



Virginia
Bluebird
Society

The Bird Box

Fall 2010

A New Cavity Nester?

For bluebird nest box monitors in southeastern Virginia, Brown-headed Nuthatches are probably a rare nest box occupant. However, recent research in North Carolina indicates that their use of nest boxes can increase dramatically – if competition with bluebirds is reduced. Prof. Mark Stanback at Davidson College conducted an experiment demonstrating that when boxes were provided with one-inch entrance holes, nuthatches became regular box occupants. But when the inch holes were removed, bluebirds quickly usurped the boxes.

Considering the availability of inch hole spacers, the current health of the bluebird population and the plight of the nuthatch, it seems reasonable to ask bluebirders in appropriate habitat in eastern Virginia to dedicate a subset of their nest boxes to this dull colored but charismatic cooperative breeder. For more information about Professor Stanback's study, visit turf.lib.msu.edu/ressum/2008/75.pdf.

– Barbara Chambers



Brown-headed Nuthatch

Birdhouses and Blowflies

Blowfly infestation in the nests of cavity birds is a deadly problem. We often come across an anemic chick falling prey to this despicable vermin in our nests, and dying ultimately. The reason is competition for the incoming food brought by the parent birds. While the blowfly maggots sucking on the baby birds do not kill them outright, they bring down their vitality to such a point from the resulting loss of blood that these birds cannot contest with their stronger nestlings for those aerial insects captured by parental Tree Swallows for food. They literally starve to death while the others get sustenance during heavy infestations. Hence, when one opens the nest box finding that all the new birds have successfully fledged, it is not uncommon to discover that one or two certainly didn't.

Nestling birds become infested when adult blowflies lay eggs directly on the nestlings, or on their nest's ingredients. The female blowfly will lay 50-200 tiny eggs usually around the time of the first hatch. These become small, tan-colored larvae within two days, and they must feed immediately. They suck on the young birds for 15-45 minutes and then return down inside the nest material. The larvae must have these blood meals to mature, and suck the greatest amount of blood as they grow. If their numbers are many, the impact is severe.

Bird blowflies include two genera: *Protocalliphora* and a close relative, *Trypocalliphora*. Cold, wet weather makes them prosper in the nest material, and it also limits the number of insects birds can capture outside during such periods. These two factors combine to make the baby birds more susceptible to the effects of this parasitism. I have long wondered why their insect eating parents do not devour these pests. It is because the larvae primarily attack at night, when the helpless nestlings are easy prey, and hide within the nest during daylight hours. The larvae attach to the nestlings' feet, legs, underside of wings and beaks while they draw out the blood and body fluids after dark. Sounds pretty vampirish!

The larvae feed on the young birds for approximately 8 days and then go into a dormant stage for 3 days, becoming the dark, leathery pupae we see as they drop to the nest box's floor. This pupal period usually lasts about 7-14 days, after which the adult blowfly phase emerges. (By now the nestlings have fledged.) After the adult flies leave the nest box, they mate, and the female starts searching for yet another bird nest to repeat the 3-4 week life cycle.

The incidence of blowfly infestation commonly increases in the second and third nestings, as the summer progresses. One can't stress enough the need to clean out the old nest box contents immediately, after noticing the birdhouse has become empty. I wear gloves, carry a putty knife and a plastic bucket, and then burn the whole mess with old lawn mower gas out on an asphalt driveway. I am not interested in growing parasites, just baby birds.

– Dave Eastman

Promoting bluebirds and other cavity nesters

The Bird Box

Issue 12.2

Newsletter of the
Virginia Bluebird Society
www.virginiabluebirds.org

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(photos and drawings) for *The Bird Box*!
E-mail your materials to Pallav Das.

Coordinators' Meeting

On July 24, 15 area coordinators, representing 10 counties, gathered for a meet-and-greet session at the home of **Barbara and Paul Tracy**, Coordinators for Culpeper County. It was a most successful event as all but six of the coordinators on the invited list were able to attend our first such meeting.

