

# TEXAS Blues



Texas Bluebird Society Newsletter - Volume 10, Issue 3

JULY 2011

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*Mama said there'll  
be days like this...*



In late August and September, Bluebirds molt. It is at this time the young of the year have a partial molt and loose their spots. They will now resemble adults. Photo by W. Long.

## Texas Bluebird Society Mission Statement

To spread "Bluebirds (and other native cavity-nesting birds) Across Texas ... one nestbox at a time" - through education; and, the installation of "NestWatch'd" nestboxes in appropriate habitat; and, sustaining and increasing their natural food supply (insects and berries of native plants) - while enjoying the process and the bluebirds.



The 2011 Summer Bluebird Symposium is in full preparation mode! Our Symposium Coordinators, **Jimmie and Benni Konvicka**, are busy finalizing plans and checking details for the big day. Following are important dates, reminders, and "good to know" tips, ensuring a great symposium experience. 2010 Symposium photos by John Park.

## 2011 Bluebird Symposium Saturday, August 20th

Somervell Expo Center  
202 Bob Gibbs Blvd  
Glen Rose, TX 78043  
9:00am—2:30pm



Presented by Texas  
Bluebird Society



Sponsored by Somervell  
Texas Master Gardeners

## Expect The Usual Good Stuff!

Keynote speaker Keith Kridler, presentations on a variety of bluebird topics, NestWatch nestboxes offer, door prizes, networking, lunch, and of course, the **Silent Auction FUNdraiser!**



*Doors open at 8:30AM for registration and early bids on Silent Auction items*

Send completed registration form with \$12 per registrant. Registration form is available on [www.txblues.org](http://www.txblues.org), Facebook, or page 3 of the last newsletter.

Early Bird Registration due **July 20th**. Advance Registration due **August 8th**.

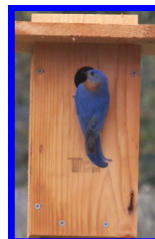
(Includes 10 door prize tickets)

(Includes 1 door prize ticket)

## Contact Coordinators

**Auction items? Questions?**

Mail Registration Forms to:  
Jimmie & Benni Konvicka  
1315 N. Dale Avenue  
Stephenville, TX 76401  
254 968-6663



Luke Hoag®

## Join Your TBS Friends

**When:** Friday, August 19 **Time:** 6:45 pm

**Where:** BBQ Dinner at Holiday Inn Express

See registration form for details



## Planning To Spend The Night?

**The Holiday Inn Express** (254.898.9900)

Ask for "Texas Bluebird Society" rates.  
(includes hot breakfast) Standard:\$84; King  
Suite: \$96.

**Somervell Expo Center** (254.897.4509) has  
limited RV sites with hookups available for  
\$20/night.

**Dinosaur Valley State Park**  
(254.897.4588) just NW of Glen Rose.  
Tent and RV sites are available.

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**Contact Us**

TBS  
PO Box 40868  
Austin, TX 78704

Pauline Tom  
512.268.5678  
ptom5678@gmail.com

Visit our website  
[www.txblues.org](http://www.txblues.org)

**Editor**

Debbie Bradshaw

**Volunteers Are Appreciated!**

|                 |                |
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| Greg Grant      | Cecil Settle   |
| Ruth Henio      | Renay Shaddock |
| Marilyn Hughes  | LeAnn Sharp    |
| Jayne Hughes    | Anthony Sharp  |



One of 37 new TBS members, Hank Backmann, (L) receives his free nestbox from booth volunteer, Susie Lower, at the annual Blueberry Festival held in Nacogdoches. Festival is always held the second Saturday in June. Always a fun time, we hope to see you next year.



**A Very Special  
Thanks To Our  
Members**

Your participation in Cornell's NestWatch program is providing valuable data to aid scientists all over the world in their intensive research of the bird population.

