

Bayou Bluebird Nest News

Editor: Sheryl Bassi June 2004 Volume 9



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LBBS SPRING EVENT AND BLUEBIRD NESTBOX WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 17, 2004, Louisiana Bayou Bluebird Society held its Spring Event and Bluebird Nestbox Workshop at the Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Beginning the event was a social period that included members and visitors enjoying a video "Bluebirds Inside The Nestbox" presented by the North Carolina Bluebird Society and Cornell Birdhouse Network.

Beau Gast, Vice President of Louisiana Wildlife Rehabilitator's Association and practicing wildlife rehabber at Clearwater Wildlife Sanctuary, Covington gave an over-view of the organization, its missions and goals and how they are accomplished. Joining Gast was, Gina Stanton, Lafayette, president of LAWRA, who shared a most interesting presentation on the busy day in the life of a rehabber. Gast and Stanton fielded a variety of questions on rehabbing all animals.

President Evelyn Cooper led a round table discussion on bluebirding, monitoring and predator control, along with a hands-on demonstration of predator guards, nestbox units and methods used to keep nestboxes cooler.

A Nestbox Workshop was held Saturday morning, April 17, 2004 at Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center. Led by President Evelyn Cooper and LBBS member Cecil Tarver, Livingston, members constructed a number of nestboxes from pre-cut kits. The kits were donated by Cecil Tarver. Following this, Evelyn Cooper gave a presentation on monitoring and predator control.

**Make Plans Now To Attend The
2004 Annual Meeting and Nestbox Workshop!
September 4, 2004**



At left is a photo of the nestbox that Anna's Dad, the late Dr. George Shannon, built for her backyard blues.

ANNA'S STORY

By: Anna Holtzclaw
West Monroe, LA

I can hardly wait for the new year to get here. This is how I am feeling after summer has passed! My bluebirds are gone, but I know I'll see them again in January and February scouting around for a new home to raise their young. I love having bluebirds nest in my backyard.

My husband and I took a trip to Hot Springs Village, AR fifteen years ago. One morning as we were driving through a quiet, shady neighborhood, I saw bluebirds - beautiful bluebirds. There were several on the ground. I had never seen a bluebird before and I was amazed at how pretty and blue the birds were.

I did some research on the bluebirds when I returned home. My Dad, the late Dr. George Shannon, was retired at the time and loved woodworking. He made animal figurines, pictures, and birdhouses, I asked him to make me a bluebird nestbox for my birthday and he did. He even put shingles on the roof of the house! I painted it blue and hung it up in late January of 1989. Almost a week later, I spotted a pair of bluebirds checking out my nestbox. I was so excited! The birds did not seem to mind me too much. It was fun to watch the parents feed the brood and witness their devotion to their young.

One day after work, I went to check on the birds and I did not hear any chirping. The brood was gone just that quick. I was a little sad, but also glad. This family of bluebirds made it into our big word. Through the summer, I would see bluebirds at my birdbath. I usually get two broods a year. I actually got to see the babies fledge one time. I started providing mealworms, which is one of the Bluebird's favorite foods. I have nine nestboxes up at the present time. I have one family of bluebirds now.

I have been a member of LBBS for two years and met other bluebird fans. We exchange stories and I give them Mrs. Cooper's e-mail address and encourage them to join. Last year, my mother, Mrs. Bessie Shannon, joined LBBS and we attended our first nestbox workshop last fall. We had a great time. Just last week, a friend I work with told me she had seen bluebirds around her home. I brought her one of my Dad's nestboxes the next day and she got bluebirds!

LBBS 3rd Annual Meeting

The Louisiana Bayou Bluebird Society invites you to attend the 3rd Annual Meeting on September 4, 2004 at Biedenharn Museum & Gardens, 2006 Riverside Drive, Monroe, LA at 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Keith Kridler - past Vice President and co-founder of Texas Bluebird Society, past board member of the North American Bluebird Society, co-author of "The Bluebird Monitor's Guide" and bluebird expert - is the guest speaker. The public is invited to attend and door prizes will be given.

