

# Beaverhill Bird Observatory



## 1997 Annual Report

Christine Rice and Jason Duxbury, Editors  
December, 1998

Beaverhill Bird Observatory  
PO Box 1418  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
T5J 2N5

The Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society is a non-profit organization composed of a variety of volunteers dedicated to developing an understanding of the birds and other natural history at Beaverhill Lake and elsewhere. A board of elected Directors administers the society and operates the field station as a bird banding, research and interpretive centre.

Membership is open to anyone and includes a subscription to *The Willet* (the BBO newsletter), the opportunity to participate in BBO activities and events (and assist in planning them) and to be trained in bird banding. Two full membership meetings are held each year - one in spring and one in the fall.

The BBO provides support to amateur, student and professional field naturalists in pursuit of studies of bird life and related fields at Beaverhill Lake and elsewhere. Student field staff are employed to operate the station during the summer months.

Membership fees are:

Individual	\$10
Family	\$20
Corporate	\$25
Supporting	\$25
Sustaining	\$100
Life	\$500

Tax deductible receipts are issued for donations. If you wish to join, please send your name, address and phone number, along with a cheque for the appropriate amount (made out to the Beaverhill Bird Observatory) to:

The Treasurer,  
Beaverhill Bird Observatory  
P.O. Box 1418  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 2N5

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Beaverhill Bird Observatory wishes to thank the funding agencies who together make this research possible with their generous grants and support. Great thanks to Employment and Immigration Canada (SEED), Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development (STEP), Environment Canada - Canadian Wildlife Services, Alberta Recreation Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Canada Trust, Ducks Unlimited, Manning Diversified Forest Products Research Trust Fund, J.B. Baillie Memorial Fund, The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (NAFTA) and many individual supporters.

The quality of the research at the Beaverhill Bird Observatory (BBO) is primarily due to devoted and generous people. Special thanks are extended to Lisa Takats and Jim & Barb Beck who regularly and tirelessly devote their time and energy in support of the BBO. Many thanks to the 1997 staff, namely Elsabe Kloppers, Karen Garvin, Kim Pearson and Jeff Sleno for their dedication to quality field research. We would like to thank the authors of past reports that aided in the compilation of this report including the 1997 field staff, Geoff Holroyd, Petra Rowell, Elson Olorenshaw, Jason Duxbury, Josh Bilyk and Lisa Takats. Thanks also goes to Jason Duxbury for redesigning the cover for the annual report. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the BBO's activities this season.

## INTRODUCTION

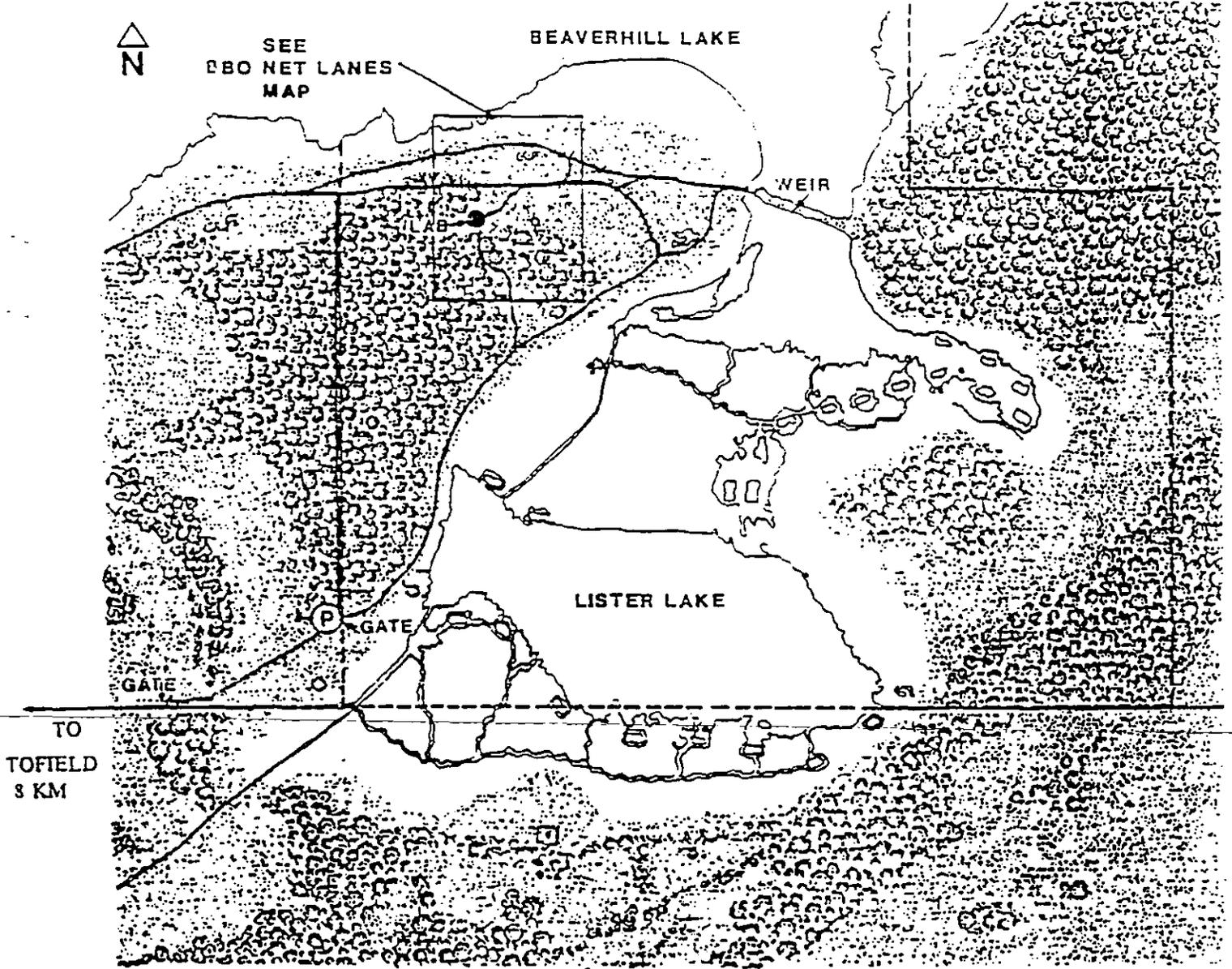
Beaverhill Lake is a large, shallow body of water located in the aspen-parkland ecoregion of central Alberta. Near the Town of Tofield, approximately 70 km SE of Edmonton, it is a popular place to birdwatch. With its large mudflats, extensive sedge, grassland and willow complexes and surrounding aspen forest, this lake is a haven for many species of wildlife. In the spring and fall, the area provides a staging ground for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and passerines.

The rich diversity of wildlife in the Beaverhill area attracts deserving attention. Many scientific studies have been conducted here by people like William Rowan (Ainley 1983), Robert Lister (1979), Dick Dekker (1991), and Roy Fairweather (1995). Ducks Unlimited has also completed several waterfowl projects in the area, such as providing spring waterfowl staging areas and breeding islands in Lister Lake. Beaverhill Lake has gained international recognition under the RAMSAR wetland agreement and has been acknowledged as a Natural Viewpoint by the Canadian Nature Federation. The Alberta Government has declared the southeast corner around Lister Lake, Pelican Islands and Dekker Islands as the Beaverhill Lake Natural Area, and the Beaverhill Bird Observatory is the Natural Area Steward.

The Beaverhill Bird Observatory (BBO) was founded in 1984 as a joint committee of the Edmonton Bird Club and Edmonton Natural History Club. Now an individual society, the BBO is a non-profit, volunteer organization. Research is conducted by field staff based out of the lab on the southeast corner of Beaverhill Lake (Figure 1).

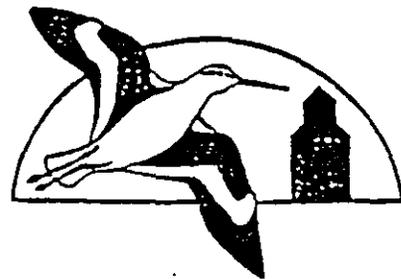
The primary function of the field station is bird banding and censusing as part of the Canadian Network of Monitoring Stations and the North American Monitoring of Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) programs. In addition, projects monitoring raptor migration and resident amphibians were launched this field season. This annual report will summarize these and other activities at the BBO in 1997.

# NATURAL AREA



-  POPLAR
-  WILLOW / GRASS
-  MARSH
-  TRAILS
-  NATURAL AREA BOUNDARY
-  PARKING

1 km  
1:20,000



Beaverhill Bird Observatory

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The goal of the Executive Committee is to use financial, human and physical resources effectively and responsibly to ensure the growth and continuation of the Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society.

### The 1997 Executive (prior to November 1):

Chairman	Jason Duxbury
Treasurer	Elson Olorenshaw
Recording Secretary	Geoff Holroyd
Past Chairman	Petra Rowell
Directors-at-large:	Lisa Takats ( <i>The Willet</i> newsletter editor)
	Jim Faragini (maintainance)
	Al de Groot (maintainance)

### Chairman's Report – Jason Duxbury

One could give the banding season of 1997 a number of names. It was a summer of birds, banding and building. It was the "Year of Extreme Weather" with eight inches of snow collapsing trees on May 21<sup>st</sup> and by May 31<sup>st</sup> temperatures reached 20 C by 8:30 am. Complaints switched from "there's too much rain" to "when is it going to rain" and back again. June 22<sup>nd</sup> saw Tofield flood to truck fender height, but temperatures sweltered over the 30 C mark on many occasions. While numerous banding days were cut short or cancelled due to the extreme weather, the year-end tallies were still very interesting. Overall, 2692 birds were caught and 2339 banded. One of the nicest surprises of the year was that the number of warbler species exceeded 20 with a couple of rarities stopping in.

The year may also have been termed the "Year of the Voles", as there density exploded in time for spring. This peak probably lead to what could have been called the "Year of the Owls". With such a high density of rodents, there was noticeable increase in the number of owl sightings. An irruption of Short-eared Owls was a special treat. These medium sized owls were seen on 103 occasions during the banding season. Other owls seen in or around the natural area were Northern Saw-whet Owls, Great Horned Owls and Long-eared Owls.

