



By Peggy

BLUEBIRDS FLY!

California Bluebird Recovery Program Newsletter

—Assisted by Mount Diablo Audubon Society —
An affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

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www.cbrp.org

“For the encouragement and conservation of cavity-nesters — especially bluebirds — anywhere in the West”

ORANGE COUNTY LEADS IN FLEDGLINGS AND NESTBOXES

Inside this issue

With 2051 active nestboxes and 8613 (7777 are WEBL) fledglings, Orange County once more is the top cavity nesting county in the state and produced the most Western Bluebirds in the state. The number of fledglings increased 2% from 2010 thanks to the dedicated efforts of Orange County trail monitors in general and in particular the Southern California Bluebird Club. This feat is primarily because of the nearly vandal free hanging boxes developed by **Dick Purvis** and placed in parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and urban gardens in Orange County CBRP Coordinator. Very few of their locations could be considered native habitat but, rather, man-made habitat that would never see a bluebird except for the artificial cavities provided by dedicated bluebirders. Merced County reported again with 3629 fledges; this is a remarkable feat considering that **Steve Simmons** monitored all of these nestboxes reported for Merced County. Summary by county follows ordered by # fledged (data represent boxes, trails and counties which reported results; i.e. no-reporting trails and boxes are not included in the counts:

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County	#Trails	#Boxes	#Fledged	#WEBL
Orange	122	2051	8613	7777
Merced	2	723	3629	230
Santa Clara	64	889	2326	865
Los Angeles	18	315	1619	1594
Alameda	2	319	1181	532
Contra Costa	18	260	680	394
San Mateo	20	245	554	207
Riverside	7	85	467	401
San Diego	12	170	380	45
Amador	2	47	212	177
San Bernardino	2	29	152	152
Santa Barbara	6	105	152	174
Shasta	3	21	100	48
Sonoma	3	31	62	22
Placer	2	27	36	0
Nevada	3	21	35	25
Ventura	1	5	16	4
Sierra	1	12	15	0
El Dorado	1	4	14	9
Tuolumne	1	5	12	12



The Director's Chair

The major accomplishments for the California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) in 2011 were:

- Grants to individual trail monitors Audubon California chapters for nestboxes
- Addition of educational and presentation material to CBRP Web site

And, of course, over 20,000 fledglings of which 12,668 were Western Bluebirds.

Thanks to all of you who entered your 2011 nestbox results into the on-line data base.

The 2011 Annual Report is included in this issue along with several articles summarizing that data. The results are similar to those for 2010. See the articles and annual report elsewhere in this issue for summaries and details. Also note that this and previous newsletters and annual reports are available for viewing and/or download from <http://cbrp.org>.

If you are interested in looking at or analyzing the information for this or the previous 5 seasons, look at the online database, <http://www.eichlerrealtor.com/birds3>. Log on (or access the database as 'guest' and go the REPORTS section. You will be able to see numerous reports by trail, species, county, etc. In addition any report and/or the entire database can be downloaded into an Excel workbook and further analyzed. This web site will not be available after March 2012 as our database programmer is retiring. I am looking into moving some of the reports to <http://cbrp.org> and will keep you informed.

Cornell has indicated that they plan to make our 2006 – 2011 box-by-box data available on Nest Watch this year. I will keep you informed.

With the retirement of Cynthia Berg, who developed and maintained the current on-line data base, I have been looking a variety of mainline, online software suitable for shared entry and ease of access. I also looked in the use of 'survey' software sites and have settled on a survey-based data collection process to use in the future. This approach meets most of my criteria for collection and sharing of data. (Continued on page 3).

California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) Board Members

Dick Blaine, Program Director — dick@theblaines.net

Dave Cook, Board Member — justdave50@earthlink.net

Georgette Howington, Asst. Program Director—
georgette@birdscape.net

Jim Semelroth, Editor,— jimsemweed@cox.net

Dick Purvis, Recruiting — dickersly@aol.com

Many of you have told me that the time needed to enter detailed box-by-box data is too much. As a result I am planning to collect species-level data in the future (as we did prior to 2007). If you want to enter box-by-box data then consider participating in Cornell's Nest Watch program.

