

# The Bird Box Bird Box

Fall 2022 Newsletter of the  
Virginia Bluebird Society [www.virginiabluebirds.org](http://www.virginiabluebirds.org)



## The Bird Box Bird Box

### Registration Is Open for VBS Biennial Conference

**REGISTER NOW**

VIRGINIA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY'S  
**BIENNIAL CONFERENCE**

CELEBRATING THE 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF OUR FOUNDING

NOVEMBER 11 & 12  
Friday, Evening (6-8:30pm)  
Saturday (8:30am-3pm)

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:  
[www.virginiabluebirds.org](http://www.virginiabluebirds.org)

Contact Valerie Kenyon Gaffney - with questions.  
[vbs@virginiabluebirds.org](mailto:vbs@virginiabluebirds.org)

Location:  
NVCC's Workforce Center  
Woodbridge, VA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:  
JULIE ZICKFOOSE

[www.virginiabluebirds.org](http://www.virginiabluebirds.org)

Bluebird photos by Randy Strickland, 2019

Registration for the 2022 VBS Conference is now live at this link: <https://virginiabluebirds.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/virginiabluebirds/eventRegistration.jsp?event=1&>

### The Great Bluebird Rescue of 2022

By Leslie Fellows, Westmoreland County

One morning in June, Carla Bangs and I started our bluebird monitoring at Westmoreland State Park. When we opened our first box, a mama bluebird flew out and we saw five eggs in her nest. We quickly realized that the box was infested with hundreds, if not thousands, of ants. They were everywhere, including all in the nest strata. I tried brushing them off of the open door and got stung multiple times in doing so. There was no question that once the eggs hatched the hatchlings would be killed within minutes, and it would be a painful death. Our first gut reaction was just to remove and destroy the nest, eggs and all.



John Narney cleaning ants out of the bluebird box at Westmoreland State Park.  
Photo by Pam Narney

But first we decided to call John Narney, a Master Naturalist and bluebird monitor, just to see if he could give us any alternative. John and Pam Narney called Anne Little, of the Virginia Bluebird Society, to see if she had any suggestions.

The only likely way to save the hatchlings was to discard the infested nest, brush all of the ants out of the box, then cover the empty box inside with diatomaceous earth, build a new nest, move the eggs to that, and return the new nest to the box. The following day, John and Pam went to the park and got to work. The eggs were carefully removed from the nest and

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placed on a towel. The nest and most of the ants were removed from the box. Diatomaceous earth was sprinkled on the bottom of the box and around the base of the support pole to prevent the ants from returning.

Pam fashioned a new nest from pine straw and placed that nest in the box on top of the DE. The five eggs were carefully returned to this new nest inside the box. Almost immediately the parents returned to the nest.

Six days later Carla and I, back at WSP for the Butterfly Count, immediately checked the box. Mama was there incubating an ant-free clutch of five eggs, which eventually successfully hatched and added five new bluebirds to the Westmoreland population.



*Above left: Ants in the nestbox.  
Above right: Five rescued bluebird eggs.  
Photos by Pam Narney*

## Pantops Mountain Paired Nest Box Experiment – Third Year Results

By Doug Rogers, Charlottesville

Let’s start with a little history for those who are not familiar with this project: I have been monitoring Bluebird nest boxes on three pieces of private property (Now four) for the past 14 (or 15?) years. The number of boxes on my trail has ranged between 16 and 21. At the beginning, I had 6” snake guards and my Noel guards were not “pronged out.” I did not use false bottoms, made from hardware cloth, and used no diatomaceous earth (DE) and had virtually no predation.

Starting from the second year forward, I have had predation from Black Rat Snakes, blow flies, House Sparrows, House Wrens, and unknown predators. Each year, I adapted and reduced the predation problems. I added 8” snake guards, installed “pronged out” Noel guards, put in false bottoms and used DE below the nests, moved the affected boxes away from House Wren territory and, after much soul-searching, finally (It took me 3 years) got the Van Ert trap to deal with House Sparrows.

