

Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society

2009 Fall Newsletter

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The 21st annual conference of OEBS will be held Saturday, March 13th, 2010 at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, Ontario. Our feature speaker will be **Elizabeth Van Stam** from Bird Studies Canada who will discuss her work with **Chimney Swift's** and their current status in North America.

The Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society will also be **hosting the 32nd North American Bluebird Society AGM** from Thursday, September 9th to Sunday September 12th 2010 at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington . (same location as our OEBS AGM). We have confirmed a number of speakers, **Bridget Stutchbury** from York University will discuss her work with migration monitoring of songbirds using geolocators, **John Tautin**, executive director of the Purple Martin Conservation Association, in Pennsylvania will talk about the status of Purple Martins in North America, **Lyle Friesen** from Environment Canada will discuss his work with the Wood Thrush. **Sherry Linn** from the Southern Interior Bluebird Society in British Columbia will discuss the status of bluebirds and Barn Owls in B.C. **Mark Nash** from the Canadian Peregrine Foundation will show us a live Barn Owl, Kestrel and peregrine and discuss their status in Ontario.

Also on the agenda will be a **members forum** that will give blue birders from across North America an opportunity to discuss their bluebird efforts, nest box design, record keeping etc.(this will be similar to our OEBS meeting) Other speakers will be listed in the registration brochure to be included in the winter issue of our newsletter. You will also receive a copy of the **NABS publication** of the **Bluebird** in that newsletter. The fall 2009 **Bluebird** is included in this mailing.

If you would like to volunteer your time for this meeting have a look at the positions that need to be filled later in this newsletter and contact me at the above address. This may be the last time that it comes to Ontario and it will be an excellent opportunity to meet fellow bluebirders from across North America and enjoy informative speakers. Our goal is to get 100 of our members to this meeting.

John Millman - We will never forget him

It is with deep sadness that I report the loss of good friend **John Millman** of Burlington who passed away on June 12, 2009.

I first met John on a Hamilton Christmas Bird count when he came along as official counter and photographer. We became good friends and it wasn't long before I asked John if he would like to become a director of the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society, he agreed. He became an invaluable member of our bluebird team. Besides being a wonderful photographer John was also a computer programmer and designer. John designed our membership system and did the layout for our bluebird brochure and provided most of the pictures. We completed the brochure in 2008 and 5000 were printed. This was a major undertaking that had been in the works for some time, it just needed someone like John to get it done. The next printing will include a reference to John's contribution. In 2008 John, Bill Wilson and myself worked on another project involving the



first nesting of Merlin in the Hamilton study area. The nest was in Victoria Park, Galt, Cambridge. John did all the pictures for this article. That article with his pictures can be found in the Ontario Field Ornithologist's publication Ontario Birds, Volume 27, Number 2, August 2009, P 80-106.

Many of John's pictures were posted on the OFO rare birds photo page, of which he was very proud. Anytime Don Wills or myself found a bird of some merit we gave John a call and he would come out and photograph it. One memorable photograph that John took is entitled Breakfast at Don Wills farm. It is a picture of five fledgling bluebirds being fed by the male with the female beside him. This picture can be viewed on our website and will also be used in the registration brochure for the NABS 2010 AGM that OEBS is hosting. John made sure that everyone on our executive received a framed copy of that picture. I will cherish mine. This picture also appeared in the fall 2008 journal of the NABS. He was very much looking forward to the NABS AGM in 2010 and had many plans with regard to pictures and displays for that meeting. There will be a tribute to John at this meeting with a display of his photographs. His website has been taken over by his daughter Katie who is also a photographer. You can view John's pictures by going to John Millman's Bird Pictures on the internet. The Millman family requested that in lieu of flowers donations be made to the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society. Our executive are currently in discussion on how to make the best use of these donations to promote the bluebird society as John would have wished. Besides the bluebird society John gave freely of his talents and time to various other nature organizations including the Hamilton Naturalists club.

John held the bluebird society in fond regard and his friendship and talents will be sorely missed by all of us. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife Jean and family.

