



# BLUEBIRDS FLY!

\$2.50 per issue  
suggested donation

California Bluebird Recovery Program's newsletter

– assisted by Mt Diablo Audubon Society  
– an affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

for the encouragement and conservation of cavity-nesters – especially bluebirds – anywhere in the West

## Birders Have Success with Mealworms

Dawn Williams reports from Woodside, just south of San Francisco, that they experienced successful mealworm feeding at their boxes during the 2001 and 2002 breeding seasons. 2003 was a disappointment with no bluebirds, but 2004 has made up for it with a great result. Of five eggs laid and hatched, four fledged. Three of those are surviving nicely and are pictured below with a parent.

Dawn believes that this was the second nesting for this pair because during nestling feeding the adults were assisted by this season's juveniles.

The birds were introduced and attracted to mealworms in 2001 and 2002. Dawn would fill the feeding tray with the worms late in the day on the theory that the birds prefer coming out in the open in the twilight hours to avoid daylight predators. Also, they would fill their tummies just before roosting time.



Each night the birds would wait on the nearby wires and branches for Dawn to come to fill the tray. Seems they knew Dawn and her family and were quite tame, not minding that the Williams watched them feed.

Following is their banding record:

2001: 2 chicks 7/16/01  
2002: 3 chicks 5/6/03 - 1 chick found dead approx. one mile away.  
2003: none  
2004: 1 hen 5/23/04 incubating  
4 chicks 6/9/04



## NABS 2005

North Carolina Beckons for Bluebird Convention

(See registration form page 7)

Mark your calendars for May 19-22, 2005, and prepare for spring-time in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina.

The North American Bluebird Society will hold its 28th Annual Convention in Asheville, NC, a small, charming city surrounded by mountains and a rich history.

The huge Biltmore Estate, a 16th century chateau designed for George Vanderbilt by Richard Morris Hunt, is one of the many intriguing sites. The gardens which surround the estate were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and contain their own bluebird trail which is maintained by the Biltmore staff.

The North Carolina Arboretum covers 426 acres in the Pisgah National Forest and has five themed gardens reflecting the Southern Appalachian heritage.

Extensive information about the upcoming NABS Convention is readily available online at [www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org).

To check out the many visitor attractions in the area, contact the Asheville Visitors' Center: [www.exploreasheville.com](http://www.exploreasheville.com) or call 1-800-257-1300.

## Letters to the Editor    New life at old gold mine    California Bluebird

## Recovery Program

I got "Bluebirds Fly!" today and was impressed. You all did a very good job.

I was interested in Phil Persons comments about ATFLs. I have observed exactly the opposite results. At least a half dozen times in the last few years I have had ATFL drive bluebirds away from a nestbox and take it over. In every case the ATFL successfully fledged young. This year I had ATFL kill four bluebird young that were 18 days old, build a nest over them and raise their own young. I also had an ATFL nest with three ATFL eggs and two bluebird eggs. The ATFL eggs hatched but not the bluebird eggs.

I thought the article about egg color never really got to the point. The function of egg color is to camouflage the eggs from predators. Eggs of cavity nesters are in general white since they need no camouflage. It is dark in the nest cavity. It is believed that cavity nesters whose eggs are not white have changed from open nesters to cavity nesters relatively recently and have not yet evolved white eggs. Perhaps bluebirds are in the process of doing so since some few do have very light or white eggs. Any characteristic or activity which has no beneficial result to the organism will over the fullness of time be eliminated. Notice the non-functional eyes of cave fish for example.

R. L. Purvis

I have worked with Hatch Graham in the past and he put me on your newsletter list. You mentioned my work with bird blow flies in your last newsletter and Hatch ran several articles about my work, thanks. The last mentioned just gave my address, but anyone wanting to know more about my work or help with a blow fly problem should check out my website listed below.

Terry Whitworth Ph.D.  
Entomologist  
birdblowfly.com

CBRP member **Leslie Latour** and husband **Bruce Winningham** happen to live near a retired gold mine whose owners have undertaken to rehabilitate their property – in excess of 1,000 acres – and to return the scarred hills to their historic appearance and cover. Somehow, a desire to encourage the bluebird population came into the picture and the quiet birder couple was invited to aid in the naturalization.

Hopefully, nestboxes now on hand and soon to be placed will promote the population early in '05. Aerial maps will aid in selecting likely habitat and later in recording nestbox locations as monitoring gets underway.

