



# Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society

## 2025 Spring Newsletter - Editor Bill Read

[oebs.ca](http://oebs.ca)

### Welcome to the 2025 Spring OEBS Newsletter

Our 2025 AGM will be held at the First Hamilton Unitarian Church on 170 Dundurn Street South in Hamilton on March 22, 2025.

Just a reminder, the AGM location is a nut free environment so any members bringing their own food, please ensure that it does not contain nuts.

### 2024 In Review

2023 - 2024 was a mild winter. The metrological winter (December, January and February) was the warmest on record. This meant that most bluebirds that overwintered in Ontario survived. Eastern Bluebird numbers on Christmas bird counts in Ontario continue to climb with 1122 counted on the 2023-2024 count. The highest count recorded was 1324 on the 2021-2022 count. Bluebirds are also being seen further and further north each year on these counts. Recently birds were seen overwintering in Owen Sound and Peterborough.

The weather was mostly cooperative during the breeding season. March was 3 degrees above the norm. April was colder than usual up to April 27 when it warmed up. May was warm with very few cold nights. Very little Eastern Bluebird nestling mortality was noted. June and July's warm weather provided ideal conditions for nest success. Overall a successful year for bluebirds and mostly successful for Tree Swallows. Some of the nest box reports recorded Tree Swallow nestling mortality related to a lack of insects and cold weather or a combination of both. Tree Swallows at some of the nest box grids like the Queens Biological Station had very poor reproductive success. This may be related to a lack of insects but

this has not been confirmed. We need to examine all the nest box grids in Ontario to determine if the reproductive success is what it should be. Are these grids really helping Tree Swallows. Maybe in the next newsletter.



*Photo by Mike Brown from bluebird landlords. Beautiful shot of an after second year male. No moult limits in the upper coverts. Most of the orange edging has worn off by this date. Photo was just taken recently.*

**Membership Renewals were due January 1, 2025**

**Join, Renew or Donate at [oebs.ca](http://oebs.ca)**

**Individual \$15, Family \$20**

## ***Bucket raffle***

Each AGM, we hold what is called a bucket raffle to help raise money to cover the costs of holding the conference. Members bring various bluebird or nest box-related items that can be used in the raffle. An item is put beside a plastic container that holds the raffle tickets. Members buy tickets and place them in the containers beside an item they want to win.



*Photo by Leslie McLellan*

## ***Bats in Nest Boxes? Life is full of Surprises.***

**Dick Stauffer, OLDS Alberta**

Late August had me cleaning out nest boxes for the 2024 breeding season. The last box had a House Wren nest over top of the Tree Swallow nest. As always I needed to remove the House Wren twigs before I could push the swallow nest out of the bottom of the box. I reached in, grabbed a handful of sticks and was completely surprised to find a bat clinging to my hand. I shook the bat off my hand, it landed in the grass.

I did not think too much of the contact until I heard that a young woman had died after being exposed to a bat without having been in direct contact with the bat. On October 4, 2024 I wandered into the doctor's clinic inquiring if there was a test for rabies. When I told the physician of my incidental contact, I was referred to the two rabies experts for Alberta, who just happened to be in the clinic.

The experts were concerned about the incidental contact and the amount of time that had expired between the contact and me reporting it. The experts informed me that a rabies infection is 100% fatal.

I filled in a report that was sent to the Alberta Health and Environment, and things happened very quickly. Within an hour, I received a call from Alberta Health explaining that I needed to get on the CDC rabies protocol, consisting of 7 injections over 14 days. The first injection consisted of 4 needles: 1 in each arm and 1 in each leg. About an hour later, the clinic phoned asking if I could be there that afternoon. The first part of the process is receiving a RIG (Rabies Immune Globulin) vaccine – about 5 cc in each leg, followed by a rabies shot in each arm. Three days later, another rabies shot, 4 days later, another rabies shot, followed by the last shot a week later.

## ***So What did I Learn?***

Rabies is and should be taken very seriously. The incubation period for the virus is from days to sometimes years, depending on where the contact occurs. The bat does not need to bite you as the rabies virus is in their saliva, and bats regularly groom themselves.

The rabies experts tell me that the vaccine protocol is 100% effective if you get the RIG shot along with the rabies vaccine. In Canada, there have been no fatalities when this protocol is followed.

