS.

There have been many wonderful Wake County Bluebirder meetings over the years. Guest speakers, with various nature, bird, and bluebird related topics, have given their time and knowledge to educate others. Presentations by Bill and Joye usually include a display of nest boxes. More about nest boxes on page 7.

The Wake County Bluebirder Sunday get-togethers are typically held quarterly—February, May, August, and November. The May and August 2020 meetings were cancelled due to the coronavirus. At this time we do not know when the next meeting will be held. Please check out the website, [bluebirdersofwake.org](http://bluebirdersofwake.org). We will post updates regarding the next meeting when we have more information. Photos below are Bill and some of his Wake County bluebird supporters.



### Happy Summer 2020

Hope your days are filled with the sights and sounds of many bluebirds!!!



# BLUEBIRD EDUCATION & AWARENESS

## TOP WAY TO HELP BLUEBIRDS: Nest Boxes, Nest Boxes, Nest Boxes

Bill Satterwhite stressed one very important way to help bluebirds is to provide nest boxes. Their loss of natural habitat for nesting was one of the reasons they were once in danger. Additionally, shy bluebirds have been hurt by more aggressive birds. They have overcome many significant challenges and rebounded, thanks in great part to nest boxes. But these precious birds need continued assistance from humans.

His presentation at Bluebirder meetings showcased a nest box line up that included pink with blue roof, an NC State embellished box, and an assortment of various others. He joked the bluebirds don't care what the boxes look like or their color (although he is partial to NC State Red). What matters to Blues is they have a safe place to nest and lay their eggs. Nest box survey data is important and serves to show how well the Blues are flourishing. Please remember to record your nest box activity/data so it can be submitted this fall.

The Bailey Box (far left box with dark brown metal roof in 2nd photo below), was created by highly respected bluebird enthusiast, Jack Finch. This nest box was included as one Bill often mentioned to serve very well for bluebirds' needs. See page 12 for words from another fan of the Bailey Box, as well as an interesting bluebird story with pictures, from Cleveland County Coordinator, Jim Kunkle.



## NEST BOX ADVICE FROM NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

- A bluebird box should not have a perch, as aggressive competitive birds will be attracted to perch.
- A good bluebird box should be well ventilated, watertight, and have drainage holes. It should be easy to open, monitor, and easy to clean.
- Solid, untreated wood is an ideal material, although exterior grade plywood can be used. The outside of boxes can be painted or stained if a light color is used.

Tips above were retrieved from [nabluebirdsociety.org](http://nabluebirdsociety.org). See a wide range of helpful bluebird resources at this website of the North American Bluebird Society (NABS).

## WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT BLUEBIRDS & THE JOY OF BLUEBIRDING

- The website for NCBS, [ncbluebird.org](http://ncbluebird.org), offers a wealth of useful bluebird information. Helpful topics to check out include the bluebird story, landscaping, good food options for bluebirds. Information can be found regarding good places to place nest boxes, how to install, monitor, and maintain the boxes.
- NCBS can provide many valuable resources, such as giving talks at schools and special events. Check with a County Coordinator in your county, or reach out to any NCBS Board Member.
- Consider volunteering. The rewards of Bluebirding are well worth the time.
- Attending NCBS conferences is a great way to network with other Bluebird enthusiasts, relax in a scenic place, and pick up some bluebird knowledge. Unfortunately, the 2020 conference did not happen, but we hope for a fabulous comeback in 2021!

# BLUEBIRD QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

## SENIOR BLUEBIRD ADVISOR — RAY WELCH OF WINSTON-SALEM

Mr. Ray Welch is currently our primary contact for Bluebird questions. Ray has served NCBS in numerous roles, including President for many years. He has been the Davidson County Coordinator since 1992. He also took on Forsyth County in 2017, after helping Bill Abbey for a couple of years. Ray has extensive experience and a wealth of knowledge regarding bluebirds. Since Bill Satterwhite is no longer part of the team of Bluebird Panel, Ray has taken on more responsibility and fields many more inquiries. Thanks Ray, for all you have done and continue to do to help with bluebird conservation and education. An example of the numerous emails and telephone inquiries follows showing the dedication and well-crafted information given to people seeking Bluebird help with questions and/or problems from Ray.