Already, selected trees have been marked with yellow ribbons so nestbox hanging can proceed at a good pace. We hope to have periodic and timely reports on how this project is proceeding.

### New County Coordinators San Diego Area

Jean & Eugene Caggiano  
221 Scenic Drive, El Cajon 92021  
(619) 444-3862  
KGYGENES@aol.com

*Comments by the Program Director:*  
We are always anxious to locate individuals interested in placing nestboxes in good habitat for use by bluebirds and other cavity nesters. Occasionally we find a person who has been placing boxes and fledging bluebirds – but not sending us their reports of success. We're always disappointed to hear of fledglings that have passed us by. 15 nestboxes have surely made worthwhile contributions to the total population of cavity nesters in the beautiful foothills of Calaveras County.

Founded in 1994, supported by Mt. Diablo Audubon Society and affiliated with the North American Bluebird Society, CBRP is "for the encouragement and conservation of cavity-nesters—especially bluebirds—anywhere in the West."

CBRP is non-profit, has no paid staff, and is supported entirely by the efforts of volunteers and donations accepted by the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society on CBRP's behalf.

CBRP members had located and reported on more than 4,000 nestboxes by the end of 2001, with more than 17,000 cavity-nesters fledged—nearly half of them western and mountain bluebirds.

CBRP welcomes membership from the public who wish to support its program, and especially seeks those who will place appropriate nestboxes in the proper habitat, faithfully monitor the birds' progress through the nesting season, and report yearly on the results.

CBRP can furnish nestbox plans, a monitoring guide, forms for monitoring and reports, technical advice through a network of county coordinators, and sometimes the nestboxes themselves.

Membership, which includes this sometimes quarterly newsletter, is available for a donation of \$5 or more made payable to "MDAS-Bluebirds" and mailed to CBRP, 2021 Ptarmigan Drive #1, Walnut Creek, CA 94595. Donations are tax deductible.

## California Bluebird Recovery Program

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Don Yoder's

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD...

In the previous issue of BLUE-BIRDS FLY we recalled some history of fellow birders in Mountain Bluebird Trails (Montana), their increase in the number of nest boxes since the first ones were hung in 1973, and the phenomenal numbers of birds fledged since that time. We asked one of their dedicated monitors, **Ervin Davis**, about his production this past year. He replied, rather modestly, "Had a reasonable season ... banded 2,170 (including adults and chicks) and had 250 recaptures. Will be cutting back some this next season ... seems like 400 nestboxes are becoming a 'job' for this old man." Ervin would appear to be a very active member of the CBRP outside our own borders. Congratulations Erv, and thanks from all those Blues.

Joan Jernegan of Placer, has observed fledgings by four different species in her garden: WEBL, HOWR, OATI, all regular visitors, and a pair of ATFL for their first year. The latter took over the cleaned-out box used by the pointed-head parents who barely finished their duties before moving on.

*One way to help CBRP grow in membership is for County Coordinators to look behind every tree for potential new members - and sign them up.*

**Dick Purvis**, Orange, goes even one step further as he reports, "I am planning on gathering up several people and signing them up for membership at my own cost just to get them started so I will be doing it at \$5 per." That seems like a good way to do early seasonal gift shopping, without the need for wrapping.

And while looking behind every tree Dick reports, "I am busy making more boxes and finding more territory. I can't hold myself back. Friday I went out and recruited a new golf course. Golf courses make such wonderful bluebird trails and they are not infested by sparrows. We have about ten now and there are at least a half dozen more in the county which should be signed up."

Dick also followed up on a new applicant in his area who reported that he needed additional nestboxes to accommodate the bluebird traffic he had observed during the past season. Dick can supply some boxes and in return will very likely get some help on existing trails for which he would like some assistance.

Victims of severe wild fires in San Diego County, **Jean and Gene Caggiano** lost two nestboxes. Believing that food supplies had been diminished, they rationed meal worms for a surviving pair of bluebirds. Morning and evening 'feedings' were accepted by the male and carried directly to the box as regularly as worms were offered. He did all of the shopping, demonstrating that his carrying capacity was just 3 or 4 worms; if given 5 at a time, he would grab all but then always drop one enroute. He was seen to eat only one worm, taking the maximum food supply to the youngsters. After fledging, the family hung around the area, enjoyed the bird bath, and gave evidence to the landlords that there is good reason to help wild things survive in the face of severe difficulties.