*Editor's Note- Hantavirus is also a concern when removing nest material after birds have fledged. Even though the chances of contracting something are very low, it is always a good idea to wear a mask when completing this task.*

## ***OEBS Conservation Award***



The 2024 Conservation Award will be handed out at our AGM on March 22 in Hamilton at the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton. The 2023 award was given to Dan Baarda from Vinemount.

This award is given out each year to an individual or group that have made an outstanding contribution to bluebird conservation during the preceding years.

***Join us on March 22, 2025 to see who this year's winner will be!***



*One of Dan's female bluebirds that stayed on the nest as he was checking the nest box .*

*Dan uses a gilbertson type nest box.*

- 2015 Elwood Jones
- 2016 Dan Welsh
- 2017 Kurt Frei and Peter REA
- 2018 Mary Anne Rose and Karen Tufford Brehn
- 2019 Gwen and Dennis Lewington
- 2020 Elizabeth Kellogg
- 2021 John and Janet Foster
- 2022 Jessica Hale
- 2023 Dan Baarda



*Photo by Leslie McLellan*

### **Previous OEBS Conservation Award Recipients**

- 1995 George Coker
- 1996 Leo Smith
- 1997 Hazel Bird
- 1998 Don Wills
- 1999 Sheldon Anderson and Doug Harrison
- 2000 Norm Shantz
- 2001 Robert Burton
- 2002 Halton Bluebird Club
- 2003 Herb Furniss and Don Parkes
- 2004 Glanbrook Conservation Committee
- 2005 Joe Hurst
- 2006 Ottawa Duck Club
- 2007 Gerry Powers
- 2008 Ken Reger
- 2009 Chris Lyons
- 2010 Don Bissonnette
- 2011 Henry Millar
- 2012 Lucille Coleman
- 2013 David Hampton
- 2014 Josef Kral

### **2024 Nest Box Reports**

**Deb Hewitt and Herb Furniss** had an excellent year with 180 Eastern Bluebirds fledged. This brings Herb's life time total bluebirds fledged to 4,827. A total of 203 blue eggs were recorded in 2024 from the 91 total nest boxes on this trail. Boxes are in Victoria County- City of Kawartha Lakes. Weather and House Wrens were recorded as the number one cause if eggs or nestlings were lost. There were 5 successful Tree Swallow nests. Herb was awarded the OEBS Conservation Award in 2003. Way to go, guys.

**Janet and John Foster** were awarded the OEBS conservation award in 2021. 2024 was not one of their best years. Only 65 Tree Swallows fledged - far down from 2011's record of 170.

According to Janet most chicks simply starved. Many Wrens nested – some built on top of nests with long dead, desiccated, half grown chicks. Only one nest had blowflies. Too much rain, and cool temperatures at critical times in the nesting period.

Lack of insects continue a downward spiral here: zero Monarch caterpillars this year, other butterflies

(apart from Giant Swallowtails) have been few to non-existent. Even dragonflies were down in number (as were blackflies and mosquitoes). Nice to sit out in bug free evenings, with no loud humming on window screens.

To sum up Janet believes starvation caused the mortality brought on by climate change which throws all wildlife calendars out of whack: bird and insect arrivals are no longer in sync; too warm winters and springs; then cold temperatures followed by rain then drought.. then too much rain. There's just no normal anymore. Here or anywhere.

**Gerard Powers** manages 162 nest boxes in Grey County. A total of 230 young fledged from the recorded number of 44 Eastern Bluebird pairs. All nest boxes are on t-bars and heavily greased. The egg to fledge was 230/272 85%. A total of 230 bluebirds fledged from 44 pairs which is 230/44 or 5.2 fledged young per pair. Gerry had 30 nests in May and 24 re-nests. A lot of waiting in between nests.

A total of 371 Tree Swallows fledged from 65 complete nests. Weather was recorded as the number one cause if eggs or nestlings were lost. Jerry states that the weather was very erratic. Hot, cold, wet explains things up here. The weather affected the Tree Swallows with 50 dead in one area. Gerry relates this to lack of food. Over 30 years Gerry has fledged 6,140 bluebirds and 15,800 Tree Swallows. Gerry received the OEBS conservation award in 2007.