Other species of birds of prey were also being monitored as the BBO's Lisa Takats initiated the Raptor Monitoring Program in the natural area. With the use of numerous trapping methods, the BBO staff managed to capture and band 6 species of raptors. Long-term sight records will be combined with banding results in an attempt to monitor the fall migration of birds of prey.

A long with monitoring songbirds and raptors, the BBO is now monitoring amphibians and reptiles. The past year marked the first year of the Alberta Environmental Protection-University of Alberta supported RANA project, recording frog, toad, salamander and snake sightings for a long term population monitoring project.

The past year will also be seen for its resurgence of the number of volunteers and visitors at the lab. Many new volunteers banders were trained, and a dedicated crew of BBO executive members built a new bunkhouse on site. An overachieving member of the executive had the extra energy to dig a new outhouse (still a room with a view!). The increasing number of people touring the observatory during the Snow Goose Festival was enhanced by those stopping by during the rest of the summer. Another increase was due to the hiring of a small army of staff. The "Year of the Staff" began with Elsabe Kloppers, Karen Garvin and Kim Pearson, but was supplemented with Jeff Sleno when Kim gave up the life of a bander to become a park warden in Waterton Lakes National Park. The fifth and final employee, Christine Rice, was hired later in the summer to band raptors and monitor songbird migrations until they ended in October.

1997 could also be the "Year of the Delectables" as the staff became regulars at Mom's Ice Cream Corral ("Screamers" – yum!), and Janos Kovacs' crepes were a smashing success for the second year in a row. Janos has now been appointed Head Chef at the annual Beaverhill Bird Observatory Crepe Spectacular. An event not to be missed!

Both Videotron and the Life Network ("The Bird Guy") came out to the lab to do some filming. ~~If bribing new recruits with food won't work, we can only hope the "high profile" TV exposure will help spark even more interest.~~ Whether they want to band, birdwatch or wield hammers, new volunteers will always be a welcome sight.

Activity definitely picked up at the Beaverhill Bird Observatory in 1997, and we now look towards the banding season of 1998 wondering what is in store. What will the songbird migration be like? Will it snow in May? Will the Short-eared Owls return? How many crepes will we eat? We shall see... we shall see.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The goal of this committee is to develop and maintain a strong financial position to support all BBO activities - to provide adequate funds for BBO operations and projects. The major portion of our funding is used for payment of wages for University students or graduates carrying out banding and other related scientific research studies.

### **1997 Sponsors**

Field research conducted in 1997 would not have been possible without the support of Employment and Immigration Canada (SEED), Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development (STEP), Environment Canada - Canadian Wildlife Services, Alberta Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Canada Trust, Ducks Unlimited, Manning Diversified Forest Products Research Trust Fund, J.B. Baillie Memorial Fund and many individual supporters. Great thanks to everyone.

# Treasurer's Report - Elson Olorenshaw

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society  
 INCOME Jan 1, 1997 TO Dec 31, 1997

## REVENUE

### REVENUE

Memberships		540.00
Grant-Alta Govt Step	3,367.00	
Grant-Baillie Fund	1,000.00	
Grant-Environment Canada	22,000.00	
Grant-Can Govt SEED	2,800.00	
Grant-Manning Div For Prdt	5,000.00	
Grant-RPW	13,500.00	
Grant-Ducks Unlimited	<u>13,542.00</u>	
Total Grants		61,209.00
Donations	5,974.12	
Donation Box- Gate	3.00	
Donation Box- Lab	<u>60.93</u>	
Total Donations		6,038.05
Interest		18.42
GST Refund		138.25
Sales-Checklists	100.00	
Sales- Calendars	902.00	
Sales- Pins	150.00	
Sales- T-Shirts	8.55	
Sales- Pancake B'fast	10.25	
Sales- Misc	71.00	
Snow Goose Fest. Income	<u>47.34</u>	
Net Sales		1,299.34
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<u><b>69,243.16</b></u>

### TOTAL REVENUE

69,243.16

## EXPENSE

### EXPENSES

Office- Mail Box	123.05
Office- Stationery	107.62
Office- Postage	268.21
Office- Printing	152.90
Office-Newsletter	102.56
Office- Reports/manuals	338.00
Telephone	82.79
Office- Misc	<u>892.33</u>
Total Office Supplies	2,067.46
Insurance	324.59
Property Taxes	62.86
Bank Charges	111.79
Repairs & Maintenance	519.40
Nets & Poles	1,880.86
Bands & Equipment	307.46
Snow Goose Fest. Expense	83.54
Sale Items- Calendars	385.00
Biodiversity Study Expense	<u>869.56</u>
Sale item Cost - Total	1,338.10
Educational Courses	18.00
Memberships	35.00
Raptor Project Expenses	885.20
Travel Expense	<u>2,990.00</u>
Total Travel Expense	2,990.00
GST Expense	6.96
Wages Expense	39,515.36
EI Expense	1,588.11
CPP Expense	<u>935.10</u>
Total Wages & Benefits	42,038.57
Calgary BBS	1,000.00
Lesser Slave Bird Ob	<u>4,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<u><b>57,586.35</b></u>

### TOTAL EXPENSE

57,586.35

### INCOME

11,656.81

BEAVERHILL BIRD OBSERVATORY SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 1418  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N5

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society  
BALANCE SHEET Dec 31, 1997

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Bank	<u>6,678.04</u>	
Cash: Total		6,678.04
Accounts Receivable		<u>9,400.00</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>16,078.04</b>

FIXED ASSETS

Building	3,604.55	
Computer	600.00	
Donation Boxes	541.00	
Banding Equipment	1,100.00	
Display Board	527.00	
Refrigerator	577.04	
Solar Panels	<u>846.38</u>	
Total Fixed Assets		<u>7,795.97</u>
<b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS</b>		<b>7,795.97</b>

**TOTAL ASSETS**

23,874.01

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES

EI Payable	52.20	
CPP Payable	36.00	
Income Tax Payable	<u>112.95</u>	
Receiver General Payable		<u>201.15</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>201.15</b>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES**

201.15

EQUITY

EQUITY		
Capital		12,016.05
Current Earnings		<u>11,656.81</u>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>23,672.86</b>

**TOTAL EQUITY**

23,672.86

**LIABILITIES AND EQUITY**

23,874.01

## SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The goal of this activity is to develop, promote implement and publish quality, field-orientated surveys and research on birds and other wildlife at Beaverhill Lake and elsewhere.

### Overall Bird Banding Totals at the BBO in 1997

In 1997 consistent banding data was collected longer into the season than ever before. Nets were open early in the spring at the annual Snow Goose Festival on April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> and banding continued from May 5<sup>th</sup> until October 30<sup>th</sup>. Despite this longer banding season the delayed spring, exceptionally wet summer and chilly fall prevented any record breaking banding efforts. The total number of banding days matched last years achievement of 109 and the total number of 6121.4 net hours was lower than the 1996 total of 7197 net hours. As expected the capture rates fell in summer as the wave of spring migrants dwindled, and were highest in the fall as the migrants and their young of the year moved back through our area.

Table 1: Seasonal Capture Rates at BBO in 1997

Season	Capture Rate (birds/100 net hours)
Spring	32
Summer	20
Fall	53

A total of 2692 birds were captured (Table 2) and 2339 new bird were banded (Table 3). The diversity of birds captured and banded this year was a spectacular record breaking 71 species with the highest diversity recorded in the fall.

Table 4: Avian Species Diversity Captured at BBO in 1997

Season	# Bird Species Captured
Spring	42
Summer	18
Fall	56

The top five species with the highest numbers captured were Myrtle Warblers (425), Yellow Warblers (402), Least Flycatchers (313), Clay-coloured Sparrows (209), and Black-capped Chickadees (201) together comprising 58% of the total birds caught in 1997. The majority of chickadees captured (64%) have already been banded since they are a resident species whose presence is enjoyed all year, unlike the brief seasonal visit of other residents such as Yellow Warblers or Least Flycatchers.

The most common species banded closely reflect the capture totals. The top five species banded were Myrtle Warblers (409), Yellow Warblers (327), Least Flycatchers (282), Clay-coloured Sparrows (187) and Tennessee Warblers (157) together comprising 58% of the total birds banded in 1997.

Table 2: Birds Captured at BBO in 1997

Species	Number	Species	Number
1. Cooper's Hawk	1	37. Townsend's Warbler	3
2. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	38. Magnolia Warbler	20
3. Hairy Woodpecker	3	39. Mourning Warbler	6
4. Downy Woodpecker	7	40. Black-and-White Warbler	4
5. Western Wood Pewee	3	41. Connecticut Warbler	3
6. Alder Flycatcher	46	42. Black-throated-green Warbler	1
7. Least Flycatcher	313	43. Northern Waterthrush	10
8. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	2	44. Ovenbird	5
9. Northern Flicker	2	45. Chestnut-sided Warbler	1
10. Tree Swallow	107	46. Nashville Warbler	1
11. Barn Swallow	11	47. MacGillivray's Warbler	1
12. Black-capped Chickadee	201	48. Western Tanager	1
13. House Wren	71	49. Chipping Sparrow	41
14. Mountain Bluebird	1	50. Clay-colored Sparrow	209
15. Swainson's Thrush	34	51. Vesper Sparrow	1
16. Hermit Thrush	19	52. Savannah Sparrow	5
17. Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	53. Song Sparrow	5
18. Veery	1	54. Lincoln's Sparrow	19
19. American Robin	6	55. White-throated Sparrow	19
20. Gray Catbird	3	56. White-crowned Sparrow	7
21. Warbling Vireo	32	57. Swamp Sparrow	1
22. Red-eyed Vireo	23	58. American Tree Sparrow	26
23. Philadelphia Vireo	4	59. Dark-eyed Junco	31
24. Solitary Vireo	2	60. Red-winged Blackbird	3
25. Tennessee Warbler	166	61. Brown-headed Cowbird	39
26. Orange-crowned Warbler	123	62. Purple Finch	3
27. Yellow Warbler	402	63. Pine Siskin	3
28. Cape-may Warbler	6	64. American Goldfinch	15
29. Myrtle Warbler	425	65. Baltimore Oriole	10
30. Eastern Palm Warbler	1	66. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	21
31. Western Palm Warbler	7	67. Golden-crowned Kinglet	9
32. Blackpoll Warbler	30	68. Cedar Waxwing	3
33. Common Yellowthroat	8	69. Rose-breasted Grosbeak	9
34. Canada Warbler	4	70. Red-breasted Nuthatch	9
35. American Redstart	66	71. White-breasted Nuthatch	1
36. Wilson's Warbler	22	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2692</b>

