

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory Weekly Update May 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015

It's been busy first week of operations! Banding officially started May 1<sup>st</sup> with a whole new crew of staff, including Jonathan DeMoor as Head Biologist, Emily Cicon and Meghan Jacklin as Assistant Biologists, and Steven Griffeth as a live-in intern for the month of May. We started off with much better weather than expected and had a full week of operations excepting one day during an unseasonal snowstorm. The first few days of banding were great for training the new staff with only a few catches per day, but with surprisingly high diversity. Migration is definitely picking up with increases in catch throughout the week and the best day occurring post-snowstorm. Emily and Chair Geoff Holroyd represented the BBO at the annual Snow Goose Chase in Tofield, manning an information booth and an interactive banding demo. At the end of the week Emily, Meghan and Steven, with the help of Geoff, added more nest boxes to one of our existing Tree Swallow grids.

We've definitely noticed "waves" of bird species in the net, where multiple individuals of the same species are caught all at once. This includes a group of four chipping sparrows caught all at once in the same net – leaving each of us with a bird to extract.



BBO staff comparing Chipping Sparrow crown plumage; a technique to help age this species. Banders look for dark flecks within the rufous crown as an indicator of a second year bird (older birds would have much fewer flecks, or none).

At the beginning of the week we had plenty of geese (Canadian, Snow, and Greater White-Fronted) and Sandhill Cranes to keep us counting during the day. As the week went by the number of these large migrants seemed to decline. With all these migrating birds, we've definitely had a chance to improve our aerial counting skills! In

addition to the birds on site, we've had the company of coyote howls, white-tailed deer, adorable snowshoe hares, and a plains garter snake.

During this week, we've enjoyed visiting with a number of new and returning visitors and volunteers, including: Irene Crosland, Joshua Killeen, Elly Knight, J.F. Jetté, Allyn Esau, Helen Trefry and Jackie, Geoff Holroyd and Gemma, and other passersby. A special thanks to Henry Sanders for the visit and the much appreciated coffee and muffins. Your donation of binoculars to the lab will certainly be greatly appreciated by future visitors.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Banded</b>	<b>Repeat<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Return<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Foreign<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Other<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Total</b>
American Robin	3	0	0	0	0	3
Black-capped Chickadee	1	0	4	0	0	5
Chipping Sparrow	5	0	0	0	0	5
Eastern Phoebe	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hermit Thrush	3	0	0	0	0	3
Lincoln's Sparrow	6	0	0	0	0	6
Myrtle Warbler	19	0	0	0	0	19
Orange-crowned Warbler	5	0	0	0	0	5
Ovenbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Swainson's Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Western Palm Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-crowned Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-throated Sparrow	11	0	0	0	0	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>63</b>

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).

Net Hours: = 154 NH

Capture Rate: = 41 birds/ 100 NH