

Winter 2023

February 2023

The Fledgling

The official Newsletter of the Missouri Bluebird Society



The Missouri Bluebird Society is an Affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society

Letter from the President:

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Dear MOBS members,

I always look forward to February in Missouri because, even though the chance for bitter cold is always present, it usually is the time of year we host the greatest population of Bluebirds in our state. Not only do we have our resident, year-round Bluebirds coming to our bird baths and feeders, but we also get to see all those Bluebirds that wintered south of us and are on their way back to their nesting grounds in the states north of us. So enjoy our resident birds and the “out-of-towners” while they are here!



Please help me welcome our new Grant Program Ambassador, Jack Corrigan! Read all about Jack on page 2 of this newsletter. Jack has been a MOBS member for quite some time and has participated in enough conferences to be a familiar face to many of us. If you have not met him yet I hope you soon will. In his new position for MOBS he is available to support **existing** grant program recipients, as well as those folks interested in applying for a nest box/baffle grant from MOBS. Thank you Jack for taking on this supportive roll for MOBS.

I am already excited about our 2023 Bluebird Conference (July 14th–16th in Jefferson City). In this issue we share a bit more about one of our presenters, Nadia Navarrete-Tindall. Nadia is a great friend to birds AND people with her efforts and expertise in utilizing native plants in beneficial and fun ways. We hope to share a bit more about other Conference presenters in the next issue of **The Fledgling**. Regina says a special thanks to Betty Richey for her submission to this issue and of course to Nadia for allowing us to print her special cookie recipe (pg6).

Do what you can to help the Bluebirds,

Steve Garr, president, Missouri Bluebird Society

Would you prefer to receive your copy of **The Fledgling** “Email Only”?

Send an email to the Editor at: regina@birds-i-view.biz
Specify your name and “Email Only Fledgling”
In the subject line.



MOBS
PO BOX 105830
Jefferson City, MO
65110

Missouri Bluebird Society 2023 Officers & Board of Directors

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MOBS Grant Box Program Ambassador.... **Jack Corrigan** wgs84@jackquest.com

MOBS Webmaster ..**Ann Smith** thesmiths91@yahoo.com 636-629-8267

Meet MOBS' new Grant Program Ambassador, Jack Corrigan



Originally from Pennsylvania but after a short stay in Virginia, my wife Amy's job brought us out to Kansas City. We have been "north of the river" now for almost 10 years. I was a State Park Ranger in Virginia and currently work part-time as a Resource Management Technician for the Missouri Department of Conservation.

I am also a conservation volunteer for MDC at Burr Oak Woods Nature Center, and a certified Missouri Master Naturalist. I would definitely classify myself a novice birder but a hobbyist woodworker for over 30 years. Nest boxes have sort of become my thing, whether building the classic designs, trying new styles or working to improve predator control. My bluebirder time is split between the workshop and keeping the nest boxes on 5 Platte and Clay conservation areas in working order.

Jack Corrigan

Please see the Applications for our two Grant programs on pages 8 and 9 of this issue.

The "MOBS Nest box Grant Program" is designed for initiating trails or adding to existing trails on publicly owned land and recipients receive nest boxes, poles, and baffles in a matching grant.

MOBS "Save the Clutch" Grant Program is designed for monitors wishing to remove their nesting boxes from trees or wooden posts and place them on metal poles with baffles.

The following individuals have joined MOBS or renewed their membership since our last Newsletter.

We WELCOME our New Members and THANK our Renewing Members for their continued support!

***Lori Johnson, Tricia Kephart,
Terry McNeely,
Jeffery Peine, Paula Peters, Betty Richey***



Did you Know MOBS memberships expire on December 31st of the Expiration Year?

So...if your membership expires in 2023, it does not expire until December 31st of 2023.

If you have any questions about your MOBS membership please feel free to contact Regina Garr at 573-638-2473 or regina@birds-i-view.biz.