That left only one other serious issue: Tree Swallows taking over my trail. At first, I used the VBS protocol of “paired boxes 15’ to 20’ apart.” I had four sets of nest boxes (8 boxes) paired that way. That worked somewhat for about 4 years. Then, starting about 6 years ago, the Tree Swallows decided that other Tree Swallow families were OK neighbors. They took over all of my paired boxes.

In the 2020 season, acting on the suggestion of my raptor researcher, I put 14 boxes on 7 poles – 2 boxes per pole in the area that was most impacted by Tree Swallows. And I had 6 more boxes, each on 1 pole, in the territory that was the least impacted by Tree Swallows. The number of nest boxes and their locations, in years prior to 2017, are not comparable to the years beginning in 2017.

For the season just ended, I had 4 less nest boxes than last year. All told, I had 5 nest boxes on a single pole and 12 nest boxes paired (Two boxes per pole) on 6 poles. This year, I had one nest destroyed when the Bluebird male was killed by a HOSP (I introduced the HOSP to Mr. Van Ert.) and one nest with eggs pierced by a HOWR. (The HOWR escaped unscathed – that time.)

The results are shown below.



*Eastern Bluebird couple on paired nest boxes  
Photo by Doug Rogers*

YEAR FLEDGED	NESTS	EGGS	HATCHED	FLEDGED
<b>BLUEBIRDS</b>				
2022	20	85	75	75
2021	30	121	91	84
2020	18	78	64	64
2019	14	59	51	40
2018	13	56	51	48
2017	9	38	33	32
<b>TREE SWALLOWS</b>				
2022	2	11	10	10
2021	6	22	20	18
2020	5	26	26	19
2019	10	38	37	34
2018	9	44	33	25
2017	12	40	22	22

Continued on page 3

Why were there 10 less nesting attempts in 2022?? My guess is that the ladies of both species just were not as interested in starting a family in the heat wave this year. (Can't say I blame them!)

In the 2021 nesting season there were 30 eggs that didn't hatch. This was due to the following: There was an early nest with 6 eggs and after about 10 days for some unknown reason, it was abandoned. In another nest, the female was injured when I opened the box to monitor it and the nest was subsequently abandoned. I have 2 sets of paired boxes (2 boxes on each of 2 poles), which have never had snake predation before, and the baffles were only 6"; they were attacked by snakes, taking out 8 eggs. One other box was invaded by a Cowbird, the bluebird eggs were removed, and the Cowbird baby was eaten by a snake. The remainder was simply a case of the eggs not hatching. I took down those two sets of paired boxes.

In the 2020 nesting season, we had significantly more eggs but a lot of them didn't hatch due to the cold snap in the spring.

Now you might ask: "Why does pairing two boxes on a single pole deter Tree Swallows?" I believe it is because the bluebirds get there first and are better able to defend the box. And in each of the three years I have done this, there has been one pair of boxes that had a bluebird family on one side and a Tree Swallow family on the other. Both fledged young.

Whatever the reason, when I look at my numbers, I have to conclude that it is working!



