



BLUEBIRDS FLY!

California Bluebird Recovery Program's newsletter

—supported by National Audubon Society—California
—affiliated with the North American Bluebird Society

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

Species diversity pays!

by Garth Harwood, CBRP Coordinator, Santa Clara County

Not long ago, I editorialized in these pages (4:2) that our statewide Bluebird Recovery Program could be an even more powerful conservation tool if we actively committed ourselves to helping a more diverse group of our native cavity nesters. A number of species, such as American Kestrels, Bewick's Wrens, and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, are actually in greater distress than the much-loved Western Bluebird, yet only a few of these are finding homes in CBRP nestboxes.

Now that we've seen the stunning 1998 results, it's time to follow up on the diversity angle. Are we doing enough to help those birds which need it the most?

Top diversity accomplishments of 1998

The good news is that numerous trail leaders have achieved good species diversity, mostly as a result of mounting large numbers of boxes. I scanned the massive results list from *BLUEBIRDS FLY!* (4:4) carefully and found the following noteworthy achievements (please forgive any errors or omissions!)

Top Diversity Award (no cash, just glory!): Nine species: **James Guthrie**, Calaveras Co. (his Acorn Woodpeckers put him over the top). Eight species: **Dick Purvis**, Orange Co. Seven species: **Dee Warenycia**, Placer Co.; **Kevin Putman**, Sutter Co.; **Hatch & Judy Graham**, El Dorado Co.; **Garth Harwood**, Santa Clara Co. (if you'll permit inclusion of my 5 White-breasted Nuthatches, which didn't make the big list). Six species: **Don Yoder**, Contra Costa Co.; **Lester Katsura**, Contra Costa Co., and **Dieter Thiel**, Santa Clara Co.

Best yields of top "decliners"

Glory should also be heaped upon these top producers of species in steepest decline (extent of 30-year decline given in parentheses): Common Barn Owl 9 (-78%): **Kevin Putman**, Sutter (4 fledged); Bewick's Wren (-49%): **Dieter Thiel**, Santa Clara (27 fledged); Chestnut-backed Chickadee (-49%): **Don Yoder**, Contra Costa (15 fledged); American Kestrel (-44%): **Larry Bodiford**, Tuolumne (19 fledged); Violet-green Swallow (-41%): **Dieter Thiel**, Santa Clara (89 fledged); Mountain Chickadee (-35%): **Barbara Moore**, Nevada (57 fledged); and Oak Titmouse (-35 %): **Dieter Thiel**, Santa Clara (76 fledged).

Records begging to be broken

As you can see, some of these records could easily fall to anyone making a special effort on behalf of a specific species. **Barbara Moore's** effort in Nevada County is particularly inspiring, since her mountain location and hard work resulted in her trail producing 92% of the Mountain Bluebirds and 69% of the Mountain Chickadees produced statewide in 1998! Which of these

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TAILORING TO FIT THOSE LITTLE GUYS

by Don Yoder, Program Director

It seems worthwhile to review our creed printed above on our masthead. It still stands. Ever since **Garth Harwood's** editorial in last Spring's issue of *BLUEBIRDS FLY!* (4:2) we have placed more emphasis on *cavity nesters* while in no way downplaying bluebirds. Many other cavity nesters, especially those in the woodpecker family, have a direct effect upon the welfare of secondary cavity nesters such as bluebirds, titmice, nuthatches, chickadees, flycatchers, owls, bats—what a list!—few of whom are capable of chiseling their own cavities. Woodies, on the other hand, are very effective in providing housing for themselves and for tenants of their cavities in succeeding nesting seasons.

Recognize, if you will, that the hammerheads also are having housing problems, brought about by the clearing of timber and individual dead trees. Instead of young trees growing to maturity, shopping centers sprout and flourish.

It's a simple matter to slightly alter the details of the NABS standard nestbox to accommodate additional species with the same pattern. Changes in the hole size and floor area are about all that are needed, thus opening up new worlds to small tenants who find the changes just to their liking. If you choose to extend a helping hand to the bigger fellows, special designs are available for woodpeck-

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More '98 returns

Our reporting system is not without its faults. Occasionally reports are lost, arrive late, or are overlooked. Some of all of these problems plagued us in 1998.

Rachel Talbot, Amador, sent in her report but we didn't get it. Her 4 Western Bluebird (WEBL) attempts with 16 fledged and 3 Oak Titmouse (OATI) attempts with 13 fledged from 5 boxes is worthy of note.

