

Winter 2017

March 2017

The Fledgling

The official Newsletter of the Missouri Bluebird Society



The Missouri Bluebird Society is an Affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

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Dear MOBS members,

What a terrific time of year to be a bluebirder! This is the time we wait all winter for—late winter/early Spring when “our” bluebirds begin courting and checking out the nest boxes in our yards. Entire scenarios of choosing a mate, and “house shopping” play out right before our eyes. The series of pictures on this page are from only a few days ago and the storyline was great fun to watch, even though I have seen it time after time. It is one of the reasons I so often recommend to folks to put a Bluebird box “where you can see it!” when asked where to locate one. I do enjoy monitoring the nest boxes on my trails, however I would never want to be without the boxes at my home and work where I really have a chance to watch the bluebirds interact with one another. Take time to enjoy the Bluebirds in your space.

I have some important THANK YOUs to extend this time, starting with an enormous thanks to all of you who mailed in your 2016 nesting Reports to our nesting data chair Greg Samuel. And of course, we are deeply appreciative of Greg’s time and hard work pulling all of this together for us and producing this informative “Nesting Report Summary”. Please take time to look over Greg’s report included as an insert in this issue of *The Fledgling*.

The Fledgling.

I’d also like to express my thanks to Mary Dobson for creating and producing the **2017 Bluebird Conference Brochure and Registration form**, also included as an insert in this issue. I thank both

President’s Letter continued on page 2

Missouri Bluebird Society Officers & Board of Directors

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Send an email to the Editor at: regina@birds-i-view.biz
Specify your name and “Email Only Fledgling”
In the subject line.

MOBS

PO BOX 105830

Jefferson City, MO 65110

www.missouribluebird.org



President's Letter continued from page 1.....

Larry and Mary Dobson for volunteering to be this year's Bluebird Conference chairs. They have planned a special event for us and their efforts are greatly appreciated. Let me also express my appreciation to Bob and Judy Peak and our good friends at the Missouri River Bird Observatory for accepting our invitation to be program presenters at the 2017 conference. Many of you know these wonderful folks. Please take time to read about them in the enclosed Conference Brochure.... It is not too soon to fill out your registration form and mail it in!

Another fun upcoming bird event is Ivan Ray Miller's Purple Martin Open House. What a terrific job our friend (and dedicated MOBS member) does with all native cavity-nesters on his property. His Open House is always a special and educational event—I thank him for sharing with us.

One final note about my Bluebirds; They were still courting till dusk, but it looks like she has finally taken to him. (See my pics on Page 5)
I look forward to having another nest at work and at home.

Do what you can to help bluebirds,
Steve Garr, MOBS President



This edition of *The Fledgling* has two important inserts. Please don't miss them!

⇒ **The 2017 Missouri Bluebird Conference Brochure and Registration Form**

⇒ **The MOBS 2016 Nesting Summary Report**

Both of these documents can be downloaded from the MOBS website: www.missouribluebird.org and have also been included in the hard copy mailing of the Winter 2017 edition (March 2017) of *The Fledgling* newsletter.

THANKS to MOBS member and Conference co-chair Mary Dobson for creating/producing the 2017 Conference Brochure!

Photo by Ann Smith



Purple Martin OPEN HOUSE

**Saturday, June 3, 2017
8:00 am—5:00 pm**

Come Watch 115 pair of Purple Martins

Guest Speaker: Steve Garr

**Presenting: “Protecting your
Bluebirds and Purple Martins”**

Steve is the president of the Missouri Bluebird Society, past president of the North American Bluebird Society, and a dedicated Purple Martin Landlord for 38 years.

**We will lower a
House every Hour
to See a Nest of
Eggs and Young!**

Check out our variety of birds nesting in the yard
(including Bluebirds!)

**Donuts and
Drinks Served!**

Photo by David Patton



Ivan Ray Miller Residence

22885 340th St Jamesport, MO 64648

2 Miles East on HWY F and 2 Miles South on 340th Street

Watch for Signs

Make a plan NOW to protect nest boxes from excessive Heat *by Steve Garr*

The MOBS 2016 nesting report shows the bluebird hatch rate was down. Some of the decline was due to the extreme heat during the 2016 nesting season. Better protection—and a little planning—often means more Bluebirds.

It is a good idea (especially in Missouri!) to have some ready-to-assemble and install oversized roofs to quickly place on active boxes when temps suddenly turn extremely hot.



Things to consider when you are installing a double roof: Try to shade as much of the nest box as possible. An air gap between the two roofs of at least a quarter of an inch will make a huge difference on a 90+ degree day in full sun. The spacers can be made out of washers, machine nuts, strips of wood, and other items. Simply attach the oversized roof to the existing roof with screws inserted through the wood from the top, through spacers, and into the existing roof. (this might take more than two hands!)



