



The Bird Box

Fall 2011

New Bluebird Trail at Hoover Ridge in Madison County

It began with a quiet conversation one night in Madison County: a discussion of bluebird boxes and the idea of starting a trail at Hoover Ridge Park. After contacting the Director of Facilities at Hoover Ridge Park and obtaining approval, several members of the Old Rag Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists set out to “blaze the trail.” Dana Squire, VBS County Coordinator, obtained a grant from the Virginia Bluebird Society for the materials to build the boxes and predator guards. With the help of a local Boy Scout leader, the box parts were cut out and members of the Old Rag Master Naturalists assembled them. On March 1st, we installed ten boxes at the park. The wait was on – we watched for the male bluebirds to start claiming their territories and hoped that the females would pick our boxes for nesting sites.

Fellow Master Naturalist, Everett Millais, and I began the weekly monitoring of the boxes on March 23rd and were delighted to find that a bluebird nest and a Carolina chickadee nest had been built in two of our boxes. The following week, another chickadee nest was built, and we sighted two bluebirds on another box. It looked like our trail might be a success, and we were excited every week to come and check on the boxes. I was amazed at how quietly mother bluebird, and sometimes father as well, would sit close by and watch while we checked inside the boxes. On one particular morning, the mother did not sit quietly by, but instead fussed

at us as we opened the box. When we peeked into the box we realized that her babies were hatching. As one baby wiggled out of its egg, I was awestruck and ecstatic to have the privilege of witnessing this



Bluebirds hatching June 22, 2011 (all five hatched and fledged)

event. I snapped a picture, and we quickly closed the box to let Mama Bluebird carry on with her new babies.

Our bluebird trail has never failed to delight us as we have watched the babies grow and the parents care for them. This summer, 32 bluebirds have fledged from 37 eggs, as well as 13 Carolina chickadees from 13 eggs. Next year, we plan to add an additional five boxes to the trail and hope to be able to actually photograph some young fledging the nest! *Cindy Crook*

Occupied!

Over the years, I've observed that all the bluebirds on my trail enjoy the Noel entry hole guard as a "porch" to sit in and guard their nest box. There is, however, another reason why they like it. I have found that all the bluebirds leave some of their nesting material inside the Noel guard as if putting up a



sign and saying, "Occupied!" The Carolina Chickadees and the House Wrens don't do this. At first, I thought it was the male who drops this material there for the female to build the nest with, but I could not back this hunch up with any witnessed observation. My earlier mentioned conclusion seemed more plausible – *OCCUPIED*. *Christine Boran*

Trail Data

It's time to send me your trail data for the 2011, nesting season. Don't delay. Send it to:

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Newsletter of the
Virginia Bluebird Society
www.virginiabluebirds.org

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(photos and drawings) for *The Bird Box*!
E-mail your materials to Pallav Das.

Community Service Camp

I look around the woodshop and see kids smiling, laughing, and working together to build bluebird boxes! These kids, ages 6-9, are in the Community



Service Camp at Reston Community Center. This is the second year for the camp and also the second year the camp has collaborated with the Virginia Bluebird Society. I think it is pretty inspiring to see young kids helping out in their community and striving to make a difference in the world.

The first and second day of camp took place in the Community Center's Woodshop. Campers sanded, painted, and assembled 6 bluebird boxes, which would go to various organizations and places.

One of the boxes went to the closet in Herndon where it will be on display for a month. Two boxes were brought to Meadowlark Gardens on the third day of camp with the purpose of replacing two older boxes on the trail in the Gardens.



The kids received maps and got to walk part of the trail on which they got the chance to observe a few

nests and boxes. They were taught the importance of maintaining the trail as well as giving the birds a home. The point of it all is, "to learn about bluebirds and how to help the bluebirds," says Laura, a camper. I volunteered with the camp and was able to share the journal my dad and I use to record bluebird activity when we monitor our neighborhood bluebird trail. Overall, the campers learned

the significance of taking care of bluebirds and had a blast at Meadowlark even though the boxes they built couldn't be put up because of hardware difficulties.

Later that afternoon, Allison Sutherland joined us at the gardens to share her book, [The Adventures of Kaluwaru the Koala in the Galapagos Islands](#)



with us! She also touched upon ideas and ways we all can keep our planet greener and protect it one step at a time. The theme of her book was about helping the endangered Galapagos tortoises. That theme relates to the lessons the campers learned about rebuilding a habitat for the bluebirds in our community.

