

Weekly Update May 7th to May 13th 2017

Finally things at the BBO are picking up. This week our major songbird movement has begun. This year, we are experiencing a very large volume of sparrows moving through to start the beginning of migration. We caught our first White-throated Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows, and Clay-coloured Sparrows of the year, and the first Savannah Sparrow in several years! It may be that the significant amount of water in the lake this year is causing the sparrow species to funnel past the BBO, as was originally intended. When these sparrows could fly straight across the lakebed, taking breaks on vegetation, there was less of a funnel effect. Along with our Sparrows, we also found ourselves with a lovely distinctive Palm Warbler as well.



Western Palm Warbler. Photo by Irene Crosland.

Not to be outdone, our favorite Least Flycatchers are back, and “Chebek”-ing away! These little flycatchers will quickly set up territories and will soon be the most common bird in the Natural Area. Geese have mostly stopped flying overhead, but waterfowl are plentiful along the shores of Lister Lake. Staff had a beautiful flyover by three Great Blue Herons right over the lab as well!

This week has been exciting in more ways than one. On Wednesday, staff surveyed water levels in the lakebed... by airplane! All three staff rode in a small 4 seater plane and toured the whole lake bed, and it is wet!!!! There is still a lot of vegetation present, but water is underneath most of it. Water is

filling approximately 70% of the space it used to occupy. This is huge considering that the lake completely dried up 10 years ago and grass has grown to fill the entire lakebed. Staff took many photos to document the water coverage across the whole lake. We got a nice overhead view of the BBO lab as well!



View of Beaverhill Lake from the west looking South. Photo by Kevin Methuen.

This week Head Biologist Kevin joined the Nature Conservancy Canada for a volunteer event. Weather was too poor to run a live banding demonstration, but Kevin brought Ray our educational Saw-whet Owl to join him, and she was a hit! After meeting Ray, and learning about bird research at BBO, the volunteers got to work. What a nice treat!

Thank you to our awesome volunteers: Fraser, Emily, Jeremiah, Laura, Irene, Brenda, Crystal, Kyle, Myla-Rae, Shannon, Jeremy, and Olivia. Thank you as well to the visitors who came out to see us, the numerous families, and Alyssa and NatureKids!

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
White-breasted Nuthatch	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	0	0	0	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	6	0	0	0	0	6
Song Sparrow	5	0	0	0	0	5
Lincolns Sparrow	14	1	0	0	0	15
White-throated Sparrow	10	0	0	0	0	10
White-crowned Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Western Palm Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Eastern Phoebe	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tree Swallow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	0	1	0	0	0	1
Swainsons Thrush	2	0	0	0	0	2
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Chipping Sparrow	5	0	0	0	0	5
Clay-coloured Sparrow	21	0	0	0	0	21
Savannah Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Least Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	75	2	1	0	0	78

Birds Caught 78
Net Hours 253.5
Capture Rate: 30.77

Capture Rate was 30.77 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).