**The Orillia Naturalists club** have 44 nest boxes in Simcoe County which are monitored once a week. A total of 50 bluebirds fledged from the 84 eggs that were laid. Nest boxes are of many different shapes and sizes. There were 63 Tree Swallows that fledged and 15 House Wrens. There were 11 unsuccessful Tree Swallow nests. House Wrens were listed number 1 as the presumed cause if eggs or nestlings were lost. Marilyn Clark coordinates this program. Another successful year. Clare Holden sent in the report from the Barrie area Eastern Bluebird trail.

**The Halton Bluebird Club** had another successful year with 73 fledged bluebirds from the 72 nest boxes that are monitored. A total of 95 eggs were recorded which is an egg to fledge ratio of 73/95- 77%. Joyce LeChasseur is the coordinator of this club. Sandy Gage suggested setting up a bluebird trail in Bronte

Provincial Park in 1988. Bronte Creek Provincial Park manager Bruce Houck advised Sandy to go ahead and set up the nest boxes. Other founding members were Ken Burgess and Floyd Elder. The boxes were set up in 1988. Only one bluebird was seen and none nested the first year.

**Marshall Byle** has 52 nest boxes mostly in Bruce Twp and 6 on the Kincardine Golf Course. Twenty four were occupied by Tree Swallows and fledged 135 young. Three pairs of Eastern Bluebirds fledged 14 young. Also fledged were 3 boxes of Black Capped Chickadees and 3 of House Wrens. A pair of Coopers Hawks fledged 4 young but did not bother the bluebirds. A very successful year.

**Chuck Beach** had Eastern Bluebirds nesting in a box about 50 feet from his porch. Also nesting nearby were a pair of Coopers Hawks that fledged 4 young.

**Renée Hallman** manages 37 nest boxes in areas around Drumbo in Oxford County. Boxes are monitored on a daily basis. Grease is used as a predator protection method to stop climbing predators like raccoons. All boxes are on free-standing t-bars or metal poles. Renee fledged 64 Eastern Bluebirds and 78 Tree Swallows in 2024. House Wrens have been a major problem affecting the number of young fledged despite continuous efforts to control their destructive ways.

**Bill Read** had another good year with 410 bluebirds fledged from 74 pairs of bluebirds. This represents 416/74- 5.54 fledged young per pair. Also fledged were 683 Tree Swallows (234-Doon Golf Course and 449 from my boxes). The Doon Golf Course has been very productive for Tree Swallows. All boxes are on t-bars and predator protected. I use grease on my boxes and metal sleeves at the boxes on the golf course. My boxes are located in three apple orchards near St George and Hamilton plus others in the St. George area. Deer mice and House Wrens are the biggest problems affecting reproductive success. I re-trapped 32 previously banded bluebirds and banded 53 new adult bluebirds.



*Photo by Leslie McLellan*

## ***The Bluebird Man: Bill Read***

**Carly Davenport**

This past January, Bill Read decided to step down from his role as President of the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society (OEBS), which he has held since founding the society in 1988. I want to take this opportunity to share with new members how the club came to be and what Bill has done for the Eastern Bluebird. I also want to celebrate these memories with Bill's friends and colleagues who have been with him since the beginning.

Bill completed his Bachelor of Education at Brock University in 1977. He requested that his placement be at outdoor education centres and was placed at Taquanyah Nature Center. Here, he met Rick Dowson and Bruce Duncan, and as they went about their days, they would observe the birds there. Bill recalls seeing American Kestrels on wires, but what stood out most to him was the Eastern Bluebirds. These Bluebirds triggered something in Bill, and from then on, he became hooked on these small but enigmatic birds.

Bill continued to work at the Nature Center part-time for the next three years on the weekends as a guide, setting up Bluebird nest box trails and began giving talks. He joined the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) in the late 70s.

In 1987, Bill conducted a survey of Bluebird boxes across Ontario. Interestingly, Chip Weseloh of the Canadian Wildlife Services had just hired Martin McNicholl to do the same thing. They ended up using Bill's survey and together produced 'Bluebird Nest-Box Trails in Ontario and their Usefulness for Bioeffects Monitoring of Agricultural Chemicals', part of a

technical series for the Canadian Wildlife Services.