Anne and Carl Little presented the CD bluebird program that VBS offers all coordinators for their use in educating the public. Our brainstorming session came up with several good ideas. The big plus was just meeting each other. Too soon the time was up, and folks had to leave. Next time we will leave more time for individual coordinators to tell us more of what they do successfully. Barbara Tracy has invited us all to return next

July for an update on our local activities. We need to take her up on it.



(Back row, left to right) Frank Wilczek, Janet Locklear, Barbara Dennee, Carmen Bishop, Dana Squire, Barbara Chambers, Barbara Tracy, Ann Dunn
(Front row, left to right) Paul Tracy, Pat Wilczek, Anne Little, Cathy Hindman, Carl Little
(Photo: Charlie Chambers)

Recognizing Carl Rupprecht

Iam writing in recognition of the guidance and help I've received from my neighbor, Carl Rupprecht, in establishing my own small bluebird trail of 14 nest boxes in Woolwine, Virginia. Just before Christmas 2006, the year we moved to Woolwine, I found a nest box dropped off at the end of our driveway. I had no idea who had left it. Then I remembered our neighbors two miles down our road. Carl had made the box and dropped it off as a kind gesture for the holidays. I had no knowledge of bluebirds, but I did have an old, weathered box in my yard. That's where I saw my first bluebird; what a sight that was! But I lost my first brood to a snake (the box had no predator guard) and the next brood to the 100-degree heat.

Carl must have known of my disappointment. So in January 2007, he helped me install his gift nest box in our backyard, and I had two bluebird broods and fledglings that year. I was able to watch them from our den. I was quite excited and I decided to start my own bluebird trail! Carl helped me go over the plans for my nest boxes and guided me through the entire process. Since then he has helped me with the needed repairs, and also in relocating the boxes to get the best results. Carl Rupprecht is an important reason for the success of my trail [visit woolwinehousebluebirdtrail.com], and I can't thank him enough.

— **Christine Boran**, County Coordinator
(Floyd and Patrick Counties)



Carl Rupprecht building a nest box
(Photo: Christine Boran)

A Flash Of Blue

One day after I came home from work, I watched a couple of Eastern Bluebirds peeking out the entrance hole to their nesting box, that the two shared with three other siblings. I monitor the bluebirds in my yard, closely, and knew they would fledge at any time. I went inside the house to get my camera gear, hoping to witness the big event. As I walked toward my front door, I saw a flash of blue on my front porch, through a window. Opening the door was like entering a three-ring circus!

The “flash of blue” made a very wobbly, low, and slow flight back toward his nesting box, a short distance away, landing on the trunk of a small, tree next to the box. He held tight, clinging to the bark. Out of my peripheral vision, I saw movement in the shrubby grass, next to my porch, and spotted the second fledgling. It was hopping and trying to escape what must have seemed like a jungle to him. I then saw movement about six feet up a Crape Myrtle tree, just over the head of the fledgling, below. This was the only fledgling that figured out how to get up in the tree, rather than on the ground below the trees. Mom and Dad were swooping down, with constant chatter, trying to get these grounded birds to follow them in flight. It did not work! Also, it appeared to be a community effort, as several House Finches and Cardinals landed on the ground next to the fledglings in what appeared to be a joint effort to get these birds airborne.

For the next hour, I observed from a distance, the fledglings hopping about my yard, taking short flights, a couple feet off the ground, and preening, like they did not have a care in the world. The concerned parents put mealworms out quickly fed everyone, which seemed to help calm them all. Still a couple of the fledglings were adamant about their flight practice and went dashing into the neighboring properties. I herded them back lest they end up as meals for the neighbor’s cats and dogs.

