

Berlin Lake honors long-time expert, volunteer

Allow me to introduce our longest-term volunteer at Berlin Lake, Darrell Gammon. Darrell has worked every year since 2003 on the Bluebird Monitoring and Nesting Program. He is a devoted long-term volunteer who has completed over 5440 hours of service in wildlife conservation in over 17 years of volunteer work. Throughout his service, he has promoted the recovery of a native species and greatly enhanced the natural resources at Berlin Lake. He has spent thousands of hours monitoring native wildlife and documenting his findings.



He records and submits the data including box, date/time, species, eggs, young, and fledged, as well as nesting specifics and additional details.

Did you know? The native bluebird population suffered a large decline, reduced by 90% of its original number. In Ohio, nesting programs were started as early as the 1930's to help the species recover. Bluebirds are cavity nesting birds, who build their nests inside hollow trees and stumps. Bluebird boxes mimic the natural homes of the species, which helps to maintain and grow the population. Bluebirds are a treasured sight around the lake, their jeweled colors and warbling song a symbol of joy and hope. They are also very important for controlling insect populations. Where bluebirds had been a rare sight before, it is now common to see their bright forms fluttering from tree to tree.

These data sheets are monitored and maintained by Darrell starting from early spring to late fall. At the end of every season, he has compiled hundreds of pages of data on over 100 nesting boxes located around the lake. Darrell also takes care of 9 wood duck nest boxes, 1 American kestrel nest box, and 1 Carolina wren nest box at Berlin. Darrell also maintains, designs, builds, and installs all the blue bird boxes, including racoon protection for each box.

In addition to this nesting box program, Darrell also participates in the National

Eagle Count in January with the Rangers at Berlin Lake. He recently adopted a raptor and he has written and published articles on birds for state wildlife organizations, posting on their websites and in magazines. He has also agreed to support and assist us with building a Bird Tally Board for our birding enthusiast visitors plus a Bluebird Walk-about Interpretive Program for our guests this season.

If you see him around the lake give him a wave or stop and say hello. He has a wealth of knowledge and information on enhancing habitat for our feathered friends around Berlin Lake. In conclusion, Darrell has been a valuable member of the Berlin volunteer team who has consistently gone above and beyond in the quality and amount of service he has provided. His contributions to the Project will have long-lasting impacts on the future of bird conservation. We all owe him a big THANK YOU. We so appreciate all you do, Darrell!

*If you are interested in birding or bird conservation, check out these resources: iNaturalist.org, [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology \(birds.cornell.edu/citizenscience\)](http://TheCornellLabofOrnithology.birds.cornell.edu/citizenscience), eBird.org or the [Ohio Bluebird Society \(ohiobluebirdsociety.org\)](http://OhioBluebirdSociety.org)

Volunteers Wanted: We need a few more volunteers for the 2021 recreation season May through September. For additional information: Contact sharon.l.perkins@usace.army.mil