

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update October 1 to 14, 2008

This update brings the end of songbird migration monitoring. Yes, there are still birds moving through the area, but with the combination of low numbers and the cold mornings making it hard to open nets early enough, we have chosen October 9 as the end date of netting for songbirds. Robin caught 12 species of birds (191 individuals) this last 9 days. The American Tree Sparrow and Slate-colored Junco topped the captures. She was pleased to catch American Tree Sparrows and White-breasted Nuthatches, the same species she had on her first day of banding in May. Robin also spent time sanding and painting the picnic tables in preparation for the public coming out for Saw-whets, thanks for all your hard work this fall!!



Table 1. Songbird banding results from Beaverhill Bird Observatory October 1 to 9, 2008.

Species	Banded	Repeat <sup>1</sup>	Return <sup>2</sup>	Foreign <sup>3</sup>	Other <sup>4</sup>	Total
American Tree Sparrow	83	5	1	0	3	92
Black-capped Chickadee	5	3	0	0	1	9
Brown Creeper	2	0	0	0	0	2
Hairy Woodpecker	0	1	1	0	0	2
Myrtle Warbler	1	0	0	0	2	3
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	1	0	0	0	3
Purple Finch	0	1	0	0	0	1
Slate-colored Junco	54	13	0	0	8	75
Fox Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-crowned Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Swamp Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>191</b>

<sup>1</sup> Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO.

<sup>2</sup> Banded at the BBO > 90 days prior to recapture (e.g. in a previous year).

<sup>3</sup> Banded at a location other than the BBO.

<sup>4</sup> Caught in a mist-net but not banded (e.g. escaped net).

*Net Hours: 396*  
*Capture 48 birds/*  
*Rate: 100 NH*

The Saw-whet Owls are really on the move now. We caught 46 Saw-whets (161 net hours), including two recaptures. One of the owls was banded 8 days earlier at our station and the other was from Hardy Pletz's site near Millet, banded in 2005. We have also been seeing Long-eared Owls consistently and more recently two Short-eared Owls have been checking out the lab when I arrive before banding. We have set up a Swedish Goshawk trap with pigeons as lures in hopes of catching one. If we do catch one, we will contact Geoff Holroyd and Helen Trefry from the Canadian Wildlife Service so they can put a satellite transmitter on it. The Short-eared Owl is a Species at Risk in Alberta and there is little information on their movements, being an irruptive species. Keep your fingers crossed!!

Of course I need to overview the Steaks and Saw-whets event that was held on October 3 and 4. We had 41 people on Friday and 61 people on Saturday enjoy a barbeque with all the fixings and observed Saw-whet Owl netting. There were 10 owls captured on Friday and two on Saturday. We also had a group from the University of Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society visit on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, definitely very excited about catching three owls. We thank Alberta Conservation Association and Federation of Alberta Naturalists for their support with our public events. Also, thanks to all the volunteers that helped out with Steaks and Saw-whets.



In other news we also had our casino event on October 11 and 12. I need to really thank all the volunteers that helped with it on this Thanksgiving weekend. Some even gave up their turkey dinners, while others were able to reschedule their dinners.

So, overall a busy few weeks for the Beaverhill Bird Observatory. Things are slowly winding down at the bird observatory, but Saw-whet netting continues until mid-November or until we get snowed out. If you are interested in coming out to see some banding please contact me. My weekend is already booked for visitors. I can be contacted at [lisa@beaverhillbirds.com](mailto:lisa@beaverhillbirds.com).

Chow until the end of October update, Lisa Priestley



*All photos by Lisa and Chuck Priestley © 2008*