



Welcome,

It's spring at last, in some places, winter is holding on in areas to the west. Shelley and I cleaned out our boxes on April 9, near the Waterton Shell plant, and there was still lots of snow. We also saw quite a few bluebirds, so that's the good news.

At the fall AGM, we elected a new executive. They are:

President: Brian Coffey
Vice President: Ken Moore
Treasurer: Gwen Tietz
Secretary: Eleanor Thomsen (Gwen Tietz will cover off in her absence)
Newsletter /Website Editor: Brian Coffey
Trail Manager: Gerry Kylo
Master Bander/Director: Gwen Tietz
Directors: Lynn Bell, Ken MacKintosh, Gerry Kylo,
Joe Michielsen, Shelley Coffey, Jean Gregg.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Fred Wishneski who has served faithfully for so many years.

We are currently in the process of building our own website, which hopefully will be up and running by the end of April. We are also in negotiations to build partnership agreements with the Oldman Watershed Council, the Milk River Watershed Council and the Crowsnest Conservation Society. Details to follow.

***“Information
Seminar/Banding
Workshop”***

Saturday, April 23rd, 2011

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Fish & Game building

1001 9 Ave South

Lethbridge, AB

\$10 fee (lunch & refreshments)

Limited Seating!

Mentors needed!

RSVP: 553-2780-Gwen

345-5806-Ken



Your Consideration Is Appreciated!

Some of you have practiced a method for many years that may not be in the interest of MBT in the future.....if you remove bands provided from the strands provided, “pre-open” them and place them in/on an independent “container” prior to use you may not be aware of the unintentional weakening of the band. If you do not use these bands and rework the band, a second time, in order to return them at the year end, you have stressed the material in the band. In the last two years of banding I have had to destroy quite a few “fatigued” bands in order to not cause possible stress or injury to a banded bird.

Most of you will notice the poor material of the bands provided to us in 2006 by the banding office. When these bands in particular are opened, closed and reopened multiple times, they rarely close properly. Remember, a band cannot be placed on a bird if it inhibits movement in any way, hence it is destroyed.

Happily, the bands received since 2006 are of a much better material from a new supplier so this problem should eventually fade with time.

Each of the MBT banders are provided with complete and new packages each year. All “left over” bands on strands returned are used the following year by two banders. “Used” defective bands are reported as destroyed and cannot be used. Band supply is of concern and all of us wish to continue to band in the future. Please help us reduce the amount of destroyed bands to insure all of us the right to band in the years to come.



Thanks once again for all your tireless efforts.

Gwen Tietz, master bander

DID YOU KNOW...

“Because only the female has a brood patch, she alone is capable of incubating the eggs. If she is killed or for some other reason permanently leaves the nest during incubation, the male cannot complete this initial phase of the young’s life cycle. A female will sometimes abandon a nest if she is disturbed, especially during the first 12 days or so of incubation. Never attempt to foster out the eggs to other nests. Simply clean out the nest for the bluebirds to start over again.”

*Myrna Pearman
“Mountain Bluebird
Trail Monitoring Guide”*

2011 Spring Banding & Monitoring Packages/Workshop

As usual, the Spring 2011 Banding & Monitoring Packages are distributed with this newsletter, except of course, the email edition. In the event that you might require additional bands throughout the season please contact Gwen at 553-2780 or 317-1252.

April **23rd** is the date for this year's Banding/General Information Workshop in Lethbridge (see box on page 1). Please call Gwen if you wish to assist with the event. This has been an overwhelming success over the years, so plan to attend, even just to socialize with your fellow members! Our membership has grown significantly and we now need some help getting to all the new volunteers. If you would like to mentor a new monitor or bander, please contact Gwen.



Gwen will also be holding a banding workshop in Medicine Hat on June 25th.

Contacting us for replacement boxes



Another season is about to start and it is time to clean, repair and replace a few of those nesting boxes. You can contact the following people to obtain new boxes:

Ken Mackintosh, Coaldale
(403) 345-5806

Joe Michielsen, Coaldale
(403) 345-4777

There is no charge to members for boxes.

Trail Management

Our members, like everyone, lead busy lives so we always need experienced people, mentors, to go out with new monitors and banders to show them maintenance requirements and proper handling techniques. Just as importantly, we need to know where all of our trails are and who's maintaining them. You know what you're doing but we, as an organization, might not. Sometimes members will move away or abandon their trails for any number of reasons and forget to let us know. That leaves trails unmaintained.

Gerry Kylo has taken on the task of upgrading our trails database. We would very much like everyone to give Gerry a call (327-0120) or an email (gkylo@shaw.ca) and let him know who you are and where your trail is. Gerry will then create a map from Google Earth (as in the image below) if he has enough information. We plan to put images of all our trails on the new website.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Google Earth, it is a free, safe download from Google (www.google.com/earth/index.html). It's an amazing program and a great way to see the earth, plan trips or just waste time on the computer in the name of science.