Remembering Gerry Whyte

The bluebird world lost another kindred spirit in **Gerry Whyte** of L'Amble who passed away suddenly at the Bancroft hospital on April 12, 2009 in his 81st year.

Gerry resided in Burlington where he was a teacher and principal for 37 years before moving to Bancroft to retire. He was a long time member of the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society and member of the Bancroft naturalists club. Gerry's passion was bluebirds. Shortly after the inception of the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society in 1988, Gerry became aware of the need for nesting boxes. Since that time Gerry has built thousands of nest boxes which he gave to other people and has erected and maintained hundreds of boxes on his own trail. After his retirement Gerry made many visits to schools and local events in the Bancroft area educating children and adults about the plight of the Eastern Bluebird. It is impossible to travel very far in the Bancroft area without seeing one of Gerry's bluebird boxes. Donations to the bluebird society in Gerry's memory by the Bancroft Field Naturalists, Bancroft Horticultural Society and his friends shows the deep respect Gerry had within the community. Our deepest sympathies to the Whyte family.

The Bluebird Season

Bluebirds had an average breeding season and we should see good numbers on fall migration. Weather impacted nest success negatively in most areas and the cooler July temperature may have been a factor in lower second nesting attempts. Some trails reported high nestling mortality due to weather and that second nesting's were fewer this year than in previous years. Overall the summer of 2009 will go down as a cool one for May, June and especially July with hotter weather coming in the latter part of August and September which modified the entire summer temperature to about average. The average daily temperature in May was 0.8 degrees Celsius lower than the long term average. Even though we did not experience really cold nights from the 18th to the 23rd a lot of nestling mortality was reported. Some areas of Ontario were hit harder by this cold weather. **Chris Lyons** from Port Hope who monitors his trail on a daily basis reported 86 dead nestlings due mostly to weather. Lower than

average temperatures continued throughout the rest of the breeding season. The average daily high temperature for June was 1.5 degrees colder than the long term average with most of the cold days coming at the beginning of the month. The daily high temperature for July was 3.4 degrees Celsius lower than the long term average. It was the second coldest July since records in the area began in 1915.(University of Waterloo Weather Station). The coldest July was in 1992. This lack of warmth was a factor in poor Eastern Bluebird nesting success and lower second brood nesting attempts than normal.

Only July of 1992 was slightly colder with a daily high temperature of 3.8 degrees Celsius colder than average. That year there was a massive die off of **Tree Swallow young** from the 19-22 June as a result of the unseasonably cold weather. David Hussell who manages three Tree Swallow grids in the Long Point area told me that mortality of young was greatest at the inland sites at Mud Creek and the sewage lagoons. The tree Swallow grid at the tip of Long Point was not affected to the same degree. David has done long term analysis of insect availability at each site. These studies indicated that more insects were available at the tip than the other two sites thus accounting for greater mortality at the inland sites. Insect availability at the sewage lagoons was comparable to the tip but has declined in recent years probably as a result of overloading and improper breakdown of the sewage. A new treatment plant is planned which should correct this problem. David Hussell holds the longevity record for Tree Swallow with two birds at 11 and 12 years and 1 month at last recapture. Tree Swallows live on average longer than the Eastern Bluebirds. The oldest bluebirds I have recaptured were a male and a female at 7 years old both in sprayed apple orchards. Both adults successfully fledged two sets of young. The longevity record for Eastern Bluebird is 10 years 5 months. For mountain Bluebird it is 9 years and 6 years 1 month for Western Bluebird. I am asked from time to time why I focus on the weather from the nesting season and the answer is because weather is the number one factor affecting Eastern Bluebird nesting success and over wintering success.

Tree Swallows had a very successful season in 2009 with few reports of nest failures.

Reports from **Purple Martin landlords** are not good. **John Tautin** of the **Purple Martin Conservation Organization** reports that just before the 4th July there was a prolonged spell of cold rainy weather that resulted in the wide spread starvation of Purple martin nestlings. We lost 90% of the nestlings in one of our large colonies, and we have received similar reports from the Great Lakes to New England. John plans to write a article about these losses in the next issue of the Purple Martin update. You can learn more about Purple Martins by going to the **Purple Martin Conservation Association website** at purplemartin.org. One of the problems we all face is the control of House Sparrows and Starlings in our bluebird or Purple Martin nest boxes. The enclosed article written by John Tautin discusses the humane removal of these two non-native species.

