

Spring 2024  
Vol. 39, No. 1



# Wisconsin Bluebird

Newsletter of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc.

BRAW is an affiliate member of the North American Bluebird Society (NABS), founded by Lawrence Zeleny.

## Final 2023 Data Report

See Page 3



© Patrick Ready

### *Inside this issue:*

President's Report - 2 • 2023 Data Report - 3 • 2023 Monitors' Data List - 4 • County Contacts News - 6  
A Second Look at Skyboxes - 7 • Fort McCoy Success - 8 • Bluebirds in Apple Orchards - 9  
Senior Services for Bluebirds - 10 • Garden Expo Highlights - 11 • Bluebirding Tips: Poles - 12  
Cavity Nester Guide - 13 • Bluebird Life Cycle - 16

**Is It Time to Renew Your Membership?**

# President's Report

Spring! And I'm anticipating [anxiously] to see blues flying around my nesting trail. I know our BRAW monitors are feeling the same way. Our work to help bluebirds is so satisfying and we all come away knowing that we are making a difference too. Best Wishes for a great nesting season!



I am writing this just after the 2024 PBS Wisconsin Garden and Landscape Expo event. BRAW had a very attractive booth (actually we had three booths in a row) and we met a large number of interested bluebird people and many of our BRAW monitors. There were at least five other bird related booths at this site and we made contact with all of them. You will hear more about our future work with the Driftless Area Land Conservancy in Southwest Wisconsin. This promises to be a big boost for bluebirds. Our BRAW Board of Directors were working our booth with Gordi Weber and Mark Martin, both nearby County Contacts.

Our data collector, Steve Fallon, is looking for some of the missing data from people who normally report their nesting successes. If you haven't submitted your 2023 data, please do it soon.

I am sure many of you know that we have submitted to the Wisconsin Historical Society a complete set of our publication *Wisconsin Bluebird* and other pertinent documents. As a result, we are missing copies for ourselves to use. If you have back copies and are willing to donate, please let us know. Our historian, Gail Smith, would appreciate it. Gail is surveying for past articles of interest and importance.

Andy Garcia-Rivera, the BRAW Web Master, informs us that he is reworking our website to improve navigation and in finding information. It should be up this year at some point. Look for it!

I realize that some of the Carol McDaniel supported boxes have not been installed as yet, but the GPS or approximate location is needed to show the McDaniel family. Please make a point to supply this information to me (ssample@gmail.com). Approximate date, GPS or location, location name if known and monitor's name. Thank you!

Last but certainly not least, we have two new county contacts. Paul Noeldner is taking Pat Ready's place as Dane County contact and Brad Zinda is taking Portage County and Wood County as a contact. Yes, Brad is the BRAW Vice president.

It's time to get excited for the is season ready to start!  
Steve  
President

## Spring 2024 New Members

Wendy Loudas, Hudson  
Kathy King, Monroe  
UW Madison Arboretum,  
Madison  
Ron Woods, Janesville  
Nansi Colley, Madison  
Carrie Laufenberg,  
Cassville  
Jerry Wolf, Milton  
Patrick Bullock, Madison  
Margaret Gierhart,  
Madison  
LuAnn Maratik, Sheboygan  
Tom Gissell, Racine  
Crystal Clear Window  
Cleaning, Onalaska  
James Greenwood,  
Baraboo  
Randy Buisker, Hillpoint  
Mary Edwards, IL  
Sue McGuigan, Oregon  
Dana Rima, Scandinavia  
Tom Olson, Westby  
Daryl Oestreich, Fitchburg  
John Anglim, Portage  
Rick Nevers, Marathon  
Sybil Mercier, Oregon  
David Knocke, Deerfield

Nancy Mergen,  
Bloomington  
Betty Dieckhoff, Babcock  
Brian Christian, Verona  
Larry & Carri Hale,  
Belleville  
Charles & Abby Ross,  
Montello  
Les & Mary Rhines,  
Plymouth  
Adam Rothe, Black Creek  
Jerry Stangl, Hazel Green  
Helen Gerth Mahi,  
Poynette  
Tom Isaacson, Hartland  
Nicole Heimbecker,  
Deforest  
Amber Etter, Montello  
Kim Hall, Pleasant Prairie  
Gregg Patten, Belmont  
Laurie Matson, Tigerton  
Stacy Stewart, East Troy  
Brian & Jennifer Laatsch,  
Janesville  
Barb Sigmund, Arlington  
Mike Padrutt, Cross Plains  
Bill Meeks, Viroqua  
Kerri Frisch, Pardeeville

## Spring 2024 Donations

Jerome & Sharon Woelfel,  
\$100 nest box  
Janet Wisner, \$50  
Tim Frank, \$100  
Gordon Telford, \$50  
Jeff Rusinow, \$500  
Ruby Thomas, \$50  
Don Persons, \$100  
Pauline Jauquet, \$25  
research  
Eric Wickstrom, \$25  
Laurence Liegel, \$50  
research, \$15 nest  
boxes, \$10  
Bill Prue, \$100  
Carol Ramage, \$15 nest  
box  
Melissa Kesling, \$25  
Barbara Roney-Peck, \$10  
Ruthann Meiers, \$50  
Charles Zarnoth, \$46  
Karen Koebel, \$15 nest-  
box  
Jon Frohling, \$25  
Timothy Freeman, \$75  
Mary Strasser-Colclough,  
\$25  
Edward Miller, \$250

Karen Haralson, \$10  
Richard Albert, \$25  
Rita Gundry, \$100  
research  
Daniel Raab, \$50  
John Scholtz, \$50  
Jack Saltes, \$25  
Susan Alden, \$10  
John Feiner, \$100 nest  
box  
Steve & Patti Heimerman,  
\$15 nest box  
Terri Sprout, \$10  
Harvey Kucaba, \$25  
Sara Sonntag, \$10  
Bill Bailey, \$15

*In Honor of Dave Lucey,  
Mary Ellen Millar, \$500*

*In Memory of Issy  
Friemuth,  
Corey & Samatha Butters,  
\$100*

*In Memory of Reggie  
Nankee,  
David Speigle, \$25*

# Data Report for 2023

By Steve Fallon

Hello, my fellow bluebirders. The final numbers for our 2023 bluebird fledglings are in, and the birds are still on the comeback trail! Our 2023 EAB fledglings were 14,790 and that is about 8% higher than the number of birds fledged in 2022. As has become my custom, I've included visual representations of where in the state the numbers originated from on the following maps.

The first map shows our 2023 Bluebird numbers by county. The numbers of boxes used by bluebirds, eggs laid, and bluebirds ultimately fledged are indicated by the height of the bars in the graph.

