

Trent University Archives

Finding Aid - Hazel Bird fonds (14-003)

Generated by Trent University Archives on May 10, 2024

Language of description: English

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Hazel Bird fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	Trent University Archives
Title:	Hazel Bird fonds
Reference code:	14-003
Date:	1966-2008 (creation)
Physical description:	68 cm of textual records (4 boxes) 1 USB memory stick
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Flag - digital records

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Hazel Bird was a recognized naturalist known especially for her work in restoring the bluebird population of Northumberland County. Born in Northumberland County, Bird served in World War II where she met her husband, Tom Bird. The couple resided in Harwood, Ontario and had seven children; in the 1950s Tom Bird died due to a boating accident. In the 1960s, Hazel Bird initiated the Eastern Bluebird restoration project in Northumberland County and continued to coordinate and lead this project for almost 40 years; with the help of volunteers, “The Bluebird Lady,” as she was sometimes referred to, erected, monitored, and recorded information about the bird boxes until an accident in 2004 prevented her from doing so and resulted in the termination of the project. Bird was involved in many naturalist organizations in Ontario including the Ontario Outdoors Educator’s Council, The Willow Beach Field Naturalists and the Willow Beach Young Naturalists. She also taught classes, first as a volunteer, and then as a paid employee at the Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre in Cobourg and was recognized for her work in 1996 receiving the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society Conservation Award. In that same year it was announced by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife of Canada that the Eastern Bluebird, which had been designated as a “rare bird” since 1984, was no longer considered a species at risk. Bird died 1 February 2009. In 2012 the Nature Conservancy of Canada designated the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve in Ontario’s Rice Lake Plains in her honour.

Custodial history

Fonds was acquired by Trent University Archives in 2013 from Gerry Bird, son of Hazel Bird, via Todd Farrell of the Peterborough office of the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Further materials were acquired in 2014 from Gerry Bird via Val Deziel, also of the Peterborough office of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Scope and content

Fonds pertains to the work of Hazel Bird and her involvement with the Eastern Bluebird restoration project in Northumberland County. Included are 30 bird box observation journals, publications and newsletters of the Willow Beach Young Naturalists and the Willow Beach Field Naturalists, newspaper articles and information regarding the development of the bluebird project, statistical records, reports, and educational materials. The bird box observation journals also include notes about native flowers and other birds observed when checking the boxes. Also included are hundreds of letters which were sent to the Willow Beach Field Naturalists Club of Port Hope and to Bird requesting copies of the pattern and specifications of the bluebird nest box mentioned in two newspaper articles, Toronto Telegram, 14 May 1971 and Toronto Star, 19 September 1972; in these letters, many authors provide details of their experiences with bluebirds in various Ontario locations. Also included is a removable USB memory stick containing maps and lists which pertain to the locations of bluebird sightings/boxes referred to in the various statistical records and reports.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title based on the creator of the fonds.

Physical condition

Some of the notebooks in this fonds are dirty and worn and have lost their bindings as a result of being used extensively in the field by Hazel Bird. Some items are also musty smelling and have been subjected to mould. It has been determined that the mould is non-active. Researchers may wish to wear masks and gloves when handling this material (masks and gloves available in the Archives).

Immediate source of acquisition

Fonds acquired from Gerry Bird in 2013 and 2014 via the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Peterborough Office. Boxes 1 and 2 were acquired in 2013 from Gerry Bird via Todd Farrell of the Peterborough office of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Restrictions on access

None

Note [General]

Special thanks to Cindy Colford and students of Fleming College's Cultural Heritage Conservation & Management Program for cleaning the documents in this fonds in July 2014. Under Cindy's direction, third semester students Amanda Tran, Hayley Robb, Kelly Dixon, and Rachel Stark volunteered their time and expertise to undertake this project.

Note [General]

Box 1

Bound collection of publications from the Willow Beach Young Naturalists, Cobourg-Port Hope and surrounding area, 1971-1980. Publications include meeting minutes, poems, puzzles, drawings and observations. Willow Beach Field Naturalist cloth badge attached to front cover.

Bluebird project binder, outlining the initial details of the project and early box observations, 1967-1969.
Box 2