Donation From TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environment

TD Canada Trust has donated \$1500 to the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society. This money will be used to print 5000 bluebird brochures.



Feeding bluebirds in Winter

The bluebird feeder in the picture is at the home of Paul Aranyos in Pennsylvania not far from the city of Erie. Paul works for the Purple Martin Conservation Association. The mealworms were kept warm and moving by placing a bird bath heater under the clay dish the worms were in. The other dish contained soaked currants. There is a heated bird bath a few feet away which is not in the picture. This area gets heavy lake effect snow and it is not uncommon to have 2 feet on the ground. Paul was able to keep the bluebirds at his feeder all winter. It is necessary once you get the bluebirds to

come that you continue to feed them daily for the rest of the winter. I know of several locations in Ontario that have bluebirds coming to there feeders all winter. I put this picture in to show the set up.

Controlling House Sparrows and Starlings

Humanely

John Tautin

**Purple Martin Conservation Association
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Edinboro PA 16444**

For most Purple Martin landlords, controlling House Sparrows (*Passer Domesticus*) and European Starlings (*Sturnus Vulgaris*) is a necessary component of colony management. These birds compete aggressively, and usually successfully, against Purple Martins for nest compartments. In some cases, they kill martins. Aside from the trauma inflicted on martins, unchecked House Sparrows and starlings can discourage people from providing the housing that is so critical to the Purple Martin's survival. Starling-resistant entrances on nest compartments can be very effective in excluding this species, but many landlords rely on trapping and removal to control both House Sparrows and starlings.

Landlords who opt for trapping and removal must make a personal decision on what to do with captured birds. Some choose to transport and release them. Although this choice is easy on the conscience, it may not be effective, because birds have a strong homing ability. Other landlords choose to euthanize them, believing that, although it is a more difficult choice, it is the more responsible choice. Euthanization of House Sparrows and starlings is legal, because they are not protected by law.

Once a landlord has chosen to euthanize these birds, the question becomes how to do so in a humane manner.

PMCA has long advocated controlling House Sparrows and starlings, and has suggested some methods of euthanasia. It has been brought to our attention that two of the methods suggested by *PMCA*, namely thoracic compression and drowning, are not recognized universally as being humane methods of euthanasia. Several prominent organizations involved with animal care issues, including the *American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)*, the *National Wildlife Health Center*, the *National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association*, and the *International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council*, view drowning as an unacceptable method, and the latter two organizations do not endorse thoracic compression. However, these organizations do suggest acceptable, alternative methods of euthanasia. The methods recommended by the *AVMA* are of particular importance, and are well regarded, because they are based on an objective review of scientific research, and they meet the critical criteria of producing rapid unconsciousness and death while causing minimal stress.

Among physical methods recommended by these organizations for use on small birds, cervical dislocation will likely be the most practical method for martin landlords to use. Cervical dislocation causes death by severing the spinal cord, resulting in rapid depression of the central nervous system, and respiratory and cardiac functions.

Put simply, the bird's neck is broken at the base of the skull, and it dies very quickly.

Several inhalation agents are also acceptable for euthanizing small birds, however, most are not available to lay persons. Ether, in the form of engine starter fluid, is readily available and effective, but must be used cautiously, because it can be explosive. Carbon monoxide is also effective and acceptable, but is not recommended in ordinary situations, because it is hazardous to human health.

PMCA will continue to recommend that martin landlords control House Sparrows and starlings, but in view of the above, we will no longer suggest thoracic compression, drowning, or carbon monoxide for euthanasia. Our literature will be altered to suggest the effective and more widely accepted methods of cervical dislocation or ether. In the meantime, we trust that landlords who choose to euthanize House Sparrows and starlings will give thought to using methods deemed acceptable by the above recognized organizations.

