Winter 2018
February

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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Would you prefer to receive your copy of *The Fledgling* "Email Only" ?
Send an email to the Editor at:
regina@birds-i-view.biz
Specify your name and
"Email Only Fledgling"
In the subject line.

Letter from the President....

Dear MOBS Members,

This issue of ***The Fledgling*** is just packed with information and news, so I do hope you will make it a point to take it all in! February is one of those months when our Bluebirds could almost do anything... They court on sunny warm days, they roost in nest boxes on blistering cold and windy nights, and gather in flocks at heated bird baths and feeders stocked with food they can eat. It is a wonderful time to enjoy Bluebirds in Missouri!

I specifically want to encourage every member, if you have not already done so, to PLEASE complete the **Trail Summary report for 2017** found on **page 11** of this newsletter. We are so fortunate to have Greg Samuel as our Nesting Data chair and he has graciously offered to continue to compile data for the past season's nesting period. Mail or email this form to Greg by **March 15th** and we can print it in the April issue of ***The Fledgling!***

Don't miss the info on the **2018 Missouri Bluebird Conference** on page 5. Last year before the 2017 conference the board voted on the dates and location for 2018, I announced it during the meeting in July, and now we have added some NEW features to the conference activities—check them out!

The MOBS Board of Directors met in January and one item of business we addressed was the inquiry into having a **"Senior" Life membership**. On the enclosed membership application you will find a new Life membership level for individuals 65 years of age or older. The dues for that membership are $100.00.
Regular memberships all expire on Dec 31st of the year in which they expire.

I hope you will participate in the fun **Survey on Page 7...**we want to know our members better and this seems like a fun way. Results will be printed in ***The Fledgling.***

Lastly, there are two events PRIOR to our Bluebird Conference I would like for you to note: The Bluebirds Across Nebraska Annual Conference and the Audubon Society of Missouri Spring Meeting in Arrow Rock. Please check those events out on pages 8 and 10 of this newsletter. Regina and I will be at both events and hope to see you there!

Follow MOBS on Facebook!

MOBS
PO BOX 105830
Jefferson City, MO 65110
www.missouribluebird.org

Do what you can to help the Bluebirds,
Steve Garr
MOBS, president

Missouri Bluebird Society 2017 / 2018 Officers & Board of Directors

President….Steve Garr steve@birds-i-view.biz 573-638-2473
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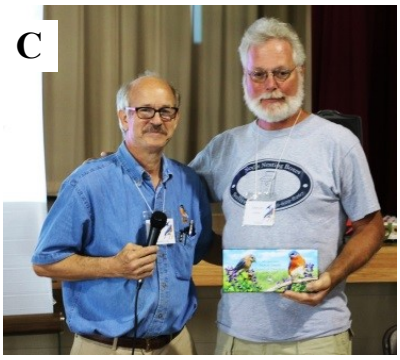
Board Member ...Ann Earley AEE623@prodigy.net **MOBS Webmaster ..Ann Smith** thesmiths91@yahoo.com 636-629-8267

A

B

C



D

MOBS Special Recognition!

Without the dedicated, volunteer service of MOBS board members and officers our Society could not exist. THANK YOU Volunteers!
Pictured left are outgoing board members and officers at the 2017 Conference being recognized for their much appreciated service to MOBS:

A. **Susan Reinagel**
Treasurer 2011– 2017
B. Larry Dobson
Vice-President 2011-2017
C. Steve Smith
Board Member 2010-2017
D. Ann Smith
Board Member 2011-2017
(Ann remains MOBS' web-master...thanks Ann!)

Right: Newly elected MOBS Board members pose during the Sunday morning field trip at the 2017 Bluebird Conference for a Group pic. **Stay tuned to future issues of *The Fledgling*** as we share more about each of the new members and officers so you can know them better. Pictured Left to Right:
Mary List: Treasurer
Bob Siemer: Board of Directors
Ann Earley: Board of Directors
Greg Samuel: Vice-President

Photo by .A. Smith

Left: We would be remiss if we did not also thank our good friend Jim Rathert for his **continuing service to** MOBS! Jim is a CHARTER board member and has remained on the board from the beginning.