We also read [Magic Summer of Bluebirds](#) throughout the week; a book approved and recommended by the VA Bluebird Society. The kids really seemed to enjoy the fun story and learn a lot from it. The camp was such a fantastic week for the campers because they got a chance to help out in their community and learn all about bluebirds! *Megan Kenny*

Give a Snake a Break

It's a scene all too familiar to anyone who's spent anytime checking bluebird boxes. You slowly open a nest box, expecting to see eggs or perhaps downy nestlings. Instead you see the shiny patent leather scales of an Eastern rat snake tightly coiled in the pine straw nest. The evidence of the marauder's prize is evident in the five bulges along its otherwise sleek length. The somnolent snake raises its head and regards you – too sated with its meal to even think of escaping. You slam the door shut and reach into your work bucket for your leather gloves. There's no two ways about it; this snake must go! But why? For a long time groups such as the Virginia Bluebird Society have worked towards the recovery of eastern bluebird populations in North America. A legion of dedicated bluebirders can be immensely proud of the fact that they have succeeded. Eastern bluebird populations are either stable or increasing across most of their range, and bluebird populations are at almost historic highs.



The scenario described above is one of the long-standing banes of the bluebirder. To this end we have moved our boxes from trees and fence posts onto narrow poles. We have tried any number of techniques to prevent snake predation, including the ubiquitous snake-guards. Why should we go to such lengths to prevent what is otherwise a natural process – indeed one of the cornerstones of evolution through adaptation? In cases where a species is rare and its survival or genetic diversity is threatened by heavy predation, predator control and exclusion may be warranted. If the predator in question is non-native (such as house cats) then the species may not have the evolutionary mechanisms to deal with predation pressure. In the case of snakes and bluebirds, however, it most often comes down to this simple truth – we like bluebirds more than snakes.

While many appreciate snakes there is often a bias against snakes in our culture. It is not uncommon for completely harmless snakes to be killed out of a knee-jerk fear reaction. In an attempt to be more humane bluebirders may simply move the snake to a location far from its original range. Both approaches are not only ethically questionable but are in fact against the law in Virginia.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, relocated animals often have poor survival as they don't know the location of key resources and may wander widely in an attempt to relocate to familiar surroundings. If the habitat is suitable for the species in question it likely has resident animals already and may not be able to support another individual. Issues of genetics and disease spread are concerns as well. There will almost certainly be nesting birds in the area that the snake is being released into. Essentially the predation pressure is simply being moved from one location to another. Clearly, relocating wildlife is not advisable.

So what to do? In many cases doing nothing at all may be the best course of action. The snake may be removed from the box or simply left alone to exit in its own time. If the boxes in a particular location are subject to frequent snake predation then it may be advisable to remove the nest boxes, as they are apparently located in prime snake habitat. If The Virginia Bluebird Society is to remain a true conservation organization our actions must not be guided by our personal preferences or even our fondness for the charismatic bluebird. Instead our management must reflect best ecological principles and ethics – even for snakes. *Stephen Living*

(1) Virginia Code § 29.1-512 There shall be a *continuous closed hunting season on all birds and wild animals* which are not nuisance species as defined in [29.1-100](#), except as provided by law.” (Note - no snake species is defined as a nuisance under Virginia code).

(2) Virginia Administrative Code 4 VAC 15-30-10: It shall be unlawful to import, export, buy, sell, offer for sale, or *liberate* within the Commonwealth any *wild animal* unless otherwise specifically permitted by law or regulation.

Proposed Board of Directors

The following is the slate for Board of Directors nominated for election at the upcoming annual meeting on November 5th. Nominations may also be made from the floor by any member in good standing. Election will be by majority of members present and voting.

President	– Carmen Bishop, Fairfax	Board	– Lexi Meadows, Pittsylvania
Secretary	– Ann Dunn, Albemarle	Board	– Earl Morris, Roanoke
Vice President	– Vickie Fuquay, Danville	Board	– Cathy Hindman, Prince William
Vice President	– Gaile Cooper, Nelson	Board	– Doug Rogers, Albemarle
Treasurer	– Carl Hansen, Radford		
Board	– Paul Davis, Nelson		

Bluebird Village Survives Vandal Onslaught

The trail at P.B. Smith Elementary School, Warrenton had a tough year due to a gross act of vandalism. The following article is being reprinted with the permission of The Fauquier Times Democrat.