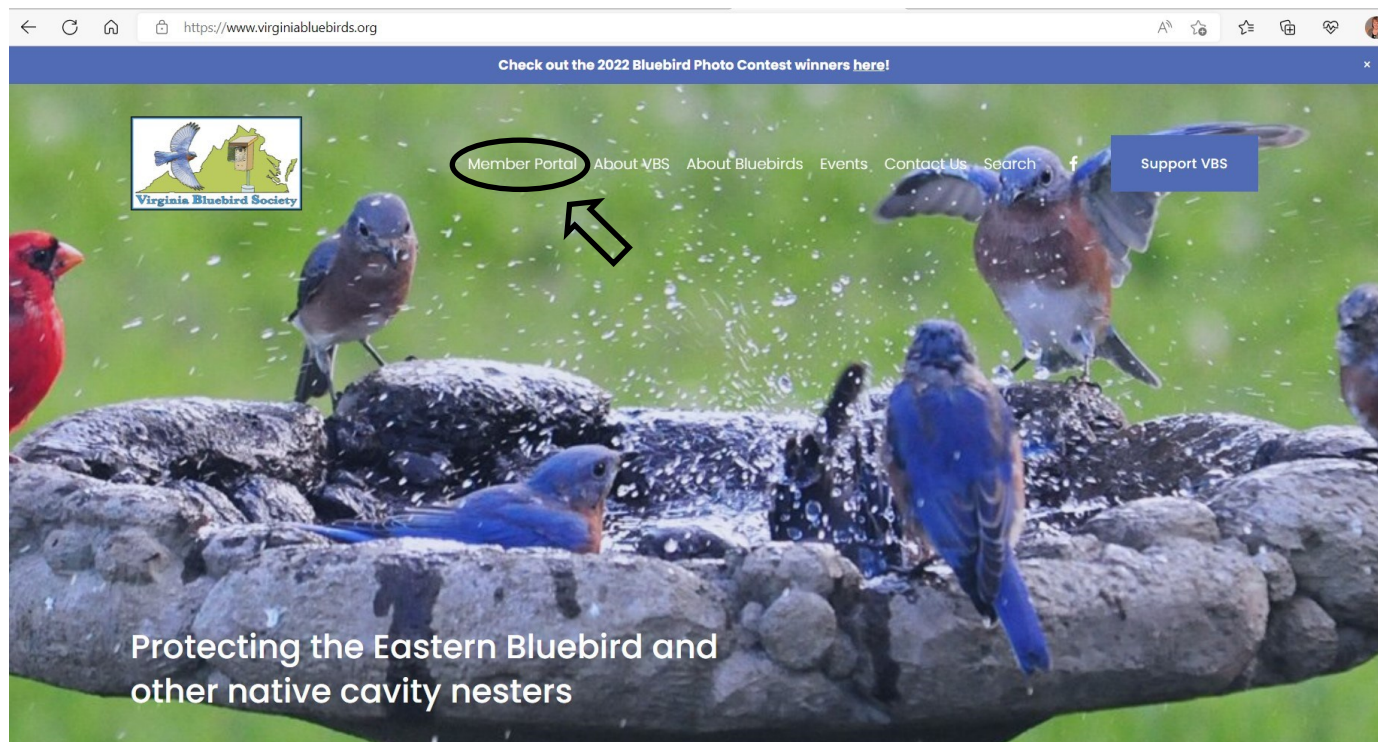
*Bluebird fledgling  
Photo by Doug Rogers*

## VBS Member Portal

**Check out your new online VBS member portal!**

VBS now provides an online member portal where you can view your membership information, update your profile, renew your membership, register for events, and more

Just select the "Member Portal" menu item on the [VBS Website](https://www.virginiabluebirds.org) to log in. Or go directly to <https://virginiabluebirds.app.neoncrm.com/login>.



## What's Happening With Nest Cam Grants

By Vickie Fuquay, VBS Vice President, Education

This summer Nestcams for Education grant added another state park, Natural Bridge State Park. They have a trail of 10 active bluebird houses up in the park and now have added a camera box with live feed going into the visitor center.

With schools back in session, as I was starting to give an update, this article came in from Daphne Cole in Nottoway County. These cameras have had amazing results and I just recently sent out a video capture card to her for Nottoway Intermediate School. If your school has an interest in receiving a camera nest box check out our grant page. We have lesson plans for teachers upon request and having a live view inside the nest box teaches them so much more than learning from a book only. Go to [VBS Educational Nestcam Grant Application | Cognito Forms](#) to learn more. My email address and my home phone number is on the bottom of the form. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Fall is the ideal time to install a bluebird box. The bluebirds will check it out and on cold nights roost in the box, staking claim to the new home before breeding season is here next spring.

### From Daphne Cole:

Nottoway County Bluebird nest cams have provided delightful insights into a steady presence of bluebird activity over the summer.