Steve and Ann Smith

of Sullivan, Missouri were awarded the 2017 Missouri Bluebird Society "True Blue Service Award" for outstanding service to the Society. MOBS President Steve Garr proudly presents Ann and Steve the award during the Bluebird Banquet at the 2017 Bluebird Conference.

Photo by Mary Dobson

MOBS "True Blue" Service Award!

Newly elected MOBS Board members and officers. Thank you for your willingness to serve!

The 2017 Missouri Bluebird Conference

Saturday , July 14-16th, 2017 Warsaw, Missouri

Photos this page ***by Ann Smith***

Left: Our spectacular Saturday morning speaker who went the extra MOBS mile and agreed to also be our Friday evening speaker ….**Bob Peak,** pictured here with his wonderful wife and Bluebirding partner **Judy.** Bob and Judy are Life Members of MOBS and are long time supporters of this Society. They have traveled from Kentucky three times to attend MOBS conferences —twice to serve as speakers and share their vast knowledge and detailed research. They are always such a pleasure to be around and always finding ways to be helpful. THANK YOU Bob and Judy for all you do!

Saturday Programs, Auction bidding, Raffle, Lunch, and good old fashioned Bluebirder Camaraderie!

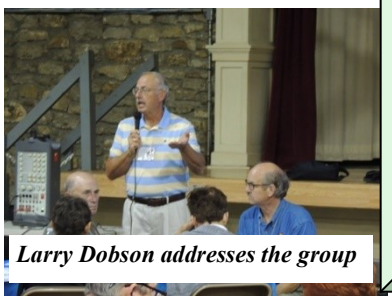
Right: MOBS is grateful to **Benton County Tourism** for their incredible support of our 2017 Bluebird Conference. MOBS 2017 Conference Chair, Larry Dobson, presents a nest box to a representative of the tourism department.

Left: Newly elected MOBS Vice-President **Greg Samuel** and his wife **Laura** are terrific examples of what it takes to make any organization productive: they are always ready to help out where it is needed most to make things happen! Here they are diving right into the Silent Auction and Raffle duties!

MORE MOBS 2017

Photos by Mary Dobson

Ann Smith welcomes attendees



Larry Dobson addresses the group

MOBS thanks
Larry and Mary Dobson
for a Wonderful Job as the
2017 Conference Chairs!

Left: Everyone enjoyed the presentation on Saturday by Paige Witek, Education Co-ordinator for the Missouri River Bird Observatory. MRBO co-founders Dana Ripper and Ethan Duke are long-time members and supporters of MOBS. Thank you MRBO!

Our very special MOBS members from Bluebirds Across Nebraska: posing here at the Saturday Evening Social. Thank you BAN for your continued support!!

Photos by Steve Garr

Sunday morning field trips to the Lost Valley Fish Hatchery and the Warsaw Visitors Center

Congratulations Dan and Lynda Blessing on your **40th** Wedding Anniversary!

Left: When folks ask Dan and Lynda where they celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary, they get to say " Why, at the Missouri Bluebird Conference, of course!". MOBS is so honored!

The 2018 Missouri Bluebird Conference!

July 13th—15th Jefferson City, MO

The Friday Banquet and Saturday Programs and Workshops will be held at the spacious **Lincoln University Carver Farm** (3804 Bald Hill Road, Jefferson City, MO) The Saturday evening Social and Sunday Field Trip will be held at the beautiful **"Mockingbird Hill"** in Jefferson City

Saturday Morning Nest Box and Baffle Building Workshop! Prior to the Saturday morning meeting and presentations, MOBS will sponsor a Building Workshop for attendees...learn to build proper nest boxes and predator baffles (**HANDS ON workshop** to restock our MOBS Grant Program materials) **PLUS....** Workshop participants have the opportunity to build a box and baffle to take home for a nominal fee, once they have constructed at least one nest box/baffle for MOBS inventory during the workshop! **Details will be in the upcoming 2018 Conference Brochure.**

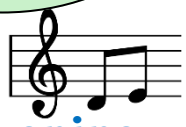
Among our Speakers on Saturday:

Steve Smith "Bluebird Basics"

Here's a program topic that came directly from conference attendees: a presentation focusing on the Basics of Bluebirding. It was a favorite presentation in 2017, so MOBS plans to include this program at each conference. Long time bluebirder Steve Smith will share his knowledge and advice with us at the 2018 Bluebird Conference!