Part of the questionnaire that Bill used in his survey asked people if they were interested in forming a society. He got a good response and decided to form the OEBS in 1988. Today, the Society is still going strong, with some members who have been with us since the beginning. Bill has led walks, put the newsletter together and hosted the AGM for the past 36 years. He reflects that what stands out the most to him are all the great people he's met through the Society over the years. Back before the internet, he loved receiving all the nest box trail reports from members—some years he would get 200 reports through the mail.

In 1996 and then again in 2010, the OEBS hosted the NABS meeting in Hamilton, ON, at the Royal Botanical Gardens.

Throughout all of Bill's work with Eastern Bluebirds, he has carefully monitored their population numbers. In 1996, he and Robert Alvo authored the 'Updated Status Report on the Eastern Bluebird, *Sialia sialis*, in Canada' for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). This report recommended a status change from "vulnerable" to "not at risk".

Bill has always maintained that the Eastern Bluebirds have a wide distribution, and he believes that the biggest threat they've faced is adverse weather. They do not have the same specific habitat requirements as other grassland birds like Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink. Bluebirds have shown that they can readily adapt to golf courses and commercial fruit orchards.

What Bill is excited to work on next, when it comes to better understanding bluebirds, is to use tracking technologies to understand the migratory routes of the birds north of Lake Superior and across the Hudson Bay lowlands. Do they go east to winter in Georgia and Kentucky, or do they go west to winter in Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma? Now that Bill has stepped down as President, I'm sure we can look forward to him working to figure out the answer shortly!

I want to extend my gratitude, on behalf of the OEBS, for the years of service Bill has contributed as President and say how honoured I am to be able to call him a mentor and serve alongside him on the board. I know that Bill will continue to share his infectious passion for and knowledge of Bluebirds with the

membership for years to come.

***Selected list of Bill Read's awards and publications***

2023 Janette Dean Award - Ontario Bird Banding Association

2019 W. W. H. Gunn Conservation Award - Ontario Nature

1993 Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Bluebird Conservation - North American Bluebird Society

1993 W E Saunders Natural History Award - Federation of Ontario Naturalists

Read WF, English SG, Hick KG, Bishop CA. 2021. Bluebirds Experience Impaired Hatching Success in Conventionally Sprayed Apple Orchard Habitats: A 31-Year Study. Environ. Toxicol. Chem. 40 (12) 3369-3378: 10.1002/etc.5218

Read WF and R Alvo. 1996. Updated status report on the Eastern Bluebird in Canada. COSEWIC

Read, B. 2024, June. Historic Changes in Ontario Population of Eastern Bluebirds. OFO News, Volume 42 Number 2, pg 15 - 17

Read, B. and Wilson W. G., 2009, August. The Southern Expansion and Urbanization of the Merlin in Ontario. Ontario Birds, Volume 27, Number 2, pg 80 - 106

***Fall banding at Hawk Cliff***

The fall 2024 blood sampling at the Hawk Cliff Banding Station was carried out by Jolene Giacinti an epidemiologist (veterinarian) with the Canadian Wildlife Service. Bill Read and Helen Toner assisted Jolene by holding the birds while the blood sample was taken. These samples will be sent to a lab in Winnipeg for antibody testing. This will tell us if any of the birds had a previous avian influenza infection. Mouth and cloaca swabs were also taken from each bird. This was carried out to determine if any of the raptors tested had an active viral infection for avian influenza. None did. The blood and swab samples were completed in less than 5 minutes and the raptor was then released. A chart showing the number of each species tested is shown below. The Saw-Whet Owls were captured and blood sampled at the Old Cut banding station on Long Point. Cyril Crocker, coordinator of the Hawk Cliff Raptor Banding stations allowed us to use the back of his banding station to do the blood and swab sampling.

Jolene hopes to continue this work in the fall of 2025 with the addition of a test for lead.