It was getting dark and I was getting worried about one fledgling, which showed no interest in getting back to its nest. After a few directionless test flights it finally climbed a foot off the ground, up the trunk of a tree, to a knothole, which was a snug fit, but at least kept him out of the plain view of predators. At this point, I felt this was the best place this little guy could be, since he could not seem to get to the treetop. This knothole is where I am certain, this fledgling spent his first night, out in the big world, alone, and quite the opposite of its cozy nesting box.

The next morning, I immediately went looking for the fledgling. Not seeing the bird in the knothole, I turned and walked toward my house, and spotted him, just sitting on a brick next to my house. He looked pooped and grumpy, but I was relieved he had survived his first night in the wild. I then spotted another fledgling, napping, low in a tree, close by, and saw one flitting about, fairly high in a tree, where the others should be. The parents were both close by, so I left them to figure out their strategy. Later in the day, I found, what I assumed to be these two, a little higher up in a different tree, and none on the ground. Yeah!

I hope they all made it, but I am reminded of the harsh reality of nature – that fledging day is the most dangerous day of any bird’s life. This season, seventeen bluebirds have fledged in my yard. Three pairs living in a territory generally required for one have been responsible for them. That’s another story in itself, a first time occurrence in my yard. I have two, six-day old nestlings in another box, and a Mom incubating five eggs in another. I watched her make numerous trips in and out of the third nesting box, preparing to start the cycle. Again! It’s been quite a nesting season; I’m tired just thinking about it! – *Glenda Simmons, Florida Bluebird Society*



(Photos: Glenda Simmons)

Nestbox Signs

Some of you have contacted me recently about badly weathering nestbox signs that VBS had sent to you. I am not talking about the fading of the writing you put on them, but the material of the sign itself. It is disintegrating. DGIF and Steve Living have corrected this problem and had the signs re-printed on more lasting material on which the original signs were. If you need replacements, please e-mail me, bj.chambers@cox.net, with the number of signs you need, and I will ensure that you receive the replacements. Please include your mailing address so that I don’t have to look them all up.

–*Barbara Chambers*

Coordinators' Meeting Schedule

The next coordinators' meeting is scheduled for Saturday, September 18, in Fries in Southwest Virginia, at the home of Dale and Linda Kerns, at 10 a.m. (212 S. Carrico Street, Fries, VA 24330). The place has been chosen to allow easy attendance to members in Grayson and Carroll Counties and surrounding areas. The invitations have gone out and, as I write this in August, I am awaiting more replies.

The third coordinators' meeting is in the works for the Northern Neck of Virginia in March 2011. Details will follow. If you would like a meeting in your area, please contact me and we will set something up.

Remembering Wendy Fowler

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing away of Wendy Fowler on August 20. Wendy was an active member of the Shenandoah Audubon and participated in the Blandly Bluebird Trail from 2005 to 2009. She loved the birds, enjoyed making her contribution to the Bluebird Trail, and always insisted on monitoring "her birds" on the Wrenville Trail section. Wendy was a retired nurse, working most recently at the Winchester Medical Center until her retirement in January 2010. We will miss Wendy, but her love and the memories of her high spiritedness will remain with us. VBS offers its sincere condolences to her family.

More About Tick-borne Diseases

Carmen Bishop's article in the Summer 2010 *Bird Box*, "Monitoring Safety: Prevent Tick-borne Diseases," elicited a great response. That surely is not surprising, given that VBS members often have to confront ticks in their work outdoors. Here are a couple of very interesting and informed responses from two of our readers. Please keep sending your letters, questions and responses. We love to hear from you.

Watch Out for Ehrlichiosis; Try Permethrin Spray or a Lint Roller

Carmen Bishop's article points out that ticks are a very real concern for bluebird trail monitors in Virginia. I want to share some information resulting from my experience with another tick-borne disease: ehrlichiosis. It is caused by *Ehrlichia chaffeensis* bacteria and is transmitted primarily by the lone star tick, which is very common in Virginia. The disease was first described in humans in 1986 (it is very common in dogs in the southeast U.S.), and the symptoms range from mild flu-like body aches to severe fever and usually appear within a week or two of a tick bite. If treated quickly with antibiotics, ehrlichiosis generally improves within a few days. Untreated ehrlichiosis with persistent symptoms can result in an illness serious enough to require hospitalization; a Maryland birdwatcher died of complications from undiagnosed ehrlichiosis a few years ago. If you have ehrlichiosis, your blood tests will likely show a low white blood cell count, a low platelet count and abnormal liver function.