For more about these organizations and their animal care guidelines, see:

American Veterinary Medical Association
931 North Meacham Road - Ste 100
Schaumburg, IL 60173
<http://www.avma.org/>

National Wildlife Health Center
6006 Schroeder Road
Madison, Wisconsin 53711
www.nwhc.usgs.gov/

National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association
14 North 7th Avenue
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56303-4766
www.nrawildlife.org/

International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council
829 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94710
www.iwrc-online.org/



House Sparrow

Patrick Kramer



European Starling

James R. Hill, III

Reports from the field

Gloria Opzoomer and **Paul Sprague** had one successful nesting fledging 5 bluebirds from 6 boxes near Balderson. A rouge bear completely destroyed 2 nesting boxes and ate the eggs of Tree Swallows on two occasions. Fortunately for the bluebirds their box containing 5 young had already fledged when the bears raided it.

Bill Read (your editor) reports that 238 Eastern Bluebirds fledged from 124 nest boxes down from 316 in 2008. My boxes are located near St George and north of Hamilton. Around the same number of EABL pairs as 2008 but lower success rates due to weather, House Wrens, Deer Mice and House Sparrows. I removed 36 House Sparrows from boxes this year up considerably from 2008. Most of these sparrows come from a 200 nest box trail at a Tim Horton's camp two concessions to the north of St George. None of these boxes are monitored and they fledge hundreds of House Sparrows. My fledged young per pair will be down from 2008. I had one triple nesting of bluebirds in the Jay Howell Orchard near St. George (both previously banded adults were recaptured at each nesting) which fledged 2, 2 and 3 young. The last 3 young fledged around the 18th of August. The adult male 2261-13574 was banded as a nestling July 5th 2007 in this same orchard. The female 2261-13623 was banded as a nestling in another orchard 5 kilometers to the west in 2007 and was re-trapped in 2008 in the same box she nested in this year. The male at this nest was not recaptured in 2008 but I suspect it was the same male. Many nestlings if still alive return to their orchard of hatching. Tree Swallow's had a very successful year with almost all nests being successful. In two combined orchards on Howell road near St. George I had 198 Tree Swallows fledge from boxes with a fledge rate of 5 per attempted nesting in one orchard and 5.16 in the adjoining orchard. Overall I fledged 364 Tree Swallows from 124 nest boxes.

Adriano Borean has a trail near Vineland and reports 49 bluebirds fledged and 120 Tree Swallows from 64 boxes. Adriano reported that House Sparrows were the main problem with 7 dead bluebirds and 7 dead Tree Swallow young all killed by House Sparrows.

Chris Lyons removed 86 dead nestlings from his boxes near Port Hope in what he describes as a very poor year. Most of the losses were due to weather, House Sparrow and House Wren interference. Chris had 29 nest failures and double broods were much lower than normal. Lower nest attempts on second broods were reported on a number of trails and may be related to the cold weather in July (the second coldest on record). Chris has had a very successful bluebird trail in that area for over 10 years.

Dan Welsh who has a nest box trail near Strabane had his best year in 2009 with 215 bluebirds fledged from 55 nests. This is up from 2008 when he had 180 fledged from 45 successful nests.

Bob Hunt and Lorne Smith reported 216 bluebirds fledged from 654 boxes. They have 596 boxes in Grey County and 58 in Bruce County.

Joe Kral had another successful season, his 18th at Guelph Lake just north of Guelph. Joe fledged 1620 Tree Swallows, 217 House Wrens, 95 Eastern Bluebirds and 52 Black Capped Chickadees. He has 558 boxes spread out over the Guelph lake property. All metal poles are painted with grease to prevent raccoons from climbing. For all species 1984 young fledged from 2698 eggs.

Virginia Hildebrandt had 6 successful nesting's of bluebirds from 3 pair on her trail near Puslinch.

The **Orillia Naturalists club** reported two nest box trails monitored by **Leanore Wiancko** and **Ray Kiff** that fledged 36 and 31 bluebirds.

