

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update, July 11-17, 2012

The last week at the BBO has been eventful as always! All of the thunderstorms that we have been having have prevented us from banding, but has given us plenty of time to catch up on chores around the lab and data entry. Along with chores, MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) round four along with another raptor banding outing, nest box checks and pollard walks have kept our days busy.

The nets are still fairly quiet; we've still been catching on average 10 birds per day. And as per usual, Least Flycatchers are still our most common bird banded. During this rotation however we did have a few interesting catches, such as a Baltimore Oriole and a Northern Flicker! Been a while since we've caught either.

While during point counts we observed a lot of neat birds during this rotation; specifically Meaghan spotted about 30 Pelicans foraging at the weir looking rather waterlogged due to all of the rain!

When the weather finally cooperated and we had a very sunny afternoon, Meaghan and I decided to complete a Pollard walk. Although the birds weren't very active during this rotation, a number of butterflies were flittering about. In an hour we counted 79 European Skippers! We also spotted a few Ringlets, White Admirals, Cabbage Whites and Greenish Blues! We even spotted some freshly emerged Mourning Cloaks. Overall a very successful Pollard walk, which has been a nice change seeing as we keep being rained out.



Meaghan with a White Admiral!



Retrieving Swainson chicks from nest.

During this rotation we were very fortunate to be invited by Hardy Pletz to accompany him and Janos Kovacs in banding an American Kestrel box and a Swainsons Hawk nest. Naturally, we jumped at the opportunity to band more raptors! I was even lucky enough to go retrieve the chicks out of their nest. After climbing to the top of a shaky ladder and hearing the calls of both parents I started to have second thoughts. Thankfully Hardy

had equipped me with a helmet and jacket which held up to the hits of the angry parents. The two chicks that were retrieved and banded made it well worth it though!

All of the rain, albeit frustrating when it impedes banding, has resulted in a number of mushrooms popping up! There are a lot of Northern Rough Stems, Oyster Mushrooms, and Inky Caps around the natural area. The raspberries as well seem to be benefiting from all of the rain. The raspberry bushes in the natural area are full of ripe raspberries that are the size of farmed ones. Unfortunately, it's a bit of a trade off; in a matter of minutes you can gather a lot of raspberries and mushrooms, but at the same time you run the risk of being devoured by mosquitoes!

The mosquito population seems to be thriving once again this year. Meaghan and I have involuntarily done our part to keep the population well fed. Unfortunately the only problem with the mosquitoes isn't the constant biting. The incessant buzzing also makes it difficult to hear bird calls. As such, they've started to become distracting during point counts and census.

And thanks again to Irene and Onyx who continue to be our most regular visitors at the lab! We're always very happy to see them!

Table 1. Results from MAPS round 4, July 11-17, 2012.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Baltimore Oriole	0	1	0	0	1	2
Least Flycatcher	24	3	0	0	1	28
Northern Flicker	1	0	0	0	0	1
Warbling Vireo	0	0	1	0	0	1
	25	4	1	0	2	32

Net Hours: 180 NH
Capture Rate: 17.78birds/ 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).