Two methods that are effective in helping to protect against ticks: a permethrin spray for treating clothes and a lint roller. Permethrin is similar to the chemical found in the "bug-off" line of clothing, and you can apply it to your own clothes either by pump or aerosol spray. Protection lasts for up to two weeks or two washings. The lint roller can remove ticks from your clothing (and you!); you simply tear off the tick-laden sheet and dispose of it properly. Duct tape or another very sticky tape works well, too. I have again added the reference provided by Carmen, as it really is an informative resource: www.vdh.state.va.us/epidemiology/DEE/Vectorborne/PolycomPresentations/2005/Ticks%20as%20Disease%20Vectors.pdf

– *Mary-Alice Koeneke*

Try Freezing Your Clothes, or Keep Masking Tape Handy

Ticks can be a real problem. Having spent a lot of time wilderness canoeing in Manitoba and surrounding provinces, I'm very familiar with the tick menace. It can be a big problem if they get into your clothes, travel home with you and infect you later. Here are a couple of ways to deal with such a situation. When you get home or back to the cabin after a day in the woods, remove your clothing and place everything in a pillowcase. Drop the pillowcase in your freezer, and leave it there over night. Remove anytime after six to eight hours. All the ticks will have frozen to death.

Here's another tip. Anyone who has spent time in the woods has had this happen. It's the middle of the night and you feel a tick walking across your body. You capture the tick, but what to do you with it? Simple solution: Have a wide strip of masking tape, taped to the wall or any handy location. Press the tick onto the sticky tape; it's going nowhere! Now get some sleep!

Hope this helps and, hey, thanks for the informative newsletter!

– *Jim Preston, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

Alleviating a Bluebird's Distress

Do you sometimes feel like an overprotective parent to your nestlings? Have you ever been inclined to panic at the first sign of something gone wrong in the nest? Have you ever freaked out and asked "Oh why isn't there 911 for bird rescue?" Well it turns out, there is!

My nest box has been busy this year, since March. But this last nest surprised me. I've never had birds nest this late in the year (July into August). So I watched them even more closely than I normally would. Three of the four nestlings fledged, yet one remained. The parents were visiting but were feeding less. That's normal as they try to encourage fledging. But then it looked like they stopped feeding altogether and were just visiting occasionally. And the remaining nestling was just sitting in there for days, not even looking outside. It had been over 90 degrees for weeks. Maybe something was wrong.

I e-mailed the VBS Board of Directors. Then I Googled the number for the Wildlife Center of Virginia (540-942-9453), and they gave me the number for the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center in Boyce (540-837-9000). I was told that sometimes the parents slow the feedings even more in order to encourage the nestlings out via hunger, and although it may look like she was not being fed, that certainly couldn't be the case or she would have been dead in three days in 90-degree heat. I was told to go out to the box and touch her to see if she was lethargic or if her eyes were open, and she was responsive. She was alert and responsive. I was told to sit tight and wait. I was also reassured that if things changed, and the bird became sickly or lethargic, that someone would come out and pick her up. I felt so much better. And the next morning she was gone.

During the waiting process I also received many emails from all of the helpful Board members of the VA Bluebird Society. They all offered advice, phone numbers, and reassurance as well. I now have an even greater respect for Mother Nature and her ability to take care of things without my help. But in the event that that you need reassurance too, you'll find the VA Bluebird Society and the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center to be wonderful, helpful resources.