You can preview the new data collection process in operation by linking to a sample survey which in its full form, will be used to collect results in 2012 – click on:

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/?s=OMHLM_85358df1. Click on “next” at the bottom of each page (not screen) to continue to the next page. Required questions (those marked with an asterisk) must be answered in order to proceed to the next page.

Dick Blaine - dick@theblaines.net

<http://cbrp.org> - CBRP Web site

<http://www.eichlerrealtor.com/birds3/> - CBRP On-line database



About the California Bluebird Recovery Program Founder - Don Yoder; Emeritus - Hatch Graham

Our Mission

Enlist current bluebirders and recruit others who will help reestablish bluebirds to their normal habitat

- ◆ Locate preferred habitat for the placement of nest-boxes suitable for bluebirds
- ◆ Secure monitors to care for the boxes and keep systematic records of the development of young birds during the nesting season
- ◆ Record and analyze all annual summaries of nest-box records
- ◆ Provide a forum (newsletter) through which fellow trail monitors can exchange information and secure help in solving problems encountered in the field.

Learn More

To learn more about the California Bluebird Recovery Program and other cavity nester conservation programs, visit the below web sites:

<http://www.cbrp.org>

<http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org>

<http://www.socalbluebirds.org>

<http://www.sialis.org>

If you are looking for a mentor, start by contacting the county coordinator in your county listed on page 12. You can also contact **Dick Blaine** (dick@theblaines.net) or **Dick Purvis** (dickersly@aol.com).

Please consider supporting our efforts. There is a donation form on the back page of this newsletter. Your contribution is tax-deductible and goes a long way in helping us conserve the bluebird population in California.

NABS 2012 ANNUAL MEETING COMES TO CALIFORNIA

Please plan to attend the 35th Annual Bluebird Conference of the North American Bluebird Society October 4-7, 2012 in Newport Beach, CA. The conference is being organized and hosted by the Southern California Bluebird Club. The meeting will be held in the Radisson Hotel in Newport Beach about five minutes from the Orange County Airport. Rooms rates are a low \$99 per night and the rates are good three days before and three days after the conference. Register now at <http://www.radisson.com/bluebirds35th>.

Already workshops on Western Bluebirds, Mountain Bluebirds, Woodpeckers, Owls of California and field trips to local wetlands and wildlife areas are planned. The Keynote speaker will be **Laura Ericson**, writer and editor for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Under the theme: *A Better World for Bluebirds is a Better World for All*, the conference will also focus on conservation and environmental issues.

CBRP members are encouraged to mark their calendars and attend the conference. Complete information and links can be found on the SCBC website, <http://www.socalbluebirds.org>. and on the NABS website, <http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/>. All CBRP members are encouraged to attend, so get your reservations in early to save and to ensure your place in the workshops and field trips.



Whew, wonder what's out there.



Some men do house cleaning

CALIFORNIA BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM
2011 YTD CONTRIBUTORS
 Contributions for year, \$325

Contributor	County	Contributor	County
Charles Lowrie	Amador	Patty Evans	Placer
Doris Allison	Amador	Constance Waddell	Pomona
Bob Brittain	Contra Costa	Melvin C. Johnson	Riverside
Samuel Sperry	Contra Costa	Cindy Lockhart	San Mateo
Kurt & Evie Davis	El Dorado	Nancy Arbuckle	San Mateo
NABS	Indiana	Sue Carder	San Mateo
Westwood Presbyterian Preschool	Los Angeles	Richard Willey	Santa Barbara
Kebi Brown	Mariposa	Marilee Jensen	Sonoma
Marybeth Arago & Michael	Mendocino	Phil Persons	Sonoma
Earl Garrison	Orange	Ken & Lucille Morrison	Tulare
Feridum A. Doslu	Orange	Carol Langford	Ventura
Fred and Kappy Hurst	Orange		
Michael & Adrain Stark	Orange		
S.M. Kernes	Orange		



TOP PRODUCERS IN 2011

This year 166 trail monitors reported results for 285 trails in 24 counties. There were 5426 boxes on these trails producing a total of 20,323 fledglings of which 12,668 were Western Bluebirds. See the 2011 year results article elsewhere in this issue for overall data and the Annual Report for all of the details.

