

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update June 30 - July 9, 2009

In the third round of MAPS the Mist nets remained relatively uninteresting, with 34 total bird captures of only 6 different species (Table 1). As usual the captures were dominated by Least Flycatchers, though we were excited about the three return individuals, all of whom were banded for the first time last year. A few rainy days set us back a bit on our banding, but we were able to catch up, and all the surrounding vegetation was glad for the moisture –it all seemed just a little bit greener afterwards.



Extended wing of a Least Flycatcher

The nest finding and monitoring was quite exciting this round, Ashley and I found our first ever Brewer's Blackbird nest by flushing the female off of her four warm eggs. As is usually the case, it was found entirely by accident as we were checking one of the nest boxes at Francis View Point. We are very much looking forward to following this nest! Brewer's Blackbirds are by no means rare or unusual, but the 'first' of just about anything is exciting...



Beautiful blue plumage of the female Mountain Bluebird

We have been busy at Francis View Point monitoring the nest boxes there, and in this round we banded three nests of Tree Swallows, with a total of 11 young between them. We also captured a female Mountain Bluebird, the first adult captured this year, who was sitting on five eggs in her nest box. In addition, we banded 6 House Wren nestlings from one box and found 6 eggs in another! And just to keep us on our toes, a House Wren decided to use a Barn Swallow mud cup nest in the look-out building! While wrens are known to nest just about anywhere, there are probably few records of secondary nesting in Barn Swallow nests!

Jenny and Tyler have also been busy with nests on the swallow grids, and in this round alone have banded a total of 181 young Tree Swallows. And there are more yet to come!

We would like to say a big THANK YOU to Jim Beck and his chainsaw for coming out and cutting us an impressive pile of firewood that we will appreciate this fall when the temperatures drop and we need to use the stove!



Jim Beck working away on our wood pile

Table 1. Results from MAPS program June 30 – July 9, 2009.

| Species | Banded | Repeat ¹ | Return ² | Foreign ³ | Other ⁴ | Total |
|----------------------|--------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------|
| American Goldfinch | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Brown-headed Cowbird | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Hairy Woodpecker | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Hermit Thrush | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| House Wren | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Least Flycatcher | 12 | 11 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 26 |
| Total | 18 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 34 |

Net Hours: 180 NH
Capture Rate: 18.3 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).



Left; the best picture of the House Wren using a Barn Swallow nest. Yes, sorry, this is the best picture, there are small young in the nest at this time. Right; Monstrous mushrooms growing at the BBO (not the scientific name...)



Two of the three young Hairy Woodpeckers we captured out at the Weir one day.