Nancy Slenger, also Amador, apologized for being late. From her 10 boxes, she had 5 attempts with nestlings that all perished from the cold, but afterward 3 renested with 12 WEBLs fledged. A Violet-green Swallow (VGSW) attempt yielded 5 fledglings, and 2 Ash-throated Flycatcher (ATFL) tries resulted in one nest with 5 eggs abandoned (ants?) and 3 fledged from the other.

Darlene Bryden, of El Dorado, had 1 attempt in her 6 boxes with 5 WEBLs fledged. She called her report in but our compiler missed it.

The new president of Central Sierra Audubon Society, **John Turner**, Tuolumne Co., wrote that he hadn't known about CBRP but would join and wanted to add his totals to our list. His 10 boxes yielded 2 WEBL attempts with 10 fledged, 1 OATI attempt—7 fledged, 1 VGSW try—5 fledged, and 1 ATFL attempt, abandoned.

Contra Costa County Co-Coordinator (5Co, for short) **Oscar Enstrom**, has so many trails, we missed one. He has 21 boxes at Macedo Ranch, Mt Diablo where 12 WEBL tries resulted in 29 fledged along with 1 ATFL fledging 3, a VGSW fledging 4, a WBNU fledging 6, and a HOWR who tried and failed. Oscar's grand total was 119.

From Placer County we learn that **Ken Hashagen's** 2 attempts with 9 fledged belonged in the Tree Swallow (TRES) columns instead of ATFL, and that **Audrey Bowman's** trail of 9

nestboxes at Diamond Oaks Golf Course was plagued with House Sparrows; still, she had two attempts by WEBL without success but 1 nest of WBNU fledged 7 young.

Not enough that Orange County had more birds than any other—**Dick Purvis** found two more monitors who hadn't reported:

Colin Campbell, with 16 NABS hanging boxes, had 24 nest tries, 73 fledglings, all WEBL, and **Billie Arthur**, in 12 hanging boxes, had 8 nest tries with 35 WEBL fledged.

These reports add 89 nestboxes to our total for 4231. It raises the number of Western Blues fledged from 5227 to 5407 and our grand total of all cavity nesters to 11,559.

HELP PUT US ON THE MAP—BIRDHOUSE ONLINE

Those of you with access to the internet will want to see your birdhouse show up on the map of California by switching to the NABS/**Cornell Birdhouse Online**. Pick one or two of your favorite nestboxes and report what you find during monitoring. Your bird species, nesting progress and location pops up on the screen. **Dean Sheldon**, of NABS worked with Cornell Lab of Ornithology to make this fascinating website a reality.

Try it, it's fun. Just click on:
<http://birdsource.cornell.edu/birdhouse>

Current CBRPers with birdhouse online include **Malcolm & Janet King**, Mendocino, reporting 2 Oak Titmouse nests with eggs, **Linda Violett**, Orange, with Western Blues nesting, **Hatch & Judy Graham**, Amador/El Dorado, with Titmouse nests in two locations, and **Ray DiBasilio**, El Dorado, with 6 blue eggs—as we go to press.

To subscribe to BLUEBIRD-L, send this message to: listproc@cornell.edu
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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.

In 1998, CBRP members reported on 4,231 nestboxes with more than 11,550 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 is available for as little as \$5, but \$10 will provide you not only with our newsletter but a 32-pg Monitoring Guide. Checks to "MDAS-Bluebirds." Mail to CBRP, 2021 Ptarmigan Dr #1, Walnut Creek, CA 94595. Donations are tax-deductible.

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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.

National Audubon Society



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.

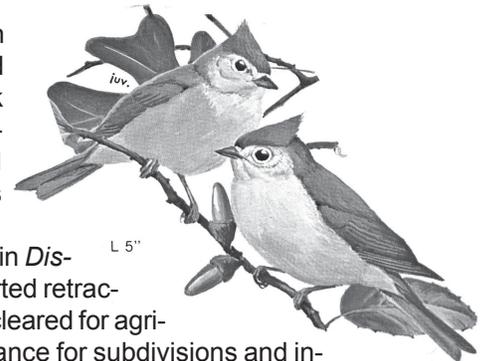
To join NAS, contact your local Audubon Chapter, or call NAS-California at (916) 481-5332. National dues are \$20 for new members, and include a bimonthly magazine as well as membership privileges in your local Audubon chapter.