Don Wills had his 4th best year with 629 bluebirds fledged from 435 boxes. His record year was 1998 with 721 fledged. Don had good success on first broods and attributes his good fortune to the fields being worked up just at

the time the young were hatching, providing lots of insects. He only had 11 dead young on first broods. This is very low compared to other nest box trails. Approximately 1200 Tree Swallows also fledged. Don has 80 Wood Duck boxes and 50 boxes set out for Prothonotary Warblers. Don also reported a Kestral nest box with 6 young that all successfully fledged. Last year this same box and possibly the same pair fledged 5 young.

David Okines and Audrey Heagy had another good year with 31 fledged young from 4 pairs of bluebirds. All adults and 29 of 31 young were banded. There has also been a flock of about 50 bluebirds in this area during the fall.

Gerard Powers from Owen Sound had another successful year with 278 bluebirds fledged from 287 boxes (229 in Grey county and 58 in Bruce county). This represents a total of 46 pair or 6.04 young fledged per pair. All boxes are on greased metal poles to prevent predators climbing them.

Help needed for our database software

We need someone who is familiar with FOX PRO and can help us modify a system that is based on FOX PRO. Contact us on the website or call.

Dedicated Bluebird Monitoring from John and Janet Foster - the bear facts

The following was sent in by long time members **John and Janet Foster** who have a nest box trail on their farm near Madoc, Ontario.

We had a really super cool May, June and even early July, with lots of rain - perfect conditions for blow flies to have adverse effects on the chicks. But, surprisingly, the tree swallows fared better than the bluebirds. We lost four bbs chicks to blowflies, two each from different nests, but just two families of tree swallows. So our total number of tree swallows fledged is 131. That is down from last season's record 153 but still counts among the four best years since starting our trail in '87. And BB count is 17 fledged, small by SW Ontario standards, but good for this neck of the woods.



The bb count would have been higher if a bear had not discovered what tasty morsels - and we do mean morsels! - there are to be found in boxes. It took down four, bending the poles right to ground level. One had 5 just hatched bbs (tiny bits of protein indeed) and the box was completely destroyed. Two other boxes met the same fate but both are salvageable. And the fourth box was untouched as ts had fledged, and box cleaned out. (I have a large bag in the basement containing 28 collected nests, all in zip loc bags along with their yucky floor sweepings, waiting for Prof Jack Werren to make it up here from Rochester. Have an idea I will end up chucking them, as I did last seasons'He's a busy guy it seems). If not for blowflies and bear, the BBs fledged would have numbered 26, our highest on record.

The bear was working our two smaller back fields, so as swallows fledged, I took down their boxes, leaving poles in place. But, as we still had 3 bb chicks in the large centre field, north of the other two, we invested in a two strand electric fence, and powered it with an old battery from our Volvo wagon (see attached photo). What is the value of bluebirds, you ask? Just divide 3 chicks into \$246.00!

We hope our system worked, even though we never saw it tested by the bear. Would have been interesting to have got his first encounter on film! All 3 BB chicks fledged ok so we moved the fence to the back fields where there

were still boxes with ts chicks. With luck, the bear has moved on and there will be no return engagements next year. But we may yet have to get a second electric fence as the centre and back fields usually host two pairs of BBs, with the third pair closer to our cabin where bear may not feel comfortable visiting.

Re blowflies. I still remain convinced that they are usually in the boxes, but when conditions are good, with warm weather and plenty of food, chicks survive quite nicely. It's the colder temps, rain, damp nests, and fewer flying insects that create perfect conditions for high chick mortality. That has certainly been our experience here. So we continue to keep big bags of dry grasses on hand, some collected the previous year, check nests weekly for blowflies larvae and provide new nests on a regular basis.

That's about it. It's been a great season otherwise, with no heat waves or high humidity. Good savings on hydro bills.

Enjoy the rest of it,

Cheers
Janet

North American Bluebird Society AGM - September 9, 10, 11th and 12th, 2010.

The Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society will host the **North American Bluebird Society's 32nd annual conference** at the Royal Botanical Gardens on **September 9, 10, 11th and 12th, 2010**. The OEBS also hosted the 18th NABS AGM at RBG in the fall of 1996. This is a wonderful opportunity for our members to meet other bluebirders from across North America. In order to have a successful conference we will **need volunteers**, lots of them. Listed below are some of the various committees that will need those volunteers. If you feel you could head up a committee or help out with that committee please email me at info@billreadsbooks.com.