Bluebird Nestbox Workshop

The Louisiana Bayou Bluebird Society invites you to learn to build your own nestbox and receive a membership to the organization. It will be held at Biedenharn Museum & Gardens, 2006 Riverside Drive, Monroe, LA on September 4, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. To register call 318-878-3210 or e-mail emcooper@bayou.com. Limited to 25 nestboxes. Registration Fee \$15.

MALE BLUES SLEEPING IN THE NESTBOX

By: Keith Kridler Mt. Pleasant, Texas

James M. Hartshorne did extensive research on bluebirds near Ithaca, New York and wrote, "Behavior of the Eastern Bluebird at the nest". He observed the bluebirds for three years by building blinds and moving the blind up against the nestbox and watching the bluebirds from just inches away while they incubated and fed nestlings. I believe this was done in the 1960's and for more information you could call him back then at 4-3318 I remember when our phone number was only 5 numbers long too!

Anyway in the 18 pages of his report he states that if the nestbox is large enough the male will often sleep at night up on the edge of the nest cup beside the female. Back in the late 1960's I had some nestboxes with 5"x5 floors and the boxes were shallow (based on the plans in John K. Terres book "Songbirds in your Garden") ALL of my nestboxes had wood perches back then and we had one male bluebird who slept every night sitting on the perch of the nestbox, tight up against the entrance hole and under the 2" or so roof overhang of this nestbox. I never opened nestboxes at night for fear of the adult leaving the nestbox.

He quotes in "literature cited" 9 different works on bluebirds from 1908 to the A.C. Bent work in 1949. This one piece of research, long forgotten now was remarkable and would answer nearly all of the everyday questions we see coming to Cornell University Bluebird List.

(Continued on page 4)

Did you know that bluebird eggs hatched in an incubator and raised in a sound proof building do NOT know how to sing like a BLUEBIRD? Did you know that when these young birds were played tapes of hundreds of other bird songs that they got excited when they first heard the song of the bluebirds?

We can learn so much from web cams but we still need to hear and see these birds up close to see some of these reactions.



At left is Larry Taylor, Manager of the Poverty Point Reservoir State Park. He monitors the LBBS sponsored Walking Trail of eight nestboxes, located at Poverty Point Reservoir State Park, Delhi, LA. At right is another of the nestboxes, mounting system, and guards provided by LBBS along the Walking Trail.



THANKS TO HELPING HANDS!

Certificates of Appreciation were awarded at the Spring Event, held April 17, 2004, in Baton Rouge to the following members for their hard work, generosity, and support of LBBS: Betty Lard, Hammond; Barbara Hargrove, Abita Springs, Kenny Kleinpeter, Baton Rouge, Cecil Tarver, Livingston, Jimmy Orr, Oak Grove, Bobby Gray, Farmerville, James Dean, Marion, and Bobbie Boykin, Prairieville.

FROM THE PERCH

We're excited about our upcoming September Annual Meeting! We are fortunate to have Keith Kridler, past Vice President of Texas Bluebird Society and renowned bluebird expert and co-author of "The Bluebird Monitor's Guide" for our speaker. I hope you will make a special effort to be with us! You will find a map of how to get to Biedenharn and where the entrance gates are and a very good parking place. Keith will do a book signing at the meeting along with two other signings scheduled at Windows Book Store, Forsythe Avenue, and at Wild Bird Center, Highway 165, Monroe.