Table 3: Birds Banded at BBO in 1997

Species	Number	Species	Number
1. Cooper's Hawk	1	37. Townsend's Warbler	3
2. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	38. Magnolia Warbler	20
3. Hairy Woodpecker	3	39. Mourning Warbler	6
4. Downy Woodpecker	5	40. Black-and-White Warbler	4
5. Western Wood Pewee	3	41. Connecticut Warbler	3
6. Alder Flycatcher	46	42. Black-throated-green Warbler	1
7. Least Flycatcher	282	43. Northern Waterthrush	10
8. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	2	44. Ovenbird	5
9. Northern Flicker	2	45. Chestnut-sided Warbler	1
10. Tree Swallow	106	46. Nashville Warbler	1
11. Barn Swallow	10	47. MacGillvray's Warbler	1
12. Black-capped Chickadee	72	48. Western Tanager	1
13. House Wren	58	49. Chipping Sparrow	41
14. Mountain Bluebird	1	50. Clay-colored Sparrow	187
15. Swainson's Thrush	32	51. Vesper Sparrow	1
16. Hermit Thrush	16	52. Savannah Sparrow	3
17. Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	53. Song Sparrow	4
18. Veery	1	54. Lincoln's Sparrow	18
19. American Robin	6	55. White-throated Sparrow	19
20. Gray Catbird	3	56. White-crowned Sparrow	7
21. Warbling Vireo	28	57. Swamp Sparrow	1
22. Red-eyed Vireo	22	58. American Tree Sparrow	25
23. Philadelphia Vireo	4	59. Dark-eyed Junco	26
24. Solitary Vireo	2	60. Red-winged Blackbird	2
25. Tennessee Warbler	157	61. Brown-headed Cowbird	23
26. Orange-crowned Warbler	111	62. Purple Finch	3
27. Yellow Warbler	327	63. Pine Siskin	3
28. Cape-may Warbler	5	64. American Goldfinch	15
29. Myrtle Warbler	409	65. Baltimore Oriole	8
30. Eastern Palm Warbler	1	66. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	20
31. Western Palm Warbler	7	67. Golden-crowned Kinglet	8
32. Blackpoll Warbler	30	68. Cedar Waxwing	3
33. Common Yellowthroat	8	69. Rose-breasted Grosbeak	9
34. Canada Warbler	4	70. Red-breasted Nuthatch	9
35. American Redstart	66	71. White-breasted Nuthatch	1
36. Wilson's Warbler	22	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2339</b>

Some interesting captures in the spring included a Cooper's Hawk (in the mist nets!), Mountain Bluebird (usually spotted annually in the within the natural area), Western Tanager and an Eastern Palm Warbler. In the fall the diversity of warblers was wonderful and accented by a Nashville Warbler (new to BBO banding records), Chestnut-sided Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler and a Black-throated-green Warbler. Also, the only Grey-cheeked Thrush, Swamp Sparrow and White-breasted Nuthatch caught this season was banded in the fall.

Banding effort in 1997 relied on a combination of staff and volunteer commitment. Veteran Elsabe Kloppers returned for her second banding season along with new recruits Karen Garvin, Kim Pearson, Jeff Sleno and Christine Rice. All staff members did an excellent job overseeing the BBO's many research projects, providing interpretation to visitors, and tending to the lab. A number of volunteers provided invaluable assistance during the 1997 season including Marke Ambard, Deena Arnold, Jim & Barb Beck, Josh Bilyk, Mark Bradley, Christie Dean, Jennifer Dober, Jason Duxbury, Jim Faragini, Al & Mike de Groot, Jay Gedir, Shannon Haszard, Nathalie Heit, Geoff Holroyd, Wayne Johnston, Rob Kaye, Lee Kearey, Janos Kovacs, Jim Nichol, Sandra Nydokus, Robbie McDonald, Christine McLachlan, Theresa Morcos, Rick Morse, Elson Olorenshaw, Dan Osness, Melanie Ostopowich, Mike den Otter, Mark Piorecki, Eloise Pulos, Brad Romaniuk, Petra Rowell, Ken Sanderson, Lisa Takats, Helen Trefrey, Mark Wendlendt, Sara Wittkowski, Dennis Verbeek, and Henry Visscher. Thank-you to all for your help.

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## **Migration Monitoring**

Migratory songbirds have suffered significant population declines since the 1960's (Dunn & Garrett 1997). Speculation over the causes of these declines includes diminishing breeding and overwintering habitats. Standardized long-term data collection is necessary to monitor changes over time and aid in future land management decisions.

Monitoring the migration movements of passerines through the Beaverhill Lake Natural Area has always been the primary purpose of the BBO. 1997 marked the fifth year of standardized data collection using formal protocol modeled after Long Point Bird Observatory (Duxbury 1994). Many of the songbird species banded at the BBO during migration are boreal breeders. For example, Magnolia and Blackpoll Warblers both breed in conifers of the boreal forest (Dunn & Garrett 1997). Many of the species caught at the BBO overwinter in Central and South America. Despite this common knowledge it is always exciting to have a band recovery which proves this habitat link, such as the two Least Flycatchers banded here and recovered in Guatemala in 1991 and 1996.

The 1997 spring migration was monitored on 29 days between April 26<sup>th</sup> and June 9<sup>th</sup>. A total of 625 birds were captured and 522 new birds were with a capture rate of 32 birds per 100 net hours. This is lower than the 1996 and 1995 rates of 34 and 37 birds per

100 net hours, respectively. The number of birds caught peaked around the third week of May with 65 captures and 52 new birds banded, then steadily declined.

Fall migration was monitored on 63 days between July 30<sup>th</sup> and October 30<sup>th</sup>. A total of 1820 birds were caught and 1601 of these were banded. The fall capture rate of 53 birds per 100 net hours was a slight decrease from the 1996 rate of 55 birds per 100 net hours, but still significantly higher than that documented in 1995 (40 birds/100NH). The greatest number of birds were captured during the end of August and beginning of September and peaked on September 11<sup>th</sup> with 195 captures and 153 birds banded. The vast majority of these were Myrtle Warblers (115 caught, 99 banded) and over ¼ of all the Myrtle Warblers banded during the entire fall season were done on this one day! Weekly capture rates quickly declined into September and remained very low in October. The benefit of extending the banding season to October 30<sup>th</sup> was not the quantities of birds' captures but the types. American Tree Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos and Golden-crowned Kinglets were common species during the end of the season.

### **Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS)**

The Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) in Point Reyes, California coordinates the MAPS project. Banding data documenting the increase in population due to hatch year birds is used to measure productivity, while returns of birds banded in previous years are used to measure survivorship. Standardized protocol involves the use of a recommended 10 mist nets (minimum 6) used one day out of each ten day period for 12 periods (minimum 5) over the summer breeding season. 1997 was the ninth consecutive year the BBO contributed to the continent wide project.

The BBO conducts MAPS banding at three separate sites within the natural area boundaries (BLAB, PARK and WEIR Stations). Ten net lanes are established at each site with the goal of banding one day out of each ten day period for the minimum requirement of 5 periods. Unfortunately, the need to clear the net lanes of tree-fall from the May snowstorm and the very rainy summer prevented this accomplishment. Banding occurred for 6 days at BLAB Station, 3 days at PARK Station and 2 days at WEIR Station. During these 11 banding days a total of 106 birds of 15 species were banded.

Point counts to support the banding data are a voluntary component of the MAPS project. During the summer point counts were conducted for 4 days at BLAB Station, 5 days at PARK Station and 3 days at WEIR Station. This data along with the MAPS banding sheets, breeding status lists and habitat description for each of the three sites were submitted to the IBP.

## Retraps

A retrap is a captured bird that has already been banded. This season the BBO had 353 recapture events of 26 different species. These retraps may be classified as repeats, returns or foreign encounters.

Table 5: Birds Retrapped at BBO in 1997

Species	Repeats	Returns & Foreign Encounters	Totals
1. Downy Woodpecker	2		2
2. Least Flycatcher	12	19	31
3. Tree Swallow		1	1
4. Barn Swallow		1	1
5. Black-capped Chickadee	123	6	129
6. House Wren	11	2	13
7. Swainson's Thrush	2		2
8. Hermit Thrush	3		3
9. Warbling Vireo	2	2	4
10. Red-eyed Vireo		1	1
11. Tennessee Warbler	9		9
12. Orange-crowned Warbler	12		12
13. Yellow Warbler	24	51	75
14. Cape-may Warbler		1	1
15. Myrtle Warbler	16		16
16. Clay-coloured Sparrow	20	2	22
17. Savannah Sparrow	1	1	2
18. Song Sparrow		1	1
19. Lincoln's Sparrow	1		1
20. American Tree Sparrow	1		1
21. Dark-eyed Junco	4	1	5
22. Red-winged Blackbird	1		1
23. Brown-headed Cowbird	6	10	16
24. Baltimore Oriole	1	1	2
25. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1		1
26. Golden-crowned Kinglet	1		1
	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>353</b>

A repeat is a bird banded at the BBO and recaptured the same season. These comprised 72% of the retraps recorded in 1997. A return is a bird banded at the BBO and recaptured in a later season. This means it has successfully migrated to its overwintering grounds and returned to Beaverhill at least once. These birds provide important data on site fidelity and ages of specific species. A foreign encounter is a captured bird which has been banded somewhere other than at the BBO, and not by BBO members banding at alternative sites. These are rare and exciting events.

Band recoveries provide indisputable and physical proof of migration routes. Birds originally banded at the BBO have been recovered as far away as Guatemala and as close by as the town of Tofield. Passerine band recoveries are not common events, but a Least Flycatcher banded by Karen Garvin in 1997 is a recent addition to a growing list.