A small community outside of Warrenton destroyed by someone — or something — last month, now appears to be thriving. The culprit allegedly caused more than \$200 in damages to 21 birdhouses used for student research at P.B. Smith Elementary School on Dumfries Road near Warrenton. According to fifth-grade teacher Barbara Dennee, some of the nest boxes were damaged “beyond repair.” “Four tree swallows, just about to leave their nest, were found dead and four baby bluebirds were missing from their nest,” Dennee said. “Twelve bluebird eggs, 30 tree swallow eggs, and six wren eggs were never found — probably eaten when the nests were open to predation,” she added.

The Fauquier County Sheriff’s Office was notified and the incident has been investigated, according to Lt. James Hartman. To date, authorities have been unable to determine who or what caused the damage, he added. Saddened but undaunted, the school community has rallied to restore the ruined nest sites. One parent even offered to have wood cut for new roofs and doors. Dennee said she and her husband also spent more than two hours repairing the birdhouses and installing new poles. The State Coordinator, Barbara Chambers, supplied the poles so they could get the new boxes up again. Charlie Chambers had some on hand and Barbara drove them out to the school in Warrenton. Everyone pitched in during this crisis.

The renovations seemed to be an instant hit. “The bluebirds and other cavity nesters are so forgiving,” Dennee said in a May 31 email. “Many birds have already begun rebuilding nests and laying eggs, even with leaking roofs and missing doors.” “One week after the nest boxes were damaged, there were six new bluebird nests and one egg; seven new tree swallow nests and one egg; and three new wren nests with three eggs.

Last Friday, Dennee and former P.B. Smith fifth-graders Blake Johnson, Ellie Sekelsky, Albie Snedaker and Austin Kirkpatrick returned to the Bluebird Trail. Decked out in T-shirts, shorts and rubber rain boots, they sloshed through long, wet grass to check the nest sites. Under Dennee’s supervision, one student used a drill to open the wooden box perched atop a pole. The others took turns standing atop a plastic milk crate to peer inside. In some cases, they found nests. Some of the nests held eggs and others held baby birds. “Bluebirds lay one egg per day and it generally takes them 12 to 14 days to hatch, so we can pretty much predict how many babies we’ll have,” Dennee said. As they checked each nest site, the students jotted their findings in their journals. At the end of the hour-long walk, Blake Johnson reviewed the number and type of baby birds they found along the way. The grand total? “There were 61 babies,” she said. The P.B Smith trail was back in business!
Alex Bogdanovic

VBS State Conference Saturday, November 5, 2011

Our Conference is just a month away and I am hoping that you will join us for a great day of education and camaraderie with other interested blue birders. We have over 40 people registered for our event already. The Conference will be held on Saturday, November 5th, in downtown Historic Fredericksburg at the downtown Fredericksburg library. The event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with an optional birding outing at Historic Ferry Farm, the boyhood home of George Washington, until 4:00 p.m. Accommodations, parking, and registration forms can be found on our website www.virginiabluebirds.org.

Our speakers at the conference will be: Steve Holmer, from the American Bird Conservancy speaking about “The Western Bluebird Recovery Effort in the San Juan Islands, in Washington State”; and we will also have David Mitchell, who is a Master Bird Bander talk about the “Big News in Bird Banding in Virginia”.

Registration for the conference is \$20 and includes lunch and all programs for the entire day. It is not necessary to be a member of VBS to attend this conference. *All are welcome!* If you wish to do a display table for the conference, please contact Barb Chambers; (703) 978-6609, bj.chambers@cox.net. There is no charge, but a donation to VBS is most welcome.

Answer Lady

QUESTION: Now that VBS recommends petroleum jelly to ward off ants in the nests, how much should we use and where should it be placed and when?

ANSWER: I am so glad to answer this question for us all. It is only in very wet soil conditions that the ants do come up into the nest boxes with their entire population. So, if it has been raining for several days and the ants might get flooded out, that is when you, as monitors, should be on the lookout for ants in the boxes. It is easy to correct this if the box is not occupied. If, however, there is a nest in there, you need to remove the nest and birds or eggs, and sweep out all the ants and

then return an ant free nest [this is another lesson for later] to the box. IT is THEN that you will place petroleum jelly [PJ] on the pole so that the ants do not return to that high dry spot! It will form a barrier to their climb.

So, where do you put the PJ? You put it on the pole UP, UNDER the snake guard. Nowhere else! Lift the snake guard up until it touches the nest box and put the PJ on the pole in a thick glob all the way around it, right there. When you lower the snake guard, the PJ is then completely covered by the snake guard. This is so that other animals, birds, and monitors, do not get it all over themselves. Monitors can wash it off. The others cannot.

