



# BLUEBIRDS FLY!

California Bluebird Recovery Program's newsletter

—sponsored by National Audubon Society-California  
—an affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

for the encouragement and conservation of cavity nesters—especially bluebirds—anywhere in the West

## 1999 REPORTS SHOW MODEST GAINS

### Bluebirds hold their own—

From a little under 4600 boxes reported on in 1999, better than 6000 bluebirds fledged. While this total is up slightly from previous years, the nestbox numbers were also.

Many monitors (90) reported no birds at all! It was a disappointing season in the Mother Lode counties of Placer and El Dorado, but Southern California and the Bay Area experienced great success with 3 broods reported in places for the first time.

Based on a comparison of actual bluebird tries (attempts=a nest with at least one egg) with the number fledging, 1999 averaged 3.27 birds per try. In 1997 it was 3.29 and in 1998 it dropped to 3.02.

This time, with the reporting of the numbers of eggs laid and the number of hatchlings, we can better analyze the typical situation. For example for every attempt, the bluebirds usually follow through with a clutch of 5 or 6. The average was 4.43 eggs but this includes nests abandoned with only one or two eggs left behind. On average, approximately one egg per nesting fails to hatch—probably due to infertility, accident, or incubation problems. After hatching, the figures indicate we lose one hatchling for every two nests. These figures could be deceiving, however. Many nests are fully successful while in others all of the hatch may be lost to predators, weather, or abandonment.

### 13 THOUSAND BIRDS REPORTED

Nineteen species of cavity-nesters were reported to CBRP in reports from 290 reporters covering 366 trails.

As befits a “bluebird” program, Western Bluebirds topped the list with 6050, followed by Wood Ducks with 2225. There were 1984 Tree Swallows, 680 Oak Titmice, 487 Ash-throated Flycatchers, and 450 Violet-green Swallows. Also reported were 372 Barn Owls, 365 House Wrens, 130 Mountain Bluebirds, 115 White-breasted Nuthatches, 88 Chestnut-backed Chickadees, and 84 Mountain Chickadees.

Others included were 33 American Kestrels, 21 Bewick's Wrens, 10 House Finches, 8 Western Screech Owls, 2 Acorn Woodpeckers, and 2 unknowns.

Monitors failed to evict 9 House Sparrows and 7 European Starlings in time. The starlings were invaders in the larger boxes reported.

#### Box Sizes

Our form asked for box sizes this year. There were 4281 standard-size “bluebird” nestboxes, 307 larger boxes suitable for kestrels, owls, and woodies. Only 18 smaller boxes were reported. These were defined as having an entry hole smaller than 1½". Interestingly, one clutch of bluebirds fledged from an undersized box but mainly they were of benefit to Oak Titmice.

### Enclosed is the complete report

Our enlarged 7-sheet report is included with this issue of *BLUEBIRDS FLY!*

It's being sent to all reporters as well as all subscribers. Additional statistics are written up on sheet 7 which also includes keys to abbreviations and alpha codes for the birds reported.

For ease in reading the report, we suggest you remove the middle pages and spread out the sheets. The individuals reporting are on the front and the details of their birds along with the totals are on the back of the sheet.

Totals will be found on Sheet 7 along with further analysis.

#### Extra Forms

Included also with this issue is a copy of an **INDIVIDUAL NESTBOX REPORT** (CBRP Form 1). It is suggested that you copy one form, front and back, for each nestbox you monitor.

Also, you will find a copy of our **ANNUAL REPORT** (CBRP Form 2). This is included for those reporters who are not subscribers and won't be reminded in the fall.

Please clip the form and store it with your important papers so you will have it handy at the end of the season. Send in one for each trail.

We had comments on this form ranging from “confusing” to “I love your new form.” It does provide us with more information than previous forms. We hope you'll get used to it.

## MORE ON THE TRANSCONTINENTAL BLUEBIRD TRAIL

The NABS-initiated **Transcontinental Bluebird Trail (TBT)** was established to guide the continuing bluebird trail development on the grassroots level and to plan, develop, establish and manage new **Adopt-A-Box** sponsored bluebird trails.