**TBS Thanks Donors For Their Financial Support**

|                         |                        |                          |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Anne Cassidy            | Anita Monroe           | Thomas Wall Simmons      |
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| Dennis F. George        | Robert Richards        | Sue Thomas               |
| Larry Jernigan          | Charles Robbins        | Jane & Mark Lyon Tillman |
| Bill Koussel            | Simonetta A. Rodriguez | Ron & Pauline Tom        |
| Donna L. Lewis          | Jan Scott              | Paula Vickers            |

**Welcome New Members**

- Eduardo Aguilar
- Floyd Anderson
- Dana Anthony
- Edward L. Ash
- Ken & Jane Austin
- Hank Bachmann
- Scherle Barth
- Kimberly Bass
- Brenda Benson
- Sheron Bingham
- Donna Brasher
- Claudia A. Brehmer
- Charla Brehmer
- Suzanne Brooks
- Darren Bryant
- Joleen Cahill
- Patsy Carroll
- Kay Casey
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- Vikki Connor
- Andy & Jane Couch
- Juanita Cumutt
- Mr /Mrs James Curtis
- Jerry Debo
- Erich Dolgener
- Debora Dorman
- Donnette Durham
- Mike Epperson
- Marlena Taylor, Dir; Family Peace Project
- Friends of Hagerman
- Gene Foster
- Jean Fox
- Evelyn & Ron Frnka
- Jeanne Fuller
- Mary Godkin
- Cheryl Goodger
- Brenda Graham
- Karen Green
- Susie Green
- Gregg County Master Gardeners
- Ben & Cheryl Groner
- Jim Hallbauer
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- Brant/Lettie Holland
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- Gloria Kaminski
- Judy Klimaszewski
- John Koenigs
- Stephen LaBarre
- Diane Lancaster
- Carla Lane
- Jamie/Susan Larson
- Kimberly Lopez
- Roy D Madearis
- Charlotte Malec
- Amanda Manis
- Tabitha Manuel
- Linda Marasco
- Roberta Marshall
- James May
- Barbara McIver
- Shaun C. McKee
- Peggy McKeithen
- Dustin McKinley
- Judy McMahon
- James R. McMains
- Evelyn Muelder
- Judy K. Neely
- Keri Nicholson
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- Vanessa Perry
- Ricky Pile
- Paul Plata
- John & Toni Platt
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- Michael Quinn
- Curtis Rainwater
- Marjorie Roark-Lofgreen
- Ruthanne Russell
- Steven Savage
- Leta/Steven Schmid
- Diels Schoech
- Laura Short
- Thomas W. Simmons
- Linda Sims
- Jeff Simson
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- Dave Smith
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- Carmen Sora
- Jennifer Stephens
- Nan Strebeck
- Diana Summers
- Tara Vineyard & Winery LLC
- Marvin Guidry The Bird Crib
- The Farm
- Artis Tiedemann
- Chip & Lynne Ting
- Dave Townsend
- Lydia Varela
- Paula Vickers
- Andy/Ruthie Vinson
- Carol Wald
- David R. Walker
- Joe Waller
- Joan Ward
- Cindy Weems
- Peggy Wieser
- Mike Wiggins
- SB, Huntsville
- MA, Longview
- FA, Milford
- EB, Austin
- DB, Waxahachie
- GB, Terrell
- JB, Rusk
- EB, Waxahachie
- SB, Magnolia
- RB, Lufkin
- JC, Edom
- DS, Sachse
- RC, Waxahachie
- RD, Whitesboro
- GE, Henderson
- TF, Wills Point
- JF, Waxahachie
- SG, Terrell
- DG, Richardson
- JG, Wills Point
- JH, Wills Point
- LH, Wills Point
- AH, Wills Point
- RH, Athens
- JI, Nacogdoches
- FJ, Waxahachie
- CJ, Wimberley
- PJ, Wills Point
- BJ, Palmer
- AK, Nacogdoches
- SK, Waxahachie
- NK, Mingola
- JK, Bynum
- AK, Robinson
- GL, Waxahachie
- TL, Elmo
- EM, Edgewood
- GM, Texarkana
- JM, Ft. Worth
- DM, Athens
- DM, Kaufman
- TM, Saginaw
- EM, Longview
- CM, Magnolia
- IM, Quinlan
- CM, Pollak
- BN, Henderson
- DN, Ft. Worth
- SO, Magnolia
- RP, Kemp
- SP, Lufkin
- RP, Buda
- DB, Wills Point
- SQ, Texarkana
- DR, Midlothian
- FR, Tyler
- JS, Royse City
- JS, Texarkana
- DS, Nacogdoches
- RS, Robinson
- NS, Magnolia
- BS, Nacogdoches
- JS, Waxahachie
- CT, Mt. Vernon
- BT, Wills Point
- CT, Wills Point
- AT, Athens
- WV, Midlothian
- SW, Athens
- FW, Terrell
- SW, Scroggins
- JW, Grand Saline

We print names of all new members who give us permission on the Membership Form, otherwise initials, city are used.

