A Word from the Prez

Here we are at the end of summer and our trail monitoring has come to an end. I hope you had a successful season with many fledged bluebirds. Once again it was a slow start for many of us due to the spring weather but for me it got better as the season progressed. Unfortunately our year to year numbers keep going down. Somehow we have to make that change direction and back to an upward trend. I am mailing this issue weeks before the normal schedule because some members don’t receive their issue for up to a month after it gets mailed here in Madison. The PO says they are having employee shortage issues and mail delivery will be affected. Of the past three Wisconsin Bluebird we have mailed, two were delivered much later than the norm. One thing I highly recommend to stay on top of events like the Annual Convention is to check our website or GroupWorks. I make sure the information there is current and posted well in advance. Not everyone has a computer so, perhaps early mailings may become more the practice when dated events are part of the content.

Many of you know that I also monitor American Kestrel boxes for Madison Audubon. Competition for their boxes comes from European Starlings and House Sparrows. When they show up I insert a Solo cup in the entrance so they leave. Often times a Kestrel moves in after I remove the cup. The photo here is from a nest box that didn’t get Kestrels this season but in late summer I found a bluebird nest! It amazes me that when a hen bluebird has the room, her nest becomes an artistic tapestry of grasses. She laid 4 eggs total and fledged all 4 in August. I’ll take it!

Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. A good variety of information I hope you enjoy reading. There is no County Coordinator column. Carol McDaniel is dealing with cancer so please remember her in your thoughts and prayers.

Patrick Ready
BRAW President

Save the Date! September 14

BRAW Annual Convention
At the Kickapoo Valley Reserve

S3661 State Highway 131
La Farge, Wisconsin 54639
608-625-2960

Chimney Swifts - The Mysterious Bird That Shares our Chimneys
By Sandy Schwab
Sandy Schwab, a Master Naturalist and a long-time volunteer at Dane County Humane Society’s Wildlife Center in Madison, will talk about chimney swifts - their fascinating natural history and the challenges they face to survive. Sandy is Chair of the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group, a small but dedicated group of volunteers whose goal is to keep Chimney Swifts common in Wisconsin. Chimney Swifts depend almost entirely on man-made structures for nesting and roosting sites, and their population is in decline. She will talk about this mysterious bird that most people aren’t aware of, why they are an important species and what we can do to help them.

Grouse in the Mist: What’s Happened to Ruffed Grouse in the Driftless Region?
By Scott Walter, WIDNR
Ruffed grouse populations have declined precipitously across the Driftless region in the past 30 years. Scott will discuss this decline in light of various potential causes, focusing on long-term changes to the area’s forest community. The importance of both species and structural diversity will be discussed, as will opportunities for landowners and land managers to proactively implement activities that support long-term forest diversity and the health of our wildlife community. Scott Walter: Currently, Large Carnivore Specialist (Bears, Wolves, & Cougars) with the Wisconsin DNR. Live with my wife Erica and our 5 children on our 7-generation family farm near Viola.

Falconry Through the Ages
By Abbey Krumrie, River Valley Raptors, Inc.
Learn about falconry in medieval times and how falconry has changed throughout time. She will also talk about what it takes to hunt successfully with a bird of prey. Abbey will bring two or three live raptors for her presentation.
BRAW Annual Convention
Kickapoo Valley Reserve, LaFarge, WI

The BRAW Annual Convention will be held on Saturday, September 14, 2019 at Kickapoo Valley Reserve, S3661 State Highway 131, La Farge, Wisconsin 54639, 608-625-2960

Conference fees:
$6.00: Registration without lunch per person
$12.00: Includes registration & lunch per person

Lunch: choice of ham & cheese or turkey & cheese on whole wheat or white bread (indicate preference); potato salad, dessert bar – cost $12 prepaid. If registering for more than one person, please indicate food choice for each person. Vegetarian available upon request.

Registration is paid in advance. Please include name and address of each person registering.

Program for 2019 BRAW Annual Convention

8:00-9:00 Registration, Silent Auction & Social Time
9:00-9:15 Welcome: President Pat Ready
Treasurer’s Report: Dan Schroeder
9:15- 9:45 BRAW Awards
9:45-10:00 2019 Season: Steve Falon, Coordinator of Data Collection
10:00-10:15 Break & Social time
10:15-11:15 Grouse In The Mist– Scott Walter
11:15-Noon Chimney Swifts - Sandy Schwab
Noon Lunch (Pre-paid only) Bring your own if desired.
1:00-1:15 Silent Auction winners
1:15-2:15 Falconry - Abbey Krumrie
2:15 - 2:45 Ask the Bluebird Experts - Q&A

SILENT AUCTION

Are you creative with sewing, baking or other crafts? Use your imagination for the silent auction. It doesn’t need to be bluebird related. Help support BRAW with your donation or plan to buy an item and support BRAW bluebird trail development.

ANNUAL CONVENTION
PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Please indicate the number of lunches for your party at $12 each: _______. Include check for full amount.

___Ham ___Turkey
___white bread ___wheat bread ___Gluten Free bread
___Vegetarian meal

___ registration only ($6) no lunch

Name(s): _______________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________
Email: _______________________________________________

Return form with payment by September 8th to:
Pat Ready
815 Sky Ridge Dr.
Madison, WI 53719