By working with the direct involvement of local bluebirding or wildlife conservation organizations, NABS is able to more effectively guide the development of bluebird trails while looking to NABS affiliated state organizations for our expertise on local issues. **CBRP** will be responsible for all trail planning and development for the newly created **Adopt-A-Box** trails in California. In addition, we will be responsible for the establishment, management and monitoring of trails under our supervision. The coordination of the overall trail system—of both privately managed bluebird trails and **Adopt-A-Box** trails—will be provided by the **North American Bluebird Society** in partnership with NABS affiliated organizations.

The TBT will help offset the struggle for survival of these species resulting from the loss of habitat and nesting spaces, exposure to extreme weather, increased competition from non-native bird species and the application of pesticides, all of which have historically diminished these species' populations since the early 1900s. The cumulative effects of poor land use decisions, habitat loss, and unwise human stewardship practices necessitate a comprehensive and coordinated continent-wide effort to meet the survival needs of these secondary cavity nesters.

Help us build a trail for the future, **Adopt-A-Box**, or join **California Bluebird Recovery Program** to help build a trail in your community. Remember,

we're only a season away from making a difference.

To register your own trail in the TBT, you will need to join NABS (\$15) and register your trail. You can do this over the internet at:

<http://www.nabluebirdssociety.org/tbt/tbt.htm>

The **Adopt-A-Box** program is for those who are unable to properly maintain and monitor a box but want to support the program. For a \$35 contribution, a box will be provided in an established trail on public land. These public **Adopt-A-Box** Trails will be monitored by cooperative organizations such as Audubon Chapters or other conservation groups.

## CBRP banders rated by WBBA

The **Western Bird Banding Association** published its 1998 Annual Report in the July-Sept 1999 issue of the *North American Bird Bander*.

**Jan Wasserman** and **Hatch Graham** are master banders with **CBRP** and subpermittees **Dave Delongchamp**, **Dee Warenycia**, **Malcolm King**, **Kevin Putman**, & **Craig Ferrari** contributed to the totals in 1998.

The **WBBA** covers all the states and provinces west of the Great Plains. Reports were received from 246 banding groups responding from Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska, 4 Canadian provinces, and 11 contiguous western states.

The **CBRP** group rated 1st for numbers banded for Ash-throated Flycatcher, 2nd for Western Bluebird, 2nd for Violet-green Swallow, 2nd for Oak Titmouse, 3rd for Tree Swallow, and 4th for White-breasted Nuthatch.

**CBRP** banders accounted for nearly 2000 birds banded of 13 species.

New to **CBRP** is master bander **Steve Simmons** of Merced who has specialized in Wood Ducks and Barn Owls. Look for his totals in years to come.

## California Bluebird Recovery Program

Founded in 1994, supported by National Audubon Society-California and affiliated with the North American Bluebird Society, **CBRP** is "for the encouragement and conservation of cavity nesters—especially bluebirds—anywhere in the West."

**CBRP** is non-profit, has no paid staff, and is supported entirely by the efforts of volunteers and donations accepted by the Mt.Diablo Audubon Society on **CBRP's** behalf.

**CBRP** members had located and reported on 4,600 nestboxes by the end of 1999, with more than 13,000 cavity nesters fledged—nearly half of them western and mountain bluebirds.

**CBRP** welcomes membership from the public who wish to support its program, and especially seeks those who will place appropriate nestboxes in the proper habitat, faithfully monitor the birds' progress through the nesting season, and report yearly on the results.

**CBRP** can furnish nestbox plans, a monitoring guide, forms for monitoring and reports, technical advice through a network of county coordinators, and sometimes the nestboxes themselves.

Membership, which includes this quarterly newsletter is available for a donation of \$5 or more made payable to "MDAS—Bluebirds" and mailed to **CBRP**, 2021 Ptarmigan Dr #1, Walnut Creek, CA 94595. Donations are tax-deductible.

### California Bluebird Recovery Program

**Don Yoder**,  
Program Director  
2021 Ptarmigan Dr. #1  
Walnut Creek, CA 94595  
(925) 937-5974 vox  
(925) 935-4480 fax  
[cbpr@designlink.com](mailto:cbpr@designlink.com)

**BLUEBIRDS FLY!**  
**Hatch & Judy Graham**,  
Editors  
PO Box 39  
Somerset, CA 95684  
(530) 621-1833 vox  
(530) 621-3939 fax  
[birdsfly@innercite.com](mailto:birdsfly@innercite.com)

## Support our colleagues



Founded in 1978, the **North American Bluebird Society** (NABS) is a non-profit organization determined to increase the populations of the three species of bluebirds on this continent. Inasmuch as the populations of these birds have diminished due to the maladroit actions of human beings, as well as natural disasters, the society strives to explain the importance of preserving native cavity nesters.