**BLUEBIRD CONCERNS:** We put up our first blue bird boxes (2) on our property in Hillsborough NC this spring and were thrilled when we had our first nest. We watched mom and dad come back repeatedly for feeds. Two days ago we noticed a near fledgling half hanging out of the box, then went back in when we approached. We thought maybe this was normal. Today no parents came by so we assumed they had fledged. When we went to clean out the box all perfectly healthy looking 5 nearly grown bluebirds were dead in the box. No larva, no peck marks. No bees or wasps. Lots of tiny mites on exterior of box. We wonder if the one hanging out of the nest was the last survivor? My husband says he saw a male on the box top today. Any idea what went wrong? Also tips to disinfect this box? Our other box had chickadees, but they abandoned the eggs when bumblebees moved in. We have since cleaned it out and have a full bluebird nest, just no eggs yet. Want to give these guys the best chance. Any help appreciated. Thanks, Jen

**RESPONSE FROM RAY:** Hello Jen. Thanks for contacting the NC Bluebird Society (NCBS) with your problem. You are exactly correct with your thoughts that "thing were going normally until you found the dead nestlings". There is no real good response as to what happened to those chicks. I suspect that those mites that you saw on the outside of the nestbox are called Clover Mites and they would do no harm to the chicks. These mites are red in color and if one is mashed it leaves a red spot. I think the same with the bees, wasp, and other insect would not bother the clutch of babies either.

In today's world everyone wants beautiful landscaped turf, nice green grass and no insects. So we put out all types of chemicals in order to do that. I can't prove this opinion but, I suspect that the parent got into some type of poison. I say that from the standpoint of how quick their death occurred with no sign of any mutation to the chicks bodies.

I totally understand how you and your husband feel about the loss of the five baby bluebirds. Unfortunately, I have been there and experience all of these thing in the twenty plus years of bluebirding. My wife told me many years ago that we were going to have to get another hobby because bluebirding was too stressful! Sometimes I totally agree with her but, I just can't give it up. So you have a full nest and by now hopefully some beautiful blue eggs and a mom that is setting on those eggs. You and your husband cross your fingers and I will cross mine and soon you will again experience the excitement of having baby bluebirds again!

Again, thanks for contacting the NCBS and hope you will feel free to contact me again should you run into a problem or have a question. You may also contact me at 336-764-0226. Happy Bluebirding!

Ray Welch



# **INSPIRATIONAL NEWS FOR THE NC BLUES**

## **NCBS MEMBERSHIP INCREASE OF 10+ PERCENT**

David and Kay Hindsley, husband-wife members of our Board, informed of a substantial increase in NCBS memberships. People are realizing the value of gift memberships. They do make shopping easy for bluebird, bird, and nature lovers on your list for so many different occasions. Birthdays, holidays, or many special occasions are perfect times for gift memberships. Recipients will be reminded of your generosity several times, with the initial membership packet and the seasonal newsletters. See form on page 15, send email to [contact@ncbluebird.org](mailto:contact@ncbluebird.org), or phone David at 252-823-0737 to start a membership anytime.

Kay has been our Corresponding Secretary for many years. David serves in dual roles with NCBS, as the Edgecombe County Coordinator and Records Retention Manager. They give so much to our organization and toward bluebird conservation. We send a round of applause for these two devoted Tarboro Bluebirders. They were able to get to the beach in late May for a fabulous time that included bird watching. They reported sightings of many species: mockingbirds, doves, blackbirds, blue jays, brown thrashers and pelicans.

## **GARDEN CLUBS WELCOME BLUEBIRD PRESENTATIONS**

Jean and Jim Walker are another husband-wife bluebirder team working tirelessly for NCBS and bluebirds. They have been serving together as the County Coordinators for Moore County for a great number of years. We are happy to hear how busy these two have been helping our feathered friends. Thanks for the long-time support, Jean & Jim. Read more about their recent bluebird efforts in report below from Jean.

I have spoken to two garden clubs this past spring. First, the Botanical Garden Club. I took lots of show and tell, including the small ring to add to the bluebird nest box hole to encourage small birds like chickadee and nuthatch. On our Longleaf trail, these smaller holes have been well used. I think the smaller birds know they are more protected !!!! I use our trail for telling the hole cycle of the BB. This club gave NCBS \$50.00!!! Much thanks for this thoughtful donation.