Species	Number sampled
American Kestrel	1
Coopers Hawk	4
Merlin	1
Northern Harrier	3
Northern Saw-Whet Owl	19
Sharp Shinned Hawk	8
Grand total	51

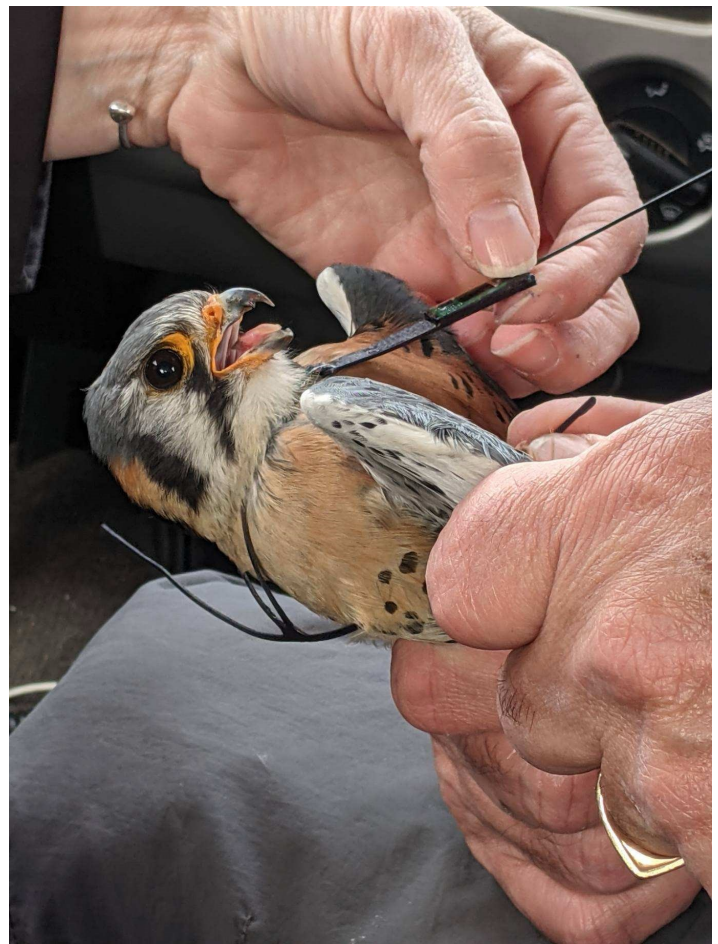


*Taking a blood sample from a Red-tailed Hawk at Hawk Cliff Banding Station*

*Photos from OEBS sponsored motus tag deployment*



*A motus tag has been fitted on this hatch-year female Sharp-shinned Hawk.*



*Measurement for a motus tag on a male American Kestrel.*

***2025 OEBS Board of Directors***

- Stewart McLellan - President and Chair of Elections Committee
- Bill Read - Past President and Founder
- Carly Davenport - Recording and Membership Secretary
- Helen Toner - Conservation Director
- Sarah Sharp - Director at Large
- Karen Tufford Brehn - Director at Large
- Mary Anne Rose - Director at Large
- Brad Clements - Director at Large

***Join our Board!***

The OEBS is actively seeking a Treasurer and another Director at Large. If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact us through the website.

## ***Notification of Proposed Constitution Amendments***

This is formal written notice of the OEBS proposed constitution amendments for our membership. These amendments represent updating our constitution to align with the North American Bluebird Society to include all native cavity-nesting birds in our conservation efforts.

The following resolution will be put forward to all voting members at the AGM on Saturday, March 22, 2025. Please ensure your 2025 membership is paid to allow you to vote.

### **RESOLVED**

- That the draft Constitution, which was presented to the Members for consideration before February 21st, 2025 and is attached hereto, is hereby approved and adopted;
- That the Society's previous Constitution is rescinded; and
- That the Directors of the Society are authorised and directed to take any action necessary to effectuate the foregoing resolution.

Here are the proposed Constitution amendments **highlighted in red** below:

## **ONTARIO EASTERN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY - CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLES:**

#### **1. NAME:**

The name of the organization shall be the "Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society", also referred to as "OEBS".

#### **2. OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of OEBS are:

- a) To increase the number of managed nest box trails for Eastern Bluebirds **and all native cavity nesting birds**.
- b) To give expertise or guidance to new nest box trail operators of Eastern Bluebird **and other native cavity nesting birds**.
- c) To monitor Eastern Bluebirds **and other native cavity nesting bird population** trends from year to year by surveying the number of fledged young from

nest boxes.

d) To further our knowledge of Eastern Bluebirds **and other native cavity nesting birds** in Ontario.

e) To provide a forum for exchanges of ideas through meetings and newsletters.