## Strategies For Controlling Fire Ants

**How Did Fire Ants Reach Texas?** Fire Ants were accidentally introduced in the U.S. around the 1930's through the port of Mobile, AL. Very aggressive and efficient competitors, fire ants have been spreading north, west, and south in Texas since the 1950's. They now infest the eastern two-thirds of the state.

**Yikes! What Can We Do?** Although research is ongoing, there is no way today to totally eliminate fire ants. It's just not possible to treat all areas that are infested. However, aggressive fire ant management strategies can provide effective control of the fire ant population in your area. Paul Nestor recommends the "ISEC" method.

**Identify:** Make sure the ant you are treating is a fire ant.

**Sanitize:** Keep the area free of debris, eliminating potential food, water, or cover.

**Exclude:** Keep fire ants out. For example use Tanglefoot to detour ants in another direction, caulk any openings that fire ants can use to enter your house, cover containers, etc.

**Control:** Use one of the readily available fire ant bait products to manage the fire ant population. *Read all labels and application directions carefully!* The application amount is calculated for you. Do not use a product unless it lists the site you want to treat. (i.e. "Not safe for gardens").

**How Does The Control Step Work?** There are a variety of insecticides and application methods available. Choose the type of insecticide suited for your purpose and the area you are trying to manage.

Knowing some basic fire ant biology will help you understand when, where, and why your control strategy will work.

A newly-mated queen lays about a dozen eggs to get the colony started. Later on, a queen fed by worker ants can lay up to 800 eggs per day. The average colony contains 100,000 to 500,000 worker ants. Worker ants are wingless, sterile females. They protect the queen by defending the nest from intruders (stinging you), by feeding the queen only food that the workers have eaten first (trophallaxis), and by moving the queen from danger. They also forage and care for the developing brood. Worker ants live about 5 weeks.

Forage is the key. Fire ant bait is very appealing and is quickly taken back to the nest by the worker ants. After 48-72 hours the bait breaks down and becomes unappealing as food. Other insects are not interested in the bait as food.

Currently, insecticides have between an 85-90 percent success rates. It becomes a numbers game; apply bait when the fire ant population is low; twice a year for best results. Paul's rule of thumb for the most effective time to apply insecticides is after Easter, before Independence Day, and after Labor Day, before Halloween.

Regardless of the insecticide used, it is best to apply during moderate temperatures in the late afternoon. Product is ineffective if applied before or after a rain.

**I Have A Small Yard With One Nestbox.** Use the same ISEC steps, identify the ant, sanitize

(keep area clean), exclude (apply Tanglefoot at the top of the pole under nestbox) and control (apply insecticide twice a year). For homeowners Paul suggests using an fire ant bait that is readily available at local stores such as Amdro Fire Strike, or Spectracide® Fire Ant Killer Plus Preventer Bait Once and Done!®. They are sold in small containers with enough material to cover a home yard. Other options from specialty stores are Extinguish® Plus, organic Greenlight Fire Ant Control with Conserve®, and Ferti-Lome® Come and Get it! Fire Ant Killer.

**I Monitor Miles Of Bluebird Trails; Is Practical?** If your time allows, keep the immediate area clean and apply Tanglefoot. Twice a year apply bait in a 6-10 foot radius around the base of the pole using products safe for pasture use (doesn't harm animals). For example Extinguish® Plus, Amdro® Pro, Esteem®, and Award Fire Ant Bait.

**I Have Several Really Big Mounds!** Mound treatment products are available as liquid drenches, injectable aerosols, or dusts or granules that are watered into the mound. Ants are killed only if the insecticide actually contacts them. Proper application is essential. Ortho Max, Bayer Lawn and Garden, DeltaGard, Talstar, Greenlight liquid spinosad, and Ortho™ Max® are a few examples. Adding diatomaceous earth to a liquid spinosad mound drench has been shown to be beneficial (an ant receives many small cuts that cause it to lose fatal amounts of body fluid).

