

PRESCOTT BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROJECT

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www.prescottbluebird.com



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Photo Credit - Tara Baker

Newsletter - Fall 2022

Bluebird Owners Who Make a Difference

By Dee Stiko

This is a story about love and care in action. I first met Fay Olsen in the early 1980's when we both worked as RNs at Meridian Park Hospital in Tualatin, OR. She was so personable and easy to like! I also took care of her husband, Rod, when he had surgery. He kindly called me his "second favorite nurse." Fay retired from nursing and so did I, eventually.

We lost contact for a few years, then our common interest in bluebirds brought us back together. My husband, Don, and I decided to monitor a bluebird route starting in 2019. Our team leader, Lauri Kunzman, introduced us to our new route, and lo and behold, there were the Olsens! Rod and Fay both have a passion for antiques, old cars, chickens, farming, and bluebirds. They even grow their own mealworms!



Dee Sitko and Fay Olsen
Photo Credit - Don Sitko

This past summer, on those hot, hot days, Fay was particularly amazing, as she tended and nursed the chicks of various kinds on their property: bluebirds, swallows, and juncos, as well as her many chicken chicks. Every two to four hours, she made the rounds to three nests to make sure water and food were available. The third nest was a junco hen with two chicks that Fay dripped water into their tiny beaks from her fingers! She admitted to feeling exhausted at the end of the day, but those chicks did fledge, a testament to her care.

We are in awe of property owners and volunteers like the Olsens who put so much energy and love into their everyday lives. It makes all the difference.



Volunteer Ed Hepp has built countless new boxes for the project
 Photo Credit - Tara Baker

Lumber Update

PBRP is always in need of wood for use by our volunteer nest box builders. We can arrange pick up of any suitable lumber which includes cedar, juniper, and sequoia / redwood for the box itself, plus hardwoods such as oak, maple, teak and mahogany for the hole extenders.

Do you know someone who is replacing an old cedar deck or fence? ...or discarding outdoor furniture or an old hardwood item? Would

the owner be willing to donate the wood? If so, please contact us by sending an email to info@prescottbluebird.com.

We would like to acknowledge the recent generous donations from the following PBRP supporters:

Bob Harding, Tualatin, bluebird nest box property owner. Utilizing his own sawmill and wood processing equipment, Bob mills slabs from locally salvaged trees that, after drying, he then planes into the precise thicknesses that are specific to our nest box components.

Patrick Lumber Company, Portland. From their multiple wood processing plants in Oregon, Patrick Lumber has been donating end drops from kiln dried, clear cedar boards that would otherwise be relegated to their waste bins. These high-quality, short pieces are ideal for planing and trimming to our precise nest box size requirements.



Photo Credit - Tara Baker

From the Bluebird Trail

By Sarah Hatfield

One of the joys of monitoring a bluebird route is to spend time weekly out in the field. While spotting bluebirds is always first on my mind, I have come to love all the other wildlife I encounter along the route. This year I decided to keep a list of what I saw. The Lazul Bunting was a lifer for me.

Yellow Rumped Warbler	Quail
House Finch	Red Winged Blackbird
Stellar Jay	Rabbits
Scrub Jay	Squirrels
Goldfinch	Ground Squirrels
Junco	Turkey Vulture
Spotted Towhee	Coyote
Mourning Dove	Deer
Lazul Bunting	Otter
Cedar Waxwing	American Kestrel
Osprey	Numerous hawks
Canadian Geese	Northern Flicker
Bald Eagle	American Coot
Egret	White Crowned Sparrow
American Robin	American Crow



Photo Credit - Sarah Hatfield

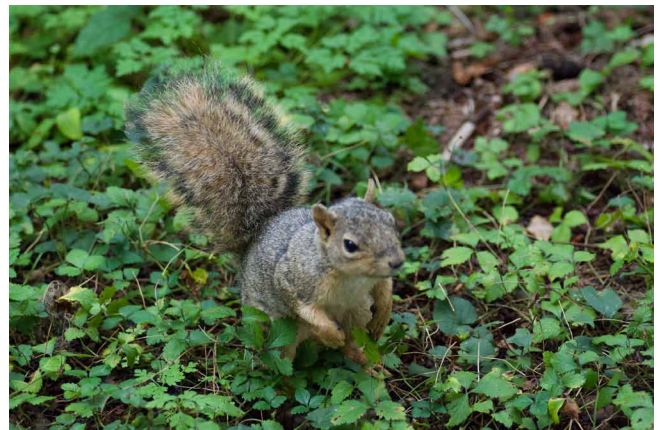


Photo Credit - Sarah Hatfield



Sokol Blosser's Russ Rosner with a newly installed bluebird box
Photo Credit - Tara Baker