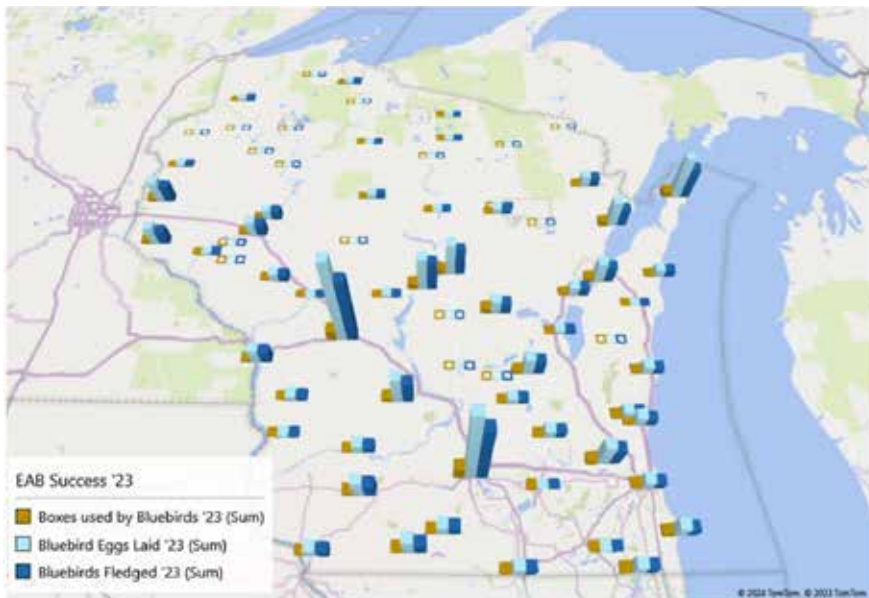
The next graphed map shows a comparison of the 2023 fledged EAB numbers compared to the 2022 values. In many areas we saw the same numbers or slight increases in bluebird fledges.

As expected, some monitors reported very good success, but others reported that the birds had another tough year. So overall, we saw some improvement, but like last year, it was spotty in terms of location. We expected that the recovery from a couple years ago might take some time. Additionally, we had fewer reports, so our totals are somewhat down due to those circumstances as well.

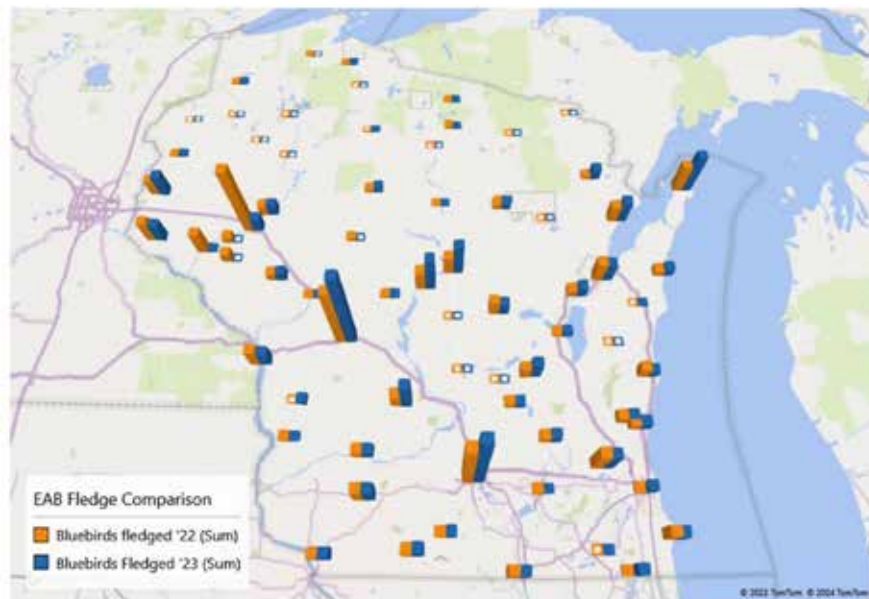
As a side note, in a non-Wisconsin location, a BRAW member from New Jersey did quite well this year fledging over 2200 birds! It's good to know that the reach of an organization can extend to the coast.

The final plot is a pie chart that indicates the relative numbers of bluebirds compared to the other cavity nesters that share the bluebird boxes. The total number of all cavity nesters for 2023 was around 30,781, which is about 2% below the total number of cavity nesters we had in 2022. Tree swallows seemed to have a tough year. Their numbers were down 17% from last year. The numbers of House Wrens and Chickadees were about 3-4% higher than last year.

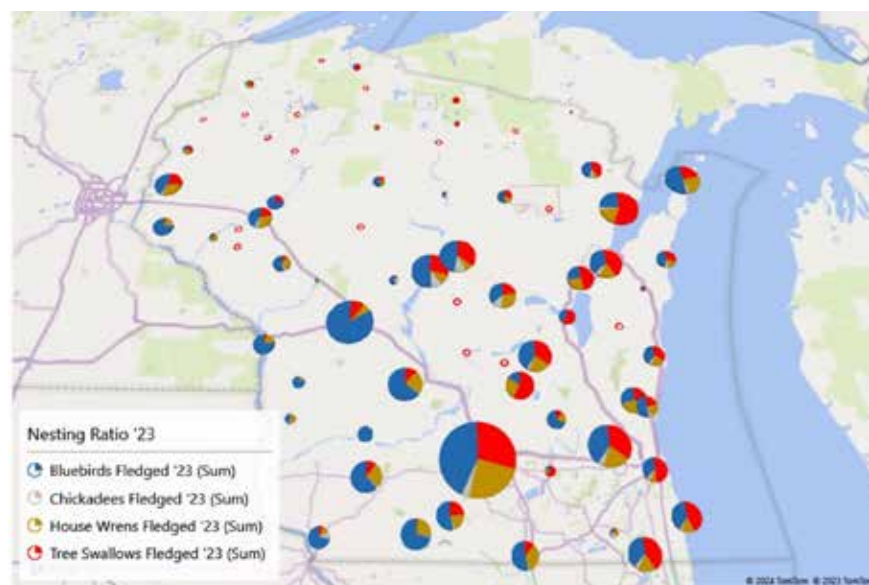
It's also our custom to recognize our monitors for their hard work. We had nearly 300 reports from our monitors that yielded 14,790 Eastern Bluebird Fledglings. It was a mixed bag this year for the birds, with some monitors doing quite well and others having another tough year. I also know some weren't able to monitor due to health issues and we wish those folks a speedy recovery. Thanks, all for your hard work! As always, please feel free to contact me with corrections or omissions at [stevefall50@gmail.com](mailto:stevefall50@gmail.com)



