

2001 Spring Newsletter

Welcome to the 2001 spring newsletter. The AGM is set for Saturday March 17th at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington Ontario. The meeting in 2002 will be Saturday March 16th.

The morning will feature members' reports starting at 9:45 a.m. and a short talk on wood ducks by Don Wills. If you have a report or information you would like to share, let me know and we can include you in this part of the meeting.

The feature speaker in the afternoon will be Bernt Solymar, chairperson of the Barn Owl Recovery Plan. James Cowan who operates the Canadian Raptor conservatory in Simcoe will bring along a live barn owl as part of the presentation.

The winter of 2000-2001 started very early with snow on November 18th. December's mean temperature of -8.7°C was almost 5°C colder than the 25 year average of -4.0°C . Information gathered at Waterloo Wellington Regional Airport by Environment Canada. We had a record amount of snow fall in December with around 100 cm. This broke the 1974 record by 26 cm. January was very mild at -5.1°C with very little snowfall. It is not very often that December is colder than January. February's temperature has also been above average.

Bluebird numbers on Christmas bird counts were down from last year. The early cold weather probably pushed them further south earlier. After December's foul weather, I was concerned that this cold weather would affect winter survival rates. On a trip to Hamilton on January 5th, I was relieved to spot four EABL's on overhead hydro wires. They were observed about 1 mile east of Sheffield on Highway 8. After I stopped the car and backed up, they flew across the road to an open wet area, three males and one female. They were picking something off the surface of the water (probably insects) and all appeared quite vigorous.

It always seems when you least expect to see something is when it usually appears. I certainly was not expecting to see Eastern Bluebirds at this location at this time of the year.

Temperature – Rainfall – Fall and Winter 2000-2001

Temperature Rainfall (Snowfall)
Month Mean Normal * Actual Normal *

Month	Temperature		Rainfall (Snowfall)	
	Mean	Normal*	Actual	Normal*
October 2000	9.9°C	8.0°C	21.1 mm	70.4 mm
November 2000	2.3°C	2.5°C	70.3 mm	83.1 mm
December 2000	-8.7°C	-4.0°C	91.1 mm	79.2 mm
January 2001	-5.1°C	-7.3°C	43.8 mm	54.3mm

*Normal based on long term 30 year average. Information gathered at Waterloo-Wellington Regional Airport by Environment Canada. Weather data compiled at the Waterloo-Wellington Regional Airport Environment Canada weather station.

During the organization of the OEBS in 1987, I decided that we should have a bluebird logo. I commissioned Juliana Hawke to do an Eastern Bluebird logo card for us and we still have copies available of this membership card. Virgil Martin did the editing during this initial phase. Later Jane Hoed painted a pair of Eastern Bluebirds for us that we had framed to take to meetings and use in displays. This year we will have bluebird sweatshirts with this logo painted by Jane Hoed on the front. It was agreed at the last meeting that the lettering on the front be moved, this has been done very graciously by Mark Peck of the ROM.

I will look forward to seeing everyone at the AGM on March 17th. All the best till then.

Bill Read

2000 OEBS Conservation Award

This award is given out annually to an individual or group that has made an outstanding contribution to bluebird conservation during the previous year.

Last year's winners were Doug Harrison from Aylmer and Sheldon Anderson from Orangeville. This year's winner will be announced during the business meeting.

11th Annual OEBS AGM	Royal Botannical Gardens headquarters Saturday March 17th, 2001
9:00 a.m.	Register
9:30 a.m.	Business Meeting
9:45 a.m.	Members nestbox reports
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
11:15 a.m.	Don Wills – Wood Ducks and Kestrels
12:00 – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Feature Speakers Bernt Solymar and James Cowan Barn Owl Recovery Plan
2:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Coffee Break
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Bucket Raffle and Nestbox Design Workshops