

## BEAVERHILL BIRD OBSERVATORY UPDATE JULY 10-19, 2007



*Amanda releasing a Least Flycatcher*

Among the birds caught this week was a juvenile Hermit Thrush that was very spotted and stared at us inquisitively. There are also many juvenile Black-capped Chickadees around, and while banding at Weir station we landed 6 young fighters in the same net. Chickadees have spunk and are really feisty. They fight the net (making themselves very tangled), they fight us, and if another bird is so unlucky as to be caught in the same net and within beak distance, they will fight it too. But they are so cute and curious that we can't help but love them.

THE REASON BEHIND slow banding during MAPS this year is mystery to us. Despite increased numbers of captures during spring migration, banding numbers during the summer months have decreased from last year. However, we continue to add new species to our list of birds banded this year. This week our first Tennessee Warbler was introduced to a shiny new bracelet. This was particularly exciting because we have heard these birds singing since May but they have eluded us. This warbler also saved the day for our visitor, Amanda Wig, as only 7 birds were banded while she was visiting, and none of them were caught in the nets while she was along for the net check!



*Tennessee Warbler with a new band*



*Shed garter snake skin found in the Natural Area*

Besides birds, we've noticed many amphibians and butterflies in the Natural Area. Numerous young-of-the-year wood frogs have been spotted, which indicates that they are dispersing from their natal ponds. We also found evidence of reptiles in the area: a fantastic and perfectly intact shed skin of a garter snake lying in the grass near the weir. The translucent skin was still flexible and an incredible imprint of the snake that recently left it behind.

Several butterfly species have been dancing along the long grass. The Beaverhill Lake North American Butterfly Association (NABA) butterfly count was held on July 14<sup>th</sup>, and keen Lepidoptera-lovers identified everything that could be chased down during the morning and hot afternoon. NABA butterfly counts are held annually in locations throughout Canada, the United States and Mexico to learn more about, and monitor, butterfly populations. Participants counted 1102 butterflies from 18 different species in and around the Natural Area, all of which were new to me. Allicia is determined to make me love butterflies yet! Thanks to Barb and Jim Beck for their expertise and assistance, and to all those who came out: Rob Hughes, Bruce Christensen, Grant Sperberg, Dave Larson, Candice Tremblay, and Geoffrey, Andrew and Angela Paul.

Finally, some of the early fall migrants are beginning their long journeys south. A Myrtle Warbler and Bay-breasted Warbler were heard and seen in the Natural Area this week. Though we have one more MAPS monitoring period to go before we begin mist-netting for fall migrants, it's exciting to see these early warblers among the summer residents of the Natural Area.

*-Anna and Allicia*

Table 1: Results from MAPS mist-netting for Rotation 4, July 13-16 2007.

Species	Banded	Repeat <sup>1</sup>	Return <sup>2</sup>	Foreign <sup>3</sup>	Other <sup>4</sup>	Total
Black-capped Chickadee	8	0	0	0	0	8
Downy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hermit Thrush	2	0	0	0	0	2
Least Flycatcher	4	3	1	0	0	8
Tennessee Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>

*Net Hours: 173.0 NH*

*Capture Rate: 11.56 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).

Table 2: Results from the 2007 NABA Butterfly Count at Beaverhill Lake, Alberta (July 14, 2007).

Species	Total
Garita Skipperling	3
European Skipper	292
SKIPPER sp.	10
Can. Tiger Swallowtail	4
Cabbage White	45
WHITE sp.	6
Clouded Sulpher	6
SULPHUR sp.	11
Grey Copper	1
Purplish Copper	2
Silvery Blue	1
Greenish Blue	37
BLUE sp.	41
Gr. Spangled Fritillary	15
Northwestern Fritillary	3
BOLORIA sp.	18
Northern Crescent	255
Red Admiral	1
White Admiral	132
Northern Pearly Eye	29
Inordinate (Common) Ringlet	103
Common Wood-Nymph	85
Common Alpine	2
<b>Total no. of species</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total no. of butterflies</b>	<b>1102</b>



*Canadian Tiger Swallowtail*



*Anna and Grant Sperberg check on a Barn Swallow nest at Francis Point during the butterfly count (photo by Bruce Christensen).*