School is back in session and Nottoway Intermediate School fifth and sixth grade students were greeted by four blue eggs, then four hatchlings and then four fledglings leaving the nest the day before Labor Day break. The school placed a monitor in the cafeteria for everyone to watch bluebird activity while eating.



*Jerry Cole installing a nestcam box at Blackstone Primary School*

*Photo by Daphne Cole*



*Live feed inside Blackstone Primary*

*Photo by Daphne Cole*

All three schools, Crewe Primary, Blackstone Primary, and Nottoway Intermediate have now been enabled with video capture cards to allow Bluebird nest cams to be observed throughout the world!

Crew Primary School conducts surveys on naming their first nest of five hatchlings and predict when they will fledge. Even the School Board voted on the Scooby Doo gang names.

The Blackstone Primary nest camera was replaced due to damage to the camera wire, and the box provided a nest of four as children returned to the building.

The bluebird nesting season has closed for the year but Nottoway Schools will continue to watch for bluebirds planning for the future nests for next season.

## Spotlight on a County Coordinator: Pam Narney, Richmond and Northumberland County

**Where do you live:** I live on a street that was a once an island with Placid Bay on one side and Mattox Creek (tidal marsh) on the other side.

**Why did you want to get involved:** Anne Little and the Northern Neck Master Naturalists introduced me to bluebird monitoring. Blue bird monitoring is yet another chance to be out in nature observing all nature has to offer. And it's a time for quiet reflection and wonder. I want to spread that joy to residents of the two counties I coordinate, Westmoreland and Richmond, especially to the children.

**What is your favorite outdoor activity?** I would rather be outside doing anything than be in the house, so the outdoor activity I am involved with at the time is my favorite: birding, kayaking, gardening, educating, hiking, or bluebird monitoring.

**One goal for the upcoming year:** I hope to educate more people on the Northern Neck about the beauty and bounty of the area in which they live, so they can enjoy and respect their environment more.

**What do you wish more people knew about you?** I am obsessed with osprey. My license plate is OSPRA-QN. We have an osprey nesting platform off of our deck, so we can watch, record, and enjoy their activities. The return of the Osprey represents the resilience of nature and promises hope for the future.



*Left: Pam Narney, VBS Richmond and Northumberland County Coordinator, holding a recently banded osprey chick at the Virginia Osprey Festival in Virginia Beach  
Below: Todd Dalton, Dominion Energy; Ken Smith, Maryland Bird Bander; Pam Narney, Certified Master Naturalist.*

*Photos by Joanie Millwood.*



## Attracting (and Feeding) Birds with Native Plants: Viburnum

By Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, VBS President

Why Viburnum you ask? Because they're adaptable to a wide range of soil types and moisture, including drought. Depending on the species, they'll grow in full sun, part sun, part shade or shade. They're hardy to Virginia USDA zones 5-8. Generally, flood, insect and disease tolerant, although all three can be susceptible to Viburnum Leaf Beetle. Some species are deer resistant. Attractive flowers and foliage, often with especially beautiful fall color. Useful for borders, screens, mass plantings and even as trees. Attractive to many different types of butterflies and moths, including serving as host plants for spring azures and hummingbird clearwing moths. Have special value for native bees, and best of all the fruit is a good food source throughout the fall and winter for small mammals and many birds— not least the Eastern Bluebird.

Of the more than 120 species of Viburnum in the world (Family: Adoxaceae), 27 are native and/or introduced to the United States. Of those 27, ten are native to Virginia and of those ten, because they're native to all three regions of Virginia, this article will focus on three species in particular: *viburnum acerifolium*, *V. dentatum*, and *V. prunifolium*.

**Mapleleaf (*v. acerifolium*)**, also commonly known as dockmackie and possum-haw is our only native Viburnum with maple-shaped (*acer*) leaves. A low, densely branched shrub, it's one of the smallest viburnums, typically 4 – 6 feet high and 3 – 4 feet wide. Its low-growing habit provides good nesting and escape cover for birds. Think bluebird fledglings! Small creamy-white, bi-sexual (monoecious) flowers which appear May through August are followed in July through October by nearly black drupes. And if among the many songbirds attracted to Mapleleaf fruit, the catbirds, the cardinals and the eastern bluebirds don't strip the plant, the fruit might even persist through winter. Optimum growth occurs in well-drained, moist soils with partial shading, but *v. acerifolium* is tolerant of acid soils, dry sites and deep shade.