It's hard to deny that weather and temperatures do have some effect on where the birds will or won't nest.

On the chilly Mendocino coast, **Michael and Marybeth Arago** provide two elevated bluebird nestboxes near their yard. This year both have been used for the first time, not by the intended occupants but by VGSW. Welcome cavity nesters that they are, flying insects disappear in good numbers. One nest with 4 young suddenly ceased usual activity, a reasonable guess being that the female had been lost. The male continued to check the box for a couple of days but then gave up. The 5-egg nest completed its calendar through to fledging, though the last two to leave the nest were most reluctant to give up the warmth they had enjoyed inside the box. They wing-wrestled to re-enter the box, causing a lot of fluttering and commotion. One did eventually go back inside. Marybeth wonders whether anyone else has seen this actually occur?



Civilization keeps spreading with what we term 'progress.' In the Placer foothills, **Larry Barker** says, "I'm not getting a very good percentage any more. Lots of human activity."

*(That seems to be the root of our problem, trying to provide substitute housing for the feathered friends who would otherwise have no place to raise families. We do need to keep trying and every nestbox in good habitat may give us a return. PD).*

*(Notes continued next page)*

NOTES FROM THE FIELD, cont.

Weather can play a large part in the success or failure of nestling production each year. **Richard Kempton**, Ventura, observed lower than normal spring rainfall and similarly, much lower insect levels; he feels that adults left the area in the midst of nesting season due to lack of a usual food supply.

Suitable habitat does play an important role in the variety of nestbox occupants that will be attracted to the cavities that we have in place. Public water supplies – wide expanses of open water – very often have one or more varieties of swallows very much at home in our nestboxes and their numbers show up in the Annual Report. The totals from **Georgette Howington and Bob McNutt** (Contra Costa) bear this out, with both numbers of nestboxes used and numbers of resulting fledglings. Bluebirds came in second, with other varieties trailing with lesser numbers

We have to wonder whether nestboxes placed near State Historical Sites hold some special attraction? One trail, maintained by **Phil Persons**, Santa Barbara, might be interpreted in that way. Phil casts a loud vote for some program of electronic reporting before we do these exercises for the '05 reporting season. (*We may very well be headed in that direction, Phil. P.D.*)

It was a pleasure to receive the Annual Report from **Lena Yee Hayashi**, Orange, with which she included notes, a CD disk and samples of seeds found in bluebird nests after hatching took place. They are undoubtedly unfamiliar to our northern monitors but thanks to our good backup **Dick Purvis**, who named them again, we have learned they are *cupaniopsis anacardioides* \* – a tree common around Southern California

including in Orange County. The youngsters digest the skin off of the seeds and thereafter regurgitate the undigested kernel. Over the period of growing up, the seed collection becomes sizable in the nest.

(*Oh, there is so much to be learned. P.D.*)

\**Sunset New Western Garden Book*, page 262, Third Printing, April 1979

Far to the north of almost everyone else **Sarah McTighe** (Nevada) had no regular forms from her records, but gave us a detailed drawing of their property and the great oak trees and others which are available to support the wildlife they enjoy. Whether it's cold or not, she observes the bluebird scouts showing up in February.

Interesting travels by their Annual Report (the actual report itself) from **Dianna and Paul Brink**, El Dorado. Through a fluke in the mail service their report reached a firm in Connecticut, was returned by an executive via his secretary to the Brinks, who again directed it to us.

We always want to know when subscribers are acting on behalf of the feathered friends, even if their efforts are not accepted. The report covers 3 nestboxes, with no activity and 3 glum *smileys* to report that fact. **Dianna** notes, "Second year of no nesting." Next year we'll look for smiling *smileys*. :) :)

**Janet King**, Mendocino, always a bluebird rancher, knows her nestboxes all produced birds this year – there were even a couple of third nestings, supplementing some losses due to heat – but she is not able to send a report due to new economic activities that simply consumed all of her time. We hope that by '05 the birds will return again, and Janet will find enough free time to count eggs and fledglings for her report.

Down in Orange, **Joe Chandler** reports reduced figures in almost all categories: eggs, hatched and fledged. "I am not sure why," he says. There are so many things that affect the results but which we don't understand. We're just thankful for the Good Years.