**What Active Ingredients Are Effective?** There are two types of active ingredients that are crucial to fire ant control: the fast acting adulticide, and a longer acting insect growth regulator (IGR).

The adulticide ingredient has killing speed. It kills as soon as the ingredient is ingested. It keeps the fire ants from rebounding, or moving the mound by quickly reducing the population. This group includes spinosad (organic), indoxacarb, hydramethylnon and the synthetic pyrethroids (bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, permethrin, cyper-methrin, etc.)

Insect growth regulators affect the queen's ability to reproduce viable eggs and preventing development of worker ants for up to a year causing the colony to die out. This group includes methoprene, fenoxycarb, pyriproxyfen or 2-[1-methyl-2(4-phenoxyphenoxy) ethoxy] pyridine.

**Can I Apply Both?** Products such as Extinguish® Plus and Amdro® FireStrike Fire Ant Bait are a pre-blended combination of fast acting hydramethylnon with the long lasting IGR of methoprene.

**FYI - Fact Or Fiction?** Molasses and grits do not work. Disturbing the mound causes the ants to move rendering your application less effective.

**Need More Information?** Following is an excellent website [http://www.extension.org/fire\\_ants](http://www.extension.org/fire_ants). This site is funded by Texas AgriLife Extension Service providing a wealth of information on fire ants and other Extension topics.

Paul Nester, Extension Program Specialist – IPM, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M University and contributor to TAMU Fire Ant Research & Management Project website <http://fireants.tamu.edu/> was interviewed for this article.



## Susan Selects Special Sites So *Sialia sialis* Succeed!

By Susan Tartaglio.

*For the last four years Susan has been monitoring bird nests on her 200+ acre home in Alvord, Texas. In that short time 135 bluebirds plus a variety of other species have fledged. Susan shares her success stories for selecting bluebird nestbox locations in a variety of habitats on her acreage located northeast of Ft. Worth. Of course, if you live in another part of the state, your selection criteria can vary depending on your local environment.*

Bluebirds can make do with all sorts of unsuitable nesting areas, and sometimes they have no choice. But with your help, they can raise their chicks in the perfect spot, or a very good spot, or at least a not-so-bad spot. Here are some considerations:

**Your own convenience.** Along a pathway or a road will make the box easier to monitor, or visible from your house for your own enjoyment. Start with this and then think about the following:

**Aesthetics.** Best ignored! One of my first boxes was next to a lovely shaded lake set amidst a cluster of flowering plums. Oops! Both the nearby water and the plums attracted all sorts of predators. Fortunately, the bluebirds seemed to know that too and never used it. I've since moved it to a better spot.

**Orienting the entry hole.** Consider the direction from which the spring and summer storms come, and orient the entry hole away from it. For example, in North Central Texas the summer winds and storms come in from the south. I lost one brood of chicks after a big



*THE NW GATE BOX. Box faces east. A large fledge tree at about the right distance and a fence line for additional good perching. This combination of open meadow/oak trees is ideal.*

storm. The entry hole, which faced south, allowed the strong winds to blow rain into the box; the chicks got wet and died.

In Texas, west-facing is also a bad idea. In the long hot afternoons the summer sun will shine into the entry hole and raise the temperature in the box.

That leaves east or north. Our winter storms come in from the north. This is a consideration because bluebirds and other birds will use the boxes for shelter during severe winter weather. That leaves east as ideal, with northeast or north as a second choice.

**The fledge tree.** A few days before fledging, young bluebirds start spending time looking out the entry hole. This gives them a head start on that brand new world into which they must soon fly. If there's a big tree such as a post oak within their range of vision, it will begin to look familiar to them and they will usually fly directly to it. Their parents will gather all the chicks together high up in the tree and feed them there until gradually they make their way lower down in the branches and finally start feeding themselves on the ground.

**How close should the fledge tree be to the nest-box?** Too far, and the fledglings can't fly there easily, too close and predators can use the tree to get to the box. About 15 to 20 feet would be a good place to start. Lacking a fledge tree, a large shrub or fence line will work in a pinch. But what if there's only grass within the chicks' range of vision? They'll fly out into the grass and their parents will have to coax them into a large nearby tree. I've watched a pair of bluebirds do this and it took them an entire day, a day better spent feeding those hungry mouths. One chick never made it. Still, you may have no other option. The bluebirds can deal with it. Just make sure there are some large trees nearby.