Spotlight on our cavity-nesters

The Oak Titmouse (formerly Plain Titmouse) is resident in oak woodlands throughout California, being absent only in the treeless San Joaquin Valley and the southeastern deserts and in the mountains above its favored oak vegetation. [Its close relative, the Juniper Titmouse, occurs in Modoc and Lassen Cos. and in the Providence Mtns in eastern San Bernardino Co.]

Oak Titmouse

Baeolophus inornatus



As early as 1944, Grinnell and Miller in *Distribution of the Birds of California* reported retraction of its range where oaks had been cleared for agriculture. This has continued with clearance for subdivisions and industrial parks. The Breeding Bird Survey reported that the titmouse has declined 35% since 1968.

Titmice will use bluebird boxes and will even squeeze into wren boxes with a 1" opening. Probably the best size for them is 1 1/4". Since many of us are happy with whatever we get, the standard bluebird nestbox works well. Titmice seem to prefer nestboxes mounted on trees and in hanging boxes although they will use boxes on poles or fence posts if they are close to oak trees. They are territorial with their own kind as are bluebirds. The nearest nestings so far reported were about 40 yards apart with most being 90 yards or more. Titmice will nest in paired boxes alongside bluebirds and Tree Swallows.

The Oak Titmouse may well be the first to occupy your nestboxes. Since they are resident, they will often use the nestbox for roosting in the winter and may begin to build their nest in the late winter, although the egg-laying usually starts in late March around the vernal equinox. Their nest is usually a base of moss and lichens, weeds and fibers, topped and lined with fur and feathers. The eggs are non-glossy white, usually unmarked (fine reddish brown dots have been reported). 6 to 8 (usually 7) eggs are laid, then incubated by the female for 14 days. The nestlings fledge in 21 to 23 days.

As you approach a box containing Ms Titmouse, you may be greeted by her vigilant mate with a *Tsik-di-di-di!* scolding which shows their close relationship to cousin chickadee. On opening the box, don't be surprised to meet the seemingly defiant gaze and a staccato chatter aimed at driving you away. This little hen will have her crest elevated to its fullest and may hiss at you, sometimes moving her head from side to side like a Balinese dancer.

In order to properly monitor the nest you will have to gently enclose her in your hand and raise her from the nest. After counting the eggs or young, replace her on her clutch or brood, close the door and move quietly away. She won't budge. The worst that can happen is she may pinch your finger with her bill. Don't drop her; endure it, and she'll be fine when you put her back.

Hal H. Harrison, in *Western Birds' Nests*, reports that 11 of 14 recaptured pairs of banded titmice were with the same mate the second year.

The Oak Titmouse aids in controlling oak moths, eating multitudes of grubs, scale, and crawling creatures that infest the native oaks. They are found gleaning the leaves, twigs, and bark of oaks most of the year. Insects make up over half their diet. In the winter, they will resort to weed seeds, grass seeds, and especially delight in poison-oak berries. But the vegetable mainstay of their diet is the acorn which they are quite capable of cracking.

It's always a delight to find an Oak Titmouse, our gray chickadee, in a nestbox. We know we're helping another cavity-nester stay off the threatened list. —HG

Bluebird rescue and release

—by Sandy Sprowl

Sandy Sprowl writes from Contra Costa County—

On May 13, 1998, after a cold rain-storm had swept through the Bay Area, I went out after work to check the boxes along the Shell Ridge bluebird trail. I found that one of the boxes had its roof completely torn off, and of the seven naked hatchlings in the nest, now there were only six.

The parents were nowhere to be seen. I reached into the box to examine the remaining hatchlings and found that all of them were icy cold to my touch. They would die if I didn't act immediately.

Because of past disasters, I was in the habit of carrying a makeshift nest with me, consisting of layers of toilet paper lining a margarine dish. I placed the six hatchlings in my nest, covered them with my hand, and blew my warm breath over them. It was a very cold day for May with a bitter wind, and I had a 20 minute hike back to the trailhead and my car. I hurried as quickly as I could.

Once I got home, I immediately filled a hot water bottle, covered it with a towel and placed the hatchlings on it. They were not moving much—only weakly lifting their heads. Then getting my hair dryer, I turned it on low and held it over them, being careful not to let it get too hot. It was gratifying to see them become more active—for the first time I felt that they had a chance to make it. When each of them defecated in turn, I knew that their body processes were getting back to normal!