Foothill birders **Kathy & Andy Aldrich**, Tuolumne, had new experiences with their trail this year. Out of 9 nestboxes, they had a total of 4 nests and 2 boxes destroyed. Two nests were pulled out through the entrance hole (*a sure sign of a lost family* – PD) all this occurring with Western Grey Squirrels living in their yard. The evidence cited usually points to raccoons as the culprits, but we have no first-hand reference as to the raiding results of grey squirrels. We've suggested the addition of 8" Noel coon guards to the boxes, but those might not be acceptable to three nests of Ash Throated Flycatchers (ATFL). (See diagram in BLUEBIRDS FLY! vol. 8 no. 1 & 2, Spring-Summer, 2002.)

Undoubtedly our largest producer of WEBLs, **Dick Purvis**, Orange, with 361 nestboxes on 4 trails in 4 counties, must also have the largest exposure to problems. He reports, "My biggest problem this year was bees. Africanized bees have really moved into Orange County. I had 27 colonies in my boxes. I had been making larger boxes (6" x 6" or larger) and I think this encouraged them." He is now scaling back box sizes to 5"x5". House Sparrows took over 26 boxes, most of which Dick took down, but he oiled the eggs in 2 and paired them with bluebirds who claimed those reserved boxes – and they fledged their families. In addition to such problems, a pair of Ash Throated Flycatchers killed 4 two-week old prefledgling bluebirds, built their own nest and fledged their own family successfully.

Severely in evidence among the nests of **Jean Beaton**, Los Angeles, was the damage done by West Nile Virus. Five parents in as many boxes were found dead with starved youngsters under them or with unincubated eggs. Egg count dropped from 190 to 125 but with 6 additional nestboxes.



In Orange, **Tom Croom** experienced appreciable reductions in bluebird starts and fledgings vs the '03 records. In contrast, Tree Swallows picked up the pace with more starts than '03 but only a few more fledgings, all after subduing a number of bluebirds for control of boxes. Tom plans to utilize paired boxes in '05 to recover some of the bluebirds' advantage.



Once in awhile bluebirds seem downright ungrateful. Case in point: **Toni Link**, Contra Costa, has supplied 2 nestboxes, two years in a row. For two years in a row blues have inspected those boxes – but moved on to points unknown. Wonder why they think she is placing those boxes for them – and they do nothing to reward her?????



**Tonya Haff**, Santa Cruz, blames merciless harassment of bluebird adults by VGSW for loss of several juvenile bluebirds. Heat may also have been a factor. This seems like a chance to install paired boxes and offer more cavities in shared territory.



Because she offers rental space to various varieties besides bluebirds, **Enid Reeves** of El Dorado is delighted when the smaller tenants move in early in the spring. Some late repairing of boxes was too late for some of these, so all she got were bluebirds (... *oh, what disappointments!* – PD.) so she has adjusted her calendar and hopes the little fellows will return in '05 to boxes that are already waiting for them.



**Peter Wetzel** reports, "Wow! Am I happy! Just finished my summarizing and, after two years of high and unexplained mortality, this year saw 154 eggs, 149 hatchlings, and 147 fledglings. The total eggs may be down but the mortality was cut drastically. On my trails, nesting started late and extended well into July but I don't think this was a major factor. Also, I treated aggressively for ants, using the mystery chalk, and lost no young to ants this year despite having several boxes heavily infested. For whatever reasons, I count this a successful year.



**Rachel Talbot**, Amador, found the first egg of the new season on March 28 in a nestbox that is regularly the first-chosen box of the season. A fairly regular sequence of egg laying followed in all of her five standard-size boxes until the final count reached 26 fledged.



**Jan Wasserman**, Ventura, gave herself a Christmas present when she added up her banding results for a few years and reported as follows: "OK, so it's just a tiny bit late in the year. But I decided to look at some numbers and they're so nice I thought I'd pass them along. Since the beginning of this project in 1991 a total of 8,736 tree swallows have been banded in Southern California; 8,074 of which were nestlings."



**Mealworm Sources:**

Sunshine Mealworms  
7263 Gallon House Road  
Silverton, Oregon 97381  
1-800-322-1100

Nature's Way  
P.O. Box 188  
Ross, Ohio 45601  
1-800-318-2611

*These suppliers offer a 15% discount on mealworms to NABS members.*

**Mealworms: A Sweet Treat for Backyard Birds**

*Special Report from the North American Bluebird Society*

It's prime time for bird-watching but the season's cold snaps can mean trouble for our little winged friends, who often have a harder time getting sustenance in the winter. The solution? Mealworms.