Table 6: Recoveries and Foreign Encounters of Birds Banded with BBO Bands

Species Band Number	Banding Date	Bander	Age Sex	Recovery Location	Recovery Report Date	Reported by
Marble Godwit 624 09202	15-Jun-83	Rainer Ebel	AHY F	Monterey Bay CA	25-Mar-84	Linda Perez
Purple Finch 2051 88304	13-Jul-88	Petra(Stubbs) Rowell	AHY F	Lougheed AB	24-Apr-89	Siobhan Butcher
B.-c. Chickadee 1750 53566	29-Jun-88	Shannon Lord	HY U	Tofield AB	29-Jul-89	Dave Carlson
Tree Swallow 2061 50071	03-Jul-89	Corrinne Tastayre	L U	Long Lake MN	28-Jun-90	Michell Walker
Myrtle Warbler 1860 67285	08-Sep-90	Jim Faragini	HY U	Macon GA	19-Jan-91	Dan Wallace
Least Flycatcher 1780 41439	13-Aug-89	Jim Lange/ P. (S.) Rowell	U U	Chiquimula Guatemala	15-Apr-91	Daniel Weber
Mourning War. N/A	18-Aug-94	Jim Faragini	HY U	Whitewater Lake, MN	29-Aug-94	Richard Peters
Tree Swallow N/A	27-Jun-90	BBO	N/A	Cooking Lake AB	18-Jun-95	Jack Park
Least Flycatcher 1930 52749	19-Jul-93	Josh Bilyk	AHY U	near Huehuetanago, Guatemala	09-Oct-96	Hamilton Whitman
Least Flycatcher 1990 63978	07-Jun-97	Karen Garvin	AHY F	Beaverhill Lake AB	21-May-98	Edgar T. Jones
Tree Swallow 3111 44520	03-Jul-97	Jeff Sleno	HY U	Beaverhill Lake AB	14-May-98	Darren Jury
Great Gray Owl 0608 97351	16-Nov-97	Christine Rice	HY F	near Fort Sask. AB	06-Jan-98	Trevor Roper
Red-tailed Hawk 1387 12869	16-Jun-97	Al de Groot	HY U	Lat-Long: 535-1130	04-Aug-98	Mark Heckbert
Red-tailed Hawk 1387 12885	25-Jun-97	Al de Groot	HY U	Lat-Long: 535-1125	19-Sep-98	Kari Grantmeyer

### Tree Swallow Nesting Box Project

Tree Swallow boxes were erected within the natural area years ago and have been the focus of graduate research. The boxes have continued to be maintained and monitored by BBO staff. In 1997, 103 young were banded at 40 nest boxes for an average of 2.58 young per successful nest. This is a notable decline from last year's average of 5.15 young per successful nest. A major contributor to this decline was the invasion of cattle into the natural area on June 24<sup>th</sup>. They grazed in the tree swallow grid and were responsible for knocking down at least 7 nest boxes and killing the eggs or young hatchlings inside. The boxes were re-erected and served to house a few second broods that successfully fledged.

## Prairie Nest Record Scheme

The BBO staff contributes data to the federally organized Prairie Nest Record Scheme. Standardized nest cards are provided by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), filled out and returned at the end of the season to be added to a national database. In 1997 a total of 55 nests of 5 different species were found and monitored. The vast majority of these were the "artificial" nest boxes monitored for the Tree Swallow Project.

Table 7: Number and Outcome of Nests Discovered at Beaverhill Lake in 1997

Species	# Nests Found	Successes	Failures	Unknown
Mountain Bluebird	1		1	
Black-billed Magpie	1			1
Mallard	1		1	
Tree Swallow	49	39	10	
House Wren	3	1		2

A nest was determined to be successful if the young were old enough at last visit to have fledged. Every egg and young did not necessarily have to hatch and fledge for it to be considered a successful brood. Nest failure was determined by physical evidence (i.e. dead young, depredated eggs) or by an empty nest that would have been too young to have fledged. Nest outcome was determined to be unknown if there was no indication of success or failure, or nest monitoring was not continued.

## Raptor Monitoring Project

1997 marked the pilot year for the Raptor Monitoring Project initiated by Lisa Takats. The purpose of this study is to collect standardized long-term ecological data on birds of prey in Alberta. Due to the high position of raptors in the food chain this data can be used to infer environmental health (Oliphant 1994) and is important to consider when making environmental management decisions. This province wide project includes a volunteer based owl monitoring program in the Foothills Model Forest, collecting morphological and location data on dead raptors turned into Alberta Environmental Protection (Natural Resources Division), working with raptor banders and the public to collect standardized information on cavity and stick nesting raptors, and entering historical information on raptor distributions in to a provincial database. The BBO's component of this project involved collecting information on migrating and nesting raptors at Beaverhill Lake via sighting and banding records.

Raptors observed within Beaverhill Lake Natural Area by BBO staff were documented from May through October, (Appendix I).

Table 8: Number of Raptors Observed at Beaverhill Lake, August through October, 1997

Species	Total
Bald Eagle	22
Northern Harrier	189
Sharp-shinned Hawk	9
Cooper's Hawk	4
Northern Goshawk	8
Swainson's Hawk	24
Red-tailed Hawk	54
Broad-winged Hawk	3
Rough-legged Hawk	7
American Kestrel	2
Merlin	5
Peregrine Falcon	3
Gyr Falcon	1
Osprey	1
Great Horned Owl	25
Short-eared Owl	57
Northern Saw-whet Owl	2

Raptors observed outside of the natural area boundaries were recorded separately. Beginning in August a variety of techniques were used to trap and band migrating raptors: drop-lid traps, drop-door traps, Bal Chatri traps and mist nets with a decoy and/or recorded calls. With the seasonal closing of the BBO field station in November Lisa Takats and Christine Rice would occasionally patrol the outskirts of Edmonton with a Bal-Chatri and hand net to trap and band some of the later migrants. A total of 5 species and 7 individual raptors were banded during this pilot year.

Table 9: Species of Raptors Banded at BBO in 1997

Species	Date	Age*	Sex	Trap
Cooper's Hawk	May 09	ASY	M	Mist net
Cooper's Hawk	Aug 24	HY	M	Drop lid
Northern Goshawk	Aug 26	HY	F	Drop lid
Broad-winged Hawk	Sep 06	HY	U	Drop lid
Red-tailed Hawk	Sep 17	HY	U	Drop lid
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Oct 12	HY	M	Drop lid
Great Gray Owl**	Nov 16	HY	F	Hand net

\* ASY = after second year, HY = hatch year

\*\* Caught north of Fort Saskatchewan

### Amphibian Monitoring

RANA (Researching Amphibian Numbers in Alberta) is a province wide effort organized by the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) and Alberta Environmental

Protection (AEP) to collect long-term data on amphibian populations, and educate the public about the ecology and plight of amphibians. It allows data to be collected by means of public participation as well as more formal scientific research utilizing drift fences and pitfall traps. In 1997 the Beaverhill Lake Natural Area was selected as a RANA monitoring site to represent the aspen-parkland eco-region of Alberta. Lisa Takats, Melanie Ostapowich, Christie Dean, Elsabe Kloppers, Jeff Sleno and Karen Garvin installed nine trapping arrays along the west shore of Lister Lake. BBO staff was unable to run the RANA traps during 1997 due to other commitments, however, data was collected on 21 tiger salamanders (*Ambystoma tigrinum*) captured by hand. Now that the trapping arrays are in place it is intended that the 1998 BBO staff collect standardized RANA data.

BBO staff documented casual encounters with amphibians. This data was recorded on Alberta Amphibian Monitoring Program data sheets and entered into a provincial database.

Table 10: Amphibians recorded by BBO staff in 1997

Species	# Observed	# Heard
Boreal Chorus Frog	19	23
Wood Frog	15	18

### Beaverhill Landscape Biodiversity Initiative

Josh Bilyk conducted morning bird surveys along the shore and surrounding habitat of Beaverhill Lake during the spring and fall of 1997. Habitat preferences and concentrations of certain species were documented. The species composition and relative abundance of avian populations at Beaverhill documented by these surveys was found to strongly correlate with BBO banding data.

This project was made possible with the support of Ducks Unlimited, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Biodiversity Fund, Environment Canada, and the Science Horizons Youth Internship Program

### Sight Records

Roy Fairweather once again compiled sight records for the Beaverhill Lake area. Please refer to the Appendix II for the "1997 Beaverhill Lake Sight Records Report".

## **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

The goal of this activity is to educate and promote community interest in the value of birds and the natural world through organization and participation in seminars and outdoor activities related to wildlife at Beaverhill Lake and elsewhere.

### **Interpretation Tours and Events**

Visits to the BBO lab, whether they are organized tours or informal drop-ins, are always welcome. 1997 saw visitors originating from places as far away as Fort Smith (NWT), Virginia (USA), Bristol (UK), South Africa and Japan. First hand experiences are very memorable and keen visitors provide the BBO staff with the opportunity to raise public awareness of our activities and of conservation in general.

The annual Snow Goose Festival marked the beginning of the 1997 season on April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Thousands of geese and hundreds of people visited Beaverhill Lake Natural Area. Jason Duxbury, Sandra Nydokus, Geoff Holroyd and Elsabe Kloppers greeted hikers at the BBO lab with hot drinks, cookies, banding information and demonstrations (with the aid of two Black-capped Chickadees!).

June 8<sup>th</sup> marked the Annual BBO Breakfast starring Chef Janos Kovacs and his Amazing Crepes. Aside from the wonderful camaraderie (20+ people), birds (17 caught) and food, this annual gathering provides an important opportunity for BBO executive and staff to meet.

A number of guided tours through the natural area stopped by the BBO lab to learn first hand about migration monitoring with banding demonstrations. On May 24<sup>th</sup> Michael Barr from Ducks Unlimited brought a group of 11 people by after birdwatching at the weir. A group of enthusiastic Edmonton Natural History Club (ENHC) birders led by Lisa Takats visited on September 27<sup>th</sup> during their hike celebrating fall migration. On October 17<sup>th</sup> cold drizzly weather did not deter the King's College Ecology Trip group. Kids groups with their unending energy and inquiries are always welcome at the BBO. The Strathcona Recreation Center brought out about 30 "Nuts for Nature" kids on July 25<sup>th</sup>, and the Tofield Nature Center brought about 10 kids out on August 8<sup>th</sup>.