A Nest Box of Our Own

This year we bought a Bluebird nest box from VBS, and what a joyful addition to our lives it turned out to be! My husband, Noah, and I have been monitoring a trail in Reston for three years and have always enjoyed it. This year, however, we observed the unfolding drama daily from our deck. Often, our larger family, neighbors and guests joined us in the fun.

We put the nest box at the edge of Noah's vegetable garden early in spring. Initially, we had to chase several house sparrows away, finally putting a strip of plastic bag blowing near the hole to discourage them from colonizing our nest box. On June 12th, our city guests from Philadelphia were lounging on the deck when they saw some action. It seemed that a bluebird (male) was pointing into the hole and showing the female the "real estate". From then on we watched the whole process of nest building, while the father sat on the nest box and guarded against sparrows, catbirds and cowbirds. Their previous brood, at least three juveniles, hung around as that activity went on. The female had five beautiful eggs and all of them fledged. We had dinner on our deck and watched her feed them every evening and got to see the young poke out, poke in and finally fledge on July 20th. It was a great experience. *Helaine Krob*



Carpenter Bees!

Earlier this year, in June, I had a minor but interesting first-time issue with Carpenter Bees. Fortunately for me, and for my nest boxes, it was easily resolved. This is what happened to me and how I solved it:

As I was approaching a box on one of my monitoring rounds, I heard a faint buzzing noise. Now, I have been stung by a Yellow Jacket on my trail in the past, so I backed away looking for any bees or wasps flying around the nest. Well, I saw nothing but continued to hear the buzzing! So I approached the box slowly and tried to figure out the source of the sound. The buzzing was underneath the box! It was a carpenter bee spinning around, boring a hole on the underside and outside the nest box. I stood there, watching it with wonder but the bee had no interest in me! I had never seen this before on my trail. Unfortunately, I did not have my camera ready. I was, however, keen to deter that bee from continuing and boring a hole deep enough to go through the floor.

I had some HotShot flying insect killer in my car (which I **NEVER** use inside a nest box), and I had a Q-Tip in my purse. I sprayed the Q-Tip with the HotShot, soaking the cotton tip. I approached the spinning bee and waved the Q-Tip around her. She flew off the box and circled around, looking rather confused; at the same time, I walked **FAST**, back to my car! I closed the windows, and sat there for a few minutes, writing my observations down in my notebook. I then, slowly, went back to the box and found the bee had left. Then, I took that same Q-Tip and swabbed it inside the hole, concentrating inside the bored wood where the hole was a slightly on the outside edges of it. Then, I left to monitor another nest box.

When I came back to check the box a few days later, there was no bee, no deepened bored hole! It seemed the problem got solved quite easily. Thankfully, I never saw a carpenter bee again on that nest box! Below is the photo I took on my return visit to the box a few days later of that bored hole. This fall, I plan on using a safe clear wood caulk to even and plug up the hole. *Christine Boran*



The Joys of Being a County Coordinator

For the life of me, I cannot understand anyone who enjoys birding and has knowledge of bluebirds not wanting to be a county coordinator. Everyone gets in touch with you if they have a problem or an interesting story about their bluebirds. You, on the other hand, are there to help and educate on the importance of things like baffles and predator guards. Before becoming a coordinator I had never seen white bluebird eggs or witnessed tree swallow nesting habits (and their attack mode as you monitor). Other than chickadee, titmouse and the sometimes-pesky house wrens in my own back yard, my experiences were limited at best. We now have 214 nest boxes on public land and 31 wonderful and reliable monitors who report to me. Just the privilege of seeing so many nesting birds and hearing the fantastic and sometimes tragic stories, makes the year-end report a pleasure to complete, not a chore.

This is a sampling of some of the calls I have received this year: . . . one of my monitors at a nursing home called to ask what to do with a strange nest. The chickadee started a nest, which the bluebirds took over. She reported 5 bluebird eggs and two chickadee eggs in one box with mama bluebird sitting tight. I told her to leave them alone and see what happens. Two days before the hatch day mama removed the chickadee eggs herself.



Another call came in with 6 baby bluebirds orphaned. I promptly called one of our monitors who is also a wildlife rehabber. We were able to place the babies in several nests with other babies the same age and had 100% success rate.