Steve Simmons reported again after a lapse of several years. He monitors two trails in Merced County and fledged 3629 of which 2156 were Wood Ducks and 230 were Western bluebirds.

Dick Purvis monitored 10 trails in 2 counties for a total of 2331 fledglings 2317 of which were Western Bluebirds. Congratulations to him. Note that of the top ten producers, six are Orange county monitors.

Following are the 10 top producers for 2011 (counts are for all counties/trails monitored):

Top Ten Producers 2011					
MonitorName	County	#Trails	#Boxes	#WEBL Fldg	#Total Fledged
Simmons, Steve	Merced	2	723	230	3629
Purvis, Dick	Orange	10	430	2317	2331
Tiessen, Irvin	Alameda	1	305	516	1152
Franz, Bob	Orange	2	165	777	819
Bulger, Susan	Orange	2	134	609	609
Pauser, Lee & Janna	Santa Clara	12	279	278	572
Violett, Linda	Orange	5	122	312	548
Rogers, Jim/Dottie	Orange	2	48	399	442
Snyder, Erin	Riverside	4	50	297	340
Perry, Steve	Orange	6	37	313	320

CALIFORNIA BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM SIX YEAR RESULTS COMPARED TO 1996

ALL SPECIES

	1996	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Average*
Counties	21	19	22	23	19	24	24	26
Reporters	169	152	128	163	174	192	168	191
Species	16	20	20	18	17	23	26	19
Boxes (N)	2400	3942	4032	3739	4189	5274	5426	4194
Tries (T)	1526	4142	2789	3704	2937	3939	3202	3430
T/N	64%	105%	69%	99%	70%	75%	59%	82%
Eggs (E)		24093	20729	20162	21762	28751	28386	22621
E/N		6.1	5.1	5.4	5.2	5.5	5.2	5.3
E/T		5.8	7.4	5.4	7.4	7.3	8.9	6.2
Chicks (H)		18707	15889	16475	17967	23014	22794	18179
H/N		4.7	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.2
H/T		4.5	5.7	4.4	6.1	5.8	7.1	5.0
H/E		78%	77%	82%	83%	80%	80%	79%
Fledged (F)	5077	17330	14188	14222	15781	20737	20323	14632
F/N	2.1	4.4	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.4
F/T	3.3	4.2	5.1	3.8	5.4	5.3	6.3	4.2
F/E		72%	68%	71%	73%	72%	72%	71%
F/H		93%	89%	86%	88%	90%	89%	90%

*Average: average of non-zero values

2005 notes No data on T,E, H from Ventura or Merced Cos.in 2005

2006 notes 6 counties which reported in 2005 did not report in 2006 & no data on T, E, H from Merced Co. in 2006

2007 notes ... 172 trails reported. Few major producers reported results

2008 notes ... 228 trails reported but several major producers did not report

2009 notes ... 265 trails reported - nest tries down but fledges up? Major producers from 2008 did not report

2010 notes ... Nest Tries underestimated as many large producers did not provide bob-by-box detail; each species was reported as 1 box in these cases.

Large increases in boxes, eggs, hatchlings and fledglings are primarily the result of Merced county reporting after a lapse of several years

2011 notes ... Nest Tries underestimated as many large producers did not provide bob-by-box detail; each species was reported as 1 box in these cases.

Ditto - boxes. All ratios based on nest tries or boxes are low as a result.