**Arrowwood (*v. dentatum*)** also known as Southern Arrowwood derives its common name from the use of the straight young stems as arrow shafts by Native Americans. It's scientific name (*dentatum*) refers to the coarsely toothed edge of its leaves. Larger than *v. acerifolium*, it can grow 6-10 feet both tall and wide and is a good candidate for hedges. Preferring moist loam, it can tolerate clay soil and grows in both full or partial sun. White flowers appear in May and June, followed by blue-black drupes in August through November. Its attractive fall foliage (ranging from yellow to orange to red) makes it an attractive landscape plant. Besides being a food source for fifty some birds, *v. dentatum* is also the larval host to the Blue Azure butterfly. Think food for bluebird nestlings!

**Smooth Blackhaw (*v. prunifolium*)** The common name Blackhaw refers to the purported similarity of this plant to hawthorns (sometimes called red haws) although hawthorns are in a different family. Its scientific name, *prunus* means resembling prune leaves. The leaves are finely serrated, the branches are more crooked and depending upon your source, the fragrance of its flowers is either non-existent, or sweet and pleasant. But like all viburnum, its fruit is consumed by songbirds (bluebirds!) game birds and small mammals, and in the case of *v.*



*prunifolium* may also be used by humans in jams and preserves. An extract of its astringent bark was formerly used medicinally. Easily grown in average, dry-to-medium, well-drained soil it can tolerate drought and does best with at least half day sunlight. Unique to the Smooth Blackhaw, the flowers

Top right: *Viburnum acerifolium* fall fruit. Photo from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Sally and Andy Wasowski.

Middle left: *Viburnum dentatum* with fruit. Photo from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Stephanie Brundage

Above right: *Viburnum prunifolium* foliage. Photo from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, J. W. Smith.

Left: *Viburnum dentatum* with fruit. Photo from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Stephanie Brundage.

Continued on page 9

occur above its leaves, while the flowers of many viburnums are nestled. And while usually grown as a large, upright, multi-stemmed shrub reaching a height of 12-15', it can also be grown as a single trunk tree reaching a height of 30'. But what's the catch? It's what your nursery may not tell you: Most native viburnums are actually pretty self-incompatible and typically require cross-pollination for good fruit production. You can get lots of flowers, but for most viburnum you need a male and a female plant to yield fruit. (Think hollies [*Ilex* spp.], which are dioecious, meaning that they produce male and female flowers on different plants.) All of which is to say, 'two genetically different plants of the same species should be planted in reasonably close proximity. And those genetically different plants must be in bloom at the same time so that visiting insect pollinators can do their job.' But don't give up. To learn more about getting your viburnum to bear fruit, check out Kim Eireman's EcoBlog.

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## VBS Member Featured in Local Newspaper

Daphne Cole was featured in the Blackstone, Virginia Courier Record recently. She wrote an article about the harm done by well-meaning people feeding bread to birds.

A Blackstone nature and environmental advocate, who has spent many hours building and installing houses in Blackstone for bluebirds, is urging local residents not to leave "food" near any of the 21 boxes in town.

Daphne Cole recently was disappointed to discover pizza crusts at one of the boxes at the old Blackstone High School property along Oak Street.

"Bread is the worst for birds," Mrs. Cole told the Courier-Record.

She said that fortunately the crust ends weren't placed inside the houses. When that happens during hatching season, which is well underway here, the bread can smother baby bluebirds.

Mrs. Cole said a friend recently discovered a nest, in another locality, with a whole slice of white crammed into the house, covering the babies. "The mama could not feed her babies, and they all died."

Birds thrive on protein-rich insects, not pepperoni.