The society works within the bounds of effective conservation to study obstacles impeding bluebird recovery and to promote ideas and actions which might reduce their effect.

Membership is \$15. NABS's mailing address is PO Box 74, Darlington, WI 53530.



There are local chapters of the **National Audubon Society** (NAS) in all fifty states, Guam, and Latin America. In California there are over fifty local chapters. Chapters have newsletters, monthly programs, and field trips to local areas of interest.

To join NAS, contact your local Audubon Chapter, or call NAS-California at (916) 481-5332. National dues are \$25 for new members, and include a bimonthly magazine as well as membership privileges in your local Audubon chapter.

### Editorial

## WHICH DIRECTION CBRP?

If not nestboxes, what should our focus be? Habitat preservation? Many of us probably already belong to other organizations that are working on that. Could our nestbox campaigns eventually have some unforeseen detrimental effect ecologically down the road?

Perhaps, but I think this notion is rather trivial in comparison to the very real threat posed by human population expansion and development. Actually, I think the concept of a natural balance, uninfluenced by man, is long since dead anyway. There is hardly one square foot of this continent—even in remote regions—that hasn't been shaped or influenced by us humans, and we're just getting warmed up! Think of all the alien plant and animal introductions—the near total turnover to second and third growth forests—millions of acres of fertile valleys radically altered for agricultural purposes, with accompanying water diversions, channelization, and dams—and last but not least, the greatest threat of all: urbanization itself—the creeping concrete.

Speaking of which, I think about projects like Dick Purvis's in Southern California. Here is a case where dedicated people were able to basically assimilate bluebirds into an urban landscape. Sure, it would be better to have pristine wilderness, but that is total fantasy. We might as well try to make the best of the situation. In this case, it was either urbanization with bluebirds (and other cavity nesters) or urbanization without them. The only thing that was and will be certain is urbanization.

Where I am, here in Northern California, I see the same thing coming on fast. The agricultural land and the wildlife populations it still supports (not to mention us!), is rapidly being converted to housing. I look at places where I now have nestboxes and wonder if bluebirds will survive the creeping concrete. Frankly, I have my doubts, but it can certainly only happen with the help of people putting up nestboxes.

*Kevin Putman,*

*Sutter & Yuba Counties Coordinator*

### **NABS SEEKS NOMINATIONS**

At its Annual Meeting in Galena, Illinois, June 22-25, 2000, the **North American Bluebird Society** will honor outstanding contributions to bluebird conservation and research.

Call **Cheryl Eno**, (402) 783-3011, before March 1 to nominate your favorite bluebirder.

Past California awardees have been **Don Yoder**, **Hatch & Judy Graham**, and **Dick Purvis**.

### **Remembering Jean Ellis**

Many South County El Dorado residents were saddened to learn of the death of **Jean Ellis** in December.

Jean was a real ambassador for the bluebird program. She enlisted all her neighbors and friends, arranged for the donation of lumber for nestboxes, posted notices inviting membership, and faithfully monitored her 4 boxes.

Her son Gene vows to continue monitoring in his mother's memory.



DONYODER'S

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

We have encountered bluebirders who have innovative ways to support the Recovery Program. There are some fund raisers underway from which we hope to hear in the near future. Already on the records **Elizabeth Crispin**, Siskiyou, feared the hassle of airport travel during the holidays. She elected to stay home, save the fares, avoid the crowds—and sent a very nice contribution to **CBRP** for the general treasury. It is greatly appreciated and, as always, will be put to good use.

*(Note: All contributions to MDAS Bluebirds, in excess of the basic subscription amount, are tax deductible. All such funds go directly to the treasury of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society—a 501(c)(3) organization).*

↳

Thanks to **Dick Purvis** who gave 2 nestboxes to **Betty Lovejoy** in Orange Co., she is enjoying “6 huge male bluebirds” several females and other varieties of birds in her yard. They all make extensive use of the birdbath placed near the boxes, proving again that a little water can be a big attractant. Betty observed a female, then a male, followed by several others entering a box—and saw 6 leave the box. Early morning coffee clutch?