Above: An infrared thermometer can be a valuable tool to determine the temp inside a nest box.

Extended Roof Materials List

- Thin wood approx 18 x 24 inches
- 6 spacers 1/2 inch (spacers can be made from rigid tubing or pieces of wood)
- 6 screws 1 to 1 1/2 inches long (the length of the screws depends on the thickness of the roof).
- The extra roof needs to be installed where it blocks most of the afternoon sun and has air flow between the two roofs.



Stanford Study ...Mealworms a potential avenue to reducing the world's plastic waste problem?!

Indeed, it is possible to find a research study on anything...one of our personal favs is from 2015 (you may recall it made national news). A Stanford University study, Dept of Civil and Environmental Engineering, apparently shows that Mealworms can safely biodegrade certain types of plastic. Actually, the study is a cooperative effort between engineers at Stanford and researchers in China resulting in at least two papers being published on the subject. To me, some of the most fascinating information provided by the research has to do with the mealworm's capacity to biodegrade Styrofoam (via microorganisms in its gut) in very much the same way it would "normal" food, converting about half of it into carbon dioxide but excreting the bulk of the remaining plastic into droppings within 24 hours. According to the study, worms being fed Styrofoam were as healthy as those eating a normal diet—AND their waste appeared to be safe to use as soil for crops. YES, as a part of their continuing research they plan to study the effect of plastic-eating worms on the animals which consume them. Just in case you are wondering...you are still fine growing your mealworms in plastic containers! No worries that they may eat their way to freedom.

Read more about this Research [HERE!](https://news.stanford.edu/pr/2015/pr-worms-digest-plastics-092915.html)

news.stanford.edu/pr/2015/pr-worms-digest-plastics-092915.html



*Mealworms munching on Styrofoam
Image credit: Yu Yang*

Is it time to Renew your MOBS Membership? Memberships expire on **December 31st of the year of expiration.****Check your mailing label to see if you need to renew.** (if your membership expires in "2017", it does not expire until Dec 31, 2017)Please mail your renewal form, along with your check or money order (payable to **MOBS**) to:**Missouri Bluebird Society/ P.O. Box 105830/ Jefferson City, MO 65110**

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ city/state _____ Zip _____

County: _____ **Email:** _____**Membership Levels:**

____ Individual one year membership \$9.00

____ DONOR (Annual) \$50.00

____ *Family LIFE Membership \$175.00

____ Individual two year membership \$16.00

____ SUPPORTER (Annual) \$100.00

____ *Family one year membership \$15.00

How many nest boxes do you monitor? _____

____ *Family two year membership \$28.00

How long have you been a Bluebirder? _____

*For individuals residing at the same address

Evening Bluebird Courtship

The glowing eyes in these pictures are evidence that this Bluebird courtship was an affair at dusk. ...an evening meal at the feeder followed by a bit of house hunting and inspection!



*The following individuals have joined MOBS or renewed their membership since our last Newsletter. We **WELCOME** our New Members and **THANK** our Renewing Members for their continued support!*

Doris Barber, Dan and Kim Basler, James Bell, Susan Burk,
 Pete and Ginny Culver, Ron Darling, Barb Duncan, James Gillison,
 Richard and Barbara Gott, Jerry and Jane Hemmersmeyer, Kristie Hertzog, Mary Kladiva,
 Ken Koncki, Betty Lusby, Joe McGuire, Dr. Lowell D. Miller,
 North American Bluebird Society, Harold Nagel, Evette Nissen,
 Elissa Oetting, Charlie Redenbaugh, Ray and Kay Schell,
 Tammy Simmons, Norm and Beth Stucky, Edward and Nancy Thomas



Supporter Membership: Bernie Bahr



Missouri Bluebird Society Nest Box Grant Program

The Missouri Bluebird Society is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to conservation of bluebirds and other native cavity nesting songbirds, and to educational projects that would be of benefit to these native birds. A limited number of nest boxes each year will be awarded to assist in projects that help promote the objective of the Missouri Bluebird Society (MOBS). These projects must include establishing and enhancing nest box trails on public lands within the state of Missouri, and have as one of its goals the education of the local community about Bluebirds and other native Cavity Nesting Species.

These grants start at five sets of nest boxes and poles per grant, on a “matching basis”, with MOBS providing five nest box/pole sets when applicant provides an equal number of nest box/ pole sets. Beginning December 2013, The Nest Box and pole sets from MOBS Grants will also include Raccoon/Snake Baffles. Whether or not the matching box requirement can be met by refurbishing existing boxes on an established trail will be at the discretion of the MOBS Board of Directors. Further, applicants must agree to the following provisions:

1. Applicant's nest boxes must be constructed in a fashion and design recommended and approved by MOBS.
2. Trail Location must be approved by MOBS.
3. The applicant agrees to present a 15-30 minute program to their organization or another community organization about bluebirds and other native cavity –nesting birds and the need for monitored bluebird trails. MOBS will assist in providing materials for this presentation.
4. The applicant agrees to take responsibility for seeing that the nest box trail is adequately monitored and agrees to take all necessary precautions and maintenance measures to ensure that non-native species are not allowed to inhabit and reproduce in the nest boxes.