The big question for me was what to do next. Under the heat they seemed so lively that I thought seriously about just returning them to their nestbox. After all, their parents might still be in the area, and I could reattach the roof more securely to prevent further predation. I also

thought about placing them in other active bluebird nests—but I really had no other suitable nest sites with young of their age. The other alternative was to take them to the **Lindsay Wildlife Hospital** for hand-raising. The facts favoring that strategy were that they were virtually naked, it was still very cold out, and night was fast approaching. It was more than likely that their mother—if not dead—had abandoned the nest after such a traumatic event. I called **Mel Smith**, a fellow bird lover and Audubon member, to seek his advice.

Taking the birds off heat and putting them back in my margarine tub nest for travel very quickly brought them "down" again. Seeing them,

"I only wish that Lindsay had a license to band birds, so that we would be able to follow up on them in the future."

Mel was worried that they would not survive the night without special care, and I had to agree with him. We took them to Lindsay, and it was a wise move, because one of the hatchlings was dead on arrival. Fortunately the supervisor on duty agreed to take them home with her—so I knew they would receive the round-the-clock care they needed.

As the weeks passed, I would get reports of the five bluebirds' progress. I volunteer at Lindsay, so I would hear the good news that they were alive, and feathering out, and eating heartily, and then beginning to test their wings. Then they were ready to go to one of the outdoor aviaries. There they would be acclimated to the weather, have a chance to strengthen their wing muscles, and become accustomed to the type of food that they would find in the wild. I was asked if I would like to be the one to release them when the time

came—and I jumped at the chance.

The big day came on July 12th. I called Mel and we went to pick up the bluebirds at the aviary. They looked very healthy, and active, and even feisty—strongly resisting attempts to catch them and put them in a port-a-pet carrier. Mel and I had given a lot of thought to exactly where to release them in Shell Ridge. We knew that their first few days on their own would be very dangerous. We were concerned that they would not know how to catch insects, or how to find water, or how to avoid hawks or other predators. Twin Ponds looked to be the best spot for them—it had water, the right combination of trees and open fields, no hawks overhead, and a good population of adults to emulate.

The release itself was thrilling. There was a rush of wings past my ear as they flew straight up and then banked in circles climbing higher and higher in the sky—seeming to revel in the sheer joy of free flight. We were amazed that they could stay aloft for so long. How had they managed to build so much muscle within the confines of an aviary? We wondered if they would disperse, but to our pleasant surprise they all came down and settled in the trees around the pond—calling to each other.

Maybe there is a bond that develops between nestlings that continues once they have fledged. In any event, these five seemed to want to stay together.

Mel had a powerful scope that he had brought with him, so we were able to observe them in detail. We watched for almost an hour, as they flitted from branch to branch and tree to tree, enjoying their new life. The adult birds in the area were catching insects at will. Clearly this was a productive hunting ground for bluebirds.

Then Mel saw one of our

immatures catch his first meal and we knew that all the necessary instincts were there for them to survive. We left feeling like proud parents.

Mel returned the next several weekends with his scope to follow up on the release. All five birds were still in the Twin Ponds area, and appeared to be doing well. I only wish that Lindsay had a license to band birds, so that we would be able to follow up on them in the future.

I will always wonder whether they survived their first winter, and whether any of the nests that I will monitor over the coming seasons might be those of the "Lindsay Five."

Do cavity nesters need nest material?

We're often asked if we should put nesting material in the nestboxes for the birds. The general answer is no. Each species prefers to gather its own material. Exceptions are shavings for Wood Ducks and Flickers, and replacement nests for nests infested with blowflies or ants.

But many folks do put dog hair and other fluff out for the birds to gather. A recent question asked on the BLUE-BIRD-L list on the internet concerned putting lint gathered from a clothes dryer out for the birds. **Brenda Best**, Oneida Co., NY, gave this reply: "This dryer lint idea has been around for awhile. It really is **not** a good idea. Try this: Sprinkle some dryer lint with a little water. See how soggy and matted it becomes? This will not keep nestlings dry and warm. Now set the wet lint somewhere to dry, then check its consistency. Sort of hard and stiff, right?"

"My point is, lint is only fluffy after it's been dried by warm, blowing air in a clothes dryer. And, combined with the fact that there are detergent and/or fabric softener residues in it, lint should not be offered as nesting material."

CONSTRUCTION ZONE

Nails or Screws?

A recent discussion on the BLUE-BIRD-L, NABS and Cornell University's email list for bluebirders, featured the merits and demerits of screws and nails in nestbox construction. Here is the gist of the arguments.

Lanelle Stanley of Sulphur Spgs, TX asked what kind of nails she should use to build her boxes. Our own **Don Yoder** responded that drywall or deck screws were preferred to nails.