↳

**Les Chan**, Placer CoCo, through the wonderful email facility which many of us are privileged to use, has forwarded an inquiry from a biologist in Wroclaw, Poland. The inquirer has asked for reports concerning loss of individual birds or entire broods of cavity nesters in *natural cavities*, due to cavity flooding. Such losses may occur in connection with low temperatures. While our attention as monitors is largely directed to artificial cavities (nestboxes) you may have occasion to observe hatchling losses due to such conditions. Please let us know details and we will for-

ward any reports back through channels.

↳

Maybe it hoped to start a fire, but a bear followed the trail maintained by **Cin Greyraven**, San Bernardino, in 1998 and made kindling of 6 boxes; the raider failed to give any consideration to some banded chicks in a couple of the boxes. This year Cin reappraised the problem, moved some boxes to ‘bear safe’ locations on elevator poles—and lost three more boxes. She reports “obviously, we are restudying the possibilities.” Almost sounds like a natural since Cin’s trail is located in Bearpaw Sanctuary, Forest Falls.

↳

Near the northern coast and Rio Dell, **David Hagemann** missed seeing any bluebirds migrating though his area this year. A usual season brings groups of blues but cold wet weather made a bleak spring for bluebird traffic.

↳

**Judith Burkhardt**, CoCo San Luis Obispo, has had a nestbox on an electrical power pole for 3 years. It is a winter roosting box and the first to be occupied in the spring. The pole vibrates from the wires overhead but the nestbox is fully utilized for its intended purpose. She has been able to find little if any information about the effects of such sensations and wonders if there is any applicable literature available? Another box had 5 white eggs, of which 4 hatched and fledged, followed by 4 blue eggs from which all fledged. She would like to find a source of boxes in the county. Tell us, if you have lumber and/or can build and supply any boxes. We’ll pass the word to Judith.

↳

In Nevada County, CoCo **Lorry**

**Hukill** finds it difficult to round up reports from her several monitors. It is important to understand the urgency of monitoring if we hope to do a good job “for the birds,” which is what it is all about.

*(Further, the work for the Coordinator is increased exponentially. The Program needs the report from every nestbox that has been hung. The unnecessary task of trying to collect monitors’ reports occurs in other counties as well and should not be added to the Coordinator’s task. A box hung but not monitored may become a hazard for any occupants.)*

↳

In Merced, **Steve Simmons** undertakes the nestbox program with a full head of steam with some 220 boxes sized largely for Wood Ducks. True, he has a backup team of high school students to build the boxes to accommodate Wood Ducks, Barn Owls, American Kestrels, Western Screech Owls, as well as bluebirds. He maintains detailed records back to 1984. Steve travels extensively to build such records and also bands large numbers of birds. Look for his annual summary elsewhere in this letter. You will find it inspirational and amazing.

↳

**Sandy Sproul** in Contra Costa can attest to the persistence of the motherly instinct in bluebirds. One of her boxes began with 3 eggs of which 1 was pushed to the edge of the nest. Dedicated incubation produced nothing. New material arrived in time to receive 4 eggs. One was pushed to the side. Two eggs hatched & fledged. Score 2 fledged, 5 unhatched left in the nest. Shucks!

↳

**Susan Hopkins**, Mendocino, fledged 19 tree swallows from 8 NABS boxes, after the parents apparently

*continued next page*



## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

*continued from previous page*

chased away bluebirds who were thinking of taking up occupancy.

↳

In Contra Costa, **Charles Christian-sen** attributes a drop in his garden pests and plant damage to increased bird foraging—after the family cat was permanently kept indoors. That just demonstrates the effectiveness of natural insect predators—when they are able to feed naturally and without interference by introduced exotic animals (cats).

↳

San Bernardino County's late cold spring seems to have eliminated a usual 2nd bluebird nesting in a box cared for by **Phyllis Lacey**. She had 5 fledge but her production dropped from 12 birds the year before and a neighbor had no eggs in a nest built in a larger box. She wonders whether a hummingbird feeder 50 ft. away would deter egg laying by bluebirds? We think it is not probable.

↳

Also in Contra Costa, **Warren But-ton** was too busy making about 160 nestboxes to have time to monitor but observed 7-8 birds enjoying his water dish and flitting about the yard—again adding evidence that water and birdbaths can help attract bluebirds.