Thank you Sokol Blosser Winery

Sokol Blosser Winery has been a supporter of PBRP for over 20 years. They host numerous boxes on their property. Since 2003, their boxes have yielded 911 eggs, 665 hatchlings, and 513 fledged. That is a lot of bluebirds!



This spring they released the 2020 Bluebird Cuvee Brute Sparkling. They generously donated a portion of every bottle sold during the first month of its release, resulting in a donation of more than \$450. Thank you so much, we are delighted to be included in the release of this special sparkling wine!



Volunteers at the Sherwood Social Hour
Photo Credit - Tara Baker

Return of Volunteer Happy Hour

In the summer of 2019, PBRP began what we hoped to be an annual tradition of having a nohost happy hour where

volunteers could get together and swap stories from the bluebird trail. Covid put a stop to gathering in 2020 and 2021 but this year we were excited to resume the tradition. Monitoring can sometimes seem like a solitary endeavor and these get-togethers are a great way of getting to meet fellow volunteers.

PBRP at Champoeg State Park

PBRP has had a long relationship with Champoeg State Park. There are numerous bluebird boxes at the park and they have long hosted our spring and fall meetings.

A few months ago a visitor center host/staff member found a Prescott nest box (complete with a nest) in their storage area. So they brought it out front and put up some of our materials around the box. Board member, Carolyn Hyink, then contributed two things to the display, a laminated chart showing bluebird data at the park since 1997 and two glass mounted photos of bluebirds on nest boxes taken in the park in March 2022.



A "Sign" that the Project has been successful at Champoeg State Park
Photo Credit - Michael Lie

Combine this with the demonstration nest box, and the informational sign outside the visitor center in the parking lot and Champoeg provides a lot of information about bluebirds and PBRP.

This spring, Cindy Hindman, North American Bluebird Society Board Member, reached out to PBRP to ask if she could accompany someone on their route so that she could see her first Western Bluebird. Cindy has been a route monitor for 25 years, first becoming aware of bluebirds when she lived in Bermuda! On May 12, 2022, Cindy accompanied Carolyn to check all 22 Champoeg nest boxes. Despite the rain, she saw a few Western Bluebirds and helped feed meal worms to the pairs. During their time together, they shared information on the birds, as well as the differences between what we do in PBRP and what/how they do things in the Virginia Bluebird Society.



Carolyn Hyink and Cindy Hindman in front of the display at Champoeg
Photo Credit - Carolyn Hyink

Celebrating

Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project Volunteers

*Thank you for all of the time and energy that you dedicate to the bluebirds.
PBRP couldn't continue our mission without your commitment. Together we make a remarkable team.*

Jeannette Adlong
Jim & Sharon Bailey
Tara Baker
Betty & John Ballentine
Carol Bancke
Lyn Burniston
Vivian Chang
Christine Darby
Ginger Edwards
Lynn Erdman
Sharon Famous
Steve Flowers
Lisa Fratianni
Debra Hall
Diane Harris
Michelle Harrington
Sarah Hatfield & Jeff Murray
Mary Hayden

Steve Hendricks
Ed Hepp
Carolyn Hyink
Madeline Ishikawa
Amy Beth Jacobsen
Katherine Kallus
Lauri Kunzman
Lori Louis
Gwen Martin
Bob Meehan
Cheryl Neal
Elaine Newland
Tricia Niday
Stephen & Judy Page
Janel Pahl
Peter Ramer
Leah Rivendell
Betsey Rixford

Russ Rosner
Teresa Schechtel
Ellie Shipley
Dee & Don Sitko
Patty & Rick Sorensen
Nancy Southard
Don Spencer
Mark Summers
Bob Swanson & Friends
of the Tualatin River
National Wildlife Refuge
Mike Turley
Sally Visser
Dave Wert
Michael Wert
David Wesley
Kit Whittaker



Photo Credit - Tara Baker

*Sadly, we acknowledge the passing of two volunteers:
Cathy Kelly, who monitored with her sister Tricia
Niday, and Harold Potter, who hosted PBRP boxes and
lent his woodworking skills to building boxes for PBRP.
We send our condolences to their families and are
grateful for their contributions.*

Annual Fall Wrap-Up Meeting Resumes in Person!