Membership Application on Page 4

2023 Missouri Bluebird Conference



**July 14th – 16th
2023
Jefferson City, MO**
Lincoln University Carver Farm

Photo from www.moprairie.org



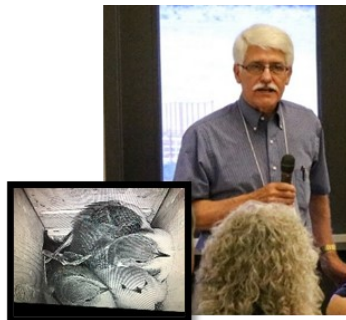
Featuring:

FUN & Educational Field Trips and Presentations!

Nadia Navarrete-Tindall, Native Plant Specialist, presents **“Native Edibles for People and Bluebirds”**

PLUS... Field Trip to the Lincoln University

“FINCA” (Families Integrating Nature, Conservation, and Agriculture). This demonstration farm tour is sure to be a memorable learning experience.



Bob Peak has managed over 200 nest boxes for the past 33 years and has kept exceptional records on his trails. To date, these trails have produced **39,963 Eastern Bluebirds** and **3127 fledglings of seven other native species!** Bob has contributed informative submissions to NABS’s Bluebird Journal, including a recent one in the Summer 2022 issue, titled “Some Uncommon Bluebird Nestlings” about atypically colored bluebird nestlings.

Ivan Ray Miller shares his knowledge and decades of experience! Ivan hosted **142 pair of nesting Purple Martins** at his home during the 2022 nesting season, as well as Northern Flickers, Bluebirds, and many other native cavity-nesting birds. He has also established a very productive **Prothonotary warbler** trail!

“Bluebird Basics” and other Birding and Nature Programs

And of course: Our Annual Friday Bluebird Banquet, Saturday Picnic, and time spent together at the one and only **“Mockingbird Hill”** for food, friendship, and bird walks.



Missouri Bluebird Society

www.missouribluebird.org

Contact Steve and Regina at 573-638-2473 for more details

House Wren vs. Bluebird

*I am sure the following information will be familiar to many readers—we have enclosed it in nearly every Conference Packet and it has appeared in several other issues of The Fledgling. But each season folks ask me how to control aggressive House wrens OTHER than simply choosing different habitat and relocating boxes. Installing this style of House wren guard is something pro-active to do in areas that routinely have problems with House wrens dislodging the nests, eggs, or even nestlings of Bluebirds and other native cavity nesters. Other styles of House wren guards exist, however many are outdated and much less effective now that nest boxes are (thankfully) employing much longer roof over-hangs than in decades past. A distinguishing aspect of this guard is the addition and placement of the “side guards” on the box. I have had nest boxes in “perfect” wren habitat that saw **less** House wren issues than boxes that were in much more open areas away from brush.... Apparently ALL the birds don't read our books and brochures! I have found this modular guard to be a quick and effective tool to implement on the trail or at home. **Steve Garr***

No nest box monitor WANTS to experience problems during nesting season, however being prepared to handle some issues (particularly if they have occurred in the past) really can make a difference in successful nestings on your trail. For example, BEFORE House Wrens arrive, take some time to package together a few “modular” wren guard kits. They can be made from a variety of materials and will usually involve



Above: Modular Wren guard installed on a traditional NABS style nest box.

three pieces of thin wood or vinyl and the necessary screws to attach to the nest box roof.

In some areas, House Wrens are so prevalent and aggressive that *discouraging* them by making a particular nest box less attractive to them than to other native species can give our other cavity nesters a chance. (Particularly since House Wrens will frequently try to dislodge the contents of a nest box, even after another bird has already built a nest and laid eggs.). **This behavior is ONLY typical of House Wrens and NOT Carolina Wrens.**

The concept behind this style of **House Wren guard** is to block the entrance hole to the nest box enough to discourage a house wren from being able to bring in the long twigs and sticks they like to build with, yet leaving it open enough to allow Bluebirds and other cavity nesters access. Note that the plywood guard hides the entrance hole from view. BEST used after the bluebirds have already committed to the box by building a nest and possibly even waiting until the first egg is laid.