Public exposure to the BBO's activities was significantly increased this season with the visit of two separate television crews. On July 11<sup>th</sup> Jason Duxbury demonstrated songbird mist-netting and banding for a film crew from Videotron. On September 21<sup>st</sup> a Life Channel film crew for the pilot show "The Bird Guy" spent the day at the observatory. Along with songbird banding demonstrations and information about migration monitoring filming also featured the raptor monitoring project and the natural beauty of Beaverhill Lake.

Banding staff made the extra effort to increase their knowledge of and involvement in current ornithological events. BBO summer staff attended a Raptor

Banding Workshop held in Edmonton on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, and after the conference were able to help with banding Osprey fledglings at Wabamun Lake. BBO fall staff joined the ENHC's Fall Raptor Migration Trip led by Dr. Gordon Court on October 25<sup>th</sup>. A total of 9 raptor species were identified during the trip including wild raptors spotted in the Beaverhill-Cooking Lake area, captive raptors at local falconers the Trefrey's farm, and a Rough-legged Hawk captured on a Bal-Chatrri trap and banded by Ray Cromie.

### **Baillie Bird-a-thon**

This national phenomenon is organized by Bird Studies Canada and raises money for bird research and conservation across the country. Sponsored participants have 24 hours within the month of May to compile the longest list of bird species that is humanly possible! Designating the BBO as the bird club of choice results in most of the money raised being donated to the observatory to aid with operation costs.

### *Adventures of the BBO's 1997 Baillie Bird-a-thon Team*

Hours of planning and now its over. It seems to have come and gone so quickly. Another Baillie Bird-a-thon has been completed in Alberta, but what an experience! Last year's count of 118 species seemed to have been a warm up for what Lisa Takats, Josh Bilyk and I achieved this year. Not contented with just travelling around the Edmonton area, we decided to go all out and visit some other regions of Alberta as well. We were told that what we had planned was not possible, however with a little work and even less sleep we pulled it off!

Our mode of transportation was Lisa's trusty '88 GMC 4 x 4 pick-up truck, with cruise control and air-conditioning (I know, I know, life is rough). We met at 9:15 and after packing up bikes, tents, backpacks, and bug dope, we were off to Lac La Biche by 10:10.

It all began in Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park just outside of Lac La Biche. After getting a feel for what birds were in the area, we synchronized our watches at 1:32 PM and set off down the Boardwalk Trail on our mountain bikes. Peddling up and down the hills along the trail we listened to the songs of the wood warblers such as Black-throated Green Warblers, American Redstarts, Black and White Warblers, Cape May Warblers, Tennessee Warblers and Orange-crowned Warblers. These songs were occasionally interrupted by the sporadic songs of Red-eyed and Solitary Vireos, and the Morse code drumming of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. It was also at this site where we managed to pick up a Winter Wren, Lisa's favorite and a "lifer" for Josh, whose beautiful drawn out, tinkling melody echoed throughout the old forest. Such a strong song for such a tiny bird! The paths of the park occasionally reach the shore of Lac La Biche, and it was at these vantage points where, through clouds of mosquitoes and midges, we were able to find American White Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants, Red-necked Grebes and White-winged Scoters. Watching pairs of Western Grebes intertwine necks and dance on the water during courtship displays was a real treat. As we packed up the bikes at the end of the trail we managed to tick off an Ovenbird. Grabbing a cool drink in Lac

La Biche and checking off House Sparrow at the same time, we started off down the highway. As we drove out of town we pondered, "Where were the Western Tanagers?" Next site we supposed.

At around 5:00 PM we pulled up to the park gates of Elk Island National Park. Astotin Lake was sure to provide us with some new species. It was in the small ponds along the roadsides that provided last year's count with Ring-necked Ducks, and they did not disappoint us this year. We also managed to get a great look at a "Black-night Crowned Heron" or more commonly known as a Black-crowned Night Heron (and we were not even tired yet!) There had been reports that Barrow's Goldeneye has been seen in the area, and sure enough the larger of the two Goldeneyes was floating around with some of its smaller cousins Common Goldeneyes. Also making their first appearances for listing were Spotted Sandpipers and Common Yellowthroats. The boreal forest of the park was sure to contain Western Tanagers, but alas, still no sign.

During the short drive from Elk Island through the back roads surrounding Beaverhill Lake, we heard the first cries of Marbled Godwits (a "lifer" for Lisa) and the crystal clear song of the Western Meadowlark at 7:31 PM. This is a tremendous year for Short-eared Owls in Alberta, and we were quick to add one to our list. Driving near the west shore of Beaverhill Lake, we were witnesses to a Short-eared Owl give chase to a Red-tailed Hawk. Like the hawk, we too were probably close to the nesting site of the owl. Other birds in the field were Black-bellied Plovers, Savannah and Vesper Sparrows, Eastern Kingbirds and Killdeers. And as we watched birds, a curious badger watched us. Too bad we were not counting mammal species as well!

After picking up a single Bobolink at "Bobolink Corner", we soon found ourselves at the gate to the Beaverhill Lake Natural Area, but we were running out of daylight! On our bikes again, and we rode off in search of a few more species before dark. Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Marsh Wrens singing on Lister Lake were the first birds to greet us to the natural area. Our route along the marsh took us within yards of two American Bitterns as they glugged out their pumping noises seemingly right beside us. The mad dash to the natural area's weir was disappointingly unproductive, but we did manage to find some Wilson's Phalaropes. Lisa was quick to remind us how it is the male of the species that stays home and incubates the eggs! With the sun gone for the day, we made tracks to the Beaverhill Bird Observatory for a rest. Sitting on the veranda watching Barney the Barn Swallow roost, the night air was filled with the tinkling sound of the Hermit Thrush; species number 101. Still no tanagers.

Call it a day? Never! After a brief rest, we were on our bikes again heading back to the truck. The sneaky Sharp-tailed Sparrows who were not singing on the way in, let us know they were available for counting on the way out. En route away from the natural area we made one stop where Long-eared Owls have been reported as possibly nesting. With a little patience, we were able to confirm both a male and female of the species, another great find for the team!

Hunger pangs led us to find pizza in Camrose. Camrose was chosen for a good reason. As we approached the lake in the town and as I had just said, "Watch for a Trumpeter Swan", Josh immediately picked one out on the lake, faintly lit by the streetlights of the neighbourhood. Now we could eat!

By the time we left Camrose full of pizza, it was 1:00 in the morning, dark and a good time to get to southern Alberta. Our route took us through Stettler and near Hanna. By 3:30, the sun was making its presence known once again, letting us know that soon we would be out picking up species once again.

At our first few stops, in the dim light of the early morning with the songs of Horned Larks and Sprague's Pipit hanging above our heads, we came across the endangered Burrowing Owl and group of Sharp-tailed Grouse on what might have been a possible dancing ground (lek). Not a bad way to start a day! With increasing kilometres on our odometer and light to the day, our drive took us on a secondary highway heading towards Dinosaur Provincial Park. Along the way we added Swainson's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Baird's Sparrow, McCown's and Chestnut-collared Longspurs, Mourning Dove and Ring-necked Pheasant. While combing the thorny buffalo-berry for Loggerhead Shrikes (which we never did find), we did manage to scare up some Brown Thrashers and a Great Blue Heron. Unfortunately, the clock never stands still so we pressed on to the provincial park.

We were relying on the park for 4 species: Rock Wren, Say's Phoebe, Violet-green Swallow and Lark Sparrow. Standing at the look-out point above the badlands of the park we were surprised to get everyone of those species within a ten minute time period! And, singing in the only aspen tree in the whole valley, we were delighted to finally pick up a seemingly lost Western Tanager! This fortunate luck gave us back some precious time lost along the way, and so, at 6:30 in the morning we started off for Waterton Lakes National Park.

The drive to the national park took us near southern Alberta prairie lakes, ponds and sloughs. Species found in this area were the large Caspian Tern, the elegant American Avocet, a calling Willet and the small black-headed Bonaparte's Gull. We arrived at the park gate at 10:48 in the morning. Our first stop was productive as we added Red-naped Sapsucker, Mourning Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush to the list. Sitting in the sun on a power pole near the park kiosk, were both a Bald Eagle and an Osprey. Just whom the nest actually belonged to was unclear, as they did not seem to mind each other's presence. Up to the still frozen Cameron Lake we drove to find some jays. However, there was not a single Gray Jay or Steller's Jay to be found. Although, having the mountain air filled with the songs of the Varied Thrush (a "lifer" for me), Wilson's Warbler and Fox Sparrow more than made up for the lack of jays.

With the clock ticking off it's final few minutes, we rushed back to Pearl's Restaurant in the town site to watch a hummingbird feeder. As we approached the restaurant, a Vaux's Swift, a species reported to be nesting in the chimneys of the grand old Prince of Whales Hotel, flew with some swallows allowing for a nice comparison of

wing shapes. Our last hope for a few more species was fulfilled with Black-chinned, Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds.

At 1:32 PM, 24 hours and 1120 km later we crashed at Pearl's Restaurant. Our grand total for the trip was 151 birds! The carefully planned trip added 33 species to last year's total of 118 species. Was it worth it? Seeing Alberta's boreal forest, parkland, prairies, uplands, wetlands, small towns, and mountains all in one day is an adventure that all three of us will never forget!

*-Jason Duxbury*

## **PUBLICATIONS**

The purpose of this activity is to develop an awareness and community interest in birds and natural history through publication.

### **"The Willet"**

"The Willet" newsletter continued to inform and entertain BBO members in 1997. Lisa Takats was responsible for writing articles, soliciting article submissions, as well as printing and organizing mail-out gatherings.