**Perches for parents.** The fledge tree works, but even better are telephone wires, which allow an unobstructed field of view around the area of the nestbox.

**An open area.** My 29 nestboxes are spread over more than 200 acres. There's all sorts of terrain:

dense woods, open meadows, ravines, hills and hollows. One day I stumbled upon what seemed the perfect nestbox site. It's a small meadow (about an acre) off a much larger meadow, surrounded on two sides by woods and on the other side by a few big trees. I call it Hidden Meadow. As I was preparing the PVC pole a beautiful male bluebird landed on the box to check it out, even though it was still lying on the ground. This turned out to be my best-producing box of last summer. Three broods, five eggs each, every egg hatched and every chick fledged.



*THE HIDDEN MEADOW BOX. The most popular box ever. Almost surrounded by large trees but still in an open area, away from game trails. Entry hole faces east. Box was immediately occupied and very successful!*

**But not too open.** A box on the high point of a large hill with a single tree (a good fledge tree, however) was not occupied till late spring.

**Shade.** I don't worry about it any more, although I do consider it. Trouble is, trees and shrubs near enough to provide afternoon shade can also allow predators to jump or drop onto the box, especially snakes and squirrels.

**Distance from other boxes.** I consider 100 yards a minimum unless the boxes are out of sight of each other. My two 'home' boxes are only about 90 feet apart but the house is in between them so the bluebirds can't see each other. I often have two pairs simultaneously raising chicks.

**Safety from predators.** What are the usual nestbox predators in your area? Squirrels? Raccoons? Snakes? Cats? Or aerial predators like the House Sparrow?

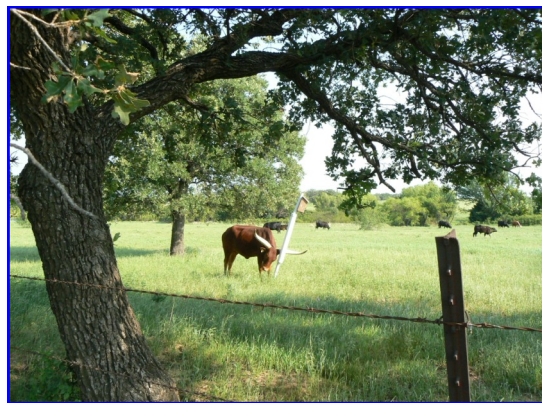
In my area, which is out in the country, raccoons and House sparrows are the big problems. The House

sparrows I deal with by placing my nestboxes more than ¼ mile away (most are ½ mile away) from their main food source, which is a hobby farm down the road with horses and poultry. (Make sure you're not feeding them yourself.)

The raccoons I deal with by placing the nestboxes away from the cow paths and game paths - even 15 feet off the path is helpful, along with active control when needed. For the same reason, stay away from water edges. Predators follow the easiest path. If you put a nestbox right next to a path, they're going to investigate.

People tell me that the raccoons need to eat too. To them I say, like Marie Antoinette, "Let them eat House Sparrows."

**Good feeding areas.** This is what makes your backyard so attractive! That short, mowed grass makes finding bugs lots easier. But open patches of dirt and road margins (quiet country roads preferably) also work well.



*THE 5 TREES BOX. The cattle can get to all my boxes but only this one has gotten this sort of treatment, probably because the cattle like to hang out here (good shade and extra-good grass). Box has not been used by bluebirds yet, and is about to be moved to another area with a stouter T-post.*

**Lastly, get that box up early!** That means in the fall, or at least during the winter months, where the local bluebirds can find it and get accustomed to it. Having said that, I'm usually late with new boxes, and even those I put up after the first broods are out often get used.

**Remember to record your nestbox activity at [www.nestwatch.org](http://www.nestwatch.org)**

Musings About Our Multitalented Multitasking Master... Keith Kridler

Bluebird lover, Master Gardener, naturalist, contractor, husband and father, Keith Kridler is a busy man!



