

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update: September 19-25, 2005



The fall continues to bring cooler temperatures and fewer migrants at BBO. Well, songbird migrants that is. The ducks and geese and Sandhill Cranes are increasing, we counted a flock of over 2000 White-fronts fly over the other day, and over 1000 Sandhills in one flight. Pretty cool!! We only had 24 captures in the nets this week, but there were only 4 days of banding. The first American Tree Sparrow was captured (but managed to escape), a sure sign that fall is getting later. The Myrtle Warblers have slowed considerably, and White-crowned Sparrows are now a daily visitor to the Natural Area. Some unusual species have also been noted: a Varied Thrush and a Harris' Sparrow.

Table 1. Results from fall migration netting at BBO September 12-18, 2005.

Species	Banded	Recapture	Other	TOTAL
Black-capped Chickadee	2	9	1	12
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	1	0	1
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	3	0	0	3
Wilson's Warbler	1	0	0	1
American Tree Sparrow	0	0	1	1
White-throated Sparrow	1	0	0	1
Slate-colored Junco	3	1	0	4
TOTAL	11	11	2	24



Saw-whets have finally begun to migrate, judging from previous years I would say they are later, but we will have to look at the data after the season is completed. Rich Krikun has been catching more owls in the past week at Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory, so looks like they are heading south. We had excellent coverage with six nights of banding this week, and 18 saw-whets captured.

The BIG NEWS was the Steaks and Saw-whets event on the 23rd and 24th, which was completely full. We had 55 people on Friday and 51 people on Saturday at the lab. And there was no lack of saw-whets, 3 on Friday and 6 on Saturday. We were also serenaded by the local Great Horned Owls and a few packs of coyotes. What a great time we had. The event would not have been possible without all the volunteer help, THANKS!!



I have to also thank the volunteers that came out for banding this week: Allicia Kelly, Martina Frey, Jim and Barb Beck with grandson Calvin, Cory Olsen, and Gill Priestley. Also a BIG thanks to Peter Stahl for giving us a beautiful picture of a Burrowing Owl he took when he made a trip to the bird observatory last week.

With more owls coming through now, we are catching them nightly, so make a trip out to the lab if you like and visit me. Do let know when you plan to come, so I can make sure I am on site for your visit.



Lisa Priestley, Beaverhill Bird Observatory