

Weekly Update April 16th to April 22nd 2016

This week has been very exciting; migration is really starting now! As we reached the end of this week we started to see the first of many of our species returning. A bit of better weather and unusual south winds seemed to help bring these species north towards us. We have seen or heard the first Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pine Siskin, Common Snipe, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Eastern Phoebe this week. As of the end of the week our Tree Swallows are back in numbers as well. This seems quite early according to our records; the warm winter and spring may be resulting in an early migration for many species. Last year an Eastern Phoebe took up residence behind our cabins and sung loudly every morning for the month of May. Hope we get a resident one this year!

In addition to our birds arriving early, we have a number of other critters that seem early this spring. Butterflies have been out in numbers already, prompting a few butterfly surveys, and other insects have been very active. Aspen across the natural area started leafing out this week after the 25 degree temperatures, and with the leaves come the warblers! We have high hopes for the new birds that could be coming next week.

In terms of captures, we finally caught some of our many Robins that have been hanging around! We caught our first Song Sparrow mid-week. We also caught a few Black-capped Chickadees this week that show evidence of breeding, which agrees with the fact that so far we have seen a number of them excavating nest cavities. However, the real excitement was Friday of this week... we broke our records so far with 45 birds in one day! We caught mainly Slate-coloured Juncos, but also our first Hermit Thrush, Fox Sparrow and Myrtle Warbler. This crazy busy day is a sign that our songbirds are really moving through now, and may be due to the fact that this week has such warm weather and looks like it will be followed by some bad weather again. No bird wants to waste energy flying in a storm, so when the going is good, they all go at once. Hopefully this sets the stage for a few busier days for us in the next weeks too.



Jeremy the volunteer with a Fox Sparrow.

It has been a pretty good owl week so far as well. Surprisingly, the Short-eared Owls are still very active over the lake, with 10 sighted on one morning. That same day, we spooked a pair of Long-eared Owls during census and later nearly caught another one in a net! Here's hoping it will be another great owl year as well.

Thanks Irene, Jeremy, Steve, Adam and Kristin, Bonnie Stauffer, Emily, Connor, and Scott, Andrew, and Phil and company and their two dogs. Our volunteers keep us running, thank you!

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Black-capped Chickadee	1	4	1	0	1	7
American Robin	3	0	1	0	2	6
Song Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Fox Sparrow	5	0	0	0	0	5
Dark-eyed Junco	49	0	0	0	3	52
Total	63	4	2	0	6	75

Birds Caught 75
 Net Hours 377
 Capture Rate: 19.89

Capture Rate was 19.89 birds/100 Net Hours.

- 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).