Above: Modular Wren guard installed on a box with a sloped roof, such as a Peterson style box or this “Campbell box”.

Is it time to Renew your MOBS Membership? Memberships expire on **December 31st of the year of expiration.** Check your mailing label to see if you need to renew. (if your membership expires in “2023”, it does not expire until Dec 31, 2023) Feel Free to contact Regina at 573-638-2473 or regina@birds-i-view.biz if you have questions about your membership. Please mail your renewal form, along with your check or money order (payable to **MOBS**) to:
Missouri Bluebird Society/ P.O. Box 105830/ Jefferson City, MO 65110

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ city/state _____ Zip _____

County: _____ Email: _____

Membership Levels:

- _____ Individual one year membership \$9.00
- _____ DONOR (Annual) \$50.00
- _____ *Family LIFE Membership \$175.00
- _____ **Senior Life Membership \$100.00
- _____ Individual two year membership \$16.00
- _____ SUPPORTER (Annual) \$100.00
- _____ *Family one year membership \$15.00
- _____ *Family two year membership \$28.00

How many nest boxes do you monitor? _____

How long have you been a Bluebirder? _____

*For individuals residing at the same address

**Is a family Life membership available for individuals 65 or older (family members must reside at this same address)

A Legacy to Benefit Chimney Swifts

Text and photos by **Betty Richey**, River Bluffs Audubon Society and long-time MOBS member

I was privileged to be a friend of Christie Lundy. She was a humble, but very intelligent person. I had no idea that she had a PHD in physics. She was passionate about native plants and birds. She also took wonderful pictures of nature and animals. When she died and left some of her retirement savings to River Bluffs Audubon, it seemed like a good idea to do something in her memory to benefit birds.

Charles Skornia suggested we put in a Chimney Swift tower at McKay Park. We met with J.J. Gates, and pitched the idea to him. J.J. liked the idea, and was willing to build and install the tower if we paid for the materials. We selected an area that would discourage close traffic (as the

traffic can cause the Swifts to abandon the nest). The area also would cause kids sliding down the hill in the snow to veer away from the tower. Swifts eat massive amounts of in-

sects each day. Swifts can't perch on a tree, because of how their feet are made, but they hang from the sides of the tower or Chimney. Since more chimneys are capped, these birds need more housing.

It's interesting to watch them come into the tower. They slowly swirl downward and eventually fall into the tower. If there are lots of them, it looks like a little tornado swirling downward. Only one pair will nest at a time, but huge numbers of Swifts can use the roost at night.

Charles Skornia gave the blueprint for the Chimney Swift tower to Parks and Recreation in Jefferson City. He has built two of them on his property. He was very helpful in making this project come to fruition.

Come see the tower at McKay Park. It's on the north side of the park, below the dam.

Betty Richey



**PLEASE KEEP OFF
THIS CHRISTIE LUNDY
CHIMNEY SWIFT TOWER.**



**THESE CIGAR
SHAPED BIRDS FLY
HUNDREDS OF MILES,
EATING 1/3 THEIR WEIGHT
IN INSECTS EACH DAY.
THEY CAN USE THIS TOWER
FOR NESTING AND SLEEPING.**

When is the last time you visited the Missouri Prairie Foundation Website or the Grow Native! Website? (www.grownative.org) Check out the "Learn" Tab on the Grown Native! site for useful information on planting native plants for the birds in YOUR space.

SWEET POTATO COOKIES WITH WILD PLUM JAM

By **Nadia Navarrete-Tindall**

Reprinted from the [Grow Native! website](http://www.grownative.org)

Ingredients

1 cup yogurt, Greek style
 1 teaspoon butter
 1 cup brown sugar
 2 eggs
 2 cups sweet potato, peeled, boiled and mashed (can substitute with 1 cup persimmon pulp and 1 cup mashed sweet potato)
 2 cups whole wheat flour
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 cup native non-hybrid pecans
 1/4 teaspoon minced crystallized ginger (optional)
 1/4 cup wild plum jam



Photo by Nadia Navarrete-Tindall.