– Carolyn Strain Stewart

Master Naturalists / Bluebirders

What are Virginia Master Naturalists? Bluebird monitors? VBS board members and county coordinators? Bluebird box builders? VBS newsletter editor? Yes, and more! Virginia Master Naturalists are volunteers throughout the state committed to protecting natural resources. The master naturalist program includes a minimum of 40 hours of basic training, plus annual requirements for eight hours of advanced training and 40 hours of approved volunteer service. Master Naturalists are trained, enthusiastic, and required to do service to maintain their certification, so they make great recruits. If you are looking for monitors for your bluebird trail, you can check with your local Master Naturalist chapter. Visit www.virginiamasternaturalist.org, and you'll find links to 27 chapters across the state. The Fairfax Master Naturalist chapter has nine members who are bluebird monitors. Other chapters have sponsored their own bluebird trails. Giving a talk on bluebirds can count as volunteer service for a master naturalist, and attending a talk can count as advanced training. If you are a Master Naturalist and would like to share how your chapter has supported bluebird trails, please contact me (cjbish@aol.com) and we can put it in a future edition of *The Bird Box*.

– Carmen Bishop

The Answer Lady

What Makes a Bluebird Blue?

Question [from Cathy Hindman]: Why do the bluebirds look so blue some days and not so blue other times? I read about sunlight affecting the color. Please explain.

Answer: I am sure you have noticed how the colorful male bird will get out on a dead branch in the sun in the spring to sing? He knows what sunshine and reflected light will do for his color and he knows that the females are attracted to his vibrant color. So the male bluebird looks for the sunshine to enhance his chances of attracting and holding a mate. Not to delight us. Though it does. And some males are more "blue" than others and these are the birds that are chosen as mates. Birds are the most colorful of our land vertebrates, for this reason.

There are two basic sources of color. The more common one is pigment. Those are the chemical compounds in the feathers or skin. We perceive that color through a function of the wavelength of light hitting our retinas. That is a science I am not well informed about.

Iridescent colors such as blue are not produced by pigments. Blue, in fact, is a structural color produced by tiny particles in the feather structure itself. These tiny particles are able to block all but the blue wavelength and those are what are reflected into our eyes. If the reflected light is blocked the blue disappears into our eyes. Then the bird's color appears black. It all has to do with available light and the science of light and wavelengths. But I hope this much helps some and you will know where to read more about feather structure and color and wavelengths now, if you wish.

Do you have a question for The Answer Lady? Send it to Barb Chambers at bj.chambers@cox.net, or call 703-978-6609.

Fall Board Meeting

The Fall VBS Board Meeting will be held Saturday, November 6, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., at the home of Anne and Carl Little, 726 William St., Fredericksburg 22401. All are invited.

After the meeting we will hold a box-building workshop, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. We will assemble 40 to 50 cedar nest boxes on poles with two predator guards. VBS sells these boxes for \$60 as a fundraiser. If you would like to help, or to learn how to do a box-building workshop, please join us.

For further information, please call Anne Little at 540-207-4298.

Cedar Chips As Ant Deterrent

Early in our season of bluebird monitoring at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville, two monitors found one of our 15 boxes completely invaded by ants. A very large ant colony was established at the base of the nest pole. The nest with one egg was removed, the box cleaned, a new nest constructed, and the egg was replaced. We also applied “Tanglefoot” to the pole and were optimistic that nesting would continue in the box. The following week, ants again invaded the nest, and everything was cleaned and replaced a second time.

We got desperate when we went through the whole process a third time the following week. I contacted an entomologist friend from graduate school in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina. He suggested aromatic cedar mulch or chips. This was based on research done on Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*). Mulch retains moisture and provides favorable conditions for ant nests. Earlier research had shown that these ants were repelled by aromatic cedar mulch, and my friend’s additional research used aromatic cedar mulch to “corral” Argentine ant colonies to minimize migration to new areas and allow for localized control with pesticides.