If you truly want to help bluebirds, Mrs. Cole suggests, "eliminate pesticides, plant native plants which provide food for insects, and limit the size of your lawn. Save all the time and water by allowing native plants and insects to do what God intended."

It was three years ago when Daphne began installing specially-designed houses for bluebirds on various town properties and other locations in and around Blackstone. Three are located on the grounds of Schwartz Tavern, three more are located in Seay Park, and five are placed in Lakeview Cemetery,

The nest boxes are designed for optimal survival: five feet high, swinging snake guards at the base, and wire mesh guards to stop raccoons, large birds, and squirrels from entering.

All boxes are on poles because, according to Mrs. Cole, "placing a nest box on a tree trunk is just an open invitation for snakes and other predators to dine."

Daphne checks the boxes weekly between March and August. She said most boxes this week have at least two broods.



*Daphne Cole recently was disappointed to discover pizza crusts at one of the boxes at the old Blackstone High School property along Oak Street in Blackstone, Virginia.*

## Bluebird Trails Featured in Local Newspaper

The *Rappahannock Record* recently featured an article written by one of our bluebird monitors. Great job, Debbie! Kilmarnock

### Bluebird Trails

The Eastern Bluebird population has increased to 23 million since 1966 thanks to concerned citizens building and monitoring trails. Bluebirds are a protected, but not endangered species. Their numbers were previously declining due to loss of habitat, pesticides, and predation. Farmers love them because they eat insects which could destroy a crop, and some farmers establish bluebird trails on the outskirts of their fields. There are three bluebird trails in the Kilmarnock area monitored by numerous volunteers. The trails are on the Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club golf course, throughout the Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury community, and on the old King Carter golf course/Hills Quarter neighborhood.

The above mentioned three trails have a total of 93 bluebird boxes. Most of these specifically designed boxes are located on a metal pole, facing south or southeast and separated by up to 150 yards. Bluebirds are territorial and conflicts will arise in competing for nests or food. You may have experienced a bluebird pecking on a window. The bluebird is tricked, thinking the reflection is another bird invading his/her space. Their diet consists of snails, grubs, caterpillars, insect larvae, crickets, beetles, ants, spiders, moths, termites, and mosquitoes.

Bluebirds begin scouting out potential nesting sites in February with the mating season running from April through September. The female will lay one egg per day with 4 – 6 total being the average. Incubation lasts 12 -14 days and the young will fledge 16 – 21 days after hatching, so the process between nest building and fledglings leaving is approximately six weeks. Each box on the trail may have 2 – 3 broods per season. Bluebirds will take out the small, white fecal sacs from their hatchlings so the nests will not produce an odor, minimizing attraction by predators. The life span of a bluebird is six to ten years with the first year the most dangerous. Predators include snakes, raccoons, cats, and house sparrows.

The three trails fledged a total of 492 bluebirds this year with ICYCC having its best year to date. In addition to infertile eggs left in the nests or lost to predators, there were 85 hatchlings lost to weather, abandonment, or predation. House sparrows were a serious problem on two trails. House sparrows can take over a trail in one to two years. A homeowner in Hills Quarter watched an hours long conflict between a house sparrow and bluebird which ultimately ended in the bluebird's death and destruction of the nest and occupants.

Records from the three trails are compiled and sent to the Virginia Bluebird Society. For more information on bluebirds, visit [sialis.org](http://sialis.org).

Submitted By Debbie Gillespie, Northumberland County, Virginia.

Right: Male Eastern Bluebird

Photo by John Roberts, a resident of the Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury community.





## The President's Box

As I write this, it's a gorgeous fall day, just 54 days away from our long-anticipated 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference. Your board of directors has been hard at work planning this event and I'm convinced it's going to be fabulous.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll find conference registration information, but here I want to share with you a little of what we have planned.

Friday evening kicks off with a social hour and perusal of a terrific collection of silent auction items, ranging from a hand painted Burley Clay bird bath to a camera-ready nest box, to the always useful pole pounder. And lots more in between.