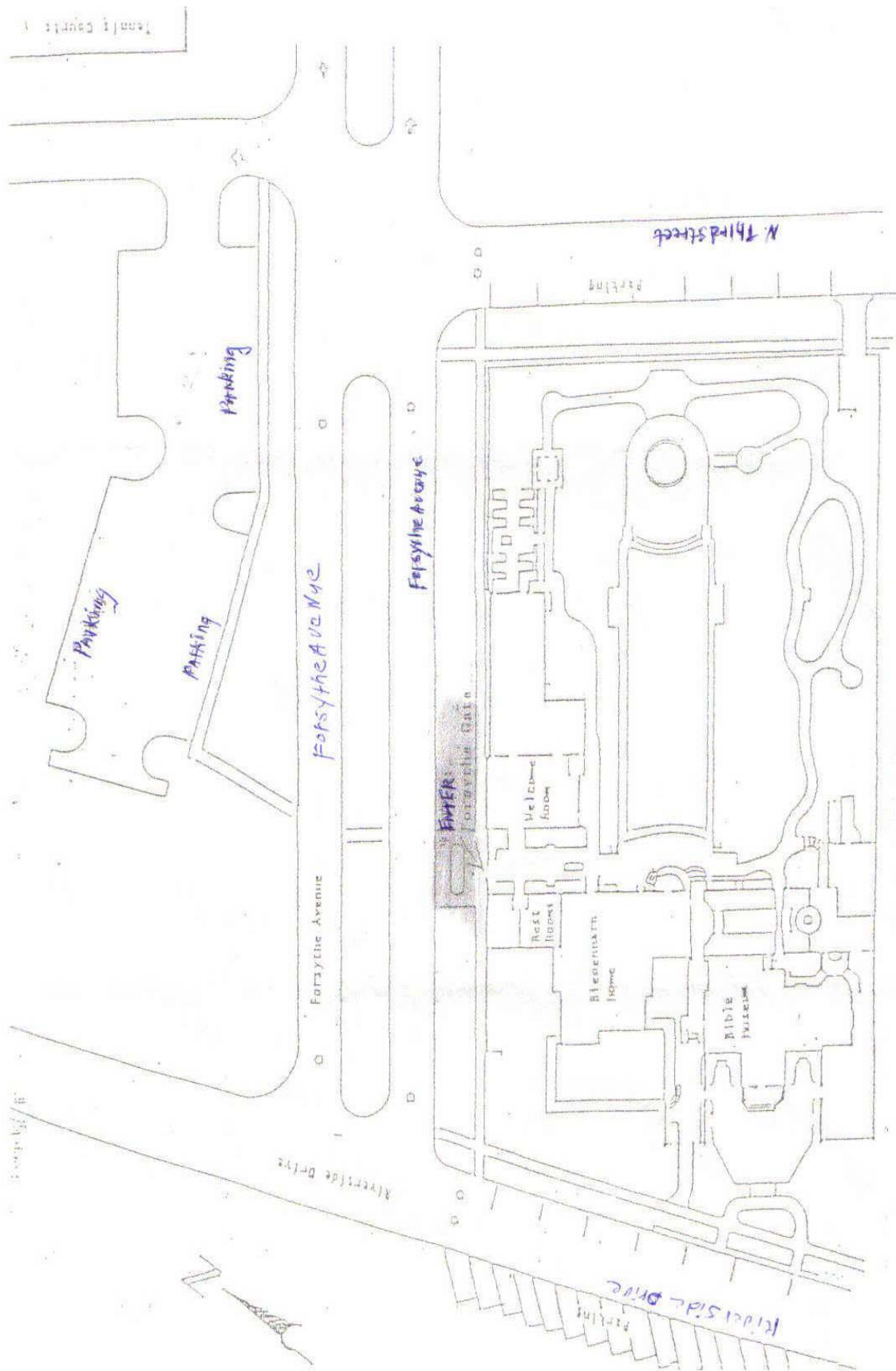
Jane and Jerry Beauregard, West Monroe, contributed a lovely picture on page 76 in 'The Bluebird Monitor's Guide' of a male Bluebird feeding his babies.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will find the year that your membership is due is on the mailing label. This will help you to know if it is due this September.

See you at the meeting!

Evelyn

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EMY-LOU BIEDENHARN FOUNDATION
 MONROE, LOUISIANA

FROM I-20, TAKE 65 NORTH - EXIT RIGHT ON DESAID EXIT. TAKE HWY 80 LEFT. IT IS ALSO
 LOUISVILLE AVENUE - CONTINUE TO NORTH 3RD - TURN RIGHT ON N 3RD TO FORSYTHE AVENUE.

Pictured above is a map showing the route to Biedenharn Museum and Gardens, location for the Annual Meeting, September 4, 2004, Monroe, LA.