Although our ant colony disappeared after the third clean-up of the nest box without the use of the cedar mulch, and the nest produced fledglings, we will keep a bag of cedar mulch available for use on our route next season. I hope it will provide an inexpensive alternative to chemical treatment. My friend recommended using the mulch in concert with “Tanglefoot” on the pole. He also suggested that any mulch might need replacement after a few weeks as the aromatic oils dissipate. I encourage anyone else monitoring boxes for VBS to try aromatic cedar mulch if they encounter ants and to let VBS know if it is successful. I can provide an electronic copy (PDF) of the original research paper on Argentine ants if you are interested.

– *Mary Alice Koeneke* [mkoeneke@cox.net]

Keeping Nests Tidy and Safe

Bluebirds love to keep their nests clean, and nature has provided them with an efficient way of dealing with bodily waste. Encasing the excrement of nestling bluebirds is a fecal sac, which is a gelatinous material that keeps feces in a portable package. After the parent delivers food he or she can poke the chick in the belly stimulating a defecation reflex in the young bird. The parent will then pick up the sac and remove the waste. This keeps the nest dry and clean and reduces risk of pathogenic infection and exposure to parasites. Just prior to fledging young birds will stop producing sacs.

Research on the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) reveals that male and female parents share the role of fecal sac removal equally. They are also very careful about where they drop these sacs. Bluebirds have been observed to fly between 40 and 200 meters from their nest box and leave fecal sacs on electric wires, wooden fence posts, tree branches, and utility poles.

The almost obsessive compulsion for fecal removal suggests that Eastern Bluebirds are not just keeping things in the nest tidy; they are, in fact, keeping the nest safe. Going out of their average range from the nest to dispose of fecal sacs suggests that Eastern Bluebirds want to reduce the risk of a predator detecting the nest through sight or smell of the nestling’s feces. When a fecal sac is dropped during transport, the birds have been seen catching sacs in midair, perhaps showing the priority placed on the package reaching a safe distance from the nest.

– *David Mitchell*



(Photo: David Mitchell)

My Nest-Cam Diary

This season I had a very interesting few days with a brood of five bluebird chicks that fledged on a Monday night under very unusual circumstances. A little bit of history first. This was a very unexpected brood to begin with. The parents had tried twice previously but failed due to various reasons. I figured I'd have no baby bluebirds this year. Probably, I would have to get the nest cam I had fixed in there, out. At the end of June, however, Daddy coaxed Mama to try again: so she spruced up the nest cup in the nest left in the box, laid five eggs, incubated them for 14 days and they all hatched! No one was more surprised and delighted than me! Last year, only two of the five of this female's chicks had survived.

The days for the chicks in the nest box were pretty much by the book. The biggest issue was the unrelenting heat here in northwest Georgia. I don't remember a summer as hot and humid for so long in the twenty-one years we've lived here. First, I put a small umbrella over the box, then a patio umbrella over that and then another patio umbrella to back that one up! I, then, had a probe in the nest connected to a wireless temperature transmitter and monitored the temperature in the comfort of my air conditioning.

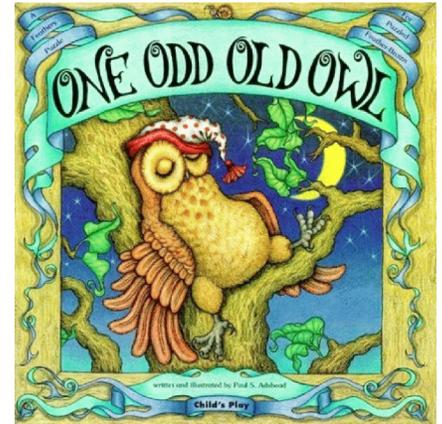
Five chicks in the box made for close quarters. With the nest box camera in it, I watched the chicks grow. From Day 13 on, they become more interested in those things called wings. They preened their wings, stretched them, and flapped them with a sense of surprise. Each day they became more active. I have a curse on me when it comes to fledglings. I seem to miss them. This time I decided that it wouldn't happen. I put an outdoor camera connected to the living room TV to record the activity from the outside of the box while I watched the goings-on inside the box on my desktop as it was recorded on my hard drive.