1. **Technical equipment set up.** This person or persons would have to have knowledge of power point projectors and lap tops to arrange set ups for conference speakers and trouble shoot in case of problems.
2. **Introducing and thanking speakers.** More than one person needed.
3. **Registration table** More than one person needed to be at the registration table on Thursday night, Friday and Saturday morning.
4. **NABS AGM Promotion.** One individual to contact local media etc. to publicize the upcoming meeting.

Manipulation of Tree Swallow Eggs

It has come to our attention that some members are removing or moving Tree Swallow eggs to accommodate more Bluebirds. **The Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society will not endorse these actions.** It is important to remember that Eastern Bluebirds and other native birds that use nest boxes are wild birds. Their use of nest boxes does not entitle the nest box owner to interfere in any way with nesting activities. All **native birds** that use nest boxes are protected under the **Migratory Birds Convention**. **House Sparrows** are not a native bird and they and their nests can be removed in a humane manner. To accommodate **Tree Swallows** put up another box about 8 feet away which leaves one box open for bluebirds. All boxes must be mounted on free standing metal poles with some form of predator protection to stop climbing predators. The **Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society** will not endorse boxes that do not have this protection.

How do parasites affect nestlings?

Nestling birds are susceptible to infestation by various external parasites such as blowflies, and blood feeding mites. Such infestations might harm or even kill nestlings. The author of this study wanted to document the effects of these parasites on Eastern Bluebird nestlings by comparing infected birds with uninfected birds.

Using a pyrethrin-based insecticide (which is considered safe to use on birds), the author eliminated parasites from half the nests in his study, while leaving the other half to become infected. He repeated the application of insecticide at 3-4 day intervals. When the nestlings were 12 days old he weighted them and took small blood samples for testing; he also monitored the young through fledging, to measure fledging success.

In comparing the infested chicks with the uninfested, he found no difference in the weight or the amount of white or red blood cells. The lack of a difference in white blood cells indicates that the immune systems of the infested chicks were not fired up in response to the parasites. However the infested chicks did have more immature blood cells, an indication that the birds had lost blood and were making more to replace it. Happily all the nestlings in the study fledged, (even the infested ones), suggesting that infestation does not lower fledging success.

Even though there didn't appear to be any negative results from mite infestation ,the author recommends removing all nest material after fledging, so that the birds can start with a parasite free nest box.

R.E.Carleton.2008. Ectoparasites Affect Hemoglobin and percentages of Immature Erythrocytes but not Hematocrit in Nestling Eastern Bluebirds. The Wilson Journal of Ornithology 120:565-568.

This article can be found in the summer 2009 issue of the Bluebird, Vol 31 #3 the journal of the North American Bluebird Society.

Editor's note Other studies have shown the same non-effect on bluebird nestlings from blowfly parasitism, it is not normal for parasites to kill their host. There may be some instances that in combination with extreme cold weather that parasites could be a factor in nestling mortality but in most cases the young would have died anyway. **Cold weather remains the number one cause of nestling and adult mortality.**

How does human activity affect bluebird nesting?

These researchers wanted to know if bluebirds change their behavior due to human disturbance near the nest, and whether this affected the nestlings. They monitored adult bluebird activity and nestling growth at nest boxes with different levels of human activity. At one end of the spectrum they had nest boxes in national parks and other protected areas with very little human activity. At the other extreme they had boxes on college campuses with a lot of human activity. They had other boxes with intermediate levels of activity.

They found when human disturbance was high bluebirds were every bit as diligent about feeding and caring for their nestlings, and the nestlings grew at the same rate as their cousins in areas with low levels of human activity. However, in the high activity areas the adults spent less time preening and resting. This lack of self-maintenance could take its toll on adult bluebirds and they might die sooner or place those birds at a disadvantage in the competition for future mates and nesting sites.

The researchers suggest that nest boxes be placed in areas with low or moderate levels of human activity, especially where humans will stay at least 10 meters from the boxes.