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F. Grease cookie sheets with Canola oil.
2. Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix sugar, butter, yogurt, eggs and sweet potato. Add dry ingredients to this mix. Fold in crystallized nuts and ginger.
3. Drop dough by teaspoonfuls, one inch apart, onto cookie sheet. Drop 1/4 teaspoonful of wild plum jam on top of each cookie.
4. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes.

*Number of servings: eight dozen (96) small cookies.
 Cookies can be kept frozen in air-tight containers.*

Recipe for Wild Plum Jam

Ingredients

4 cups of wild plum pulp
 4 cups of sugar
 2 cinnamon sticks

Directions

1. Boil plums in water to loosen skin. Get the pulp using a tomato juicer.
2. Boil wild plum pulp with sugar and cinnamon sticks. Lower the temperature and let it simmer for an hour or so. Stir and check mixture constantly to avoid burning. Jam is ready when it sticks to wooden spoon.



Wild Plum is a shrub or a small tree. It spreads from roots and may form thickets. Suckers can be controlled with fire or mowing. The fragrant flowers are in clusters with five white petals. The leaves are alternate, ovate, with long-pointed tips. The fruit is red to yellow and ball-shaped (1" diameter). It grows in full to partial sunlight on fertile loamy soil to marginal soils. It can be found along wooded areas, fence rows and pastures. It can be propagated from seed or cuttings.

Wild plum provides food and cover for wildlife. It is consumed by quail and many other songbirds and mammals.

It is used to produce superb jellies and other preserves. The edible fruit matures from July to September. It can be consumed raw or cooked. For more wild plum growing information, visit the [Grow Native! Native Plant Database](http://www.grownative.org)

Above information reprinted from the Grow native! Website: www.grownative.org

Note from the Editor: *Dr. Nadia Navarrete-Tindall* is a Lincoln University associate professor, leader of the Cooperative Extension Specialty Crops/Native Plants Program, and a Grow Native! Advisor. She will be presenting **“Native Edibles for People and Bluebirds!”** at the 2023 Missouri Bluebird Conference in July.

Upcoming Events

Central Missouri Master Gardeners' Spring Seminar 2023

Registration opens Feb. 1 and continues through Feb. 25.

Saturday, March 4

<https://cmmg.regfox.com/2023-spring-gardening-seminar>

8:00am - 4:00pm

Southridge Baptist Church

1815 Vieth Drive

Jefferson City, MO 65109

573-680-3718

Be sure to check out the programs on "Bluebirds and Chickadees", "Nocturnal Pollinators", Gardening with Native Plants and More!



March 3 and March 10, 1:00-4:00 pm. Pruning Native Fruit Trees Workshop.

2 sessions. Each class is limited to 12 participants.

To register: send email to Sue Bartelette (BarteletteW@lincolnu.edu) or call 573-690-1828 by March 1.

The session on March 3 is at **Lincoln University Busby Farm** located at 5124 Goller Rd., Jefferson City, MO.

And the session on March 10 is on campus, at the **Finca EcoFarm**.



Bluebirds Across Nebraska Annual Conference! April 28th and 29th Platte River State Park www.bbne.org

**SAVE
the
DATE!**

SATURDAY, June 3, 2023 8 am—4 pm

The Annual **Purple Martin Open House** at the Home of MOBS' member Ivan Ray Miller.

Ivan routinely hosts 142+ pair of Purple Martins each season! Come visit and enjoy the Miller family's thriving wildlife habitat and their special hospitality. The 2023 speaker will be Andy Troyer, a familiar and respected name in the Purple Martin world!