Bob Siemer and Ann Earley: "Wild about Monarchs!"

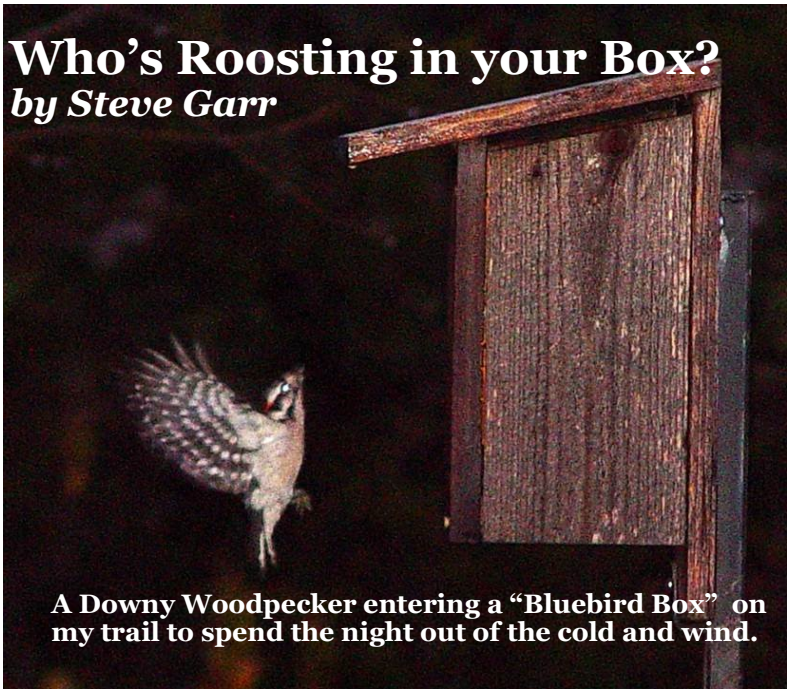
Bob and Ann travel all around Missouri on behalf of this beautiful butterfly spreading information, instruction, and hope! Come learn how you can help ***and*** enjoy Monarchs

The Friday **"Bluebird Banquet"** and **"Bluebirds and Friends"** Slide Show is always a great time! (held at the LU Carver Farm...watch for more info in the upcoming Conf. Brochure)

NEW! *Entertainment* at the Saturday Evening Social! Not only do we think you will enjoy the "Americana" style music of Andy May, we just know you will enjoy meeting Andy and Lauren May personally, because they are birders, they LOVE Bluebirds, and they know how to successfully engage young people in a cause. Decades ago, the Mays started the "Acoustic Kids" program to provide youth a vehicle for sharing and showcasing their musical talent in a supportive environment. Referring to the young people they work with, their website reads " the Music is in good hands...". Don't we all want to know that *Bluebird Conservation* is in good hands?!

Since last we met at Mockingbird Hill...both the Saturday evening Social and the Sunday morning field trip will be at the wonderful property owned by MOBS' members Norm and Beth Stucky. The Stuckys have a message for us! "*Since you were here in 2016, we have fledged over 140 purple martins and 80 Bluebirds. **And** we will give the individual who finds the first hummingbird nest a $50 gift certificate to a local bird* shop."

Who's Roosting in your Box?

by Steve Garr



A Downy Woodpecker entering a "Bluebird Box" on my trail to spend the night out of the cold and wind.

Right: Evidence of a Downy Woodpecker roosting in this box (note the wood chips!) This pic taken 2/19/18.

Above: Evidence of House Sparrow roosting in this box....**this is often a strong contrast to what is seen in a box being utilized for roosting by Bluebirds.** In this picture we have mostly white droppings in the bottom of the box but in boxes used by Bluebirds there is frequently regurgitated seeds from the berries /fruit they have eaten. Frequently the floor of a nest box in which bluebirds are roosting is dark red or brown from regurgitated seeds.