PBRP volunteers gathered at Champoege State Heritage Area Saturday, Sept. 24th for our annual Fall Wrap-Up Meeting. This was the first time since 2019 we were able to meet IN PERSON, and what fun it was to meet old and new friends. Our Fall meetings close out the Bluebird nesting season and also serve as the organization's annual meeting, which is required of us as a non-profit.

Board member and team leader Michelle Harrington kicked off the meeting by welcoming everyone on behalf of the board. Volunteer updates included the following: Tara Baker is a new team leader, taking over (retired) Nancy Fraser's team, and Sarah Hatfield is now the newsletter editor.

Treasurer Don Sitko gave a financial report, noting revenue from donations and expenditures are tracking on budget. Last year we received a generous honorarium, which was a one-time gift. This

year Sokol Blosser Winery, a longtime supporter of PBRP, donated a portion of sales from their Bluebird Cuvée Brut Sparkling, a donation of \$453. PBRP is grateful for their continued support.

It's been a busy year for PBRP volunteers, and a number of projects and activities were highlighted.

New print materials have been created. New PBRP brochures are now available as are preprinted postcards for monitors to send to homeowners on their routes both in the spring announcing the start of the season and in the fall to say thanks for hosting our nest boxes.

Carolyn Hyink hosted a visitor from NABS (North American Bluebird Society) at Champoege where Carolyn monitors.

Michelle Harrington reported that new nest boxes have been installed at Springwater Environmental School & McIver Park where they will be monitored and used for educational purposes.



Tara Baker gave a well-received informational talk about Western Bluebirds to residents at the Springs retirement community in Sherwood.

Elaine Newland and Sally Visser collaborated on a webinar for the national superintendents of golf courses. Elaine and Sally monitor boxes at the Oregon Golf Club, and they shared our monitoring activities with the group.

Ruby Vineyard has been added as a nest box site and had a successful first season fledging Bluebird chicks.

Volunteer/master nest box builder Ed Hepp is continuing to install new and replacement boxes; since Sept. 2021, Ed has installed 55 boxes! Ed also fields inquiries from folks wanting to donate wood for boxes, and he's skilled at finding and re-using salvaged wood.

And, as always when we get together, stories from the field were swapped, reminding us that we're all volunteering because we want to support our beloved Western Bluebirds.

Photo Credit - Tara Baker



Presidents' Message

Diane Harris & Lyn Burniston
Co-presidents PBRP Board

As we monitor our bluebird boxes in spring, it is a wonderful way to usher in the season. Now, at the end of the season, it is time to evaluate our findings. And it has been a good year.

The purpose of the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project is to provide nesting cavities for our local bluebirds - and as we know, the boxes also provide cavities for our native swallows, wrens, chickadees, and nuthatches. The need for man-made boxes is due to the elimination of natural cavities caused by habitat destruction and competition from non-native species, primarily English Sparrows and European Starlings.

We are a group of at least 54 monitors who monitor over 740 boxes in 5 counties. Some years seem to be better than others; we always have surprises, usually due to irregular weather. Last year (2021) we had extraordinary heat and this year (2022) - an extraordinarily cool, wet spring. Every year there seems to be a different scenario. Despite yearly weather events, our Project has been a very successful conservation program. And our monitors are the key to the success of this organization.

As we think about this season...and we are out in the field monitoring our nest boxes, we have the unique opportunity to observe and come to understand the nuances of nest building, egg laying, incubating and fledging. That makes us very fortunate to have this addition to our intimate knowledge - something that other birders do not have.

To our wonderful monitors and homeowners, we thank you all for the efforts you have put forth for the bluebirds this season. Have a restful, healthful rest of the year!