Maynard Sumner of Flint, MI, joined in endorsing drywall screws. And **Jim Walters**, Iowa City, IA pointed out the advantages of a power drill to make repairs in the field. He says, "One of the main reasons for using screws (as opposed to nails) in colder climates is that the freezing and thawing doesn't cause screwed-together boxes to come apart—quite the opposite with nailed boxes. I don't know that it makes much difference if one uses drywall screws (black) or galvanized deck screws (silver). I started out using the drywall screws many years ago and many of those boxes are still in good shape."

Ann Wick, southern WI, gave an example of replacing box fronts enlarged by woodpeckers with galvanized deck screws and her power drill. And **Dave Porter**, Minneapolis, MN, pointed out that it's easier to correct mistakes when you're building a box if you need to redo a panel.

Then **Jeff Holbrook**, Canton, NY, wrote, "I heartily recommend screws too. My only addition is that I use square recess screws. They never strip out like the normal Phillip's heads do. You can get these screws at most hardware stores now. However, I get mine from a mail order place. They have all types; plain steel, brass, bronze, statuary bronze, marine bronze, white & yellow zinc

plated, even stainless steel. They will last longer than the box and then you can reuse them too. They are much stronger....You will never snap the head off like you often do with the drywall types.... If you are so inclined, try these good square recessed screws. You'll never go back—"

Keith Kridler, TX, adds: "Many may not be aware of the self-drilling screws to attach sheet metal to metal perlins. They make 3/8" x 2 1/2" long Phillips drive and various assorted hex head screws that will drill themselves into 3/16" thick steel pipe! They have a hardened point that is a drill bit and will self-thread into the steel. For mounting to pipe it is best to use an awl or sharp steel punch to make a dimple in the round pipe to keep the bit from 'walking' This is quicker than using bolts and will leave less of a pin for raccoons to grab onto."

Clarence Christie, Pottsville, MI, uses screws but prefers #6 x 1 1/2".

Bob Wilson, CO, pointed out that drywall screws are cheaper but they will rust and **Frank Navritil**, IL, says deck screws are designed for outdoor use. **Jace Stanbury**, TX, says he's been using drywall screws for years and protects them with a dab of silicone caulk.

Your editor pointed out that roofs on redwood boxes can be easily pulled off by raccoons if nailed but not if they are screwed on.

We priced drywall screws and zinc deck screws at our local building supply store where they sell them in bulk and found they cost the same—\$2.40 per pound. We bought 2 pounds of 1 5/8" gold-colored, zinc-plated deck screws. They cost almost exactly a penny a piece.

Lanelle Stanley thanked everyone for the help and concluded she would build her boxes with screws.

Diversity—

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“birds in need” are found in *your* backyard?

Although there are many good things to be found in our 1998 results, it is also important to note a few exceptions to that trend. Over the past 3 years, fledge counts for several of the species that need us most have improved steadily, but counts of Barn Owls, American Kestrels, and Mountain Chickadees have actually declined while our program as a whole has doubled! Clearly, there is more work left to be done.

A friendly challenge from Santa Clara County

Our Santa Clara County nestbox program is on the small side compared with many others across the state, with 19 monitors reporting on just over 300 nestboxes in 1998. But, just two years into our new commitment to diversified nestboxes, our crew contributed at least half of the total statewide production of three species (Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Violet-green Swallow, and Bewick's Wren).

We also accounted for more than 20% of the state's Oak Titmouse fledges. How? Simple: we started building a smaller box that is more popular with chickadees, titmice, and wrens, and distributed a few to each trail monitor.

We encouraged our monitors to place boxes into a variety of habitats favored by these species. And that's all it took!

Our friendly challenge to monitors far and wide is to beat us at our own game. Not only is it easy, it also adds to the fun of monitoring nestboxes. Each species has its own nesting cycle, some of them starting earlier or ending later than that of bluebirds.

TAILORING TO FIT

—continued from page 1

ers, owls, bats, wood ducks, kestrels. When it comes to building and installing some of those bigger boxes, it soon becomes evident why it is so easy to help bluebirds—their boxes are light and small.

Paraphrasing **Keith Kridler**, one of the writers on the popular BLUEBIRD-L Internet discussion list, “If you're all for bird conservation and trying to help only bluebirds, you're not even started yet.”

We plan to revise the Annual Report form into 3 categories to reflect the diversity of boxes that many of you already use: (1) *Standard Size* to include Standard and Gilbertson PVC boxes, with round 1½" or 1⁹/₁₆" holes, Peterson with its oval 1³/₈" x 2¼" entry, and Kentucky Slotboxes which have slots 1³/₈" deep; (2) *Larger than Standard* for ducks, owls, kestrels, flickers, etc.; and (3) *Smaller than Standard* with round holes less than 1³/₈" for chickadees, wrens, nuthatches, and titmice.