### **3. BUSINESS:**

The business of the society shall be carried out without purpose of gain for its members; any profits or other gains to the society shall be used in promoting and furthering its objectives and activities. A director shall serve as such and in any capacity as officer without remuneration, and no director shall directly or indirectly receive any profit from the position of director or officer, provided that a director may be paid reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of a director or officer.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP AND DUES:**

a) Society memberships shall consist of individuals and families. Corporations and organizations who have paid the required dues shall be considered individual members.

b) Other categories of membership and associated dues may be added at the discretion of the Board.

c) Dues shall be payable upon application and shall be renewable each December 31st thereafter. Dues for membership commencing during the year may be prorated at the discretion of the Board.

d) Each membership shall have voting power at General Meetings. Individual and family memberships will both be entitled to one vote.

### **5. MEETINGS:**

a) An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held within six (6) months following the start of each calendar year.

b) Other General Meetings may be called at the discretion of the Board, at the written request of three (3) directors or, at the written request of twenty (20) or more members.

c) A simple majority of the voting members present shall be required to elect the Board or pass any motions presented to the members for their approval at the AGM or any General Meeting.

d) The annual AGM or other General Member meetings may be held via electronic means ("ZOOM")



conferencing or other as deemed appropriate) after approval by the OEBS board. The meeting format must include the ability for members to vote on items as presented to members with the appropriate protocols in place to verify OEBS membership and tally the vote.

#### **6. BOARD APPLICATIONS:**

a) Open positions on the Board shall be filled by election at the AGM. Only members in good standing may apply for open board positions.

b) Not less than three (3) months prior to the AGM, the Board shall appoint an Election Committee to draw up the slate of officers to be presented to the membership at the AGM and notify the members of any open positions on the Board.

c) The Election Committee shall consist of three (3) members of the Board. The Vice-President will preside as Chair.

d) Applications for open position(s) must be received at least one (1) week in advance of the AGM, in writing or by e-mail, to the Chair of the Election Committee. Should applications received exceed the number of open positions, the applicant(s) will be selected by vote at the AGM.

#### **7. BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a) The affairs of the society shall be administered by the Board of Directors ("The Board").

b) The Board shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Membership Secretary & Treasurer, Conservation Director, and up to five (5) Directors-at-large to bring the total to no more than ten (10).

c) The elected board shall determine who will fill each position. Newly elected Board members will serve as Directors-at-large.

d) The Immediate Past-President shall be an ex-officio member of the Board and, as such shall not have voting privileges.

e) At least three (3) Board meetings shall be held annually, the timing at the discretion of the President.

f) At any Board meeting, six (6) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Motions shall be carried by a simple majority.

g) Minutes of each Board meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Board.

h) Any member may attend Board meetings or

request a copy of Board meeting minutes.

#### **8. BOARD DUTIES AND POWERS:**

a) The President shall normally chair all General Meetings and all Board meetings. In the event of equality of votes, the chair shall have the deciding vote.

b) The Vice-President shall preside at General Meetings and Board meetings in the absence of the President. In the absence of the Vice-President, the chair shall be appointed by the meeting.

c) The Immediate Past-President shall act as an advisor to the president during the President's term of office.

d) The Recording Secretary shall record the minutes of General Meetings and Board meetings.

e) The Membership Secretary & Treasurer shall collect all fees, keep membership records, notify members who are in arrears, and dispatch all communications addressed to the general membership. The Membership Secretary & Treasurer shall keep an account of all receipts and expenditures, an annual statement of which, certified by a financial reviewer, shall be presented at the AGM.

f) The Conservation Director shall monitor possible threats to Eastern Bluebirds **and other native cavity nesting birds** and propose counter measures to the Board, recommend ways to advance the objectives of OEBS, chair the committee to choose the annual OEBS Conservation Award recipient and present the Conservation Award.

g) The Board shall present Annual Reports from at least the President and the Membership Secretary & Treasurer for adoption at the AGM.

h) The Board shall have the power to fill any vacancies for the balance of the year up to the next AGM.

i) The Board may appoint any member to undertake a specific task, such as the Newsletter Editor. Any appointee who is not an elected member of the Board shall be an ex-officio member of the Board with no voting privilege.