Brood Patches are Important

Excerpted from an article by Jim Williams

Perhaps you have removed a female bluebird or swallow from her nest to have a look at her eggs or hatchlings and noticed that she had bare skin on her belly. That bare spot is known as the brood patch, and it plays an important role in incubation and brooding.

A few days before the female lays her first egg, feathers on her breast and belly fall out. She loses both outer (contour) feathers and the down beneath. The bare skin contains blood vessels feeding the skin. When she sits on the nest, these vessels expand, bringing greater amounts of warm blood to the area. The heat from the heated skin is transferred to the eggs or chicks.

The brood patch develops only on those birds that incubate. If males incubate, they develop brood patches as well. If they do not participate in incubation, they develop no brood patch. Male birds that might or might not incubate, as in the case of Tree Swallows, will have a brood patch if the incubation role of the male is important.

Passerine species - songbirds, like bluebirds and swallows, wrens and chickadees - have a single brood patch. Other species can have more than one patch, each one separated by normal feathering. Herring Gulls, for example, typically lay two or three eggs and will have a brood patch for each.

Most birds with brood patches use the patch to warm hatchlings until the young have developed the ability to control their own temperatures, usually day five or six for bluebirds. When brooding is completed, the blood vessels shrink, the swelling recedes, and the feathers grow back, often before the next molt. **Bob Franz**

You say Sialia, I say Bluebird

Excerpted from early NABS newsletters

Sialia means bluebirds - it is the word which Swedish scientist Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778), used to name the genus grouping of bluebirds, a subset within the thrush family (Turdidae). Technically, sialia is the Latinized neuter plural version of the Greek word sialis, a noun meaning a "kind of bird." Since the Eastern Bluebird was the first bluebird he classified, Linnaeus gave it the species name, sialis. Therefore the scientific name for the Eastern Bluebird is *Sialia Sialis* (pronounced see-owl-lee-ah, see-owl-iss). Similarly the Western Bluebird and Mountain Bluebird, the two other species within the genus were named *Sialia mexicana* and *Sialia currucoides* (coo-roo-coy-dees), respectively, and their species names are descriptive of their locations. All three bluebirds are native only in the North American continent, although each inhabits different regions generally separated by the Rocky Mountains and by altitude preferences. **Bob Franz**

The Mad Bluebird

There is an interesting story behind the original photo of "The Mad Bluebird" that was first published in the Baltimore Sun and then printed in the autumn 2000, issue of *Bluebird*. The following are excerpts:

"A picture of a bluebird, that's all he was after. Photographing birds was his passion. And so it was that on a cold February day in 1979, Michael L. Smith set up a tripod in his Largo, Maryland, backyard, pointed his camera toward a fence post, and waited.

And waited.

And waited.

At last a male Eastern Bluebird flew into his backyard and lit on the fence post. Not just any fence post, it was the fence post he had aimed his camera at. The bluebird hunkered down and fluffed up its feathers. It fixed his beady little eyes on the lens of his camera.

But Smith couldn't see what the bluebird was actually doing, because he was sitting sixty feet away in his house, holding a remote camera trigger, while watching the bluebird through a glass door. All he could see was that the bluebird was facing the camera.

So he clicked the shutter. The bluebird flew away and Smith went on with his life.

More than 20 years later, Smith can hardly believe what has happened. And this was because the bluebird he photographed looked like no ordinary bluebird - it looked as if it was grumpy or ticked-off. Or so it appeared to humans, and that is what mattered.

At last count, humans have bought more than 102,000 signed prints of "The Mad Bluebird" - a phenomenal number by most photographer's standards. And that does not include the tens of thousands of "Mad Bluebird" stained-glass sun catchers that have been sold. (*Hold up sun-catcher*)

This popularity began in 1983, when "The Mad Bluebird" was used as the cover of a brochure for a National Geographic bird book. People loved the photo so much that they ripped off the covers and framed them. The same thing happened when the photograph appeared on the Duncraft birding supply catalog a year later. Duncraft Co-owner Sharon Dunn, then realized that they should be offering these as a print.