He remembers, "My mother was the main vegetable gardener of the family; brother Barrie was the

landscape design genius, and my Dad owned a construction company. Mom handled the office for both Barrie's and Dad's businesses. Her full time job was watering all of the plants in the hot Texas summers."

It is only natural that Keith inherited a love and talent for both occupations, incorporating these skills in his everyday life.

**TBS Achievements**

► Co-founded TBS with Pauline Tom in 2001.

► Received Cornerstone Award in 2003 for his help,



Co-founder Pauline Tom presents award.

support, advice, and many contributions to TBS.

► Presented TBS Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009 in acknowledgement of the support to TBS and his commitment to bluebird conservation.

Long before the formation of TBS, Keith had an intense interest in and knowledge of bluebirds. He built zillions of nestboxes, monitored miles of bluebird trails, and participated in several internet forums such as Bluebird-L, sharing his observations and

opinions with other birders.

In fact, it was his participation in the Bluebird-L forum that prompted Cornell Ornithology Labs to ask Keith to co-author *The Bluebird Monitor's Guide*.

Keith continues to share his love and knowledge of bluebirds through his extensive speaking engagements to a variety of audiences. In fact, Keith is the keynote speaker for all of our symposiums!

Keith's love of nature is not limited to bluebirds. He is often requested to speak on a variety of topics to naturalist and gardening groups.

He also teaches several continuing education classes for both of these groups.



Keith uses his sawmill and recycled logs to build nestboxes. He quit counting in 1979 after number 2,000.

**A Typical Week**

► Teaching a local MG group how to build nestboxes tonight. They have a summer camp in early July where more than 100 4-H children will get to build a bluebird nestbox out of Yellow Pine lumber that I sawed out of donated logs.

► Help a Girl Scout Troop build Bat Houses for a project.

► Tour a Wildlife Preserve in Wood County with a couple of Native Plant Groups.

► In Salt Lake City touring

some Utah Master Gardener group projects for a few days.

**Master Gardener**

Keith has been a Cypress Basin Texas Master Gardener for the past 12 years and is President of the Lake Country Chapter of the Texas Native Plant Society.

Keith's love of gardening is totally focused on raising heritage daffodils.

**Award Winning Daffodils**

Starting with daffodils from his parents, Keith now owns 7 acres filled with 1,000+



Glimpse of spring at the Kridler's

species of heritage daffodils and is one of only two semi-commercial bulb growers in the southern half of the U.S.

Keith is an officer in the Texas Daffodil Society. His participation is not limited to administrative tasks.

This year at the American Daffodil Society approved Texas Daffodil Show, Keith along with his wife Sandy, and his son Shawn were awarded: the Red White and Blue ribbon for the Best Collection of five stems of American bred daffodils; the best three stems of Standard Daffodil in the show; the very best Standard in the whole show; the best collection of five different miniatures in the show; the best three

stems of a miniature in the show; the best miniature in the show; and the best Intermediate sized daffodil in the show. The Kridler family also received the hardest to win, and most prestigious award for the best standard daffodil seedling in the show from our own breeding.



Terri Wilson created this collage of photos from her visit to the Kridler home in March.

Congratulation Kridlers! This is the most recent of a long list of awards they have received for their work with daffodils.

Another passion for Keith is raising and selling the unusual Paulownia trees.



Keith stands beside a 4 year old Paulownia tree holding a potted sapling. They like heat and humidity.

These fast growing trees have large bushy leaves that drop after it frosts. The trees bloom with large, fragrant flowers in spring. The flowers, said Kridler, are edible and safe for livestock.

*Keith admits "All this stuff means is that I don't get any days off or I am off giving programs every night or helping folks with plants, animals or birds."*

How lucky for us!

Keith's column resumes in next newsletter.

## Will They Nest One More Time?



By Keith Kridler

You can tell if your bluebirds are going to try nesting again. All you have to do is get up early and listen! Male bluebirds at the height of nesting season will begin calling or singing well before daylight as this re-establishes that they survived the night and they are broadcasting their song in order to attract any available female bluebird. This also establishes or warns unmated male bluebirds that they are holding that section of territory.



Nest photo by Linda Crum.  
Other photos by Luke Hoag.