The applicant agrees to turn in a completed MOBS nest box monitoring form each year after nesting season reporting nesting activity on the trail.

Applicant Signature _____ date _____

Please provide and attach the following information for review by the MOBS Board of Directors:

1. Applicant's name, address, county, telephone number, and email address (if any).
2. Name of any organization involved and contact information for the organization.
3. Purpose of the proposed project- particularly if the nest box trail is a part of an existing project that encompasses other goals.
4. Location of the project and description of the habitat of the trail or proposed trail.
5. Description of how the project will be implemented (including a time line).
6. Description of predator control measures that are planned and how they will be implemented.
7. Other sources of funding for the project.
8. Plans and details for the required presentation (i.e. to whom and when)
9. Please attach a basic description of the “matching box /pole sets” the applicant will provide (plans or photos are helpful)
10. Number of grant boxes requested.

Please mail this form, along with the above information to:

Missouri Bluebird Society/ PO Box 105830/ Jefferson City, MO 65110

It is the responsibility of grant recipients to make arrangements with MOBS to claim their grant boxes & poles from Jefferson City, MO—MOBS cannot ship or deliver grant nest box/pole sets.

www.missouribird.org

Only Need Poles and Baffles?

Ask for our “Save the Clutch” Grant Program Application or find it on our website.

Missouri Bluebird Society

www.missouribird.org

Important ordering info: When ordering product from MOBS, please remember to enclose these completed order forms, and **include your NAME, shipping address, and phone number** with your order. *Thank You !*



Our wonderful MOBS Logo mugs by Jim Rathert are dishwasher & microwave safe!

The MOBS Logo Mug

by Jim Rathert Photography

11 ounce white ceramic Mug with blue interior featuring the beautiful Logo of the Missouri Bluebird Society (designed by Jim Rathert).

_____ Mugs @ \$13.00 each = \$_____

Shipping \$6.00 (for up to 2 mugs)

Shipping \$10.50 (for 3-4 mugs)

Shipping \$_____

TOTAL \$_____

****Please note your mugs will arrive via PRIORITY MAIL**

Please make checks out to :

“MOBS” or the “Missouri Bluebird Society”

(Checks or money orders only– PLEASE do not send cash)

Mail to: **MOBS product sales**

P.O. Box 105830

Jefferson City, MO 65110

Order your MOBS Nest Box Signs

(Order Form left)

Nest Box Signs are \$3.50 each, or
buy FIVE, get ONE FREE!

_____ signs x \$3.50 each = _____

_____ 5 Signs get ONE FREE = \$17.50

_____ 10 Signs get TWO FREE = \$35.00

Shipping & Handling _____ + 2.00

TOTAL _____

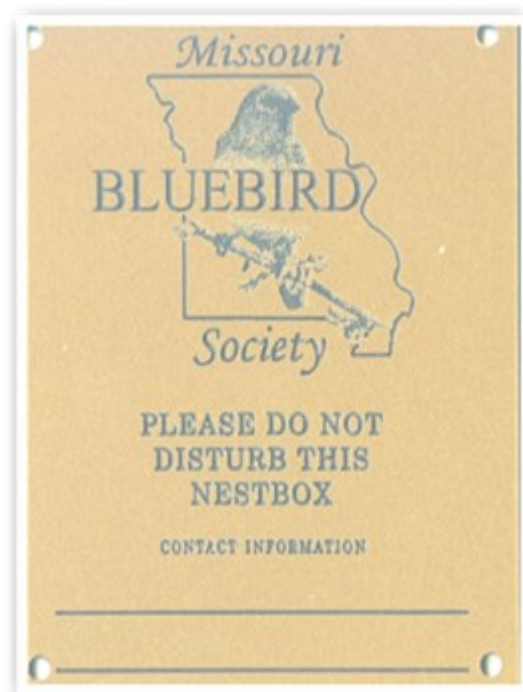
Make Checks to the MO Bluebird Society

Mail to:

MOBS Nest Box Signs

P.O. BOX 105830

Jefferson City, Mo 65110





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The Fledgling 2017 Winter Issue

- **The 2016 Nesting Report Summary is here!**
(Many thanks to all who submitted data and to our terrific Nesting Data chair Greg Samuel for pulling it all together)
- **MOBS 2017 Bluebird Conference Brochure & Registration Form!**
- **Mighty Mealworms (A unique Study)**
- **Get an early start protecting your nest boxes from excessive HEAT**



Photo by Steve Gaur