I had 3 robins (on three occasions) brought to me because each one who found them thought they were bluebird babies. The first two, I knew right away, were robins; the third one was only 5-6 days old and was brought to me at the beauty shop . . . while I was getting my haircut! The woman who brought it swore it was a bluebird baby! I thought it looked a little large, but it had no feathers and the eyes were tightly shut. I called the rehabber and headed home to feed mealworms. I sent out the plea by email for any monitor with VERY young bluebirds under one week to call me so I could compare the orphan and maybe place it in her new home. Within fifteen minutes I had received calls from 5 monitors with nest box numbers that would work. When I went to the first box and my baby “blue” in hand was twice the size of the baby blues and I knew I had another robin! The fantastic part was the quick response of my wonderful team of monitors and the efficient way they kept records. They could direct me to the right box and knew the very age of the chicks in each of those boxes. Needless to say, my buddy the rehabber got another robin to raise and release.

One last story came in just today. A gentleman came by today to tell me about a strange nest he had that had 5 eggs. Three hatched, but he left the other two eggs figuring that the mother would discard them. At each box check the 3 were growing and the 2 eggs remained. When he went for the last check at almost three weeks the 3 babies had fledged and the 2 eggs that had been there had just hatched. He said he had been housing bluebirds and keeping records for more than 40 years and had never seen anything like that.



And this one had me wondering at the irony! Did you know tree swallows in cemeteries don't always stick to the natural goose feathers to line their nests? One strange tree swallow nest had tissues (sniff-sniff), yarn and old silk flowers!

This is only a small sampling of the wonderful experiences witnessed in the course of one year in the life of a county coordinator. Next time any of you receives that call to join us and represent your county don't run . . . jump at the chance and enjoy more of the beautiful blues than you ever imagined. *Vickie Fuquay*

Greene County Bluebird Trail



We have had an exciting year in Greene County with our thirty-box trail on a local golf course. By August 9th we had already fledged 100 bluebirds and our hope is that a dozen more will fledge before we put away our supplies for the season. The number of other cavity nesters, which fledged in our boxes has also gone up -- a total of 147 desirable birds in three species.

We were surprised to find a cowbird egg in one of our boxes this year. This was something new, and we closely monitored the box to see what would happen. That box had seven Carolina Chickadee eggs plus the cowbird egg, and when fledging occurred six chickadees left. Unfortunately, however, we found the cowbird and one of the chickadees dead in the nest. Losses always upset us, but we know this is how nature works.

An exciting event on our trail was the sighting of a mink. Unfortunately that was a day we went out without the camera. We did, however, get a few interesting photos of tree swallows as they brought in supplies to build their nest.

Roger and Pat Temples

So, You Want to Raise Mealworms?

Are you tired of mail ordering mealworms? Do you want to raise your own? Well, the first thing you'll need to do is buy a supply of live, loose mealworms from a reputable seller like Grubco or Nature's Way or Bassett's Cricket Ranch, Inc. You can find them online - just Google the name. Or call me at [703-978-6609](tel:703-978-6609) and I will give you the phone number or address.

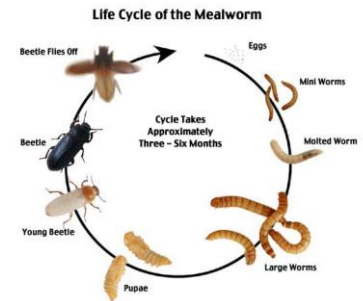
While you are waiting for the mealworms to arrive you will need to gather some equipment and locate a place **INSIDE YOUR HOUSE**, where you can have your little mealworm farm. These insects, their eggs and beetle form will die of the temperature extremes outside, in your garage or a shed. These are living creatures and will go through a metamorphosis just as the butterflies do. If you have a cool basement that would work well too, but under a bed or sofa would be just right.

Get ready by getting a plastic sweater box from a store. It is a flat, long, rectangular box that could easily be stored under a bed. With a sharp tool (like an ice pick), make many holes in the top of this plastic sweater box. Fill the box with Wheat Bran, or Oatmeal or any grain about three inches deep. This will feed them as they grow and change to other forms. Then cut a small apple in half and put both pieces, skin down, in the mixture, being careful not to let the moist flesh of the apple touch the mixture. This helps to prevent mold. Remember to replace the apple halves weekly.

The mealworms are the larval form of the Darkling Beetle. This beetle will lay eggs that then hatch into more mealworms and there you have your mealworm farm. When the mealworms you ordered arrive, place them into this wonderful habitat you have just prepared - 30 to 50 of them on top of the mixture and cover them with four layers of cut-up strips of brown paper bags, which the mealworms will use to cocoon in. Date this box because it will take up to three months before you see new mealworms.