Small and round, mealworms are actually larval forms of the darkling beetle (*tenebrio molitor*) and are a favorite food of bluebirds and many other birds. Installing a mealworm feeder in your backyard can be quite helpful to birds during the cold winter months, when insects are scarce. In the spring, they can even promote the growth of healthy nestlings; if a plentiful food supply is readily available, the female won't have to leave her eggs for very long.

The easiest way to care for mealworms is to store them in the refrigerator, inside a shallow container that allows air circulation (holes in the cover) so the mealworms can breathe. They will remain alive, in a dormant state. Add a few pieces of apple or banana peel about once a week to provide moisture.

When you're ready to feed them to your backyard birds, place several dozen in a container with slick sides, so they won't crawl away before the birds can find them. (e.g. a glass custard jar) Place the feeder a good ways from your house to begin with; as the birds become aware of the food source, you can bring the mealworms closer for better bird-watching, even to your window with an acrylic stick-on feeder, said Pauline Tom, a board member of the North American Bluebird Society.

*Notes from*  
**Howard Rathlesberger**  
 San Mateo County Coordinator

**REACHING THE PUBLIC**

We had a very successful display at the Filoli Fall Harvest Festival on October 2nd. As many of you know, Filoli is a magnificent old estate in Woodside, open to the public, with acres of gardens, fruit orchards, woods and meadows. We featured the documented nesting of House Wrens at Filoli and also had an abandoned WEBL nest with 6 eggs that made a real hit with the many young children attendees.

We had a perfect spot for our two display tables at the dining room outdoor patio under a big oak tree where we were able to hang one of our boxes. We also had the "Slippin' Silo" nestbox, made of all manmade materials, as another attraction. This was featured at the NABS 2004 convention in Ithaca.

The following week we set up the same display at the Woodside Earth Day celebration at nearby Runnymede Sculpture Farm.

In the next newsletter we plan to expand on the activities at the four separate trails (83 boxes) at Filoli.

**BIRD IDENTITY**

One notable resident of the fruit orchards at Filoli this winter was the fellow pictured at the right. After consultations with our friend Sue Cossins of Sequoia Audubon Society, our best guess is that the bird is a juvenile Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. If some expert out there has a different opinion, please drop us a line. We'd be most interested.

**NESTBOX INSERT**

We discovered a very practical nestbox insert which worked out perfectly in our standard 5"x5" NABS side opening boxes. The insert is the lower 3" of a clear plastic spring water bottle. The ones we have are Crystal Geyser Natural Alpine Spring Water. We know Trader Joe carries that brand. We salvaged them from our neighbor's recycling bin, with his permission of course. The bottle has a surrounding rib providing a great convenient place to cut with a box cutter. I just drilled or punched some holes in each corner on the bottom for drainage and it appears indestructible.



*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
 at Filoli Orchard*  
 Photo by Jerry James

**CBRP and Audubon bring message to schools**

As you may know, one of the goals of CBRP has been to provide educational opportunities not only for our members but for the public as well.

These educational opportunities are purposefully broad in scope, without describing any particular field of endeavor. Neither does this educational component have to apply only to bluebirds, or even birds in general. It may be implemented by furthering the public's understanding of the importance of protecting and restoring the habitat for the many wild creatures that have been extirpated by development. Furthermore, our goals are open to the entire age spectrum and our efforts are directed towards young and old alike.

Under the general term of *education*, CBRP has taken one direct step to promote such measures for some of our younger public, namely school children.

Our program is closely allied with our particular chapter of National Audubon, but all of the chapters promote an identical opportunity which could be seized upon by alert and willing contributors.

34 fourth grade students under the tutelage of (our member) teacher **Leslie Latour** at a small rural school in San Joaquin County called Collegeville School, have been supplied with copies of *Audubon Adventures*, a nature program explaining four science topics in large color posters. These, together with a teacher's manual will help demonstrate the inter-relationship of man and nature.

Who can say if one or more of these young people won't be "sparked" to find a vocation in some specialized field of biology or natural science? At the very least, these children will gain an increased understanding of and respect for the other life forms on this planet that we share.