↳

In Sonoma Co., **Catherine Heater** fledged bluebirds, woodies, Tree and Violet-green Swallows and has a census for each box. But bluebirds also chose the underside of a high oak limb to fledge a brood—a very difficult location to count noses.

↳

In far upper Yuba County **Helen Goforth** didn't produce any bluebirds—perhaps because resident cows detached one box. Next year's trail will be expanded and a new location found for the disengaged cav-

ity.

↳

**Helen Burke**, San Joaquin Co., hatched 5 bluebird eggs but 10 days later found 1 dead bird and disturbed nesting material. Papa bird hung around for a couple of days followed by 7 bluebirds from another local nest. A woodpecker enlarged the entrance hole of the same box, perhaps preparing for winter occupancy. (*Reduce the hole to its original size by an overlay block, Helen*).

↳

In Amador County **Sharon May** and **Mary Lambert** had bluebirds arrive early—too soon for a spell of bad weather that followed. They left but were replaced by aggressive tree swallows who took over most of the boxes.

↳

**James D. Cox**, in Orange County, needs to turn over his trail of some 40-50 nestboxes to a conscientious successor for the 2000 season. He also has extra boxes, videos, books and various helpmate items for the new trail manager. The season is fast approaching: give Jim a call at (714) 544-4294. Otherwise, Jim will take the boxes down.

↳

Blues waived their opportunity to nest in boxes placed by **Lloyd Cook**,  
*continued next page*

## Hitting the harder trails

It is time to give a bow of appreciation and recognition to a special group of monitors and trail builders. We refer to those who blaze trails, monitor, and maintain their boxes by extra personal effort and under some very adverse conditions—physically, topographically and weatherwise, as well.

In Lassen County, **Suzanne McDonald** and her husband don hip boots to service boxes in a meadow which at times may also require a snowmobile to reach. Her broods tend to be Mountain Bluebirds although Westerns may also show up.

And our Editors, **Hatch & Judy Graham**, in El Dorado, confess to using showshoes or cross-country skis to cover their high-country trails at 8 to 9000' in May.

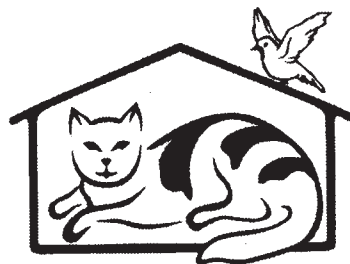
Bluebirds get special attention down in Orange County by **Dick Purvis** whose pole lifter gets national attention, and recognition by the birds who see him coming at some distance—they know they may be about to go for a ride. Dick's been joined by a number of box-lifter enthusiasts like **Howard Rathlesberger** in San Mateo.

In Sutter County **Kevin Putman**, and in Merced County **Steve Simmons** both specializing in Wood Ducks travel by boat and resort to ladders to inspect nesting activity in those larger boxes.

This is but a sampling of birders who expend extra effort "for the benefit of the birds," hoping for a super fledging season. Furthermore, the distance travelled to get to some of those boxes reaches the outer limits.

Well, you get the picture. We who have 'easy' trails respect the effort expended by such people and can only try to appreciate what it takes to get their figures into the Annual Report Summary. Congratulations and thanks to all of them.

—dy



**CATS INDOORS!**

THE CAMPAIGN FOR SAFER BIRDS & CATS



## NOTES

from previous page

Shasta, leaving them for Tree Swallows and Ash-throated Flycatchers.

↳

At least the Orange County sunshine didn't prove helpful for one box placed by **Joe Chandler**. Three nestings with 20 eggs all failed to produce a fledgling. (*Wonder whether dad wasn't staying home at night?*)

↳

All kinds of problems befell nestboxes placed by **Tom Croom**, also Orange County. Attacks on adults, abandoned nests, tree trimmers, weather fluctuations, a Cooper's Hawk nesting nearby.....but nevertheless, 44 Western Blues managed to fledge from 45 boxes. There is always hope and Tom plans to move boxes to some new locations for a fresh start to the millennium.

↳

Always in the forefront of energizing new birders, our indefatigable editor, **Hatch Graham**, got **Ray & Pati DiBasilio**, El Dorado, to place new boxes in their community of Sierra Vista (at the site of old Logtown) and they involved several neighbors in the project also. Likewise, **Candy Perisho** and **Chantal Truscelli** in the community of Greenstone Country have 22 nestboxes along four bridle trails and a half dozen neighbors with nestboxes up. The word spreads and interest just keeps growing. Hatch has orders for more than a dozen additional boxes in those areas. And **Wendy Guglieri** is taking over the boxes of retiring **Elmer Cleveland** at Camino Heights Golf Course and will add another 20 or more. All of that for the good of the cavity nesters.