Second, was the Whispering Pines Garden club. About 50 members, Jim came also and showed the two piece pole and how to make a flange for the back of a new nest box. I had several notes of appreciation from this talk. Door prizes given out to members by the club were four bluebird nest boxes from State Employees Credit Union. This is a well made box for \$10.00. I use one for show and tell. I added my name to bluebird literature I gave out and have gotten calls with bluebird questions. I am scheduled to give a talk February 2021 to another garden club. I like to give talks early months of year. Every one of our 65 nest boxes has activity this year.

Jean Walker, Longleaf Bluebird Trail, Southern Pines

## **VISITS FROM BLUES BRING LOVING MEMORIES**

Growing up in Halifax county, my father had bluebird houses on field edges and telephone poles around the farm. My first sighting as a child in the 1950's was when he pointed out the swooping flight path of a bluebird as it flew across a field. Daddy loved all birds but "His Bluebirds" held a special place in his heart. I think of my father when Blues visit my feeders.

Sally Neal, Halifax County

# REPORT FROM CLEVELAND COUNTY

## BLUEBIRDS ARE A DELIGHT TO EVERYONE!

I have been interested in Bluebirds for many years now. Every year has been a new and delightful experience. Originally I tried one box, and had limited success, so I then added another box. They were about 125 feet apart; at the time I did not know that they were too close together! During the mating season between March and August I would always have bluebirds in one box, with some sort of other wren or titmouse or chickadee in the other. I tried to discourage the other birds from building as much as I could, but it's hard to do. I didn't know until recently that you can put two boxes on opposite sides of your house and have bluebirds in both at the same time!

There are several different designs of boxes of course, but I like the Jack Finch type boxes. Jack died in 2006, but his brother Dan still runs the business and turns out the boxes up in Bailey, NC. They actually grow their own trees to make the boxes with! I add a 3/4" board at the opening to prevent creatures from reaching in. See the photo of the box. Also, I have a snake guard, and add snake netting below the box as added precaution. I take snakes seriously, because I have lost quite a few eggs and babies to them.

I love the bluebird feeders too. It's great to see the birds at the boxes from March to August, but it's also great to watch them year round come into your feeders. If the feeder has only one entrance, I add one on the other end. They seem to enjoy popping in one end, and out the other. I also have been known to build little balconies on each end. (Maybe that's a little much, but they seem to like it!)

Within the last month I have had four babies fledge in my back yard (just last week), and five still in the box in my front yard. At the time of this writing, they should fledge in about four or five days!

The NCBS annual conferences are a fantastic way to learn more about bluebirds. I have been to most of them for the last 6 or 7 years. (I may have missed one). They bring in great speakers, and it is a great way to network with other bluebird enthusiasts! Also, as the Cleveland County Coordinator I have done many bluebird presentations for garden clubs, libraries, and civic groups. What a great way to meet people, create interest in bluebirds, and just bring others into the "fold" so to speak!

As you might have guessed, I love Bluebirding, and hope you do also!

Jim Kunkle Cleveland County Coordinator for the NCBS



# DURHAM BLUEBIRDS

## DURHAM BLUES RECEIVE HELP TO OUTSMART SNEAKY SNAKE



Meg Gresham reported a bluebird story with a roller coast ride of happy, sad, and a happy ending. She was excited to see a bluebird egg so early this year — on March 8 (which actually is a very early date to see bluebird eggs, so that is extra special)!!! She kept a close eye on the nest — more appeared. Then came Baby Blues! How wonderful!

However, she was soon devastated to see a black snake in the box and the precious babies gone. She had a snake baffle on her bluebird nest box, so this horrible event took her by surprise. She called for assistance from Durham County Coordinator, Steve McDaniel. He quickly helped by moving the nest box and putting up an improved snake baffle (right photo below).

Meg was hopeful when another nest of bluebird eggs appeared. After keeping watch, she is pleased to report that fledglings resulted from those eggs as well. She is so glad there have been no more sightings of snakes in the box. This story is a great example of how bluebirds can prevail with assistance from humans. The bluebirds will likely always need help from people.

Meg informed her interest in bluebirds came from her father back in Texas, who loved bluebirds. His interest began from literature from Jack Finch of Bailey, NC (*Come Back Little Bluebird*). Isn't it a small and wonderful world?