Map 1



Map 2



Map 3

Name	County	EABL Fledged	Name	County	EABL Fledged	Name	County	EABL Fledged
Rich & Carol Becker	Ashland	32	Alanis Penzkover	Dane		Larry Johnson	Fond du Lac	88
Bonnie Lumberg	Ashland	5	Patrick Ready	Dane	74	Memuna Khan	Fond du Lac	234
Barbie Allen	Brown	73	Jack Saltes	Dane	68	Steve and		
Jon Beckman	Brown	9	Steve Sample	Dane	68	Karen Kinziger	Fond du Lac	6
Bruce Behnke	Brown	5	Lori Sheehan	Dane	8	Michelle Mellencamp	Fond du Lac	4
Ray Bildings	Brown	6	Gail Smith	Dane	10	Dorothy Messner	Fond du Lac	26
Della and			Ruth Smith	Dane	9	Roger Villers	Fond du Lac	19
Gerald Clabots	Brown	140	Mary Sobol	Dane	5	David Speigle	Grant	224
Sue Clairmont	Brown	9				Jay Brooks	Green	43
Renee Heder	Brown	11				Rodney Courtier	Green	33
Steve Mayer	Brown	56				Kathleen Dreikosen	Green	118
Warren & Julie Schultz	Brown	20				Michael Johnson	Green	85
Warren Schultz	Brown	16				Kim Cates	Iowa	39
Stephen Zimmermann	Brown	30				Eugene Kroupa	Iowa	45
Rachel Padour	Calumet					Brooke & Jon Lewis	Iowa	26
Debbie Anderson	Chippewa	213				Dale/Doris Moody	Iowa	260
John & Jeanne						Lianne Stephenson	Iowa	15
Flickinger	Columbia	87				Gail Van Haren	Iowa	41
Scott Mathwich	Columbia	7				Jan Wicks	Iowa	6
Mark and			Robert Stanley	Dane	13	Jane Prindle	Jackson	9
Jenny McGinley	Columbia		Gail Van Haren	Dane	55	Joanne Belstner	Jefferson	8
Graham Steinhauer	Columbia	9	Ann E S Wick	Dane	516	Tammy Frey	Jefferson	9
Graham Steinhauer	Columbia		Brad Zinda	Dane	146	Stan Parsons	Juneau	48
Dennis Kirschbaum	Crawford	42	Michael Helgren	Dodge	174	Elizabeth Alvey	Kenosha	12
Bob and			James Kronenberg	Dodge	12	Ron Cascarano	Kenosha	9
Gerry Bennicoff	Dane	13	Barbie Allen	Door	16	Anna Hudson	Kenosha	26
Kathie Brock	Dane	31	Nick Anderson	Door	58	Bong State Recreation		
Curtis Caslavka	Dane	36	Marjorie Andrae	Door	17	Area John Meyer	Kenosha	104
Mike Crawford	Dane	10	Jim and Pat Blair	Door	16	Julie Milligan-Barr	Kenosha	26
Sue Eagle and			Sarah Freyman	Door	4	Dennis and		
Cynthia Carlson	Dane	48	Marilyn Hansotia	Door	15	Marie Persinger	Kenosha	50
Betty Downs	Dane	33	Mark & Michaela Holey	Door	8	Krerowicz Rosenstiel	Kenosha	32
Rainer Dronzek	Dane	9	Brenda Keys	Door	43	Barbie Allen	Kewaunee	30
Steve Fallon	Dane	14	Wendy Lukes	Door	20	Don Pritzl	Kewaunee	128
Steve Fallon	Dane	18	Char Lukes &			Verdel Dawson	La Crosse	46
Tim Frank	Dane	66	John Maring	Door	59	Dan Henderson	La Crosse	69
Jim Goodno	Dane	3	Mike & Barb Madden	Door	6	Allen Herbers	La Crosse	171
Patrick Handrick	Dane	45	Sandy and Ed Miller	Door	26	Michael Huffman	La Crosse	11
Patrick Hasburgh	Dane	11	Jim Blair + others			James Barth	Lafayette	216
Lynne Haynor	Dane	4	Newport Park	Door	16	Jim Hess	Lafayette	104
Pam Heilman	Dane	23	Ken & Signe Onsrud	Door	232	Dale/Doris Moody	Lafayette	60
John Kessler &			Glenna Peters	Door	10	Diane Morgan	Lafayette	30
Grace O'Connell	Dane	10	Sherry Seubert	Door	7	Dan & Mary Jane		
Sally Keyel	Dane	27	Ben Teich	Door	50	Reinhold	Lafayette	20
Deb Knudsen	Dane	14	Carl & Darcy Wallace	Door	17	Paula Kiel	Manitowoc	8
Jeffrey Koziol	Dane	9	Renee White	Door	8	Karen Koebel	Manitowoc	4
Eugene Kroupa	Dane	17	Eric Wickstrom	Door	63	Al Lancaster	Marathon	9
Walter Kugler Jr	Dane	8	Charles Bergsten	Douglas	29	Jolie Wood	Marathon	12
Stephen and			William and			Barbie Allen	Marinette	125
Mary Lang	Dane	69	Shirley Lundberg	Douglas	9	Tim Comer	Marinette	46
Bob & Deb Lucas	Dane	90	Rita Gundry	Eau Claire	87	Joanne DeVetter	Marinette	35
David Lucey	Dane	128	Joan Hoy	Eau Claire	8	Kathleen Drews	Marinette	5
James Mand	Dane	18	Laurence Liegel	Eau Claire	60	Lynn Crawford	Milwaukee	18
Sylvia Marek	Dane	37	Martina Lindseth	Eau Claire	36	Kelly Herda	Milwaukee	6
Guy Martin	Dane	52	Bernie Hoefgen and			Mark Kastner	Milwaukee	16
Dawn Zungler and			Paul Savides	Eau Claire	38	Shari Kastner	Milwaukee	89
Nicole Wagner	Dane	15	Luke Trittelwitz	Eau Claire	40	Mark McNally	Milwaukee	
Casey Olson	Dane	25	Steve Schleitwiler	Florence		Michelle Mellencamp	Milwaukee	28