After the Signals catalog started carrying the print in 1996, sales really picked up and Smith began filling orders for thousands of prints at a time. Despite the volume of prints he sells, Smith still signs each one by hand. Today, "The Mad Bluebird" is available in five catalogs, about 80 stores, and directly from Smith. Smith charges \$26 for a matted 5-by-7 print, the Signals catalog charges \$58 for a framed 5-by-7, the Orvis catalog charges \$95 for a framed 8-by-10.

Thanks to "The Mad Bluebird," Smith has quit his job as an electrician, has become a full-time free-lance wildlife photographer, and traded his townhouse for a 4,000-square-foot dream home on 13 acres in New Windsor, Maryland. When Smith moved into his new home in the Fall of 1998, a copy of "The Mad Bluebird" was the first possession he attached to the inside of his new home - it is visible over the threshold. Today, a giant print above the kitchen table reminds him every day whom he has to thank. **Bob Franz**

Many more wrens this year, probably due to changes in the area - more thick scrub added to park. **Gilbert Collins**

This trail is now summary of Canyon RV Wood Duck box totals. **Linda Violet**

Not a good season. WEBL habitat is being replaced by thistle and other non-natives. OATI and BEWR have moved in over past several years. **Dick Blaine**

Once again it was not a very good year for our trail. Hopefully we will see improvement next season. **Rosemary Silva**

Two nesting boxes monitored by Middle School students. **Sherri Guerrero**

Both of the second nests at La Mancha Park were abandoned, one with five eggs in it, and evidence of the parents' demise under the boxes: piles of bluebird feathers. This area is also home to many birds of prey...Cooper's Hawks, etc. Sad, sad, sad! I only hosted two boxes in the park this year. **Becky Sholten**

Very few dead this year. This really surprised me. Dates reflect days I monitored but I actually monitored more days than I could submit here. **Georgette Howington**

None of my urban boxes had nests this year. Very disappointing
Marion Krause

Got off to a very slow start due to late rains. However, totals for Western Bluebirds ended up being pretty good. Tree Swallows are still greatly diminished on our trail.

Doris & Bill Allison

Tree Swallows settle for fixer-upper

A bird caught my eye as I was monitoring nest boxes on the Anaheim Hills Golf Course. I saw that it was a tree swallow with a bug in its beak. I followed it behind a tree and was surprised to find an old nest box left behind by the previous monitor, **Dick Purvis**. The box was riddled with termites, the latch had fallen out and the hole had been enlarged by woodpeckers. Inside were five healthy tree swallow chicks. I expected to find mites, but despite the condition of the box there were none. I believe this is a small example of how these cavity nesters manage with whatever is available. **Jo-Ann Coller**

After the nesting season, I returned to a trail to replace a box I had removed earlier. I parked the car and took out a clean box and a lifter to hang it. I had to walk about 100 yards to the tree where I would hang the box. A female bluebird followed me from the parking lot to the tree and perched on the limb before I arrived. I hung the box and immediately she jumped to the hole, peered in and entered the box. Many of us swear they recognize us or the nestboxes and not just the black hole. Some believe they even recognize our vehicles. **Jim Semelroth**

NOT TO BE OUTDONE

I love it when the bluebirds sit and watch the nestboxes going up and then immediately come in to check them out. I worked for three years as a Conservation Manager for a private developer in my area. There are about 2800 acres of conservation area and lots are a minimum three acre size. He had started with some nestboxes in the two years before hiring me. Some were on the conservation areas, but I was to ensure every lot also had nestboxes. The second spring I had my little Ford Ranger truck bed loaded with new boxes. Parked in a nice cul de sac I proceeded to hike into the area and install boxes. Imagine my surprise when I came back to the truck for more boxes and was met with two pairs of Westerns hopping all over the pile as if they were trying to select their new homes! I never smiled so much as I did that day. **Sherry Linn**, NABS President

An unusual event is occurring on the Yorba Linda Golf Course trail with a female incubating eggs alongside a feathered chick from the previous clutch. Here are the notes:

May 5 - Five warm eggs

May 12 –Two chicks about three days old. One chick warm in the center of the nest, the other barely alive on the nest rim under the hole

I put the failing chick back in the center of the nest.