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### **Migratory and Breeding Bird Habitat Associations Of The Beaverhill Lake Landscape - Joshawa N. Bilyk, Michael Barr, and Geoffrey L. Holroyd**

#### **Abstract**

In 1997, a study was undertaken in the Beaverhill Lake area (70 km east of the City of Edmonton, Alberta) to inventory all bird species which occurred during that year. This information, together with historical information on bird species occurrence, will be used to develop a comprehensive conservation plan to guide habitat protection and management activities in this area.

A total of 146 bird species were recorded within eight wetland and eleven upland habitat types. During the summer, large saline wetlands and riparian habitats demonstrated the highest avian diversity (46 species each) followed by medium seasonal and large semi-permanent wetlands (38 and 36 species respectively). The lowest diversity was found in delayed haylands (9 species). During the migration seasons, large saline wetlands were again the most diverse habitat type (65 species) followed closely by grazed deciduous uplands (57 species). The lowest bird diversity was observed in idle shrub habitats during migration season (15 species).

An analysis of species of special status (as a subset of the total number of species observed) versus habitat type revealed 30 special status species. Special status species were defined as those red, blue or yellow listed according to the Status of Alberta Wildlife ranking system. Large saline wetlands recorded the highest number of species of special status for both the summer (8 species) and migration seasons (18 species). During the summer, continuously grazed grassland, idle native grassland and large semi-permanent wetlands hosted the next highest number of special status species (6 species each). Grazed and idled deciduous upland

contained the fewest special status species in summer (1 specie each). Large saline wetland habitat is the most outstanding habitat type in this landscape; it supports the greatest number of total species and greatest number of special status species during both the migration and summer residency periods.

Of historical records including some 283 species, 57 species classify as special status according to the criteria established in this study. Only one species, the Piping Plover, is a red or blue listed species and confirmed summer resident (and breeder). It is strongly associated with large saline wetland habitat.

Recommendations are provided to address the needs of species of special status through identifying key habitat types and specific locations within the Beaverhill Lake landscape.

## **INTERORGANIZATIONAL COOPERATION**

The goal of this activity is to communicate and promote participation of volunteers and organizations of a similar nature in cooperative bird projects at Beaverhill Lake and elsewhere.

### **First Annual Beaverhill Bird Banding Workshop**

The first banding workshop hosted by the BBO during the last weekend in February 1997 was a huge success. Geoff Holroyd's initial idea of a small gathering for western Canadian bird observatories to share their recent data quickly evolved into a full-fledged conference. Participants represented such prestigious research organizations as Birds Studies Canada, Long Point Bird Observatory, Canadian Wildlife Services, the University of Saskatoon, as well as Last Mountain Lake Bird Observatory and the Calgary Bird Banding Society. Charles Francis (Senior Scientist from Bird Studies Canada) was the special guest speaker and discussed techniques for analyzing migration monitoring data, the current status of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, and future initiatives of Bird Studies Canada. Although the workshop focuses on passerine banding issues talks were also given on raptor and waterfowl banding techniques and data. The genuine interest in migration monitoring techniques shown by the attendees, and the quality and variety of talks given by the presenters provides encouragement for future workshops

### **The Commission on Environmental Cooperation**

Financial support provided by the CEC allowed BBO banding data to be analyzed. Jan Radziszewski was hired to enter all of our banding data up to 1996 into a database and analyze sex ratios, recaptures, and repeats. We are grateful to the CEC for making it possible to have our data computerized.

### **5th Annual Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference**

Lisa Takats represented the BBO at this conference held in Saskatoon Saskatchewan from February 19-22, 1997. The objectives of the Alberta Raptor Monitoring Program and data collected at Beaverhill Lake over the 1997 field season were presented.

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**APPENDIXES**

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1997 BBO RAPTOR SIGHTINGS																	
	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	SWHA	RTHA	BWHA	RLHA	AMKE	MERL	OSPR	PEFA	GYRF	GHOW	SEOW	NSWO
MAY		49(33)	1 (1)	2 (1)		1 (2)	55(18)				4 (1)		3 (7)		6 (4)	7 (19)	
JUNE		29(20)				1 (1)	14(12)			1 (1)	0 (1)				0 (2)	2 (6)	
JULY		51 (6)	1			8 (4)	24 (4)						1			6 (6)	
AUG.		52 (9)	5	2	2	3 (11)	21 (9)				2		2		6 (1)	6 (27)	
SEPT. 4		56(17)	3	2	3	2 (6)	10 (9)	3	0 (1)		3		1		11 (2)	3 (11)	1 (1)
OCT. 8 (10)		42(13)			3	0 (2)	2 (3)		2 (4)			0 (1)		1	4 (1)	8 (2)	
Total	12(10)	279(98)	10 (1)	6 (1)	8	15(26)	126(55)	3	2 (5)	1 (1)	9 (2)	0 (1)	7 (7)	1	27(10)	32(71)	1 (1)
		Accip	Hawk	Falcon													
MAY		2 (1)	1 (1)	1													
JUNE		1															
JULY		2	0 (2)														
AUG																	
SEPT		5		1													
OCT		1	2														
Total		11 (1)	3 (3)	2													
		()= sightings outside the Natural Area boundaries															

1997 BBO RAPTOR SIGHTINGS																	
MAY	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	SWHA	RTHA	BWHA	RLHA	AMKE	MERL	OSPR	PEFA	GYRF	GHOW	SEOW	NSWO
* 5		2					10									1	
* 6		6 (8)	0 (1)			0 (1)	4 (6)				2						
7		4		0 (1)			3 (1)								0 (1)		
8		3 (1)					8				0 (1)		1		1	0 (2)	
9		3 (2)		1			2									0 (1)	
10		0 (3)	1			0 (1)	1 (1)									1	
11		2 (1)					3 (2)								1		
12		2 (1)					1								0 (1)		
13		4					3 (1)										
14		1				1	2										
15		1 (2)					1 (1)						1 (1)			0 (1)	
16		0 (2)		1			4						0 (1)		1	0 (2)	
17		1														0 (3)	
18		0 (3)					0 (4)										
19		2 (1)															
20		3					2										
21		2					1				1				1		
22		4 (1)					1				1		0 (1)			0 (2)	
23		2					1						0 (4)			2	
24		2 (1)					4										
25		1					1						1		0 (2)	0 (1)	
? 26																	
? 27															1	1 (3)	
28		0 (1)					1									0 (1)	
29		1 (3)					1										
30		1 (2)					1 (1)									1 (1)	
31		2 (1)					0 (1)								1	1 (2)	

( ) = sightings outside the Natural Area boundaries  
\* = no census that day  
? = no data that day

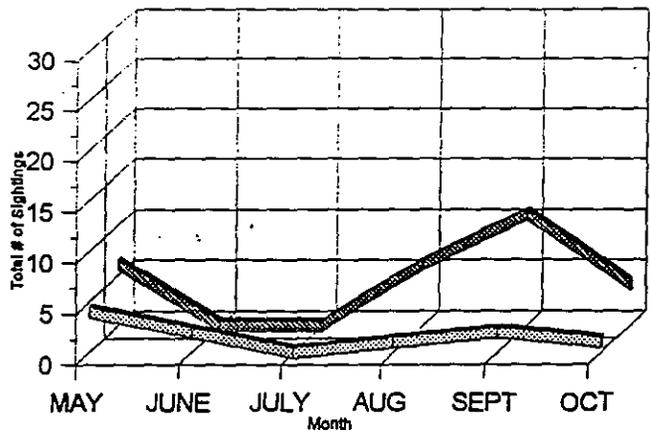






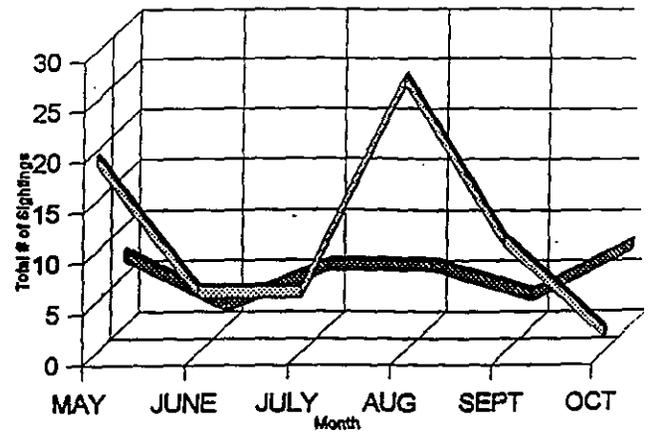






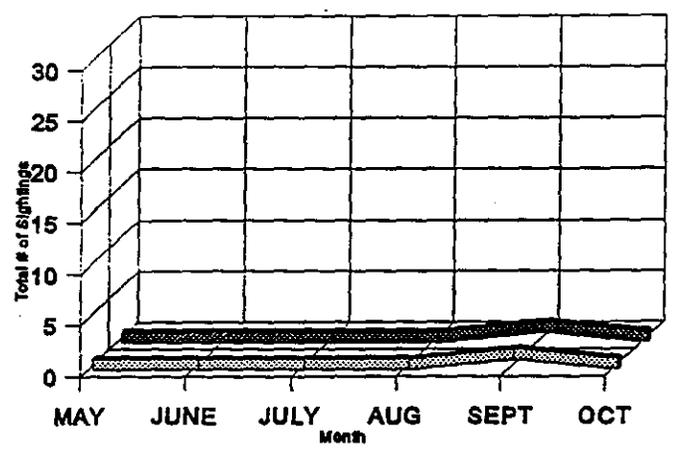
Inside Natural Area Boundries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundries

Great Horned Owl



Inside Natural Area Boundries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundries

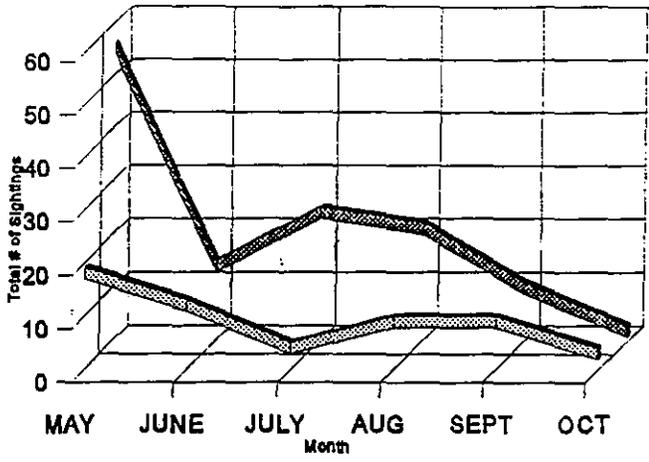
Short-eared Owl



Inside Natural Area Boundries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundries

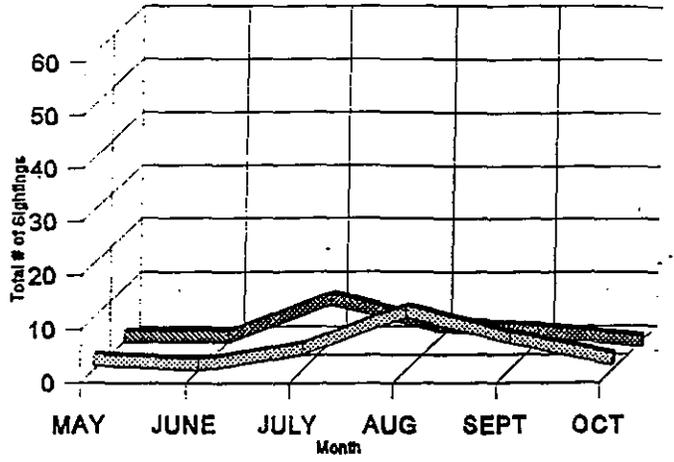
Northern Saw-whet Owl

Figure : Monthly Totals of Owl Sightings at the BBO



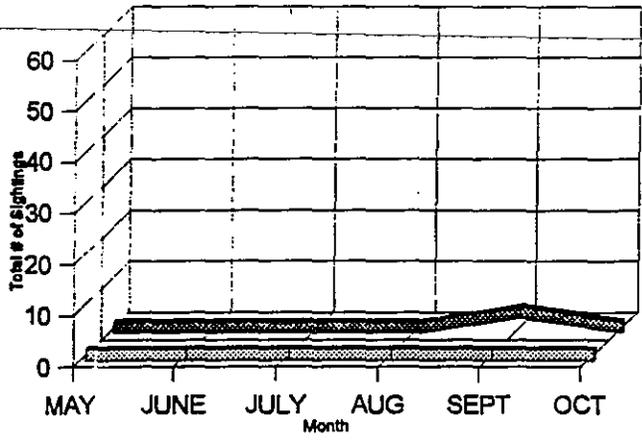
Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Red-tailed Hawk



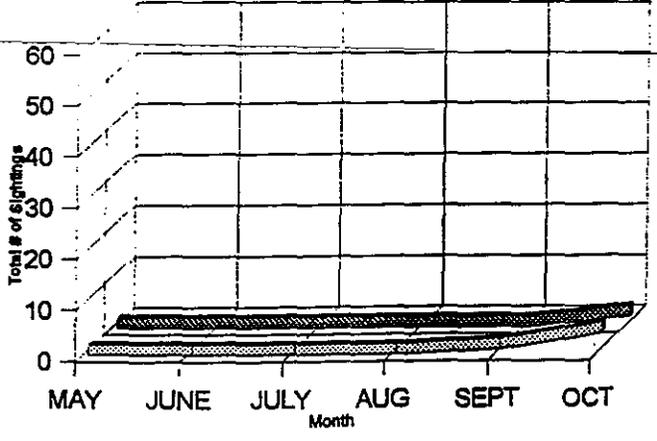
Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Swainson's Hawk



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

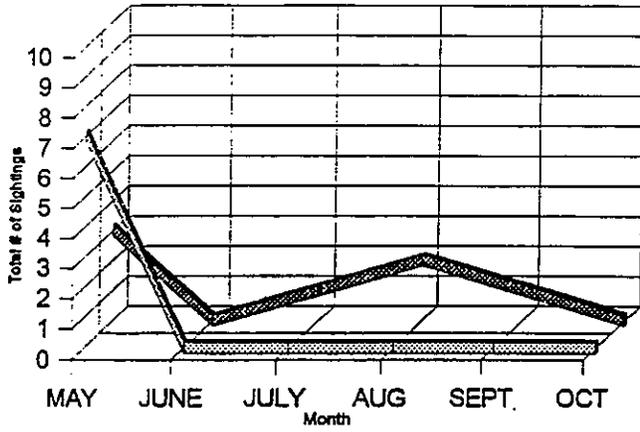
Broad-winged Hawk



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

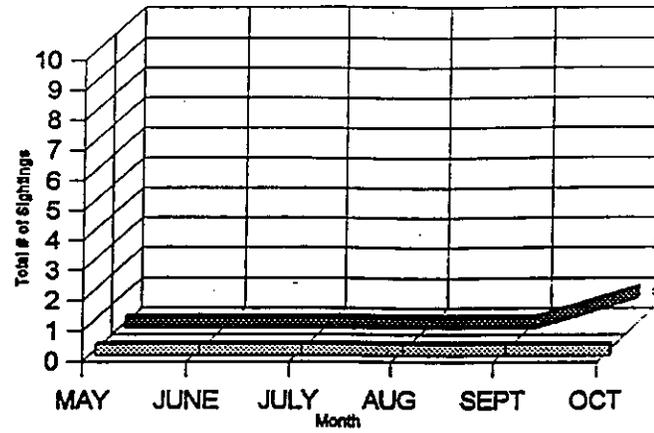
Rough-legged Hawk

Figure : Monthly Totals of Buteo Sightings at the BBO



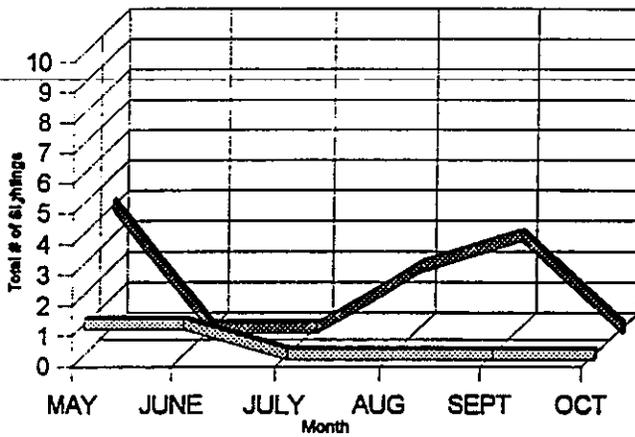
Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Peregrine Falcon



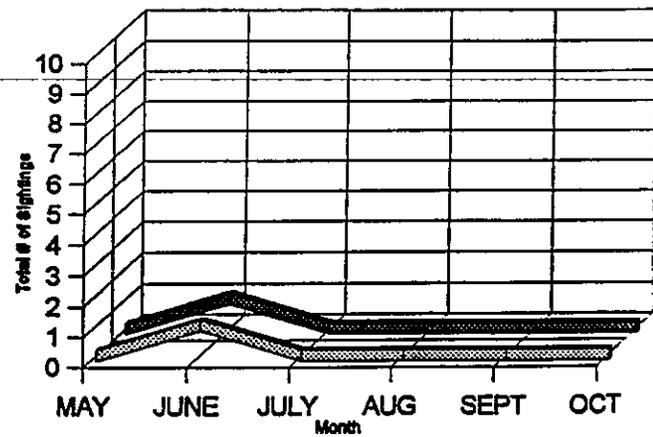
Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Gyrfalcon



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

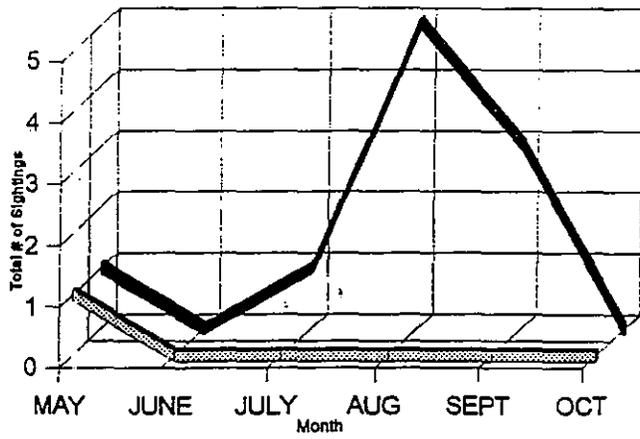
Merlin



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

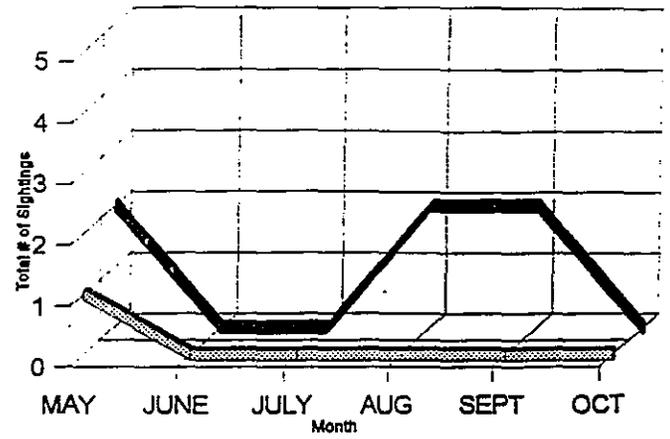
American Kestrel

Figure : Monthly Totals of Falcon Sightings at th BBO



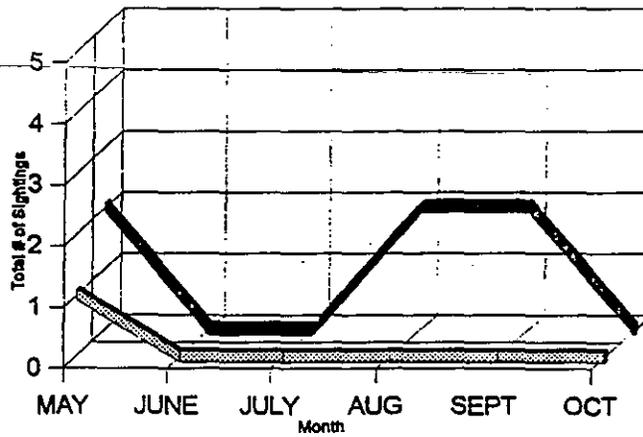
Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Sharp-shinned Hawk