Patrick Ready

Name	County	EABL Fledged	Name	County	EABL Fledged	Name	County	EABL Fledged
Paul Stencil	Milwaukee		Jim and Dorothy Beix	Pierce	28	Jim Wolf	St. Croix	70
Laurie Bartholomew	Monroe	164	Carol Forsythe	Pierce	20	Jim and Lori		
Bruce and Jerrilyn Brewer	Monroe	288	John Hanson	Pierce	41	Livingston	Taylor	34
Jeff and Abby Duebler	Monroe	153	Pauline Jauquet	Pierce	30	Dwight Offord	Taylor	54
Warren and Janet Evens	Monroe	173	Mark Ritzinger	Pierce	17	Steve Banicki	Trempealeau	171
Bessie Kmiecik	Monroe	84	Rodger Meyer	Polk	39	Bill LeClaire	Vernon	10
Cathy Malzacher	Monroe	215	David/Patti Becker	Portage	60	Debbie Pavick	Vernon	62
Gretchen Reis	Monroe	17	Lisa Bey	Portage	7	Robert Tamm	Vernon	25
Gordon Weber	Monroe	464	Alice Chaney & Melba Carey	Portage	150	Robert Butzer	Vilas	8
Gordon Weber	Monroe	87	Mary Bratz and Dick Stephens	Portage	129	Michael and Jean Curran	Walworth	5
Barbie Allen	Oconto	106	Darlene Jakusz	Portage	91	Ralph Konrath	Walworth	9
Joan Altergott	Oconto	30	Jean Klein	Portage	16	Susan Crowley	Washington	24
Gene Birr	Oconto	130	Jan Ronchetto	Portage	14	Dee Freeman	Washington	29
Sue Clairmont	Oconto	15	Joe Schultz	Portage	53	Ray Pinter	Washington	105
Randy Cooper	Oconto	11	Janice Seybold	Portage	62	William Rumpf	Washington	9
			Rick and Lynn Wyman	Portage	31	Melissa Bruder	Waukesha	73
			Jeff & Lynn Dodge	Price	5	Randy Cooper	Waukesha	17
			Rick Fare	Racine	95	Jon Frohling	Waukesha	36
			Sara Fare	Racine	41	Gerald Gerndt	Waukesha	39
			Kathy Gabriel	Racine	29	Norm Hausser	Waukesha	69
			Chris Glass	Racine	43	Walter Jost	Waukesha	117
			Christopher Jamieson	Racine		Shari Kastner	Waukesha	23
			Dennis and Heather Jensen	Racine	7	Ilene and Paul Kronschnabel	Waukesha	52
			Barbra Nelson	Racine	16	Anne Moretti	Waukesha	18
			Paul Klawiter	Richland	181	Robert Tamm	Waukesha	70
			Jim Brase	Rock	3	Steve Vidmar	Waukesha	26
			Rodney Courtier	Rock	189	Alice Chaney		
			William Fruin Jr	Rock	50	Melba Carey	Waupaca	156
			Steven Oakeson	Rock	12	Mary Naylor	Waupaca	46
			Susan Kenney	Sauk	25	Lori Paige	Waupaca	15
			Evonne Kraemer	Sauk	165	Craig and Sheila Beyer	Waupaca	333
			Eugene Kroupa	Sauk	5	Bob Fox	Waushara	230
			Laurence Liegel	Sauk	196	Len Place	Waushara	25
			Bruce and Ruth Marion	Sauk	115	David Misterek	Winnebago	87
			Jenny Pickhard	Sauk	1	Tom and Gayle Bartelt	Wood	112
			Sharon Stark	Sauk	19	Fred Camacho	Wood	118
			Bill and Donna Stehling	Sauk	96	Mary Dahm	Wood	63
			Ruthann Meiers	Shawano	109	Karen Haralson	Wood	84
			Ellen Klusmeier	Sheboygan	22	Kim Marshall	Wood	29
			Ellen Klusmeier	Sheboygan	25	Mike Moran	Wood	96
			Janet & Andy Raddatz	Sheboygan	37	Tom/Amy Reitz	Wood	102
			Janice Wittkopp	Sheboygan	60	Ruby Thomas	Wood	42
			St Anne's 4th Grade	St. Croix	4	Ted Urban	Wood	44
			Pat and Steve Cox	St. Croix	9	<b>Total</b>		<b>14790</b>
			Kathy Fredrickson	St. Croix	9			
			Jim Higgins	St. Croix	101			
			Pauline Jauquet	St. Croix	20			
			Stanley King	St. Croix	17			
			Lowell Peterson	St. Croix	75			
			Debby Walters	St. Croix	18			
			Paul Wenzel	St. Croix	54			



Mary Blanke



# BRAW CC News

Gene Birr, CC Chair  
[gbbird22@gmail.com](mailto:gbbird22@gmail.com)

New phone # 920-461-0108

## Gene Birr, County Contact Chair

Our very unusual warm weather in February has likely gotten everyone excited about our bluebirds which may arrive early if this pattern continues. That means by the time we are reading this in early March some of us will already be seeing their first bluebirds and the rest of us will be hurrying to prepare our boxes and bluebird trails so they are ready when the majority of bluebirds, which are sure to follow, do return.

It has been thought by many folks that the title of County Coordinator implies that there are far more duties and responsibilities than there really are, regarding the position of assisting someone in their county who is inquiring about what can be done to help out bluebirds. To help alleviate that notion we have decided to give the role a new title, simply that of **County Contact**.

The sole purpose of having someone with this designation is merely to be the first point of contact for anyone who expresses an interest in helping provide nesting habitat for Eastern Bluebirds and the other cavity nesting songbird species in Wisconsin. Anyone with a basic knowledge of bluebirds can take on this role and then do as much or little as their time and passion provides them.

If you can answer the bluebird question, that may be enough. If you want to help someone select nest box sites, you can do that. If you want to build boxes, provide mounting poles and hardware, predator protection and sparrow traps, you can do that. If you can't or choose not to do all those things, your only duty is to reach out to other county contacts or members of the BRAW BOD, who can provide these things for you, or refer you to others who can.

BRAW will compensate or reimburse any county contact person for their expenses incurred for providing nest boxes, poles, guards and traps. If you build your own nest boxes and provide them to other monitors in your

county, BRAW will pay for those too. And if your passion for bluebirds is boundless, feel free to offer to give a presentation about bluebirds to any group that expresses an interest in having one. Some of us do all of these things while others simply list their name, number and address so that there is a starting point in every county for anyone with a bluebird question.

Witness the accounts of these following county contacts to get an idea of what can be done if you choose to be one of this select group of dedicated bluebird enthusiasts, and consider becoming one in your county.



Patrick Ready

## Dodge County, Elizabeth Herzmann

Interested in birdhouses, but don't know where to begin? Wondering what you can do to help cavity nesting animals? Head to the **Horicon Marsh Education & Visitor Center on Saturday, March 2nd from 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM** to bolster your nesting knowledge. Speakers will discuss popular nest boxes, such as bluebirds and wood ducks. A live kestrel will be sure to engage participants of all ages! Come for a specific topic or stay for all three. Whatever you choose, these presentations will cover many topics to "brood" about for this upcoming nest season!

Doors will open at 8:00am so that early birds can peruse displays on cavity nesting birds, talk with experts on how to attract birds to your yard or purchase your own nesting box. A schedule of speakers is as follows.

- 8:30 AM: Wood Ducks;** Make your Boxes Pro“duck”tive”: Discover the best ways to make your nest boxes pro-duck-tive! Presented by Jeff Bahls, President of the Horicon Marsh Bird Club.
- 9:45 AM: Bluebirds:** Identify prime bluebird real estate and how to

attract mating pairs, too! Presented by Pat Ready, **Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin**.

- 11 AM: Join Amber Eschenbauch** from Central Wisconsin Kestrel Research and her live Kestrel to learn more about this cavity nesting raptor.

Bluebird/tree swallow and wood duck boxes are available for purchase on site. The Friends of the Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center will provide kits and fully assembled boxes for sale. Donuts and coffee will also be available for a donation during the day. Get involved or learn more in the classrooms, where there will be displays from local bird conservation organizations: Horicon Marsh Bird Club, Marsh Haven Nature Center, Wood Duck Society, Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Horicon NWR, Friends of Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center and Wisconsin DNR.

Free entrance event, and all ages are welcome. No registration required. For more information, call 920-387-7893 or e-mail [Elizabeth.herzmann@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.herzmann@wisconsin.gov).

The **Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center** is located between Horicon and Mayville at N7725 Highway 28, Horicon. For a detailed list of all Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center special events, please visit the Friends of Horicon Marsh website at [www.horiconmarsh.org](http://www.horiconmarsh.org).

## Door County, Charlotte Lukes

I will be presenting my **BLUEBIRD NESTBOX AND TRAIL** program on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> in Baileys Harbor at The Cook-Fuller Nature Center of The Ridges Sanctuary

There is a registration fee, so participants must contact the Ridges Sanctuary at 920-839-2082 or via their website, <https://www.ridgessanctuary.org>.