Watched as long as I could and it appeared there was single female of the two chicks competing with a new pair for box possession.

May 26—One healthy feathered chick (about 2 weeks old) in the box alongside a female sitting on three new eggs.

The only other time I've had eggs laid in a box with chicks was years ago when a single male was caring for chicks. A new pair came into the territory, the male of the new pair helped the single male feed/fledge the single male's chicks and the female of the new pair laid eggs just prior to the fledge of the first clutch.

Linda Violett

California Bluebird Recovery Program County Coordinators January 2012

County	First	Last	City	Home#	Email
Alameda	Georgette	Howington	Pleasant Hill	925-686-4392	Georgette@birdscape.net
Amador	Doris & Bill	Allison	Plymouth	209-245-3135	allison1932@att.net
Contra Costa	Georgette	Howington	Pleasant Hill	925-686-4392	Georgette@birdscape.net
Los Angeles	Dick	Purvis	Anaheim	714-776-8878	dickersly@aol.com
Marin	Ruth	Beckner	San Rafael	415 479-9542	jabeck1924@cs.com
Mendocino	Michael & Mary-beth	Arago	Fort Bragg	707-962-0507	mmbarago@mcn.org
Merced	Steve	Simmons	Merced	209-722-3540	simwoodduk@aol.com
Orange	Dick	Purvis	Anaheim	714-776-8878	dickersly@aol.com
Placer	Heath	Wakelee	Granite Bay	916 797-4536	towa1@cs.com
Riverside	Erin	Snyder	Riverside	951-683-7691 x 207	snyder@rcrcd.com
Sacramento	Vicki	Butler	Sacramento	(916) 448-8030	butlerrowe@sbcglobal.net
San Bernardino	Glen	Chappell	Redlands	909-794-3470	NG glen.chap@adelphia.net
San Diego	Martin	Marino	Encinitas	626-826-4336	martin.marino@sbcglobal.net
San Louis Obispo	Paul & Judy	Burkhardt	Creston	805 438-4491	tinhornranch@sbcglobal.net
San Mateo	Margaret	Gabil	San Mateo	650-572-9709	mgabil@me.com
Santa Barbara	Richard	Willey	Lompoc	805-733-5383	dick.willey@verizon.net
Santa Clara	Mike	Azevedo	Fremont	510-792-4632	levinbluebird@comcast.net
Shasta	Larry	Jordan	Oak Run	530-472-3131	larrytech@frontiernet.net
Solano/Yolo	Melanie	Truan	Davis	530-754-4975	mltruan@ucdavis.edu
Sonoma	Mike	Crumly	Sonoma	707-996-7256	mikec@freixenetusa.com



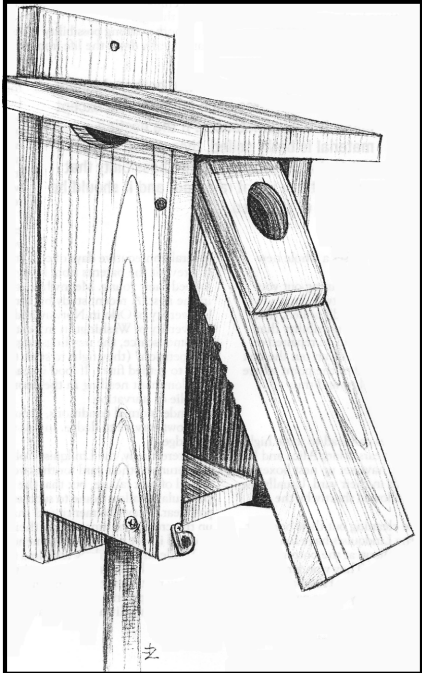
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BLUEBIRDS FLY!

Please send correspondence to CBRP
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