Any of these boxes may be top-opening, side-opening or front-opening.

(We haven't yet heard of anyone designing a bottom-opening box. Take the next elevator, please).

With a diversified trail, you tend to get more birds through a longer season, not to mention the joy of discovering the unique personalities and behaviors of each new species.

As the 1999 breeding season gets underway, I hope more of you will have the delightful experience of seeing new types of birds in your boxes.

As always, we stand ready to answer questions or help out in any way we can. Good luck out there!

(You can email Garth at GarthHar@aol.com, or see the County Coordinators' list for other means of getting in touch.)

Hanna Boys build boxes

A joint venture between CBRP and the **Hanna Boys Center** has resulted in a successful project that benefits both the boys and the bluebirds.

Cheryl Kaul, a longtime supporter of the Boys Center, approached **David Graves**, Napa/Sonoma Coordinator, with a proposal that she donate \$500 earmarked for the building of nestboxes by the boys of the Center.

This created a worthwhile project for the boys while extending the aims of CBRP. Graves recruited **David Luther** of the Resource Conservation District to be on the lookout for promising locations for the boxes.

In March, the Center completed 480 nestboxes which are now located in suitable habitat awaiting occupancy. Program Director **Don Yoder** calls this “a win-win situation.” He adds, “The boys are interested in building more boxes. Now if we can just contact more such angels who have the same thoughts as Mrs Kaul!”

GREENSTONE IS FOR THE BIRDS

Just west of Placerville, in El Dorado County, Greenstone Community is an attractive area with ponds, a reservoir, tennis courts and equestrian trails. **Candy Perisho** ran an article in the homeowners' newsletter about CBRP and this Spring contacted her friends about the availability of boxes built by **Eugene Loeder** and installed by **Hatch Graham**.

Seven new CBRPers—**Suzanne & Wes Hagstrom**, **Candy**, **Chantal Truscelli**, **Jane & Tom Sartoris**, **Dick & Jan Day**, **Karen & Bruce James**, and **Pam Harris**—have 28 boxes and **Candy** and **Chantal** will monitor 25 more placed along the equestrian trails—53 nestboxes in Greenstone!

These coordinators are ready to help you—

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✿ New

CALIFORNIA AUDUBON CHAPTER PRESIDENTS AND EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

For the past 4 years, *BLUEBIRDS FLY!* has been sent to you as a part of **National Audubon Society-California's** support of **California Bluebird Recovery Program**. Conceived by **Don Yoder** of Walnut Creek, a former Board Member of the **North American Bluebird Society**, and an active member of **Mt Diablo Audubon Society**, CBRP was embraced by NAS-CA as a part of the *Birds in Balance* program.

As you will see, NAS-CA underwrites our mailing. In return, copies of *BLUEBIRDS FLY!* are sent to each of you. Our hope has been that all Audubon members who support bluebird and other cavity nester recovery will join with us in supporting our efforts in habitat restoration and

mitigation. A contribution to cover our printing is appreciated.

The problem is that only a few members of Audubon's Chapters seem to know of our existence after four years! We update our mailing list quarterly and yet, just recently, a new Chapter President, on receiving our Annual Report issue, wrote that he was "not aware of the organization." He is an active bluebirder and has helped on a major trail supported by his Audubon Chapter.

Our plea to all of you: ***Please inform your members of CBRP.*** Share this newsletter with them.

Anyone can help support us, but we especially seek those who will erect nestboxes and will monitor them and report to us. This way we can get a better measure of the health of our cavity nesting populations and where declining, increase their numbers.

Your chapter may want to sponsor major trails in your County as has been done by the **Mt Shasta Audubon, Sierra Foothills Audubon, Central Sierra Audubon, and Santa Clara Valley Audubon**. Perhaps some of the others of you already do so, and we don't even know about you. We can provide information and assistance in

getting started and solving problems. That's what we're here for.

So spread the word if you will. We and the cavity nesters will appreciate it.

**GREAT FALLS HOTELS FILLING UP—
GET YOUR RESERVATIONS IN NOW**
The NABS Annual Meeting in Great Falls, MT, is June 17-20. Contact **Bob Niebuhr** at (406) 453-5143 or (406) 761-5842 (h). Better hurry!

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., 199906=June 1999.

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