## Pierce County, Jim Beix

Lowell Peterson plans a BB presentation at the Prescott, WI, Freedom Park on Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM. After his talk, Jim Higgins, Polly Jauquet and I will assist with demonstrating nest box types and giving information on monitoring boxes.

Lowell will also give a presentation at Star Prairie, WI at the Nature Center on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 AM. Jim Higgins and Polly Jauquet and I will help answer questions and display different nest box types after Lowell's talk.

**Iowa County, Dale & Doris Moody**  
We looked at our records last fall and moved 8 houses that were not producing and replaced a few that were "aging" with new houses. We had a nice rebound in numbers last year and hope the trend continues in 2024. We do not have any scheduled programs yet in Iowa Co.

#### **Rock County, Rod Courtier**

I plan on moving some houses around, repairing some. I had good success with predator guards that I put on a few houses last year, so I want to put as many as I can on this year.

If anyone in Rock County has questions or would like some advice where to place houses you can call me at 608-882-5859.

#### **Waukesha County, Steve Vidmar**

Hello everyone. It has been a pretty mild winter so far. We had a small group of bluebirds here for the beginning of winter that would visit my bird feeders and heated bird bath. That has never happened before. That all changed with several wet, heavy snowfalls with the last one being 16-plus inches and doing a lot of tree damage. The bluebirds disappeared and now that the snow is

mostly gone, except in the woods, the bluebirds have not returned. Hope they made it. I am repairing many bluebird houses damaged by woodpeckers again. I have started to trap House Sparrows already for people close by because of reports of sparrows sitting on bluebird houses and showing interest in the boxes. Very early but this year's weather has been so unusual. I plan on making more bluebird houses and finding good places to put them. I am hoping for a better nesting season this year. I have a lot of work on my property cleaning up the tree damage from wet, heavy snowfalls, the worst I have had in 32 years. Well that is it, hope everyone has better success this year.

#### **Dane County, Paul Noeldner**

We wish to welcome Paul as the new County Contact in Dane County. Paul was recruited for this position by directors Gene Kroupa and Pat Ready, whom he is replacing as CC there. Paul was recently named BRAW's 2023 Educator of the Year award winner for his longtime efforts with Madison's Friends of Urban Nature workshops and Bird Buddies programs to establish bluebird box trails in the parks around Madison. He will be a strong advocate for expanding bluebird education, programs and trails in his new role for BRAW.

**Patrick Ready:** I want to thank Paul for taking over for me. I do have a couple presentations I am committed to before officially stepping down. On March 16 I will be giving my Attracting Eastern Bluebirds &

Other Cavity Nesters talk at Wild Birds Unlimited in Madison. Pre-registration required. In May I will be doing a Walk & Talk at Pope Farms in Madison again. As we walk to a few nest boxes there I explain the trail monitoring methods and recording data and where I send information. Last year this was a nice family event with 35 attendees of all ages.

Keep up the good work everyone!

#### **Oconto County, Gene Birr**

After another year of continued improvement with a 55% increase in bluebird fledglings last year, I look forward to another great year for bluebird production. In addition to the hundred boxes I built last fall to supply myself and local county monitors, I've been asked by the BOD to build up to 100 more nest boxes that I will provide to BRAW to build up the organization's inventory for anticipated requests from other county contacts and BRAW monitors statewide. I also will prepare another 50 Noel Guards that I will make available to local monitors. Before the new nesting season sets in, I will have replaced the remaining skylight boxes that I didn't get around to last fall, with solid roofs or new boxes altogether. This comes after my own two-year study found that no bluebirds at all nested in any of my nearly 50 available skylight boxes, and my belief that using a Van Ert trap is still the most effective method to stop sparrows from using our nest boxes that are intended for bluebirds.

## **A Second Look Through Skylights**

**By Gene Birr, Oconto CC**

Since first learning about skylight nest boxes over 5 years ago from Dr. Dean Rust, President of the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania, I have been a strong advocate for their use by member monitors of BRAW. I have placed many of them on my own bluebird trails for each of the last 5 years. I first replaced 5 of my regular nest boxes with skylights where House Sparrows were often usurping the boxes that had been intended for and previously been used by bluebirds.



For the next few years I added more and more skylight boxes wherever I encountered a recurring sparrow problem along my trails. I also encour-

aged several NE Wisconsin fellow monitors to use them, as well as many members across the state. Eventually, the BRAW Board of Directors decided to fund a study with Dr. Memuna Khan of Ripon College, to test the actual effectiveness of skylight boxes in deterring sparrows from nesting in our nest boxes. In that first year bluebirds nested in 3 of my own 5 skylights.

During 2022 the new BRAW Skylight Study Project involved 30 plus members who monitored 85 skylight boxes statewide that were paired alongside regular nest boxes to see if they were used more or less often by sparrows

*continued on next page*

over other cavity-nesting native songbirds. The first year's results showed definitively that all species, especially sparrows, preferred to choose to nest in a regular, opaque roof nest box, instead of a skylight when they were available side by side.

In the second year of the study, during the 2023 nesting season, we tested whether House Sparrows would nest in these same locations if the skylight box were the only option available.

The results showed that other native species occupied 66% of the skylights while sparrows occupied only 6% of boxes. Meanwhile, bluebirds comprised only 12% of the birds using the skylights, while Tree Swallows were the largest users of skylights, nesting in nearly 50% of them.

#### **My Own Trail's Skylight Study**

Because I already had been using a large number of skylights on my own trails, I decided to test their effectiveness while tabulating the results of my trails' numbers along with my participation in the official study. During these same two years, I monitored a total of 236 nest boxes that were available to bluebirds (111 in 2022, 125 in 2023). Bluebirds occupied 55 of these 236 boxes (22 in 2022, 33 in 2023).

I had made 48 of my boxes available with skylights, including the 6 that I used in the official study (22 in 2022, 26 in 2023). My own skylight boxes had full 3" openings and clear Plexiglass or Lexan covering the opening and the entire roof, in most cases. This made the box cavity even brighter than most other skylights. Amazingly,

## **Another Successful Season for the Fort McCoy Bluebird Volunteers**

**By Jerrilyn and Bruce Brewer, Fort McCoy Bluebird Monitors**

Eastern Bluebirds are a migratory songbird that arrive in Wisconsin in March and fly south in September or October. They are insectivores, prefer open grassy habitat, and normally utilize cavities in trees for nesting. Eastern Bluebirds can raise one or two broods each year and, on rare occasions, a third brood. These beautiful

not a single one of my 48 skylight boxes was occupied by bluebirds.

#### **Summary**

In the 2 years of my study, bluebird pairs nested in 55 of the 236 nest boxes that were available on my trails. Yet, no bluebirds chose to nest in the 48 boxes with skylights provided for them. At the same time these 48 skylights hosted 25 Tree Swallow, 6 House Wren and 7 House Sparrow nests, while 12 boxes remained unused by any species.