These mornings few of the bluebird males are really singing like they do early in the season. But this morning about 8am a very vocal male bluebird began calling/singing. It choose a

tree near an empty nestbox, sang for a while and then moved about an acre and sang from another tree top near more empty nestboxes. Instantly the male that has fledged two broods of young nearby came and challenged this new male. The old male sang in retaliation all along the edge of his territory, moving from tree top to tree top and then down the high line wire guarding the edge of his territory. The new male retreated tree by tree on across my neighbor's acre or so and at the far end another male came and challenged the new male.

So I have three males out there singing just like spring guarding or still guarding their territory

from this new male. You can figure that IF you hear territorial singing then the hormones are still raging in some of these birds and they are still actively searching for a mate with similar hormone levels, hoping to breed and nest at least once more this year.

Insects are not a problem for bluebirds late in the season; day length is still really long.

Most species of birds when they start molting and begin replacing their feathers, sacrifice the ability to breed and lay eggs until the molt is done.

I usually see bluebirds beginning to molt in late August.

## Alright! Who Did This?

### Question:

We have several nest boxes all of which have been attacked by something at the opening as if to make the opening bigger. The inside of the raised openings are splintered. We have not seen any animal doing this during the day. Do you have any ideas about what animal is doing this and why and how can we stop them?

### Answer:

This could be either woodpeckers or flying squirrels. Do you see any evidence of feathers or hair in the nestbox? A good way to put a stop to this is a metal hole guard. NABS sells these in their catalog <http://nabluebirdsociety.org/miscellaneous.htm> . Of course you can purchase metal guards from a variety of sources. Just be sure to purchase one and a half inch diameter guard.



*The FIRST bluebird eggs I saw were when my father lifted me up and held me in his arms so that I could see down into the nest. Five delicate, sky blue eggs nestled in a beautifully woven grass nest! That chance nesting of the bluebirds in our nestbox helped to encourage a lifetime of memories! Keith Kridler, Bluebird\_L, 2008.*



"Texas Blues"

This newsletter of the Texas Bluebird Society is published four times a year.

Send street or email address changes to Caryn Brewer at: records@texasbluebirdsociety.org or send to our P.O. Box.

## Need Nestboxes?

Purchase in quantities of 4 from our website [www.txblues.org](http://www.txblues.org) (Sales tab)



Luke Hoag®

**ALL NATIVE CAVITY-NESTERS are protected by federal law. Do not disturb the birds or the nest.**

**Monitor the nest and report to NestWatch.**

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

"I have found that bluebirders as a whole are the most giving, loving, sensitive and caring segment of the human population in America.



Scouts install nestboxes at Taylor Park.

Of all of the environmental groups, bluebirders are the most proactive group as nearly 100% of them actually go out and help their target species themselves instead of just writing a check once a year and sending it to a distant mailbox."

Keith Kridler

Texas Bluebird Society  
PO Box 40868  
Austin TX 78704

Return Service Requested

## FUNdraising Keeps TBS Nestboxes Across Texas!

Bluebirders, we need your help. Every year during our Summer Symposium, our silent auction generates funds that we use to purchase lumber for our volunteers to build nestboxes which we distribute throughout Texas. Every dollar that the auction generates is used to build these nestboxes. As the August symposium is getting near, we need items for this year's auction for the August 20, 2011 symposium in Glen Rose.

Our summer symposium has been very successful at bringing in new Texas Bluebird Society members, and the auction plays a vital part in attracting registrants. More members mean more nestboxes across Texas, more monitoring of these boxes, and more support for our cavity-dwelling friends.

These items do not have to be bluebird related; they can be anything that would be fun to bid on.

Please send your auction items to:

Jimmie & Benni Konvicka  
1315 N. Dale Avenue  
Stephenville, TX 76401  
254 968-6663

If you do not have or cannot think of item to donate, but you would still like to support the auction, you may make a donation which will be used to purchase auction items.

Please make any donation checks payable to The Texas Bluebird Society and send them to Jimmie and Benni. You will be notified of the items purchased with your contribution .

2010 Symposium Silent Auction raised **\$2,182.00** for purchase of materials to build nestboxes.



We are hoping for a great success with this year's auction, but we cannot do it without your help. Items received after July 20th will miss the publication deadline.

*Need your item carried to the symposium? Contact Pauline Tom (512 268-5678 or 512.268.5678) and we'll try to make arrangements.*