# NABS 2005 Registration Form

May 19 - 22, 2005  
Asheville, NC

	# of people	Cost	
<b>Conference Registration</b> (includes Saturday's lunch)	_____	\$35	_____
<b>Friday Field Trips: Select one.</b>			
A. Biltmore House & Folk Art Center	_____	\$45	_____
B. Biltmore & North Carolina Arboretum	_____	\$45	_____
C. NC Mountain Tour (lunch included)	_____	\$45	_____
<b>Meals:</b>			
Friday Evening Barbeque	_____	\$30	_____
Saturday Evening Banquet	_____	\$30	_____

Vendors - \$25.00 per table charge for sales' tables, including electricity.      \_\_\_\_\_ # tables      Fee \_\_\_\_\_  
 Display tables (no sales) and nonprofit organizations are free of charge.      \_\_\_\_\_ # tables

**Total Enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_

I will need transportation from the Asheville Airport \_\_\_\_\_ My flight number is \_\_\_\_\_ I (we) will arrive on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) at \_\_\_\_\_ (time) There will be \_\_\_\_\_ in our party.

This is my (our) first NABS Convention. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
 To help with planning, check your interest in these workshops. Sunday Morning: Local Birding Trip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Thursday: Photography \_\_\_\_\_ Bird Banding \_\_\_\_\_ Keep America Beautiful \_\_\_\_\_ Ventures Birding \_\_\_\_\_  
 Saturday: Tote Bag (\$3) \_\_\_\_\_ Card Making \_\_\_\_\_ Press Release \_\_\_\_\_ Asheville Historic Trolley (\$13) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State (prov.)/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Complete this form and return with full payment to:

Helen Munro, 22 Bobolink Rd., Jackson Springs, NC 27281  
 Checks should be made payable to North Carolina Bluebird Society or NCBS.  
 List of attendees will be available to participants in NABS 2005.  
 Check here \_\_\_\_\_ if you do not want to be listed.

\*\*\*\*\*

Host Hotel - HOLIDAY INN, SunSpree Resort (phone - 828-254-3211 or 1-800-733-3211) Advise them that you are with NABS 2005. The discounted room rate is \$89.00 per night which will be held until April 19, 2005. Rooms have either two double beds or one king size and a sofa bed. (Web Site: www.sunspree.com).

Additional Asheville information including other hotels and attractions can be obtained from the Asheville Visitors Bureau, 151 Haywood St., Asheville, NC 28801. (1-800-257-1300) (www.exploreasheville.com)

# Feathered Friends Family Values

by Peter Wetzel

If you have time to read one more story ... I had one WEBL box which timing told me should have fledged several days before. However, I found an adult pair still guarding the box and, taking the box down, I saw a large young bird flapping at the hole. Thinking this must be one slow fledger I quickly covered it up and replaced the box.

The following week, I again found both an adult pair and an immature bird guarding the box. This time I opened it and found that same fledgling with his leg entangled in plastic "straw" from flowers left at the cemetery in which the box had been placed. I managed to get him out despite dive bombing from the adults, and I spent some

15 minutes cutting away the strands which were wound tightly around the leg from his/her repeated efforts to escape.

Even with much care, I found one toe deformed or missing and saw blood from places in which the straw had been cutting into the bird's leg. All the while, the youngster was screaming at me. When I finally released him, he flew straight and fast into a nearby tree and all his family followed.

We've been warned about this straw material but this is the first time I had seen it. As I figure, the adults and siblings (?) must have fed and stayed with this one for at least nine days after the others fledged. Quite a commitment!

# Bird Banding and Tracking Pays Off

We have read with interest a couple of items of historical impact, written by Marilynne Keyser in the Prescott (OR) Bluebird Recovery Project Newsletter -- Fall 2004.

One of their birders trapped the oldest recorded Western Bluebird male, according to the Federal Bird Banding Laboratory. This fellow clocked in at 6 years 2 months of age. Runner-up is a female recovered at the age of 5 years 10 months. Both were trapped in 2004 and are out there carrying on in their pursuits of species reproduction. Another 6-year old, captured in June 2004, is credited with fledging 33 offspring to the end of the 6th nesting season in 2004. It is only by completing the necessary banding processes and recording the data that such records can be established.

\*\*\*\*\*AUTALL FOR AADC 956 T3 P1  
HATCH & JUDY GRAHAM  
CALIF BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM  
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## BLUEBIRDS FLY!

Please send correspondence to CBRP,  
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