j) The concurrence of at least six (6) members of the Board shall be required before proceeding to pay any expenditures in excess of one thousand, five hundred dollars (\$1500).

k) The concurrence of at least three (3) members of the Board, one of which shall be the President, shall

be required prior to reimbursing expenses claimed by members of the Board that are other than normal operating expenses of OEBS.

l) Subject to clauses “j” and “k”, the Treasurer, and in the absence of the Treasurer, the President shall have the authority to sign cheques on behalf of the society.

m) The President and the Recording Secretary shall have authority to sign together all other documents on behalf of the society. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the Treasurer may sign.

n) The board shall have the power to hold official board meetings via electronic means (“ZOOM” conferencing or other as deemed appropriate) or via telephone conferencing when deemed necessary. A board member attending via these electronic means shall be counted as present for the meeting records.

### 9. FISCAL YEAR:

a) The fiscal year shall run from January 1’ to December 31’

b) Each year, two (2) persons shall be appointed by the Board to review the accounts of OEBS prior to the AGM. Neither of these can be a Board member.

c) Should the office of Membership Secretary & Treasurer become vacant, the accounts shall reviewed immediately by two

(2) reviewers appointed by the Board. Neither of these can be a Board member.

### 10. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:

a) A copy of the constitution shall be forwarded to any member on request to the Membership Secretary & Treasurer.

b) Any member may propose an amendment to this constitution by presenting it to the Board in writing or by email at least two (2) months before the AGM or any special meeting called for the consideration of the amendment.

c) Notification of proposed amendments shall be distributed to the membership at least one (1) month prior to the meeting the membership votes on the change.

d) If accepted by two-thirds of the members voting, the amendment(s) shall become part of the constitution.

### 11. DISPOSITION OF ASSETS:

Upon a vote of the general membership, the

directors shall be empowered to dissolve OEBS and turn over all properties remaining, after payment or provision for payment of all its debts and liabilities, to an organization with objectives similar to those of OEBS. In no case shall such assets be given to any organization not established and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes and recognized by Revenue Canada as a registered charity.

### 12. This constitution shall be effective as of and from March 22, 2025 (pending Member Approval).

Certified to be a true and accurate copy of the constitution of the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society adopted and approved by the general membership at the Annual General Meeting held on the **22nd day of March 2025**. This amended Constitution supersedes the Constitution dated March 20, 2021.



Join us for our  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Saturday, March 22, 2025**  
**First Unitarian Church of Hamilton**  
**170 Dundurn St S Hamilton, ON**  
**Registration 8 am**  
**Meeting 9 am**

### *Presidents message*

Stewart McLellan, OEBS President

I am writing this message on Family Day, the day after a major snowstorm hit Southern Ontario. If you are anything like me, I spend lots of time hoping to see my first blue bird or American Kestrel back in this area of Durham Region. Hang in there, it won't be long now!

In December of last year, Bill Read messaged me to let me know that he had decided to step down as President of OEBS, a position he has held since

forming our Society in 1988. There is an excellent article in this newsletter about Bills accomplishments with OEBS so I will not lay them out again, but it is sufficient to say that there are some big boots for me to fill.

One of the items we have been working on over the winter is an amendment to our constitution to include all native cavity nesters along with bluebirds in our future goals.

Bluebird populations have rebounded since OEBS was formed, in no small part to the valuable work that our members have done in creating, maintaining and monitoring bluebird trails. Our existing constitution limited our work to bluebirds, and we have found that it is becoming more difficult to find bluebird projects that we can support through expertise or donations. At the same time, some of our other cavity nesting species are suffering from long term declines and could use our help.

We brought this to the membership at last years AGM and there was broad support for amending the constitution among our members in attendance. As a result, your executive recently approved an amended constitution to bring forward to you at the March 22 AGM for your approval. You will see a copy of the proposed constitution in your inbox in the next few days.

The fact that we are amending our constitution to include all native cavity nesters does not mean that we are turning our attention away from bluebirds, on the contrary, we will continue to be strong advocates of bluebirds to ensure that our success in the recovery of these magnificent birds continues.

In closing, I look forward to meeting, working with and learning from all members of OEBS.

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