On another note, we would like to welcome Sally Visser to the board. Sally has been with PBRP for nearly 20 years and recently collaborated on a webinar about the Western Bluebird for The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

And finally, this is our last Presidents' Message as our term has come to an end. We would like to congratulate Lisa Fratianni, our new president. We know she will do an excellent job guiding the project.



Photo Credit - Sarah Hatfield



Photo Credit - Sarah Hatfield

Partnership With Local School

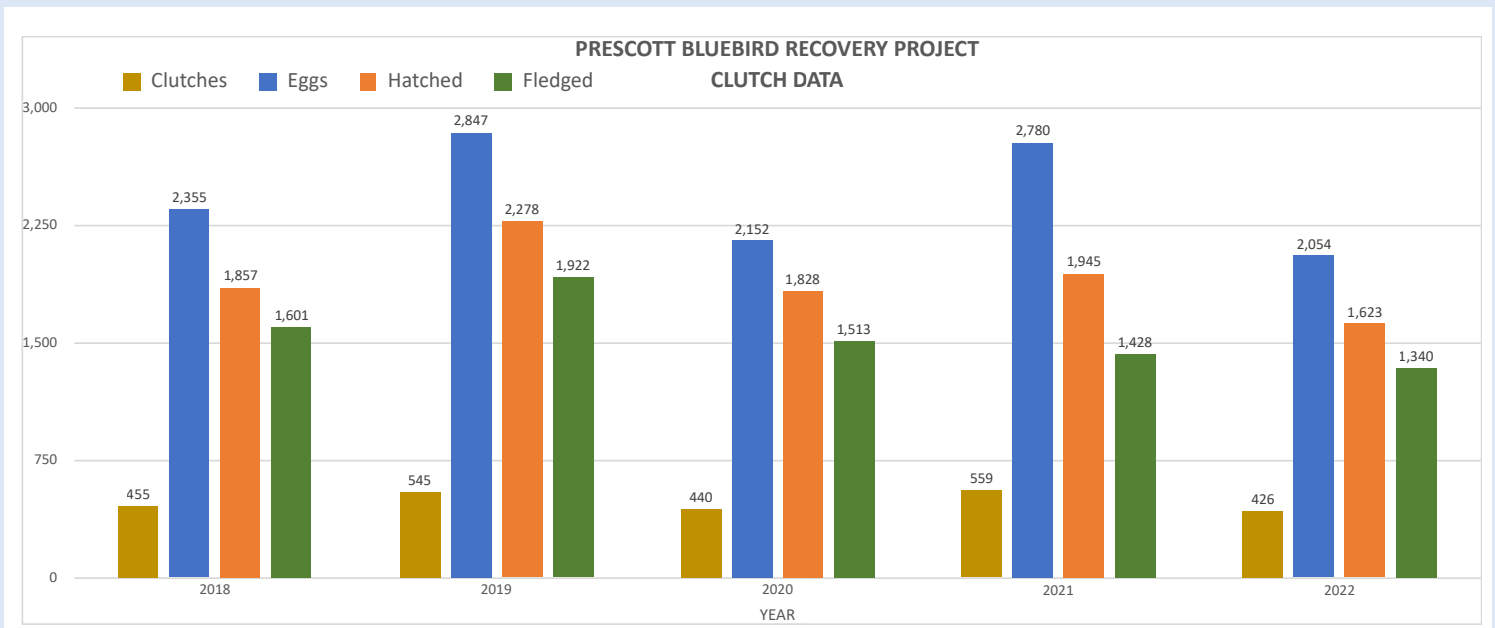
By Christina Lohbeck, Learning Specialist, Springwater Environmental Sciences School

This past summer, three new bluebird boxes were installed by members of the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project on the campus of my school, Springwater Environmental Sciences School. We are located in Oregon City and have students in preschool through 8th grade. There are mixed grade groups of students responsible for caring for different areas around the school, including a group taking care of the nesting boxes. I'm excited for this group of

teachers and students to learn about the Western Bluebird habitat, nesting, and how to help them thrive. They will have the opportunity to participate in checking nest boxes for nests, adults, and babies next spring and hopefully learn their life cycle and observe their behaviors. The goal is that this learning experience will be a springboard for some children to go on to share information with their families and spread the word to their friends about how to help with Western Bluebird recovery and maybe even host bluebird boxes on their own homes!



Photo Credit - Tara Baker



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