#### **Conclusions**

The clearest notion that comes to mind from this study is that bluebirds especially avoid our skylight boxes. House sparrows clearly avoid them too, but not entirely. On one of my trails, where I have the most sparrow problems, at the Pulaski High School grounds, every one of the 10 boxes are skylights. I switched my regular boxes to skylights in the same year that the school installed more than a half-mile of new chain-link fencing around their entire athletic grounds where the fields are always mowed and an 8 foot path outside the fence is mowed weekly as well. It seems this would be ideal bluebird habitat, but a nearby abundance of sparrows makes this location challenging. Even with all the skylights, the sparrows actively nested in 4 boxes and lingered near or in most of the others. Yet, here too, I have not had a single bluebird nest there in the 3 years this trail has had all skylight boxes, when it had hosted 2 or 3 pairs previously.

Several other local monitors have

songbirds were once very common but they experienced a huge population decline from the 1920's through the 1970's. During late 1970's and 1980's, Bluebird Restoration groups began to form and have created artificial nest boxes placed along routes that volunteers maintain and monitor throughout the summer.

One of these groups, the Fort McCoy Bluebird Monitors (FMBM) is located on the Fort McCoy Military Installation in Monroe County and is one of the largest producers of Eastern Bluebirds in the state of Wisconsin.

There are several reasons why a large number of Eastern Bluebirds are fledged each year at Fort McCoy:

noticed that the bluebirds are reluctant to nest in skylight boxes too. For example, Jon Beckman of Howard monitors 10 boxes on Oneida's Thornberry Creek Golf Course in western suburban Green Bay. Only one of his 8 skylights has been used by bluebirds in two years, so he has returned them to standard closed roof boxes. In his own yard he has had bluebirds nest in his box every year. Two years ago he replaced this box with a skylight when sparrows appeared to cause a problem. He then witnessed bluebirds interested in this box and enter it many times, but they did not nest in the skylight. Then he replaced it with a regular roof and the bluebirds returned to check it out and he found a completed bluebird nest in it the next day.

Although House Sparrows are clearly less reluctant to use a skylight box than a regular box, it is even more clear that bluebirds especially choose to avoid them and will travel elsewhere to find a darker, more acceptable nesting cavity. Therefore, I have decided to return all my skylights to regular roof boxes and battle the sparrows another way.

I still believe the best way is to use a Van Ert trap to remove them individually as I have done in the past. Eliminating a pesky sparrow permanently is far preferable to having that sparrow move away from a skylight box it does not find suitable, onto another location where it can continue to harass and chase other songbirds away from nesting cavities somewhere else.





excellent bluebird habitat, dedicated Fort McCoy leadership, synergistic partnership between Fort McCoy and FMBM, committed bluebird volunteers led by seasoned bluebird monitors.

A beautiful oak savanna provides a perfect spot for 293 bluebird boxes that are monitored by seven teams of one or two people. Kevin Luepke, Fort McCoy Wildlife Biologist, provides guidance and supervision to this group and collects data on volunteer hours as well as production data that are also reported to the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW).

Last year (2023) was an average year for production for the 293 boxes at Fort McCoy: 1,541 bluebirds were fledged, 171 Tree Swallows, and 126 House Wrens. One of the Fort McCoy bluebird boxes had a Triple Brood this year and fledged a total of 16 Eastern Bluebirds.

The FMBM are grateful for the leadership they received for many years from Kent Hall, Professor Emeritus from Stevens Point and the person who recruited all of the original Fort

McCoy volunteers. Professor Hall was an active member of BRAW and instilled in all of us an understanding of the importance of “clean data” and reporting weekly results on a timely basis. His energy, passion, knowledge, and dedication served as a role model for all FMBM. After Professor Hall retired from bluebird monitoring, Charlie Lautermilch, a seasoned bluebird monitor with the Fort McCoy group, took over as “leader” of the FMBM. He continues to bring us

together twice a year for mentoring, advice, encouragement, and a steady supply of nest boxes and poles. He tallies our yearly data and submits it to BRAW after giving each of us a “blue ribbon” for our most productive box!

We love Eastern Bluebirds, our beautiful oak savanna habitat, working together, and continuing a tradition started many years ago. Thank you for letting us be part of BRAW!



## Bluebird Hatching Success Lower in Apple Orchards

By Gene Kroupa

Bluebird hatching success is not as good in apple orchards. That’s the conclusion of Canadian researchers who conducted a study comparing reproductive success of bluebirds nesting in apple orchard and non-orchard nest boxes.

Covering the years 1988 through 2018, the researchers analyzed data from 2,397 nest boxes monitored at 20 orchard sites and 52 non-orchard sites in southern Ontario. After controlling for climate change factors, they found that egg laying started four days earlier over that time span.

Average clutch sizes in the first and second broods did not change significantly. But overall, they were significantly smaller in orchards compared with non-orchards (0.10 ± 0.03 fewer eggs between sites).

As reported, “Nests built in orchards were also at 6.1-fold greater risk



Bluebirds using nest boxes in apple orchards had a 4-5% lower hatching success in a Canadian study.

of parasitism and 2.1-fold greater risk of depredation than nests in non-orchards.” After accounting for parasitism and depredation, hatching success was 4-5% lower in orchards, a significant difference.

In 2012, Canada banned the use of the organophosphate insecticide azinphos-methyl in orchards. However, the researchers noted that

“We did not find a difference in hatching or fledging success in orchards after the ban.”

They postulated that the impact of any pesticide effect in sprayed orchards on bluebird hatching success was most likely due to “long-term exposure to DDT compounds in orchard soils and bioaccumulation in eggs rather than pesticides in use since regulation of DDT in the 1970s.”

Bluebirders will need to decide for themselves whether the benefits outweigh the potential downsides of putting nest boxes in orchards.

###

*Editor’s Note: Information for this article was taken from “Bluebirds Experience Impaired Hatching Success in Conventionally Sprayed Apple Orchard Habitats: A 31-Year Study” co-authored by William F. Read, Simon G. English, Kristina J. Hick & Christine A. Bishop. First published 22 September 2021 in Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry—Volume 40, Number 12—pp. 3369–3378, 2021.*

Patrick Ready

# Senior Services For Bluebirds

By Gene Kroupa

Some of us senior bluebirders are starting to cutback on trailing. But there are still lots of things we can do to help bluebirds. Here are ones that BRAW can assist with:

- **Start a cemetery mini-trail.** Most cemeteries offer ideal habitat for bluebirds. The circle drives, neatly mowed lawns and resting benches welcome persons with mobility issues. BRAW can supply free nest boxes, predator guards and poles, plus advice about how to get started. Contact Gene Kroupa, [gkroupa@tds.net](mailto:gkroupa@tds.net) or 608.238.3571.



**Cemeteries have paved circle drives that make senior access easy.** (Gene Kroupa)

- **Conduct a workshop.** Passing on your wisdom about bluebirding will leave a legacy for a younger generation to carry on your work. Holding bluebird sessions in town parks can become a part of their nature programs. BRAW can supply handout materials, nest box kits and a how-to checklist. Contact Paul Noeldner, [paul\\_noeldner@hotmail.com](mailto:paul_noeldner@hotmail.com) or 608.698.0104.
- **Build nest boxes and predator guards.** Whether using your own tools or those of a retirement village or community center, there is always a need for nest boxes: either finished or pieces ready to assemble.



