

BEAVERHILL BIRD OBSERVATORY UPDATE AUG 31-SEPT 14, 2007



My constant companion:
A drab Yellow-rumped Warbler
(hatch year male)

THE END OF AUGUST saw Alicia and Anna hand off the songbird banding at BBO to me, Jonathan Martin-DeMoor, and the saw-whet owl banding to Lisa Priestley. The fall migration was already visibly underway, with the sounds of geese (Canada, Snow, and Greater White-fronted), Sandhill Cranes, and many, many ducks overhead. The young aspen trees around the banding lab had started to turn yellow, and their branches were full of brownish fall warblers- mostly Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warblers.

My first week of banding started off nice and easy. On Monday I caught 19 birds (7 spp.)- mostly yellow-rumps. As the week progressed, the number of birds hitting the nets per day slowly escalated (23, 37, 49) finishing Friday with a frenzied day of banding- 76 birds caught! Needless to say, (although I will anyways), I was very glad to have the help of Cory Olson who came out to volunteer on Thursday and Friday.

Highlights of the week included a recaptured Yellow Warbler first banded at BBO in August 2001. Small songbirds in the wild have a life expectancy in the neighbourhood of 4-5 years, making this bird a real great-granddaddy in "bird years." (This was actually this bird's 3rd time through the lab- he was also recaptured in May 2005. I'd like to think that this repeat customer speaks to the quality of service provided by the BBO banders!)

Another highlight was catching a female Cooper's Hawk on Wednesday afternoon. This is a BIG bird to catch in a mist net, and will give you a pretty intimidating glare as you try to decide how to get it back out. I think this bird stuck around the lab for a couple of days, and provided the service of driving flocks of panicked warblers into our nets.

Migration activity slowed a little after the first week, and some poor weather didn't help the capture rates either. I had lots of help, though, with the birds we did catch. Cory Olson stayed another couple days, Erin Cameron, a grad student at the University of Alberta, came out to learn the ways of the bird bander, and Barb and Jim Beck came out on Friday, and stayed to cover my days off over the weekend. Many thanks to all of them.



Giving me the evil eye:
An aggravated Cooper's Hawk
(adult female)



Good help: Erin (with a "butter-butt" warbler) & Cory

Lastly, I should mention that Lisa started banding Northern Saw-whet Owls in the evenings on September 12 and captured one, a second owl was captured on the 14th. Owl numbers should begin picking up in the next week or so, see you all at Steaks and Saw-whets at the end of the month.

All in all, a pretty good first shift for me out here at Beaverhill.

- Jonathan

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Myrtle Warbler	251	3	0	0	0	254
Black-capped Chickadee	8	14	0	0	0	22
Orange-crowned Warbler	17	0	0	0	0	17
Swainson's Thrush	8	0	0	0	0	8
Downy Woodpecker	3	3	0	0	0	6
Slate-colored Junco	5	0	0	0	0	5
Ovenbird	4	0	0	0	0	4
American Redstart	4	0	0	0	0	4
Wilson's Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
White-throated Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	0	0	0	0	2
Lincoln's Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Blackpoll Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0	0	0	0	1
Warbling Vireo	1	0	0	0	0	1
Red-eyed Vireo	1	0	0	0	0	1
Northern Waterthrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Magnolia Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Gray Catbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Fox Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-and-White Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tennessee Warbler	0	1	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	320	22	0	0	0	342

Net Hours: 842.75 NH

Capture Rate: 37.5 birds/ 100 NH

- 1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO.
- 2 Banded at the BBO > 90 days prior to recapture (e.g. in a previous year).
- 3 Banded at a location other than the BBO.
- 4 Caught in a mist-net but not banded (e.g. escaped net).



A different perspective on things: A Swainson's Thrush (hatch year, sex unknown) hangs out, waiting for a band.