At some point, most bluebirders will experience birds other than bluebirds roosting in their nest boxes during the winter months. I think most of us consider that a good thing. We are providing shelter for native birds from the harsh winter elements. Many of us even "winterize" many of our boxes to make them particularly welcoming and warmer by covering ventilation slots and plugging drainage holes just for the winter.
It is good to know WHO is utilizing your nest boxes in the wintertime. For one thing, because if we install man-made housing for our feathered friends, we should at least take the time to know what's going on in there. But also, it is important to remember that if House Sparrows are allowed to roost in your nest boxes in winter, they become even more bonded with the box come spring which makes it that much more unlikely that one of our native cavity-nesting birds will get to utilize that nest box for its designed purpose... NESTING! So...other than actually observing a bird enter the box there are a few ways to help determine which species is utilizing your nest boxes in winter. (see pics and info right).
First, however, I think it is important to review a few significant things to keep in mind when you set out to discover "who's roosting in your nest box".

- It is very important to NOT disturb birds when they first go in to roost. They are taking shelter for protection....please do not force them back out into the cold or damp weather. I have found quiet, **quick** observations made between 10:30—midnight usually do not cause birds to flush from the box. It is generally Ok to use a flashlight, but again, quickly and quietly.
- Just because you see one bird exit a nest box in the morning don't assume the coast is clear....several bluebirds often roost in the same box!
- Don't assume a box is empty because it seems too warm outside for a bird to need to use the box for cover. Often if a bird begins roosting in a box during a severe cold snap in November, they may continue to roost in the box every night well into warm days of spring. Some years, if it is particularly mild ALL winter, birds may never roost in some of my boxes.▪

Right: This box contains a few feathers and a few pieces of grass...who do you think is roosting in this box? HINT: very few birds will use feathers and grass in a box during winter.
ANSWER:

Best guess (without actually seeing the bird carrying in the material) is a House Sparrow

Reminder:

Please remember that, thanks to a generous donation from **Bluebird Network telecommunications company,** MOBS has wonderful full color handouts for you to use for your next educational program!
Just call Steve and Regina at 573-638-2473 or email : steve@birds-i-view.biz

BLUEBIRD NETWORK

We want to learn more about YOU!!....

Could you please take our ***short survey (FYI: you could win things, plus this is just FUN!)***

You may write your answers here and mail this page to MOBS, OR email us your answers by typing the words **"MOBS Survey"** in the subject line of your email written to steve@birds-i-view.biz and type your answers in the body of the email.
Deadline to participate: March 29th, 2018 (we'll draw for prizes on March 30th)

1. What is your favorite bird species? (no pressure, really, we will not judge!):
_____
2. Which of the following statements best describes how often you photograph "your" bluebirds:

A. never B. only occasionally for fun C. Only for record-keeping or data info D. frequently and year –round for fun and records E. Fanatically, and I make everyone look at my pictures!

3. Tell us how many young birders you know personally, ages 10-18: (count any young people you believe would consider birds or birding to be one of their hobbies)
A. none B. 2– 4 C. 5-8 D. 9-20 E. more than 20

4. How many of the individuals in your answer to question 3 are related to you?-
_____
5. Do you feed Bluebirds?

A. yes, daily or almost daily year-round B. Yes, but only during nesting season C. yes, but only during harsh or cold weather D. Never

6. What do you feed your Bluebirds? (circle all that apply)

A. commercial suet B. Home-made suet dough or other home-made foods C. "Shell-free" seed products (such as sunflower hearts/kernels or shelled nut products) D. dried mealworms E. Live mealworms F. fruits or berries

7. How long have you monitored nest boxes?_____

8. How many nest boxes do you monitor? :

A. one—five B. 6– 12 C. 13-25 D. 26-35 E. 36-50 F. 51– 75 G. 76-99 H. 100+

9. What do you consider to be your greatest predator/competitor issue in your nest boxes?

A. snakes B. house sparrows C. house wrens D. ants/insects /mites E. Other Birds (not house sparrows or house wrens)_____ F. Wasps G. Cats H. Other_____

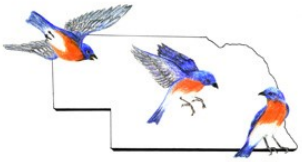
10. (A question submitted by one of our members!): Do you currently have or have you ever owned /used a "Nest Box Camera" in any of your Nest Boxes? YES or NO

Please mail your completed survey to:
MOBS / PO BOX 105830/ Jefferson City, MO 65110
OR.....
Email your answers to: steve@birds-i-view.biz and be certain to type the words "MOBS SURVEY" in the subject line in order to be eligible to win prizes.
Deadline to enter: March 29th (we will draw for prizes on March 30th)

MOBS Membership is our most Valuable Resource.
We thank ALL of our members for their support!