Keynote speaker at Friday evening's banquet is Julie Zickefoose. Julie is a well-known nature book author, a very talented artist, and an immensely entertaining and informative speaker. Trust me, you won't want to miss this very special opportunity to hear Julie speak.

Saturday morning kicks off with an optional early birders' quick 7:00 AM visit to Neabsco Creek Boardwalk, led by local birder Phil Silas. A long-time birder, Phil is a member of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, is compiler for the local Manassas-Bull Run CBC and happened to lead the very first bird walk I went on several years ago. I can personally attest to Phil's knowledge and to his patience with inexperienced birders who keep saying, 'Huh? Where? I don't see it.' If you can rise and shine by 7:00 AM, you're in for a real treat.

Our breakout session line-up promises to be fun and informative for folks both new to bluebirding and for veterans as well. You'll be able to choose among presentations as varied as Bluebirding 101 with VBS' own Anne Little; photography tips & tricks with VBS Vice President Doug Rogers; a session with Maureen Eiger, founder and director of Roanoke's Help Wild Birds; Backyard Habitat with DWR Watchable Wildlife Biologist Jessica Ruthenberg; and last but certainly not least, North American Bluebird Society directors Kathy Kremnitzer and Bet Zimmerman Smith with a session they're calling, 'The Cobalt Conundrum.'

If you've spent any time at all researching bluebirds on the web, you most assuredly found Bet's website: [sialis.org](http://sialis.org). And if you attended the 2019 VBS conference you will recall what an engaging and entertaining speaker Bet is. So engaging in fact that we invited her back for this year's conference.

I think we've got a terrific conference planned in celebration of the 25th (+ One) anniversary of Virginia Bluebird Society. I look forward to seeing you there!

- vkg



## VBS takes its show on the highway – four-lane or information!

Know a Master Naturalist or Master Gardener chapter in need of a program? How about a garden club, scout troop, middle school eco club? Elementary school classroom? Your home school group?

VBS has programs we will be tailor to your audience. We can always present via Zoom, and depending upon where and when your group meets, may be able to present in person.

Recent presentations by board directors were given to a Danville Girl Scout troop, the Centreville Garden Club, Hill City Master Gardeners, and Southside Bird Club among others.

## Seeking Executive Editor

Looking for something to do for a few hours or so each January, May and August?

Do you know the difference between a blue jay and a bluebird? Between their and they're and there? To, two and too? Have a journalism degree you've never used? Just kidding on that last one...but VBS would love to talk with you.

Judy Hall, our longtime newsletter editor is looking for a little help putting together *The Bird Box*. Judy will continue to do the hard part, the layout, but is seeking an Executive Editor to assist her. Three times a year you'll be responsible for soliciting articles from VBS directors, county coordinators, members, trail leads and others, proofing articles, editing as needed and seeking permission for reprinted articles from other Society newsletters. As content comes in, you'll do your thing and then send on to Judy for layout.

And, if you're a Master Naturalist or Master Gardener, with the permission of your chapter coordinator you may even be able to count time spent toward your annual volunteer hours.

If this sounds like something you might be interested in doing, send an email to VBS President Valerie Kenyon Gaffney at [vkg3105@gmail.com](mailto:vkg3105@gmail.com).



## The Bluebird Advisor



Newsletter of the  
**Virginia Bluebird Society**  
[www.virginiabluebirds.org](http://www.virginiabluebirds.org)

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If you have a new email address, or have recently changed it, please let us know.

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We welcome your written items and artwork (photos and drawings) for *The Bird Box*.

Email your materials to Judy Hall.

## The Bluebird Advisor

The Bluebird Advisor is on vacation this edition of 'The Bird Box,' getting ready for VBS' Twenty Five +1 Conference on Friday, November 11 and Saturday, November 12. With a lineup of presenters as Bluebird knowledgeable as Julie Zickefoose, Bet Zimmerman Smith, Kathy Kremnitzer, Maureen Eiger and Anne Little, we're convinced you'll learn more in a few hours spent in their company than you would possibly learn from this column this month. But not to worry, we'll be back here in the spring, providing the advice you need to ensure another successful nesting season. Meanwhile, see page (insert page #) for conference registration information.