*Photos provided by Meg:*

- Bluebird eggs
- Sassy bluebird perched on nest box
- Meg by her nest box
- Steve by nest box with new snake deterrent



## DURHAM BABIES THRIVING

- Tommy Stevens provided this great snapshot of two baby Blues receiving an afternoon meal.
- Aren't they just precious? The one on the right is showing manners and waiting patiently for his food.
- Thanks for sharing this wonderful picture, Tommy. It demonstrates the rewards for the efforts and dedication by Bluebirders.





# GUILFORD COUNTY— GOOD NEWS & PICS

## BLUEBIRDS OF HAW RIVER STATE PARK ARE FLOURISHING

Local High School Volunteer Ethan Ryder is back again for a second consecutive season monitoring the NC Bluebird Society Nest Boxes at The Summit Environmental Education & Conference Center (5 boxes) and at our Iron Ore Belt Access - Day Use Area (8 boxes) at Haw River State Park (13 boxes total).



Park Staff have been monitoring at both locations since 2016 and Ethan reports that we are having a record number of Bluebird nests in 2020; "At Iron Ore last Wednesday (April 23), my mom and I counted 15 young and 8 eggs. I think we showed up around the time the eggs in box 3 were hatching, because we found one tiny bluebird in there with the other four eggs. At the Summit, we counted 8 young."

Most of the first set of chicks Ethan references in his monitoring notes has already fledged; we are looking forward to additional Bluebird babies for the month of May. Left snapshot forwarded by Ethan taken in April at Iron Ore Belt Access: nest box 2.

Angelia Allcox, Park Ranger, Haw River State Park

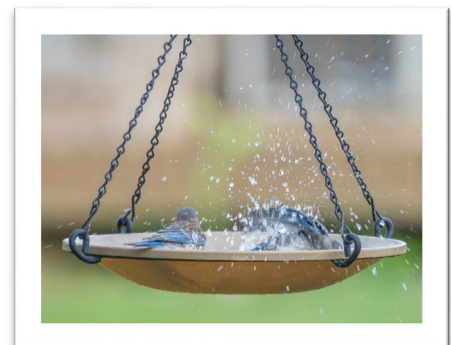
## WORDS FROM NEW NCBS DIRECTOR

I became interested in Bluebirds at an early age growing up in farm country and hearing their song and the flash of blue when they flew. About 35 years ago I ran across a *Homes for Bluebird* bluebird house and discovered the flyer inside with NCBS information inside. I sent in my application to join and have been a member ever since. My job with a local non profit hospital was on 80 acre campus with lots of bluebirds. I started a trail and never stopped. I moved to Carteret County and became the NCBS County Coordinator until we moved back to Guilford County. I am now acting coordinator for Randolph County and re-establishing a couple of old trails. Ken Roberson, Greensboro

## FABULOUS SUMMER PICTURES FROM OAK RIDGE, NORTH CAROLINA



Thanks to Edward Haynes for these fabulous snapshots and some others he donated to NCBS. Be on the lookout for more of his fantastic bluebird pictures in future issues and our online channels— NCBS Facebook & [ncbluebird.org](http://ncbluebird.org).





# HENDERSON COUNTY BLUEBIRD PROJECT

## Local Boy Scout Unites Not-For-Profits to create Bluebird Habitat in Laurel Park

*Press Release below reprinted with permission (with minor formatting tweaks) from Apple County Woodcrafters. Submitted by Joe Sanders, Henderson County Coordinator. Thanks for this great news, Joe.*

Eagle Scout candidate James Lilly, of Hendersonville Troup # 601 (sponsored by the Hendersonville Kiwanis), has joined forces with three area not-for-profit agencies to build and install a Bluebird “habitat trail” in Laurel Park. While Lilly has organized the project and did most of the work as part of his “Eagle Scout” project, he has tapped the resources of the North Carolina Bluebird Society ([www.ncbluebird.org](http://www.ncbluebird.org)) and the Apple Country Woodcrafters ([www.applwcountrywoodcrafters.org](http://www.applwcountrywoodcrafters.org)) for the design and construction of the specialized Blue Bird houses. Lilly, age 14, lives in Laurel Park with his parents, Dr. & Mrs. Edward G. (Lillian) Lilly.