22885 340th Street/ Jamesport, MO

(Two miles East on HWY F and two miles South on 340th Street—watch for Signs). For more details contact:

Ivan Ray Miller **660-684-6563**





Missouri Bluebird Society Nest Box Grant Program

The Missouri Bluebird Society is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to conservation of bluebirds and other native cavity nesting songbirds, and to educational projects that would be of benefit to these native birds. A limited number of nest boxes each year will be awarded to assist in projects that help promote the objective of the Missouri Bluebird Society (MOBS). These projects must include establishing and enhancing nest box trails on public lands within the state of Missouri, and have as one of its goals the education of the local community about Bluebirds and other native Cavity Nesting Species. These grants start at five sets of nest boxes and poles per grant, on a “matching basis”, with MOBS providing five nest box/pole sets when applicant provides an equal number of nest box/ pole sets. Beginning December 2013, The Nest Box and pole sets from MOBS Grants will also include Raccoon/Snake Baffles. Whether or not the matching box requirement can be met by refurbishing existing boxes on an established trail will be at the discretion of the MOBS Board of Directors. Further, applicants must agree to the following provisions:

1. Applicant’s nest boxes must be constructed in a fashion and design recommended and approved by MOBS.
2. Trail Location must be approved by MOBS.
3. The applicant agrees to present a 15-30 minute program to their organization or another community organization about bluebirds and other native cavity –nesting birds and the need for monitored bluebird trails. MOBS will assist in providing materials for this presentation.
4. The applicant agrees to take responsibility for seeing that the nest box trail is adequately monitored and agrees to take all necessary precautions and maintenance measures to ensure that non-native species are not allowed to inhabit and reproduce in the nest boxes.
5. The applicant agrees to turn in a completed MOBS nest box monitoring form each year after nesting season reporting nesting activity on the trail.

Applicant Signature _____ date _____

Please provide and attach the following information for review by the MOBS Board of Directors:

1. Applicant’s name, address, county, telephone number, and email address (if any).
2. Name of any organization involved and contact information for the organization.
3. Purpose of the proposed project- particularly if the nest box trail is a part of an existing project that encompasses other goals.
4. Location of the project and description of the habitat of the trail or proposed trail.
5. Description of how the project will be implemented (including a time line).
6. Description of predator control measures that are planned and how they will be implemented.
7. Other sources of funding for the project.
8. Plans and details for the required presentation (i.e. to whom and when)
9. Please attach a basic description of the “matching box /pole sets” the applicant will provide (plans or photos are helpful)
10. Number of grant boxes requested.

Please mail this form, along with the above information to:

Missouri Bluebird Society/ PO Box 105830/ Jefferson City, MO 65110

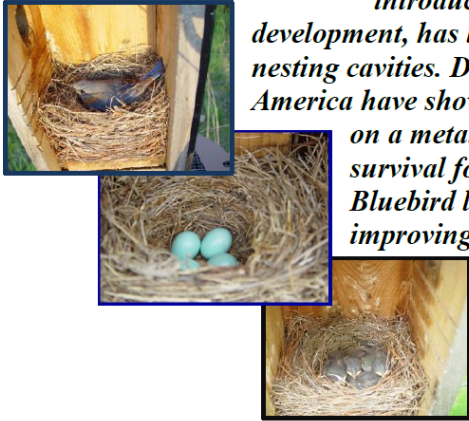
It is the responsibility of grant recipients to make arrangements with MOBS to claim their grant boxes & poles from Jefferson City, MO—MOBS cannot ship or deliver grant nest box/pole sets.

www.missouribluebird.org



**Missouri Bluebird Society’s
“Save the Clutch” Predator Baffle Grant Program**

The Missouri Bluebird Society is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to conservation of bluebirds and other native cavity nesting songbirds, and to educational projects that would be of benefit to these native birds. **This Grant Program is for Baffles and Poles only. Please see our “Nest Box Grant program” if you need nest boxes also.**