If you keep adding the bran or oatmeal and a slice of apple or a damp paper towel for moisture on a weekly basis, you will have a never ending supply of these yummy worms to feed your bluebirds and all the other hangers on, in your backyard. I have a friend in Massachusetts who takes them out to his trail and puts some of them on top of each box in a little container that he has secured up there. He has a very healthy trail of cavity nesters, you can be sure!

These worms have a soft smooth feel to them and are easy to handle. Unlike angleworms, for instance, these "worms" (actually larva), have a dry feeling. I once raised them in a classroom for a science project about metamorphosis. The students all named their mealworms and drew pictures of them and the stages they went through. You may not do all that, but you will definitely get hooked on your mealworm farm and it will begin to pay for itself very soon. With a little effort you will have a never-ending supply of mealworms for your bluebirds. *Barbara Chambers*



VBS Nest Box Labels Available for Your Nest Boxes

VIRGINIA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY (VBS) Box #

This nestbox is designed to attract bluebirds and other small cavity nesters. It is checked weekly by a trained monitor.

It is protected by State and Federal Laws. PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB

For info on bluebirds or membership contact VBS at: www.virginiabluebirds.org

Trail I.D. _____

This program is provided through a partnership between the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the VBS.

VBS now has labels available for your nest boxes. The labels have VBS contact info plus they warn visitors that federal law protects the nest boxes. The labels are made from a very tough plastic vinyl and can last for years attached to the outside of your nest boxes. In the past, DGIF has supplied us with these labels free of charge, but with budget cuts, DGIF is unable to do so any longer so VBS is stepping up to keep them available for our members. If you have nest boxes on public land, please consider installing these labels to help protect your nest boxes and to help promote VBS.

We are making these labels available to all VBS members. We request a donation of \$1 per label if that is possible. That is our cost for the label. If you cannot afford a donation, we will still supply you with the labels. They are a great deterrent to vandalism and a perfect way for VBS to promote its work.

We request that your nest boxes be equipped with both a snake guard and a noel predator guard. This is VBS protocol, and we do not want to

have labels attached to non-protocol boxes. Nest boxes on public lands are very visible to the public, so we owe it to the bluebirds to promote the best way to protect them - predator guards.

To obtain labels for your boxes, please send a note requesting your labels with a check (no cash please) and your return address info, to VBS, 726 William Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. *Anne Little*

President's Message

Fall is here and the bluebirds are gathering in flocks and going into the deep woods to wait out the winter. All of nature is going into hibernation. As my last year as VBS president winds down, I am looking forward to doing a little hibernating myself. I will miss being your president and having the opportunity to help set the direction of our organization. Thank you for all of your support over the last four years. It has been very rewarding and fun.

VBS is in great shape. We have over 500 members. We are in excellent financial health. We have a great group of dedicated volunteers serving on our board, and also tending the many thousands of bluebird nest boxes throughout Virginia. Our message is getting out to all corners of Virginia. Nest boxes now have predator guards and boxes are being monitored consistently. Many of our volunteers have established trails at State Parks and we are getting more and more calls from other parks that want our program. We have two great grant programs that help our members and also work with youth and scouts to build boxes for our trails. Virginia has just issued a new bluebird license plate and it is beautiful. We are in the process of developing a grant program for schools that want nest cams.

Carmen Bishop will be our new president starting in November when she is elected at our VBS Conference in Fredericksburg on November 5th. Carmen will bring a fresh perspective and lots of new ideas and energy to VBS. I wish her much luck and I know there will be a lot of support from our new board of directors and all of our members. Hope to see you at our State Conference on November 5th. *Anne Little*

Calendar of Events – Fall 2011

Today: Register for the VBS Bi-Annual Conference, Saturday, November 5, Fredericksburg, Virginia. We are hoping to see a lot of members attend this great event.

Today: **Send your data to Charlie Chambers.** Data forms are available on the VBS Web site (under Forms). *Please do it now while your information is fresh.*

October/November: Time to winterize your nest boxes. See our website for instructions on how to do this.

September 29-October 9: See our display at the Virginia State Fair. Find us in the education area of the fair.

Saturday, November 5: VBS Conference, downtown Historic Fredericksburg, Central Library, 1201 Caroline Street, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., optional birding outing 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. \$20 (lunch included)



Virginia Bluebird Society
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