

Weekly Update May 14th to May 20th, 2016

This week things have stayed pretty slow, but we were lucky to get one slightly busy day. Hopefully once this weather clears up we'll have a few more of them... this week finished up with quite a bit of rain! We did catch some cool species this week including the first Brown-headed Cowbird, House Wren, Blackpoll Warbler, and White-breasted Nuthatch. Over the week we have caught a decent number of Clay-coloured Sparrows, and have been hearing them throughout census. This is our most common sparrow, but they clearly have just arrived in any numbers. In fact, the bad weather at the end of the week knocked quite a few cool species out of sky... while we did not catch them we saw the return of our resident American Goldfinches, and saw migrating Tennessee and Magnolia Warblers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Blue-headed Vireos. We will start catching them soon!

We also had another raptor capture this week! A second Sharp-shinned Hawk, a young male. It makes a great comparison to our earlier capture because this one was a young male versus an older female. The young male had yellow eyes because it was young, and the female had orange red eyes because she was older. Typically, red eyes are more common in males and yellow in females, but because of the ages of the birds this was reversed.



Male Sharp-shinned Hawk (left) vs. female Sharp-shinned Hawk (right). Red eye colour is more prevalent in males and older birds, and yellow is more common in females and younger birds. The female in this picture is old and the male is young. The female is also larger than the male.

We hosted our International Migratory Bird Day Event this week on Saturday, in partnership with Nature Alberta. They brought out activities for kids. It was nice to see a few

familiar faces among them, including Alyssa and Emily from last year, but also Jerry, who was an assistant bander in 2013 at BBO. It was great to see them all.

This week we had fun playing host to 10 students and assistants from the University of Manitoba. They took a break from their fieldwork in southern Alberta to come up and band for a day with us. They were a lot of fun and got to learn about some more forest/parkland species compared to the southern grassland birds that they get at their field site. They also study specific species and got to see what a general banding station is like too.



The Clay-coloured Sparrow is our most common sparrow banded at BBO. It has a brown cheek patch and a gray collar around the back of its neck. Our visitors from the U of M saw lots of them.

In terms of other non-bird life, we have spotted the first Canadian Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly of the season. This characteristic yellow butterfly can be seen across the natural area as well as Edmonton area during summer. We also have observed the first strawberry flowers blooming... those will be well appreciated in the months to come. Finally, we have begun checking out our bat boxes to make sure they will support our little flying mammals too! None yet.

This week we put up our hummingbird feeders for the first time. It is only in anticipation right now, hummingbirds have been seen in Edmonton, but not Tofield, that we know of yet. But they will be here soon.

Thank you to our awesome volunteers: Sara P-M, Jeremy, Irene, Emily and Susan, Alyssa, Jerry, Carissa, 10 U of M students and assistants, Chris, Jody, Megan, and Kayleen. Thank you as well to our visitors: Connie and Caroline, and others.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0	0	0	0	1
Least Flycatcher	12	0	0	0	0	12
White-breasted Nuthatch	0	0	1	0	0	1
House Wren	2	0	0	0	0	2
Swainsons Thrush	5	0	0	0	0	5
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
American Robin	1	0	0	0	0	1
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Myrtle Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	1
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clay-coloured Sparrow	16	0	0	0	0	16
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-throated Sparrow	3	0	0	0	0	3
Dark-eyed Junco	1	0	0	0	0	1
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	47	0	1	0	1	49

Birds Caught 49
Net Hours 243.75
Capture Rate: 20.10

Capture Rate was 20.10 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).