C.R.Kight and J.P.Swaddle. Associations of anthropogenic activity and disturbance with fitness metrics of Eastern Bluebirds. (*Sialia sialis*). Biological Conservation 138: 189-197

Does handling nestlings affect their health?

Handling very young mammals is stressful and can affect their health. But the effect on nestling birds has rarely been studied. The authors of this study handled American Kestrel and European Starlings for 15 minutes per day. They compared the birds' growth and their immune systems with those birds that were not handled. In addition, the researchers brought some nestlings into the lab for 24 hours (they were kept in comfortable conditions and given plenty of food and water.). These 24 hours of captivity, while not harmful, was more stressful than simply handling the birds. . As it turns out, handling the birds had no effect on their immune systems- the birds that were handled were just as healthy as the birds that were not handled. The handling had no effect on the birds' growth either. However, bringing the birds into the lab for 24 hours did temporarily weakened their immune systems, as you might expect given the more stressful nature of captivity. **The good news for folks monitoring the nest boxes of bluebirds and other cavity nesters is the activity does not appear to cause harm to the nestlings.**

M.W.Butler and A.M.Dufty, Jr 2007.Nestling Immunocompetence is Affected by Captivity but not Investigator Handling. The Condor 109:920-928

Editors note: Handling young will not cause undue stress to nestlings as long as

1. Your handling does not cause premature fledging
2. The box is predator proof so mammals will not follow your scent and climb to the box. Poles with grease or cone guards are needed.

Membership form for the North American Bluebird Society

A special offer by NABS allows affiliate members to join NABS at the special one year rate of \$15 in US funds. This is especially good with our dollar approaching par with the US dollar. OEBS is an affiliate of the NABS. Go to www.nabluebirdsociety.org/aplus See in red **affiliate membership special.**

North American Bluebird Society, Inc.

New Membership Renewal A Gift Subscriptipon from: _____

For: Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State/Province: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____

How did you learn about NABS membership? _____

(Multiple years are not available for A+ This membership type must be renewed annually.)

A+ (for affiliate members only) **\$15.00** Name of affiliate organization: _____

An on-line membership form with payment through paypal is available online at www.nabluebirdsociiety.org

* Note: Canadian members use postal or bank money order in US Funds only

Visa Mastercard
Card #: _____
Last 3 digits of code on reverse side: _____
Name on Card: _____
Billing Address for Card: _____

Expiry: _____ Signature: _____

We do not share or sell our NABS memembership list.

\$10.00 of each membership is designated for your subscription to *Bluebird*, our quarterly journal. The remaining portion of your payment is a contribution.

Payment must be in US funds

Mail to:
North American Bluebird Society.
P.O. Box 7844
Bloomington, IN 47407

Membership Cards

Please find enclosed a membership card for 2010 that can be filled out after your membership dues are paid. This will avoid a separate mailing.

2009 Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society Conservation Award

An award is given out each year to an individual or group that has made an outstanding contribution to Eastern Bluebird conservation during the preceding year. The 2008 award was given to Ken Reger of Elmira. Ken manages a 425 nest box trail in the counties of Waterloo and Wellington. In 2008 Ken fledged 422 bluebirds and had 306 successful nests of Tree Swallow. If you would like to nominate someone for this award fill out the form below or email the information to me that is requested on the form.

Previous OEBS Conservation Award Recipients

1995	George Coker
1996	Leo Smith
1997	Hazel Bird
1998	Don Wills
1999	Sheldon Anderson Doug Harrison
2000	Norm Shantz
2001	Robert Burton
2002	Halton Bluebird Club
2003	Herb Furniss Don Parkes
2004	Glanbrook Conservation Committee
2005	Joe Hurst
2006	Ottawa Duck Club
2007	Gerry Powers
2008	Ken Reger

Nomination Form for the 2009 Bluebird Conservation award.

Name of individual or Group Nominated _____

Your Address _____ phone _____

Email _____

Below give a brief explanation why you believe this individual or group deserves this award.

Mail to: **Bill Read 24 Brant Place, Cambridge, ON N1S 2V8** or email: **info@billreadsbooks.com**