**SAVE *the* DATE**

VIRGINIA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY'S  
**BIENNIAL CONFERENCE**

Registration opens early September. Contact Valerie Kenyon Gaffney - with questions. [vbs@virginiabluebirds.org](mailto:vbs@virginiabluebirds.org)

Location: NVCC's Workforce Center Woodbridge, VA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: JULIE ZICKEFOOSE

Bluebird photo by Randy Streufert, 2014

TWENTY FIVE +1 CELEBRATING THE 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF OUR FOUNDING

NOVEMBER 11 & 12  
Friday Evening (6-8pm)  
Saturday (9am-3pm)

Virginia Bluebird Society  
[www.virginiabluebirds.org](http://www.virginiabluebirds.org)

## AmazonSmile - Donate While You Shop

Don't forget - VBS has an account with AmazonSmile! If you shop on Amazon Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charities you select. We hope you'll choose VBS as your charity.

To donate a portion of an Amazon purchase to VBS at no additional cost, [click here to log in](#) or go to [amazon.smile.com](http://amazon.smile.com). If you are using the same device that you use for Amazon, AmazonSmile will open your account, with VBS already selected. If not, you will be asked log in with your Amazon username and password (or create a new account) and then select VBS (Virginia Bluebird Society) as the organization you wish to support. When you place an order, "Supporting: Virginia Bluebird Society" will appear below your order summary.

Each time you shop, remember to begin with AmazonSmile so that your purchases will benefit VBS.



## Mark Your Calendars

- September** Clean and winterize boxes, add clean grasses or pine straw, install ventilation plugs
- October 10** VBS board meeting via Zoom. Check your email for further details, or contact [vbs@virginiabluebirds.org](mailto:vbs@virginiabluebirds.org) for link to attend meeting.
- October 31** **Deadline for submitting TRAIL SUMMARY REPORTS to your County Coordinator. For blank forms or CC email address, contact [vbs@virginiabluebirds.org](mailto:vbs@virginiabluebirds.org).**
- November 11-12** VBS Biennial Conference (see page 1 for registration information.)
- January 30** Deadline for submitting articles, photos, ideas, and artwork for Spring newsletter

Check out our *Facebook* page <https://www.facebook.com/Virginia-Bluebird-Society-133048243442687/> for photos and videos throughout the year, and follow us on *Twitter* at [https://twitter.com/VA\\_Bluebirds](https://twitter.com/VA_Bluebirds).

## How To Join

Go to [Virginia Bluebird Society](http://www.virginiabluebirds.org) and click on Support VBS. You can also join or renew by snail mail. Send your name, address, phone number and/or email address along with a check for

\$25 for a one-year General membership

\$75 for a three-year General membership

\$60 for a one-year Sustaining membership

\$100 for a one-year Endowment membership to:

**Virginia Bluebird Society**  
**726 William Street**  
**Fredericksburg VA 22401**

Membership forms are available on the VBS web site: <http://www.virginiabluebirds.org>



**Become a Member!**

[www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)

Visit Us Online For

- Fact Sheets
- Events
- Nestbox Plans
- Speakers
- Tips/Guidance
- And more!

**MISSION:**

To engage in such educational, scientific and charitable pursuits as may be beneficial to the prosperity and well being of the three species of bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting bird species.

## Send An Article to The Bird Box

*We welcome articles and photos from our active VBS members. We want to share our success stories. Send your original articles, photos, or artwork, or suggest a topic for a future newsletter. Submit materials to [Judy Hall, Editor, at birdboxeditor@gmail.com](mailto:birdboxeditor@gmail.com) by January 30 to be considered for the spring newsletter. Please include your location, identification of people and birds in photos, and name of photographer or artist. Please send photos separately as jpg files if at all possible.*