↳

Lake County has good habitat for swallows. They've taken over all of the boxes placed by **Doris Delbo**. This may present opportunities to try paired boxes— 'one for you, one

nearby for me.' (*We'd like your count of the swallows, too, Doris*)

↳

**Anna Eckstein**, San Diego, raised 5 bluebirds in her single nestbox. Now she is about to continue her efforts at a new location in Monterey County. The birds will surely find suitable accommodations again.

↳

Placer County's **Ken Hashagen** termed the past season a "Bad Year." Bluebirds were visiting early in the season but their single nesting attempt failed. Seemed to be the case elsewhere in Placer, too. There is always next year.

↳

## Master boxbuilder donates another 100

How do all those nestboxes end up in El Dorado County? By this report, 886 were monitored in 1999.

**Eugene Loeder** lives in the Bay Area and 5 years ago contacted **Don Yoder** with an offer to build boxes for CBRP. Eugene is not a birder. In fact, he's a bowler, participating in several Senior bowling leagues. But important to our cause, he's also a woodworker and loves to build things. At the time, Don had no calls for nestboxes but **Viola Sampert** who was Co-Coordinator for El Dorado had a request for some and Don referred Eugene to her. Viola drove her van down into the valley and transferred 100 from Eugene's pickup to her van in 1996. This was followed by additional loads in 1997, '98 and '99. As you read this, Loeder has just met El Dorado reps near Manteca to transfer another 100 boxes to the foothills to total 500.

Loeder's nestboxes are given out for a donation to CBRP except where enterprising monitors need a substantial number for a promising trail.

Cavity-nesters have gained much through **Eugene Loeder's** generosity.

## ARE YOU A SUBSCRIBER? IF NOT, YOU NEED TO BE

Our thanks to the monitors who have submitted their Annual Reports for 1999. As a courtesy we are publishing all reported activity, whether or not you are a paid subscriber to the Program. If you haven't paid, you will not receive further editions of the Newsletter. It takes hours of hard work to call tardy reporters for their records; it also slows up California's compilations and delays our passing those totals to NABS for national totals. This issue is long overdue for that reason and we may have to set a cut-off date for submission of all reports in order for them to be published in the future

To that end, the 2000 year Annual Report form is included here. Please keep it in a safe place and fill it out and submit it at the completion of this year's season.

If you are not a subscriber, we'd love to have your dues. A mere \$5 will bring you four quarterly issues. Additional contributions are always welcome and are tax-deductible. The address is on page 2, column 3.

## Trails on golf courses

**Kevin Putman's** suggestions: 3 considerations for nestbox placement:

1. Where are the sprinklers located? Put boxes on the back side of trees, opposite the sprinklers, or far enough away so that the water comes down as rain.

2. Consider the play of the course—the direction that the golf balls are going. Avoid being too close or down range of the tees. If down range, keep them 100 yards or so away, and on backside of trees or outside the line of fire.

3. Consider heat. If possible, locate on the northeast side of trees, or where they'll be shaded in the afternoon.

Balancing all 3 takes some doing but is worth it for longterm success.

# Call your coordinator if you need help—

Are you having problems identifying your birds? Are you having problems with wasps, blowflies, mites? Have your nestlings been abandoned. Are your nestboxes being invaded by House Sparrows? Your County Coordinators can give you advice and assistance, or have resources they can call on to help. Keep in touch.