New or Renewing Memberships since our last issue of *The Fledgling*:

Julie Anielak, Bernie Bahr (supporter), Sallyann and Loren Boline, Steve Bower, Kay Conklin, Penny Holtzmann, Mary Lou Hubble, Lois Kimrey, Linda Larson, Ken and Ann Littlefield (new Life Members), Mike and Jan Lowe, Terry Marmet, Kathy Marquart, Ivan Ray Miller family, Charlie Redenbaugh, Ben Rexing, Jeanne Russell, Mel Steffens, Norm and Beth Stucky, Carol Ware, Derry Wolford



Bluebirds Across Nebraska Annual Meeting! *April 13th and 14th, 2018*

Southeast Community College in Beatrice, NE

MOBS members Steve and Regina Garr will be presenting a program titled "Bluebirds 101" at this event, but of course, there will be lots of other educational fare you won't want to miss! PLUS, check out these top 5 reasons to visit Beatrice, Nebraska! Check the BAN website often for more details.

If you have never been to BAN Conference, let this one be your FIRST (We know you'll be back!)

Thank you, Thank you!

Steve and Regina Garr would like to thank Anna May Miller for the **exquisite** hand-made Bluebird quilt she made for us. Having it presented to us by our dear friends Ivan Ray Miller and Jim Rathert made it even more special. It is truly one of the most treasured gifts we have ever received and we will cherish it forever. Thank you Ivan and Anna May for your kindness and friendship!

MOBS Membership Application/Renewal Form

Memberships expire on December 31st of the year of expiration. **Check your mailing label to see if you need to renew.** 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

___Individual two year membership $16.00 ___SUPPORTER (Annual) $100.00

___*Family one year membership $15.00

___*Family two year membership $28.00 __***Family LIFE Membership** $175.00

NEW: _____***Senior Family Life Membership** (available to individuals 65 years or age or older)….$100.00.

How many nest boxes do you monitor?_____

How long have you been a Bluebirder?_____

*For individuals residing at the same address

MOBS Members doing Outreach!

MOBS' most recent Nest Box Grant Recipient presents for the Arrow Rock Community!

February 17th, Paige Witek, Education Coordinator for the **Missouri River Bird Observatory**, presented "Arrow Rock's New Neighbors: Eastern Bluebirds!" After a terrific program indoors, several of the attendees headed outdoors with Paige and Ethan Duke (co-founder of MRBO) to witness the placement of the new MOBS Grant Box. **And.....**just as installation of the nest box, pole, and baffle set was completed, the group heard a Bluebird! Isn't it great when a program ends on such a special "note"?

Recent Educational Programs by Larry Dobson
Text by Larry Dobson, Photos by Mary Dobson

Larry Dobson, charter member and former officer of the Missouri Bluebird Society, has been spreading the word about the Eastern Bluebird far and wide during the autumn months. He is an popular speaker and presented at three events recently. Larry believes that many people want to establish a habitat that nurtures bluebirds, but do not know the proper setting and nest box details.

So his presentation is geared towards those who want to attract our beautiful state bird to their backyards or acreage. But the many beautiful pictures of bluebirds always leave the attendees spellbound and hopeful that those birds will soon be found in their yards.

Larry was invited by a long-time friend to speak to her PEO group at their September business meeting, which was held at her home near Eldon, MO. The ladies were enthralled by the pictures and the information presented in Larry's entertaining style. In late September, a tri-county conference of Master Gardeners held a day-long workshop near Versailles, MO and invited Larry to have a booth representing the Missouri Bluebird Society. He gave three presentations as part of the sessions open to over 100 Master Gardener members. In November, Larry even crossed the state line to visit the Audubon Society of Topeka, KS, which meets at the Shawnee County/City of Topeka Library . This group is celebrating its 40th Anniversary and has a long history of service and events in that area. His presentation was listed in their annual catalog of 2017 programs. Larry enjoyed visiting with other very knowledgeable bird lovers and they had many great questions about the Eastern Bluebird.

It was a busy autumn on the road on behalf of MOBS. Larry already has programs booked for the spring, and hopefully will be ready after Mary and he spend some time during the winter in warm Arizona.

Girl Scout Troop # 71096 learns about Bluebirds!