Folder

1. Hazel Bird personal journal noting her daily activities with ornithological observations from 1 January 1966 to 6 March 1973. Willow Beach Field Naturalist Bluebird box locations and box checking journals from 28 March 1973 to 21 June 1973.
2. Bluebird box checking and observations journal, 21 March 1977-29 October 1977. Bluebird box checking and observation journal, 17 February 1978-25 August 1978 which also contains an article from Cobourg Star, 20 June 1978 asking for volunteers for Bluebird project and bird box observations on loose pieces of paper in the back of the binder.
3. Bluebird box checking and observations journal, 17 March 1979-2 September 1979. Bluebird box checking and observations journal, 20 March 1980-19 October 1980, which also contains bird box observations on loose pieces of paper in the back of the binder.
4. Bluebird box checking and observations journal, 11 April 1981-17 October 1981. Bluebird box checking and observations journal 24 March 1982-4 September 1982 which also contains bird box observations on loose pieces of paper attached to front cover.
5. Bluebird box checking and observation journal 16 April 1983-12 September 1983 which also contains bird box observations on loose pieces of paper attached to front cover. Bluebird box checking and observation journal 1 April 1984-29 November 1984 which also contains bird box observations on loose pieces of paper and Bluebird Update Report #9 from 29 November 1984-3 January 1985 in the back of binder.
6. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 14 April 1985-7 November 1985 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Report # 10 for 1985 and list of box location changes. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 25 March 1986-20 September 1986 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Report #11 from 29 November 1986, a list of new series numbers for bird boxes.
7. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 19 March 1987-27 September 1987 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Report #12 from 19 January 1988. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 23 March 1988-24 November 1988 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Report #13 from 13 January 1989 detailing annual observations, program costs and other findings.
8. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 27 March 1989-28 October 1989 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Report #14 from 13 February 1990 detailing annual observations, program costs, school trips and other findings. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 29 April 1990-26 August 1990 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Report #15 from 20 February 1991 detailing annual observations, program costs, school trips and other findings.
9. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 9 March 1991-31 August 1991 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, contact information for individuals and Bluebird Update Report #16 from 20 February 1992 detailing annual observations, program costs, school trips and other findings. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 2 April 1992-16 September 1992 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations, Bluebird Update Reports #17 from 2 February 1993 detailing annual observations, financial statements, school trips and other findings.

10. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 29 March 1993-17 September 1993 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #18 from 27 February 1994. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 25 March 1994-6 September 1994 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #19 from 15 February 1995.
11. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 13 March 1995-21 November 1995 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #20 1995. Bluebird Box checking and observation journal from 14 March 1996-22 October 1996 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #21 published for The Curlew Vol. XLII No. 3 March 1997.
12. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 28 March 1997-18 September 1997 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #22 for The Curlew Vol. XLIII No. 4 April 1998. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 1 April 1998-17 September 1998 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #23 published for The Curlew Vol. XLIV No. 3 March 1999.
13. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 5 April 1999-12 August 1999 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and newspaper article from The Sunday Star 3 January 1999 'Worst storm socks Ontario.' Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 25 March 2000-21 September 2000 which also contains loose papers with bird box observations and Bluebird Update Report #24 published for The Curlew Vol. XLVI No. 3 March 2001 and article by Hazel Bird "Upland Sandpipers in Bluebird Country" published in The Curlew Vol. XLV No. 5 May 2000.
14. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 10 April 2001-28 September 2001 which also contains Bluebird Update Report #26 for The Curlew Vol. XLVII No. 3 March 2002. Bluebird checking and observation journal from 18 March 2002-27 August 2002 which also contains second section of Bluebird Update Report published for The Curlew Vol. XLVIII No. 3 March 2003.
15. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 2 April 2003-11 August 2003. Bluebird box checking and observation journal from 27 March 2004-5 July 2004.
16. Newspaper article from The Port Hope Evening Guide 25 April 2003, "Randy Bird and the little horse that could."

Note: Boxes 3 and 4 were acquired in 2014 from Gerry Bird via Val Deziel of the Peterborough office of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Box 3

Folder

1. USB memory stick containing maps and lists pertaining to bluebird nest locations (IMPORTANT: these documents complement and correspond to statistical records found in the fonds) (note: the original documents from which these copies were made are not part of the Hazel Bird family fonds; the USB copies were made by Val Deziel)
2. "Willow Beach Field Naturalists Bluebird Project 1970" (note: original binder discarded as it contained sections of extensive rust)
3. Bluebird project 1971,1972,1974: statistical data re nests and checking scheme
4. Bluebird Update/Bluebird Report by Hazel Bird, 1986-2003 (note: scattered issues only)
5. "The Curlew" newsletter, Willow Beach Field Naturalists, 1965, 1973-1975,1997-2005 (note: scattered issues only)
6. Miscellaneous documents re Hazel Bird's involvement with bluebird project
7. Miscellaneous pamphlets/newsletters, some with references to Hazel Bird, 1968-2005
8. Published bluebird photographs and signage, perhaps used as teaching aids

Box 4

Note: All correspondence in this box pertains to bluebirds.

Folder

1. Correspondence, 1970-1971
2. Correspondence, 1972
3. Correspondence, 1972
4. Correspondence, 1972
5. Correspondence, 1973
6. Correspondence, 1974-1979
7. Correspondence, 1980s
8. Correspondence, 1990s
9. Correspondence, no date

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
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Access points

- Textual records (documentary form)
- Maps and atlases (documentary form)
- Science and Engineering (subject)
- Birds (subject)
- Northumberland and Durham Counties (place)