Monday was Day 15, and during the day the chicks alternated between being active and napping. I'm sure the heat affected how active they could be for any length of time. It was 8 p.m. and getting dark. Sundown was at 8:37pm. I was tired. I love my bluebirds, but a full day of "Bird TV" does get on one's nerves (cheep, cheep, cheep,).

About 8:20, I got ready for bed. Dave, my husband, was still in the living room watching TV. I was in bed but not asleep yet, and I heard him calling "1 is ready to go, it's 8:50; another one is getting ready." Of course, I thought that he was joking (he does that a lot!), so I didn't get up right away. He continued, "Now 3, now 4, now 5! It looks like they planned it this way!" I thought I had better get up and check. I was able to rewind the video, and we saw all five the chicks leave the box in one minute. We didn't have the volume on because we kept getting noisy feedback. We watched the video over and over again and thought that it was a very unusual fledging. The chicks had *not* done the "sticking the head out of the hole" that they usually do before they take that first flight. They'd peeked out while standing on the edge of the nest, that's all.

So I missed the fledging in real time, but at least I have the video. While editing it for YouTube, I discovered something else that helped me put the pieces of the "five fledge fast" puzzle together. I would like y'all to look at it and see if you could come up with clues or conjecture, as to what really happened. I hope you have fun; I did! You can find the video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGk5M4S_fEk.

– Linda Moore



Book Review

One Odd Old Owl

Rollicking, delightful, quirky, colorful, cleverly written sentences, and positively stunning birds! Aspects of this book will enthrall and entertain a myriad of ages. Available in either paper or hard copy, this brightly presented work contains a whimsical story with smashingly vivid drawings, clues, missing birds, and puzzles. There is enough here to interest a young child listening to this wonderful story and learning colors and shapes, to a first grader learning to sound out words and letters. Even older kids in fourth or fifth grade would love to find the missing birds (much like it's done in picture puzzles in *Highlights for Children*) within the brightly painted scenes. Sixth through eighth graders would appreciate the other challenging puzzles.

Published by Child's Play (Intl.), Ltd., this book is listed as appropriate for 4-16-year-olds. It's written and illustrated by Paul Adshard and is available on the Web with prices between six and thirty dollars. Imagine a child's delight in hearing the cadences repeated throughout, "Two lazy Lovebirds chirp, chirrup and cheep, but One Odd Old Owl continues to sleep." Hint: If you purchase a used copy, make sure the puzzle and answer section in the back are included and usable. (P.S. This reviewer is well into her seventh decade of life, and there are at least two puzzles she has failed to solve. No cheating – yet!)

– V.K. Fry

How to Join

Send your name, address, phone number, and/or e-mail address along with a check for \$10 for an individual or \$15 for a family to:

Virginia Bluebird Society
726 William Street
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Membership forms can be downloaded from the VBS Web site:
www.virginiabluebirds.org.

Visit Our Web Site

The VBS Web site offers nest box plans, trail monitoring protocol, trail data forms, news, and links to other useful sites:

www.virginiabluebirds.org.

Mark Your Calendar

Today – Make sure your data has been reported to Charlie Chambers.

Sept. 18 – Coordinators' Meeting at Dale and Linda Kerns' residence at 10 A.M. 212 S. Carrico Street, Fries, VA 24330

Oct. 9 – Occoquan Birding Festival at the NWR in Woodbridge. VBS will have a table as usual.

Nov. 6 – Fall VBS Board Meeting will be held Saturday, November 6, 11 A.M. - 1 P.M., at the home of Anne and Carl Little, 726 William St., Fredericksburg 22401. All are invited.

Nov. 13 – Bluebird presentation at Ginter Botanical Gardens in Richmond, VA by Anne Little, President of VBS.



Virginia Bluebird Society
726 William Street
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

**DATED
MATERIAL**