In January, eager- to -learn girl scouts met with MOBS' members Steve and Regina Garr in Jefferson City to learn about Bluebirds in Winter. The girls were given a brief program, an educational packet to take home, participated in an activity to "choose" bluebird food, and helped Steve "winterize" a bluebird nest box.

Left: the group chooses which foods bluebirds are able to consume.

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF MISSOURI SPRING MEETING MAY 4TH - 6TH 2018

Hosted by the Missouri River Bird Observatory
at Arrow Rock State Historic Site!

MEETING THEME: ENGAGING YOUTH IN BIRDING & BIRD CONSERVATION!

Presentations by young Missouri birders
and
A Saturday afternoon workshop devoted to launching the Missouri Young Birders Club!

Audubon Chapters and Individuals are encouraged to sponsor a young person attending this meeting (registration fee, lodging and travel costs). ASM and MRBO will cover the costs of the Saturday morning Missouri River Pelagics field trip for up to five youth who will assist with the Young Birders Club workshop.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Friday 2 - 5:30 pm: registration at the MRBO office, across from Arrow Rock State Historic Site

Friday 5:30 - 7 pm: social with heavy hors d'oeuvres at the Historic J. Huston Tavern on Arrow Rock's Main Street

Friday 7:30 - 8:30 pm: presentations by young Missouri birders at the Arrow Rock State Historic Site auditorium

Saturday 7:30 am: field trips begin

Saturday 5:30 - 8:30 pm: banquet and keynote presentation by Ken Keffer, educator and former director of the Ohio Young Birders Club, at the Arrow Rock Schoolhouse

Sunday 7:30 - 11:30 am: field trips

FIELD TRIPS

ALL DAY SATURDAY:
GRAND PASS CA AND VAN METER STATE PARK
SWAN LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
THE COLE CAMP PRAIRIES

HALF DAY SATURDAY:
MISSOURI RIVER "PELAGICS" -
BIRDING BY BOAT WITH MISSOURI RIVER RELIEF!

HALF DAY SUNDAY:
ARROW ROCK AND JAMESON ISLAND
OTHER LOCAL HOTSPOTS

Arrow Rock is a small village that that is both a National and State Historic Site. It is located approximately 30 miles west of Columbia and 13 miles north of I-70. Arrow Rock itself has great birding - especially during migration - and is adjacent to the Jameson Island Unit of the Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge.

Registration fee is $65 for adults and $30 for people <18. Includes Friday social and Saturday banquet.

On-line registration coming soon to mobirds.org!

Please email dana.ripper@mrbo.org, ethan.duke@mrbo.org or paige.witek@mrbo.org with any questions.

Nest Box Trail Summary Year_____

Date:_____

TRAIL MONITOR NAME:_____

Address:_____

PHONE NUMBER:_____

Number of Nest Boxes_____ Number of "Unused" Nest Boxes____

Species	Total nesting attempts by species	Total successful Nest for Species *	# Eggs laid By species	Total chicks By species	Total fledged (by species)	Additional notes
TOTALS :						

* A successful nest is considered to be one that has fledged at least one chick

How often was the trail monitored?_____

First date monitored for this season:_____

Last date monitored for this season:_____

Signature of Trail Monitor:_____ date:_____

Please print name of Trail Monitor_____

PLEASE NOTE Address! Please send this completed form to :

Greg Samuel 4749 State HWY Z Fordland, MO 65652

Please mail form to arrive by Dec. 31st

Everyone's data is important! Please report your data to MOBS!

www.missouribluebird.org

Greg's email address: **pls@arczip.com**

Deadline extended!
Please mail or email your trail data to Greg by **March 15th**

The Fledgling
The Official Newsletter of
The Missouri Bluebird Society
P.O. BOX 105830
Jefferson City, MO 65110

Mark your calendar!
MOBS 2018 conference:
July 13-15, 2018
Lincoln University's Carver Farm
Jefferson City, MO

2018 Winter Fledgling

Inside:

- Pics from the 2017 Missouri Bluebird Conference
- Meet the new Board members!
- NEWS about the 2018 Missouri Bluebird Conference
- **Nest Box Data….It's NOT too late!!** (Reporting form enclosed)
- Who's Roosting in your Nest Box?
- **FUN survey enclosed….. (you can WIN things!)**