A lack of natural cavities for native cavity nesting birds, caused by the introduction of non-native species, as well as the loss of habitat to development, has left many of Missouri’s Cavity-Nesting birds in need of safer nesting cavities. Decades of research by Bluebird Conservationists across North America have shown that placing a man-made nest box on a tree (as opposed to on a metal pole with a proper baffle) greatly reduces the chances of survival for the clutch of eggs or babies. In an effort to assist current Bluebird landlords (on public trails such as greenways and parks) in improving the safety of the man-made cavities they offer, MOBS is pleased to present the “Save the Clutch” grant program. Each year, MOBS will provide, at no charge, a limited number metal poles and stove-pipe predator baffles to trail monitors wishing to remove their nest boxes from trees and/or wooden posts and place them on poles with baffles.



Grant Applicants must meet the criteria stated below.

1. Applicant’s nest boxes must be constructed in a fashion and design recommended and approved by MOBS.
2. Trail Location must be approved by MOBS.
3. The applicant agrees to present a 15-30 minute program to their organization or another community organization about bluebirds and other native cavity –nesting birds and the need for monitored bluebird trails. MOBS will assist in providing materials for this presentation.
4. The applicant agrees to take responsibility for seeing that the nest box trail is adequately monitored (as outlined in the MOBS Educational Brochure) and agrees to take all necessary precautions and maintenance measures to ensure that non-native species are not allowed to inhabit and reproduce in the nest boxes.
5. The applicant agrees to turn in a completed MOBS nest box monitoring form each year after nesting season reporting nesting activity on the trail.

Applicant Signature _____ date _____

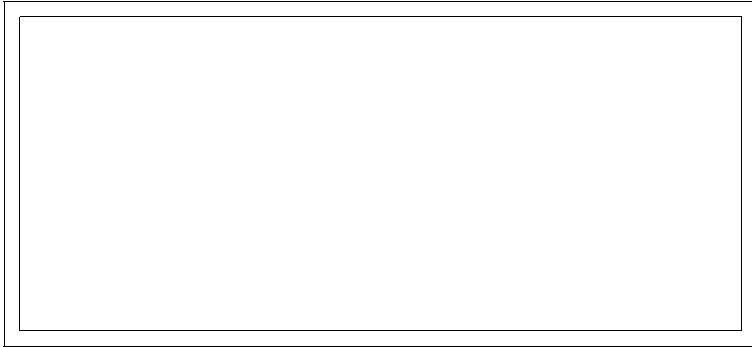
Please provide and attach the following information for review by the MOBS Board of Directors:

1. Applicant’s name, address, county, telephone number, and email address (if any).
2. Name of any organization involved and contact information for the organization.
3. Location of the project and description of the habitat of the trail currently, and description of habitat once the boxes are removed to poles, if that will change (photos are helpful).
4. Description of how re-mounting the nest boxes onto the grant poles/baffles will be implemented (including a time line). A limited number of baffles only (without poles) may be granted for trails where boxes are currently on poles but without predator baffles.
5. Plans and details for the required presentation (i.e. to whom and when)
6. Please attach a basic description of the nest boxes being removed from trees or wooden posts (plans or photos are helpful)
7. Number of grant baffles or baffles/pole sets requested.

Please mail this form, along with the above information to:

Missouri Bluebird Society/ PO Box 105830/ Jefferson City, MO 65110

It is the responsibility of grant recipients to make arrangements with MOBS to claim their grant baffles & poles from Jefferson City, MO—MOBS cannot ship or deliver grant predator baffles or poles. www.missouribluebird.org



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The Missouri Bluebird Society
P.O. BOX 105830
Jefferson City, MO 65110

The Fledgling Winter 2023 Issue

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- **Meet our new “Grant Program Ambassador”!**
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- **A delicious RECIPE from one of the 2023 Conference speakers**
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- **Upcoming Events!**



Bluebirds in Winter

Photo by Steve Garr