

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update Oct 15 – 31, 2010



An interesting fault bar...

I've enjoyed having a number of visitors out to the lab to help out with the Saw-whet banding. The University of Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society was out on October 16th for their annual visit. Approximately 30 people made the drive out from Edmonton or the Augustana Campus in Camrose to see the owls. It worked out very well and we had 8 owls throughout the night, so everyone was able to view an owl. I was also happy to have a visit from my mom (Claudia Cameron) that night, along with her friend Mary Roy.

We continue to have great coverage thanks to volunteers that are willing and able to come out and keep the nets running when I am away on days off. Gerry Beyersbergen was out on October 17th and caught 8 owls, and Chuck Priestley was able to cover the next night and caught an additional 3. Many thanks guys!

October 22nd was another busy night for having guests out, my good friend from High School Jess Bennett came out for a chilly night in the bush, as well as my buddy from University, Jill Anderson and her crew of interested friends. Gerry and Robyn were out, and we caught two owls early on in the night. After they had left the rest of us had to wait until 1:30 AM for the next bird! At least we got some good visiting in. On the 23rd my husband Isaac came out with a group of friends and we had a great BBQ and caught two owls. I sure enjoy all the company out here during owling season!



Gerry and Robyn doing all the hard work!

At the very end of this round we had a surprising second wave of birds come through. After a week of catching 1 -3 birds per night, on October 30th I caught 12 owls! Again Gerry and Robyn were out, I am starting to see a pattern... Gerry always catches birds! Lisa and Todd Mahon were also out that night and banded their first Saw-whets. The next night Geoff was able to come out to band, he and Helen Trefry got 16 owls! I am very glad we are going to keep banding longer this year, and we'll see where we end up by November 15th, the final day of Saw-whet banding for 2010.



Currently, we have banded 260 owls, caught four of these owls a second time, and caught two owls that were banded elsewhere. One of the birds was banded near Lindbrook last year by Bob Gehlert, but the other one remains a mystery yet, which is always exciting!

Normally we would be ending the Saw-whet banding now, so everything from here on out is all icing on the cake. Looking forward to seeing what November brings!

Table 1. Northern Saw-whet Owl captures by age and sex from September 10 – October 31st

Age	Male	Female	Unknown
Hatch Year	28	142	45
Second Year	4	15	10
After Second Year	1	19	2
Total	33	176	57



Lisa and Todd Mahon – having a blast!