COUNTY	COORDINATOR	STREET	CITY/STATE/ZIP	PHONE VOX	PHONE FAX	EMAIL
Alameda	Ann Kositsky	1090 Miller Ave	Berkeley, CA 94708	(510) 527-5091		: ajpa@pacbell.net
	Raymond A. Fontaine	P.O. Box 92	Livermore, CA 94551	(510) 447-0213		
Amador	Penny Brown	20624 Parkside Dr	Pine Grove, CA 95665	(209) 296-3849		penny@cdepot.net
Butte	Emily Harbison	3536 Butte Campus Dr	Oroville, CA 95965	(530) 895-2449		deb@cin.butte.cc.ca
Calaveras	La Verne Hagel	466 Thompson Lane	Copperopolis, CA 95228	(209) 785-2363		
Contra Costa	Shirley & Warren Engstrom	232 Tharp Drive	Moraga, CA 94556	(925) 376-4695		: wlese@juno.com
	Oscar Enstrom	21 Manti Terrace	Alamo, CA 94507	(925) 837-8392		: bigo@lanset.com
El Dorado & Amador	Hatch Graham	P.O. Box 39	Somerset, CA 95684	(530) 621-1833	(530) 621-3939	birdsfly@innercite.com
	Georgetown Divide	Viola Sampert	5655 Hollow Ln	Greenwood, CA 95635	(530) 333-0318	
Lake	Jeannette Knight	PO Box 152	Cobb, CA 95426-0152	(707) 928-5250		
Lassen	Edward Bertotti	470 413 Wingfield	Susanville, CA 96130	(530) 257-3774		
	Mike Magnuson	PO Box 767	Chester, CA 96020	(530) 258-2141		
	Tom Rickman	PO Box 2017	Susanville, CA 96130	(530) 257-2151		
Los Angeles	Doug Martin	13066 Shenley Street	Sylmar, CA 91342	(818) 367-8967		
Madera	William Rihn	PO Box 1648	Coarsegold, CA 93614	(209) 683-3052		
Marin	Ruth Beckner	15 Portola Avenue	San Rafael, CA 94903	(415) 479-9542		
	Meryl Sundove	37 Greenwood Bch Rd	Tiburon, CA 94920	(415) 388-2524	(415) 388-0717	
Mariposa	Lawrence Punte	9443 Banderilla Dr	LaGrange, CA 95329	(209) 852-2559		
Modoc	Charles Welch	PO Box 825	Alturas, CA 96101	(530) 233-4534		
Napa & Sonoma	David Graves	1500 Los Carneros Ave	Napa, CA 94559	(707) 257-0843		
Nevada	Lorry Hukill	15954 Wolf Mtn Rd.	Grass Valley, CA 95949	(530) 477-7165		
	Richard Nickel	107 Bawden Ave	Grass Valley, CA 95945	(530) 273-2600		
	Dick Purvis	936 S Siet Place	Anaheim, CA 92806	(714) 776-8878		Dickersly@aol.com
Placer	Lesia Chan	9720 Oak Leaf Way	Granite Bay, CA 95746	(916) 791-4529		: habitat@jps.net
Plumas	Patricia Johnson	PO Box 767	Chester, CA 96020	(530) 258-2141		
Riverside	Melissa Browning	10154 Beaumont Ave	Cherry Valley, CA 92223	(909) 845-9266		
San Bernardino	Glen Chappell	1923 Abbie Way	Upland, CA 91784	(909) 981-1996		: Chappell@CHS.Chaffey.K12.CA.US
San Diego	Rosemary Fey	PO Box 1245	Borrego Spgs, CA 92004	(619) 767-5810		
San Francisco	Don Wolff	1376 6th Ave	San Francisco, CA 94122	(415) 665-6938		
San Joaquin	Thomas Hoffman	10122 E Woodbridge Rd	Acampo, CA 95220	(209) 369-8578		: thoffman@lodinet.com
San Luis Obispo	Judith Burkhardt	8560 El Corte	Atascadero, CA 93422	(805) 466-3272		burkhardt@thegrid.net 3.
San Mateo	Howard Rathlesberger	230 Ridgeway	Woodside, CA 94062	(650) 367-1296	(650) 369-4788	: Rathles@aol.com
Santa Barbara	Richard Willey	4172 Vanguard Dr	Lompoc CA 93436	(805) 733-5383		willey@utech.net
Santa Clara	Garth Harwood & SCVAS	5901 Pescadero Crk Rd	Pescadero CA 94060	(650) 879-0724		: GarthHar@aol.com
Santa Cruz	Nanda Curren	530 Amigo Road	Soquel, CA 95073	(408) 462-3703		hearth@cruzio.com
Sonoma (see Napa)						
Sutter	Kevin A. Putman	2884 Coy Dr	Yuba City, CA 95993	(530) 755-1480		: dputman@syix.com
Tehama	Pete Flower	331 Oak Street	Red Bluff, CA 96080	(530) 527-0392		
Tulare	Peter C. Morrison, MD.	325 So. Willis	Visalia, CA 93291	(209) 733-1154		
Ventura	Jan Wasserman	1158 Beechwood St	Camarillo, CA 93010	(805) 987-3928		: bandlady@west.net
Yuba (see Sutter)						
All Other Counties	Don Yoder	2021 Ptarmigan #1	Walnut Creek, CA 94595	(925) 937-5974	(925) 935-4480	cbrp@value.net



