

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update November 1 to 12, 2008

Well, the field season is over for the Beaverhill Bird Observatory. The lab has been shut down and Saw-whet Owl migration monitoring is completed. We had a pretty slow final 11 days for owls, with only 4 captured in 8 nights of netting. We were shut down early on two nights due to wind and one night due to the first snowfall of the season. Our final night of netting, the nets were actually frozen shut, so it took a while to thaw them out. We thought about trying a few more nights, but with the forecast for freezing rain on the 12<sup>th</sup> and high winds on the 13<sup>th</sup> we decided that something was telling us to quit. We had no owls on the final four nights of netting indicating we are at the end. So the final count was only 131 Saw-whet Owls, our lowest number of owls ever captured, but not our lowest capture rate.



Number of Northern Saw-whet Owls captured at Beaverhill Lake 2002-2008 (Sept 9- Nov 14).

Year	# of Nights	# of Net Hours	# of Owls Captured	Number of Owls/100 Net Hours
2002	55	953.00	142	14.9
2003	48	753.00	150	19.9
2004	59	996.00	306	30.7
2005	37	600.00	135	22.5
2006	42	551.50	149	27.0
2007	50	675.00	184	27.3
2008	47	669.50	131	19.6
Total	--	--	1197	--

The big news was that Beaverhill Lake was on fire again. November 3 we drove out to the lake to watch yet another fire sweeping southeast across the dry lakebed. The fire had started further north and west of the last one, and was fortunately put out more quickly. Once again a big thanks to all the fire crews that brought the fire under control and kept it out of the Beaverhill Lake Natural Area.



Once again we had a little internal contest to see who could guess closest to the number of saw-whets we capture in the season, and once again Rich Krikun won the contest. Rich will be receiving a .....

So here ends the final installment of the lab updates for 2008. Tune in next time in early May to hear about the spring migration for 2009. We hope you can make it out to the lab to see what we are doing and to get up close to some owls and songbirds!

Cheers,

Lisa  
P  
r

i  
e  
s  
t  
l  
e  
y

*All photos by Lisa Priestley © 2008*