**Building nest boxes and predator guards is a welcomed service.** (Craig & Sheila Beyer)



**They still need seniors' help no matter how much or little.** (Patrick Ready)

BRAW has the plans and funds to reimburse you for material costs.

Contact Dave Lucey, [dklucey@chorus.net](mailto:dklucey@chorus.net).

- **Train someone to take over your trail.** Think of all the joy that trailing has provided you over the years. You can introduce a retired person or younger individual to maintaining, monitoring and reporting. BRAW can supply replacement boxes. Contact Steve Sample, [ssample@gmail.com](mailto:ssample@gmail.com) or 708.606.8070.



**Sharing your expertise prepares young folks to be bluebirders.** (Paul Noeldner)

- **Become a county contact.** The main job of a county contact is to answer questions beginners and others have about bluebirding. You can do as much or little as you want in this capacity. BRAW will provide you with backup support as needed. Contact Gene Birr, [gbbird22@gmail.com](mailto:gbbird22@gmail.com) or 920.461.0108.

Cutting back doesn't have to mean cutting out. Whatever service to bluebirds works best for you, just let us know how BRAW can help.

And if you're not up to doing anything physical, please consider maintaining your membership and remembering BRAW in your estate planning.

# Excellent Expo For BRAW & Bluebirds!

By Patrick Ready

On February 9-11 BRAW had a large booth at the PBS Wisconsin Garden & Landscape Expo in Madison. This event gives us an excellent chance to meet & greet bluebirders from around the state. Many good questions and some good answers were exchanged! I gave a presentation to about 80 attendees on Saturday.

Thanks to all the board members and County Contacts that assisted at the booth.



**Looking for more information about Eastern Bluebirds & setting up trails? Go to the BRAW website: [braw.org](http://braw.org)**

## More Photos from the PBS Wisconsin Garden & Landscape Expo



Large display booth with plenty of room for products and people to peruse the table areas.



Mike Crawford demonstrates how the nest box can be checked and vented.



Nest boxes were selling like hot cakes! Steve Fallon helps a customer.



It got pretty busy at times!



Long-time Bluebirder Gordon Weber answers questions at the booth.



# Bluebirding Tips: P&P's Not Equal

By Gene Kroupa

When it comes to nest box mounting, not all support posts and poles (P&P's) are created equal. Both from a bluebird's and a monitor's perspective, some types just work a little better than others. What are we looking for?

First off is **safety** for the hens, eggs, and nestlings inside. Poles and posts that are made of materials that are easy to climb by critters looking to do harm need to include extra protection, such as greased PVC covers.

All nest boxes should have predator guards. Stay away from using anything that offers raccoons and squirrels enough leverage to rip off guards, such as tree trunks, utility poles, and wooden posts.

Second is **ease of installation**. Most bluebirders opt for steel studded T-posts or electrical conduit that can be driven into almost any strata. The bottom end of conduit should be flattened to keep it from twisting.

A post driver or pounder makes it easy to set a metal post or pole. This handy tool is available at farm supply stores. Two people can usually use one without the aid of a step ladder.

If you are by yourself and handling a heavy post driver or pounder is out of the question, try this method. First, use a hammer to drive in a shorter metal T-post (3' or 4'). Next to it, pound in a 6- to 7-foot metal conduit pole and use cable ties to affix it to the post.

Another one-person method involves using a hammer to first pound in a short piece of metal conduit or pipe of slightly wider diameter than the nest box pole. Insert a longer metal conduit pole into the wider anchor piece before driving it down.

The third consideration is **viewing inside** to monitor. Whether the door swings open from the top or pivots from the bottom, the nest box should be situated so that you can look down into the nest. Keep driving the pole or post until your line of sight is where you need it. Different heights off the ground don't matter much to the bluebirds.



**Nest boxes should be mounted on metal conduit poles in CRP properties.**  
(Gene Kroupa)

**Maintenance** is another key criterion. Wood rots, metal rusts and PVC doesn't stay slick forever. Years ago, I was lucky enough to observe a successful bluebird nest in a cedar fence post that had been standing for decades.

Most metal posts last many years before rust weakens their anchor wings. An easy to maintain mounting system involves using a single 6-foot steel studded T-post. It puts the nest box 5' – 5.5' above ground level. A round U-bolt holds the nest box in place. Easy to set with a pounder or small sledgehammer, the post should last decades.

So far, my 3/4-inch metal conduit poles have held up very well against the elements. I cut the 10-foot pole down to a 7-footer, flatten the end that goes into the ground, and drive it to the desired depth. Two 2-hole straps and screws secure the nest box to the pole. A brass screw or aluminum nail sticking out from its top back prevents a loosened box from sliding down the pole.

I've had no problems with critters trying to climb the pole. But applying some Vaseline or other lubricant further discourages any scaling attempts. However, some persistent raccoons are able to climb a weather-worn PVC sleeve, especially if it is not coated regularly.



**A 6-foot steel studded T-post and U-bolt to hold the nest box works well.**  
(Dave Lucey)



**Ease of monitoring is the key criterion for setting nest box height.** (Gene Kroupa)

A **final consideration** in favor of using a metal conduit pole is that it is the only type of mounting system approved by the Farm Service Agency for use on properties enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in Wisconsin.

## Check-Out BRAW.org

Searching for data and facts about bluebirds? Need tips about setting up a bluebird trail? Want to know how bluebirds are doing in Wisconsin? Have a problem with nest pests and pirates? Looking for help in getting nest boxes, predator guards and hole plates? Curious about where most bluebirds over-winter? Interested in volunteering to assist cavity nesters? Planning to donate to bird groups?

**Then check-out [www.braw.org](http://www.braw.org) for answers and a lot more useful stuff.**

# Nest Guide to 3 Cavity Nesters

by Patrick Ready/BRAW

## Eastern Bluebird

Fine or coarse grasses, pine needles, lined with fine grasses.



## Tree Swallow

Similar to bluebirds, coarser grasses & straw, lined with feathers when eggs are laid.



## Black-capped Chickadee

Moss, fine grass, lined with animal hair.



# Membership Renewal Information

## By Valerie Van Winkle, Membership Services

If the address label of your *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletter reads Spring 2024 next to your name, then your membership expires this month and you need to renew immediately. If you are an online member, you won't see this clue so please consider marking the expiration date on your calendar when you sign up. We don't want you to miss a single newsletter!

The next issue of the *Wisconsin Bluebird* goes into production in May and will be mailed in June. Memberships received after May 15 may not be processed in time to receive the Summer newsletter. Consider an extended or one-time \$300 Life Membership.

**Please fill out the membership renewal form on this page and send it with your check or money order to: BRAW, Inc., Valerie Van Winkle, PO Box 628492, Middleton, WI 53562**

You can also renew your membership at [www.braw.org](http://www.braw.org) and use PayPal or a credit card.