## Find out more about your birds—have them banded

When you have determined your estimated hatching date, call a bander if one is near. Schedule permitting, the bander may be able to band the adult incubating the eggs and/or the nestlings a week or so after they pip from the eggs. Banding helps us learn about the site fidelity of the adults, the dispersal of the chicks, longevity, and other elements of population dynamics.

### BIRD BANDERS:

Amador & southern El Dorado	Hatch Graham	(530) 621-1833	birdsfly@innercite.com
Northern El Dorado	Dave DeLongchamp	(530) 333-2304	selkaijen@jps.net
Placer & northern Sacramento	Dee Warenycia	(916) 786-5056	warbler5@aol.com
San Francisco Peninsula	Lee Franks	(650) 592-7733	
Sutter & Yuba	Kevin Putman	(530) 755-1480	dputman@syix.com
Ventura	Jan Wasserman	(805) 987-3928	bandlady@west.net

Anyone desiring to band who can commit 2 or 3 days per week is encouraged to contact Hatch Graham.

## Pillbug peril persists

The Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project in Oregon reports losses of bluebirds last Spring to the thorny-headed tapeworm.

Oregon, like California, experienced prolonged cold spring weather causing many birds to delay nesting. Their regular winter food supply—fruits and berries—are depleted, and spiders, grasshoppers, and crickets are inactive or not yet available.



Apparently, the blues turn to pillbugs or sowbugs (*Armillidium vulgare*), the little gray isopod common in bark and borders around gardens. The pillbug is the only known intermediate host of this particular tapeworm.

By the time the tapeworm takes effect in the birds, it is too late to help. They will first become lethargic and sit with feathers ruffled, then

will be found dead in the nest. If this occurs and you have the opportunity, collect the bird in a zip-loc bag and ask your local animal rescue organization to have it examined for *Plagiorhynchus formosus*.

Dispose of the nest and spray the nestbox with a solution of 1 tbsp of bleach to a pint of water. Leave the door open till it dries.

One possible preventative measure is to feed mealworms in those cold, wet spring days when the birds might have to resort to pillbugs for food.

The pillbug peril was first reported in *Sialia*, v.2, no.2 in Spring 1980 by **Elsie Eltzroth**, et al. **Pat Johnson** wrote the report in the Fall 1999 newsletter of **PBRP**.

Here's but another example of how an observant monitor may be able to intervene to help our cavity-nesters succeed in what, for some, has become an alien environment.

## POETS' CORNER

*BLUEBIRDS FLY!* welcomes poetry and light verse provided it meets our standards of craftsmanship or humor or both. Send your inspirations to *Poetry Editor, Bluebirds Fly, PO Box 39, Somerset, CA 95684*.

### The Bluebird

O bluebird, welcome back again,  
Thy azure coat and ruddy vest  
Are hues that April loveth best,—  
Warm skies above the furrowed plain.

The lucid smoke drifts on the breeze,  
The steaming pans are mantling white,  
And thy blue wing's a joyous sight,  
Among the brown and leafless trees.

Now go and bring thy homesick bride,  
Persuade her here is just the place  
To build a home and find a race  
In Downy's cell, my lodge beside.

~John Burroughs, 1881 (excerpt)

Your subscription is a benefit of membership. Membership is available for as little as \$5 per year but more is greatly appreciated. We send the newsletter to many cooperators but we need paid members to keep printing. The year and month of your membership expiration is shown in the upper right side of your label, e.g., 200007=July 2000. If your label says AR99, it means you have no subscription but your report is included. Thanks for reporting. Please subscribe.

Vol 5 No 4 Winter 1999-2000

Newsletter

California Bluebird Recovery Program's

1999 Annual Report Edition

BLUEBIRDS FLY!

Please send correspondence to address on page 2

a service of  
National Audubon Society-California  
555 Audubon Place  
Sacramento, CA 95825

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Sacramento, CA  
Permit 910