



San Juan Islands Western Bluebird Reintroduction Project

Fall Update

October 2011

BLUEBIRD PROJECT STATISTICS 2007-2011

**Numbers of Adults
Translocated:
92**

**Numbers of Young
Fledged:
238 (!)**

**Current (2011)
Number of Breeding
Territories
Established:
14**

**Current (2011)
estimated breeding
adult population size:
38**

**Nestboxes
Placed: 600+**

**Islands with
Nestboxes:
10**

**Oak/prairie habitat
conserved since
outset of this project:
376 acres**

**Numbers of
community members
involved:**

A Farewell Gathering to Remember

On Saturday, September 10th, approximately 75 bluebird enthusiasts (and 9 bluebirds!) gathered at Two Barn Farm on San Juan Island to toast the final year of the initial phase of the San Juan Islands Western Bluebird Reintroduction Project.



The bluebirds didn't stick around long enough for most party-goers to see them. However, for those humans who were in attendance, we were thrilled to have the opportunity to say thanks to our island community, share some notable successes (see left column), and highlight a few very key take-home points from the culmination of this project. Consider this:

- This project marks the first successful reintroduction of a

300+

**Numbers of kids who hit their fingers with hammers during nestbox-building parties:
0 (whew!)**

**Numbers of bluebird hats left:
0 (sorry, folks)**

migratory songbird completed in the United States.

- Releases and nest box placement were conducted almost entirely on private lands; nearly unheard of in reintroduction efforts of this sort.
- Funding for this project came entirely from individual donors and private foundations; we received no government funding whatsoever.

Remember: although this phase of the project is "over"it really isn't over. Although the translocations will cease, we will be **seeking funding** to continue monitoring the population for the next several years to make sure that the numbers of returning and breeding adults continues its upward trajectory.

The San Juan Islands Western Bluebird Reintroduction Project is a partnership of the following organizations:

[The San Juan Preservation Trust](#)

[American Bird Conservancy](#)

[Ecostudies Institute](#)

[San Juan Islands Audubon Society](#)

in cooperation with:

Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

Ft. Lewis Military Installation

The Nature Conservancy of Washington

Pacific Coast Joint Venture

We will be relying on your sightings/observations more than ever, now that we will no longer have a full-time technician to scout for the birds. Remember to clean out your nestboxes each fall, keep vigilant on removing English house sparrow nests before the young hatch (house sparrows are a distinct and very real threat to bluebirds) and keep your binoculars dusted off and ready to report the first returns in the spring. Tracking leg band colors is key (and we know, can be tricky) because it helps us identify the movements and survival of individuals. *The bluebird hotline number will now be disengaged. Report any sightings/activity directly to Kathleen Foley at 360-298-1856 or at 360-378-2461.*

These birds have come home again. After a long absence of 50+ years, they are part of our islands, our ecosystem... and they will only continue to grace our islands with our help and good stewardship. Please continue to embrace and support their presence here and help us ensure that they never disappear again.



Our deepest thanks to all of you!
Bob Altman (American Bird Conservancy, left), Kathleen Foley (San Juan Preservation Trust, middle), and Gary Slater, (Ecostudies Insitute, right).

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