## BRAW, Inc. Membership and Wisconsin Bluebird Subscription

**Yes! I would like to join or renew as a member with the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (BRAW) and receive its quarterly newsletter *Wisconsin Bluebird*. Enclosed is my check/money order (do not send cash) made out to BRAW, Inc. for the following:**

- \$10 Gift Annual Membership (Online subscription)
- \$15 Student/Teacher Annual Membership (Online subscription)
- \$20 Online Annual Membership
- \$40 Extended Online Annual Membership for 2 years
- \$60 Extended Online Annual Membership for 3 years
- \$25 Individual or Family Annual Membership (Printed copy mailed)
- \$75 Extended Individual or Family Annual Membership for 3 years (Printed copy mailed)
- \$100 Corporate Annual Membership
- \$300 Life Membership

**A BRAW membership makes a great Anytime gift!**  
\$10 includes Online Newsletter  
Give the gift of Bluebirds!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

County of residence: \_\_\_\_\_

\*BRAW sends out nest box deal promotions and "time to renew" reminders via email.

### Donation (optional):

\$15 for nest box construction/post & predator guard

\$100 for nest box trail

\$\_\_\_\_\_ for bluebird research

In addition to my membership contribution, I wish to contribute: \$\_\_\_\_\_

(Contributions to BRAW are tax deductible.)

Check appropriate boxes:

This is a renewal

This is a new membership

This is a GIFT membership

Enclosed please find my check \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this membership request to:  
BRAW, Inc.  
Valerie Van Winkle  
PO Box 628492  
Middleton, WI 53562

We do not share or sell BRAW's membership list.

If you have any questions, please contact Valerie at 847-302-5684 or [ripvws@gmail.com](mailto:ripvws@gmail.com).

## BRAW ELECTED & APPOINTED OFFICERS

**President Steve Sample**, 422 Shepard Ter., Madison, WI 53705  
708/606-8070 • [ssample@gmail.com](mailto:ssample@gmail.com) (term to 12/25)

**Vice-president Brad Zinda**, 6737 Pinelake Dr. #213, Madison WI 53719  
• [brad.zinda@gmail.com](mailto:brad.zinda@gmail.com) (term to 12/25)

**Secretary Gene Kroupa**, [gkroupa@tds.net](mailto:gkroupa@tds.net) (term to 12/25)

**Treasurer Joanie Haugen**, 9773 Vermont Church Rd., Black Earth, WI 53515  
• [jlhcb@gmail.com](mailto:jlhcb@gmail.com) (term to 12/24)

**Director Steve Fallon**, 974 Halcyon Days Ct., Oregon, WI 53575  
[stevfall50@gmail.com](mailto:stevfall50@gmail.com) (term to 12/25)

**Director Dave Lucey**, Cross Plains, WI • [dklucey@chorus.net](mailto:dklucey@chorus.net)  
(term to 12/24)

**Director Mary Sobol**, 5205 Broadhead St., McFarland WI 53558  
[msobolontime@gmail.com](mailto:msobolontime@gmail.com) (term to 12/24)

**Director Mike Crawford**, 817 5th St., Waunakee, WI 53539  
608/213-1806 • [mike@marieandmike.com](mailto:mike@marieandmike.com) (term to 12/23)

**Director Patrick Ready**, (Past President) 815 Sky Ridge Dr., Madison,  
WI 53719 • 608/239-0791 • [birdsready@gmail.com](mailto:birdsready@gmail.com) (term to 12/24)

**Website : Director Andy Garcia-Rivera**, 10 Darien Circle, Madison, WI  
53717 • [agarciaivera@gmail.com](mailto:agarciaivera@gmail.com) (term to 12/24)

**Director Gail Smith**, Middleton, WI 53562 • [gsmithbird@gmail.com](mailto:gsmithbird@gmail.com)  
(term to 12/24)

### APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:

**Data Collection Officer: Steve Fallon** (see above)

**County Contact Chair: Gene Birr**, 3698 Morgan Marsh Rd.  
Oconto Falls, WI 54154 • 920/461-0108 • [gbbird22@gmail.com](mailto:gbbird22@gmail.com)

**Funding: Joanie Haugen** (see above)

**WI Bluebird Editor: Patrick Ready** (see above)

**Membership: Valerie Van Winkle**, PO Box 628492, Middleton, WI  
53562 • [ripvws@gmail.com](mailto:ripvws@gmail.com)

**Public Relations: Gene Kroupa** (see above)

### Student and Youth Outreach Committee:

**Lowell Peterson**, 1860 45th St. Somerset, WI 54025 • (715) 247-3243

### BRAW LIAISONS:

**Bureau of Endangered Res. Liaison: Sumner Matteson**, DNR, 101 S.  
Webster St., PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53701 • 608/266-1571

**WSO Liaison: Jennifer Wenzel** • [miloloki@wi.rr.com](mailto:miloloki@wi.rr.com) • 262-488-8077

## Do Your Shopping at the BRAW Online Store

Check out the new BRAW Online Store! T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and lots more all with the BRAW logo on them. Items can be ordered online at <https://stores.inksoft.com/brawstore/shop/products/all?page=1>



madison  
AUDUBON\*

Now the..  
Badgerland Bird Alliance



**Wisconsin Bluebird** • Volume 39, Number 1 • Spring 2024  
Published by the **Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**

Editor, Designer, Photographer  
Patrick Ready, 815 Sky Ridge Dr., Madison WI 53719  
608-239-0791 • [birdsready@gmail.com](mailto:birdsready@gmail.com)

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** Contact Membership Chair **Valerie Van Winkle**, PO Box 628492,  
Middleton, WI 53562, Email: [ripvws@gmail.com](mailto:ripvws@gmail.com)  
*Wisconsin Bluebird* is published quarterly by the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin,  
Inc. (BRAW) 815 Sky Ridge Dr., Madison, WI 53719. Subscription price is included in membership  
dues. Subscriptions and membership renewals should be sent to: **Valerie Van Winkle, PO Box  
628492, Middleton, WI 53562**

Issues are dated Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. Deadlines for submissions to the editor are due  
the 1st of February, May, August, and November.

Except for material with a copyright notice, permission to reproduce material printed in *Wisconsin  
Bluebird* newsletter is granted providing credit is given to *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletter as the  
publisher and to the author(s) or photographer(s) whose bylines and photo credits appear with the  
story or photographs.

The mission and  
purpose of the  
Bluebird Restoration  
Association of  
Wisconsin, Inc. is to  
broaden the base of  
state residents to help  
Eastern Bluebirds and  
native cavity nesters by  
erecting, maintaining  
and monitoring nest  
boxes.

# Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin

Patrick Ready  
815 Sky Ridge Dr.  
Madison, WI 53719  
www.braw.org



NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
MADISON, WI  
PERMIT #2783



## 2023 Data Final Numbers

See page 3

Check the address label. If it says "Spring 2024", then you need to RENEW membership now.

### Life cycle of the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) by Patrick Ready.



Pair select box and female builds the nest.



Within a week or two 3-5 eggs are usually laid in the nest.



The male stands guard.



After 13-14 days of incubation the chicks hatch.



After 16-22 days old the chicks are ready to fledge.



The chicks grow quickly being fed by both parents.