Starting with a grant from the Friends of Laurel Park ([www.friendsoflaurelpark.org](http://www.friendsoflaurelpark.org)) for the materials, Lilly reached out and contacted the Bluebird Society for help in the design and placement of the Bluebird homes. The Apple Country Woodcrafters pitched in with materials and fabrication of the bird house kits.

Following a further meeting with Laurel Park Commissioner Paul Hansen, the “build” part of the project was expanded to include an additional dozen bluebird houses and feeders that Laurel Park will make available to their residents.

The assembly was performed on a Saturday February 29th by Lilly’s fellow scouts, who then went on to aid in the final installation and maintenance of the Bird House Habitat Trail under the supervision of Joe Sanders, NCBS county coordinator for Henderson County.

Sanders notes that “Bluebirds need help in securing proper and safe habitats to fledge their young. They are dependent on other creatures like woodpeckers to create a natural niche” A number of years ago when the Bluebirds were on the brink of extinction, concerned nature lovers, like the North Carolina Bluebird Society stepped in to assist the birds by the creation of specialized habitats (bird houses) which the society places and maintains in key nesting areas.

“Once completed”, says Sanders, “the birds move in and begin to nest in early March. The young are hatched in about 12 – 14 days after the eggs are laid, and then leave the nest about 17 – 18 days later.”



The habitat trail is maintained on an on-going basis by clearing out the old nests and making the houses available for the next generation.

“These specialized birdhouses are built out of cedar with an aluminum weatherproof top. They should last for up to 15 years when properly maintained” notes Sanders.

\*All activity described in this release occurred PRIOR to local and statewide restrictions on activities due to coronavirus.

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# SUMMERTIME 2020

# NCBS MEMBERSHIP

Hope you have been able to find inspiration from the arrival of bluebirds this year. I have really enjoyed putting this newsletter together. I am delighted to honor Bluebird Man, Bill Satterwhite, in this issue.

I have found cheer viewing bluebird photos as well as floral snapshots from NCBS Member from Raleigh, Lyn Cochrane. Sharing a nest box and gorgeous Iris from Lyn's garden. Happy Summer, Everyone!!!



Glenda Ryan, Webmaster/Newsletter Editor

NCBS memberships options are one or three years.  
**Dues: \$10.00 per year or \$25 for three years**

Gift membership from \_\_\_\_\_ to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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A member's email address will be used only for NCBS official business and considered private and confidential.

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New Membership [  ]

Renewal [  ]

Check Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you also have an interest in:

- Assisting with the annual meeting
- Serving as a NCBS Board Member
- Helping with the newsletter
- Conducting a bluebird workshop
- Contacting my local paper with news
- Volunteering to be a NCBS County Coordinator
- Other (please explain)

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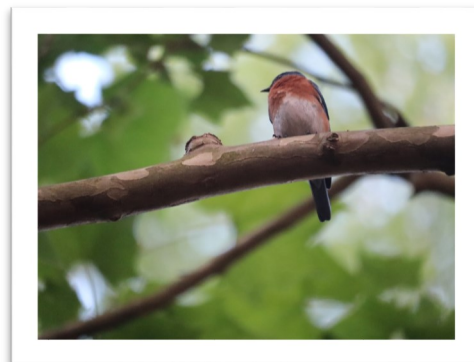
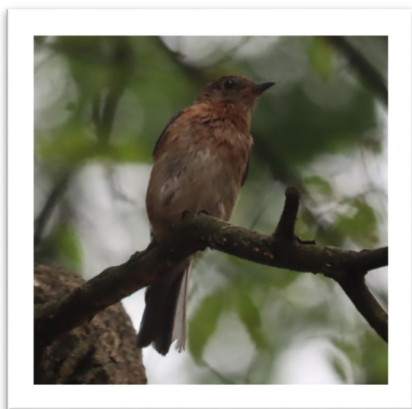
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# **SUMMER 20 GREETINGS FROM THE BLUES**



Since this edition is being dedicated to Mr. Bill Satterwhite, we are including a photo gallery of bluebirds from the Mordecai Historic Park in Raleigh. This location, where the Bluebirders of Wake meet quarterly, is the center of bluebird action in Wake County. Bill set up a trail of 7 nest boxes here many years ago. With the help of Suzy Spencer for several years and Marti Kane (temporarily), the Blues at this location are still flourishing. Photos by Glenda Ryan.