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

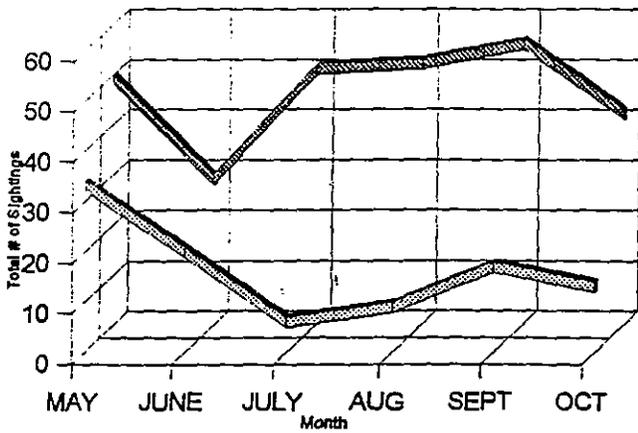
Cooper's Hawk



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

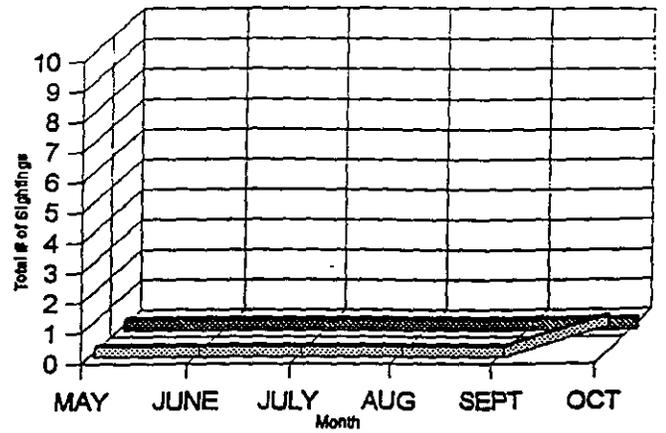
Northern Goshawk

Figure : Monthly Totals of Accipiter Sightings at the BBO



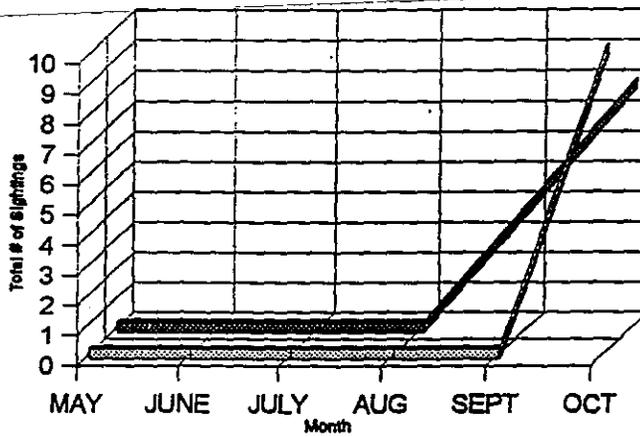
Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Northern Harrier



Inside the Natural Area  
 Outside the Natural Area

Osprey



Inside Natural Area Boundaries  
 Outside Natural Area Boundaries

Bald Eagle

Figure : Monthly Totals of Harrier, Osprey and Eagle Sightings at th BBO

# 1997 Beaverhill Lake Sight Records Report

compiled for the Beaverhill Bird Observatory by Roy Fairweather

## Species Recorded at Beaverhill Lake in 1997:

210 species recorded in 1997

Species	First Record	Last Spring	First Fall	Last Record	Status
<b>Loons</b>					
Common Loon	*SGF	*****	*****	*****	Transient
<b>Grebes</b>					
Pied-billed Grebe	*****	*****	Sept 17 (RF)	Sept 20 (BP)	Breeding
Horned Grebe	April 19 (FW)	↔	↔	June 29 (BP)	Breeding
Red-necked Grebe	April 25 (RF)	↔	↔	Aug 27 (BBO)	Breeding
Eared Grebe	April 19 (BP/FW)	↔	↔	Sept 10 (BBO)	Breeding
Western Grebe	SGF	↔	↔	Oct 19 (BP)	Breeding
<b>Pelicans and Cormorants</b>					
American White Pelican	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 17 (RF)	Breeding - failed nesting 1993 and since
Double-crested Cormorant	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 17 (RF)	Breeding - failed nesting 1993 and since
<b>Hérons</b>					
American Bittern	May 10 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 14 (RF)	Breeding
Great Blue Heron	April 13 (BP)	↔	↔	Oct 18 (DD)	Transient
Black-crowned Night-Heron	June 28 (BP)	↔	↔	Oct 4 (DD)	Breeding
<b>Swans</b>					
Tundra Swan	April 19 (FW)	May 5 (RF)	Sept 7 (BBO)	Oct 27 (BP)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Trumpeter Swan	SGF	*****	Sept 6 (BBO)	Oct 18 (DD)	Transient
<b>Wood Ducks</b>					
*Wood Duck	*June 2 (NAH)	with young; Pr. Rec.-May 3, 1980 (RE); May 29, 1985 (DD); June 9, 1996 (MP)			
<b>Geese</b>					
Greater White-fronted Goose	April 25 (RF)	May 13 (BBO)	Aug 18 (BBO)	Oct 26 (DD)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Snow Goose	April 19 (FW)	May 10 (BBO)	Aug 14 (BBO)	Oct 29 (BBO)	Transient - S & F Migr. (1 bird-June 1 BP)
(Snow Goose - blue Goose)	April 19 (FW)	*****	Oct 4 (DD)	Oct 26 (DD)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Ross's Goose	SGF	*****	Sept 19 (DD)	Sept 28 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Canada Goose	March 31 (FW)	↔	↔	Nov 6 (RF)	Breeding
<b>Dabbling Ducks</b>					
Gadwall	April 25 (RF)	↔	↔	Oct 15 (BBO)	Breeding
*Eurasian Wigeon	*SGF	Pr.Rec.:Sept 26, 1990 (RK); May 8, 1994 (RD); April 18 (RD) - 29 (BBO), 1995			
American Wigeon	SGF	↔	↔	Oct 12 (BBO)	Breeding
Mallard	March 31 (FW)	↔	↔	Nov 6 (RF)	Breeding
Blue-winged Teal	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 25 (BBO)	Breeding
Cinnamon Teal	SGF	May 5 (RF)	*****	*****	Breeding
Northern Shoveler	April 25 (RF)	↔	↔	Nov 6 (RF)	Breeding
Northern Pintail	March 31 (FW)	↔	↔	Sept 27 (BBO)	Breeding
Green-winged Teal	SGF	↔	↔	Oct 18 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Diving Ducks (Pochards)</b>					
Canvasback	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 19 (BBO)	Breeding
Redhead	April 25 (RF)	↔	↔	July 11 (BBO)	Breeding
Ring-necked Duck	April 25 (RF)	SGF	*****	Oct 18 (BBO)	Breeding
Lesser Scaup	April 25 (RF)	↔	↔	Nov 6 (RF)	Breeding
<b>Sea Ducks</b>					
White-winged Scoter	*SGF	*****	*****	*****	Only record in 1997 - unconfirmed
Bufflehead	April 25 (RF)	June 8 (BBO)	*****	Sept 14 (RF)	Breeding
Common Goldeneye	April 25 (RF)	May 6 (BBO)	Sept 11 (BBO)	Sept 19 (BBO)	Transient (Breeding?)
<b>Mergansers</b>					
Common Merganser	*May 24 (BBO)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Red-breasted Merganser	SGF	*****	*****	*****	Only record in 1997 - unconfirmed
<b>Stiff-tailed Ducks</b>					
Ruddy Duck	April 19 (FW)	May 16 (BBO)	*****	Sept 14 (RF)	Breeding
<b>Osprey, Bald Eagle and Harriers</b>					
*Osprey	April 26 (BP); Pr.Rec.:May 13, 1984 (DD); May 21, 1993(DD); May 13 & 24, 1994 (?)				
Bald Eagle	April 19 (FW)	May 24 (BBO)	Sept 12 (DD)	Nov 14 (NAH)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Northern Harrier	SGF	↔	↔	Oct 29 (BBO)	Breeding
SGF - Snow Goose Festival List - April 26 & 27					
Pr.Rec.: - Previous Records					
*rarely recorded species					
**status questioned					
Breeding status - general term, not necessarily confirmed breeding at BHL in 1997					

Species	First Record	Last Spring	First Fall	Last Record	Status
<b>Accipiters</b>					
Sharp-shinned Hawk	SGF	May 10 (BBO)	July 26 (BBO)	Oct 12 (BBO)	Breeding
Cooper's Hawk	SGF	May 16 (BBO)	Aug 24 (BBO)	Sept 21 (BBO)	Breeding
Northern Goshawk	SGF	Aug 26 (BBO)	Sept 10 (BBO)	Oct 19 (BBO)	Winter Transient
( <i>accipiter species</i> )	*****	May 25 (BBO)	July 9 (BBO)	Sept 26 (BBO)	
<b>Buteos</b>					
•Broad-winged Hawk	May 14 (BBO)	*****	Aug 23 (BBO)	Sept 6-14 (BBO)	Transient (Breeding?)
Swainson's Hawk	SGF	←	→	Sept 28 (BBO)	Breeding
Red-tailed Hawk	April 25 (RF)	←	→	Oct 14 (BBO)	Breeding
Rough-legged Hawk	April 13 (BP)	SGF	Oct 1 (DD)	Nov 6 (RF)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
<b>Falcons</b>					
American Kestrel	April 19 (BP)	June 6 (BBO)	Aug 5 (BBO)	Sept 27 (BP)	Transient
•Gyr Falcon	Oct 12 (BBO)	Pr.Rec.: Nov 16, 1991 (DD)			
Merlin	April 25 (RF)	←	→	Sept 9 (BBO)	Breeding
Peregrine Falcon	April 13 (BP)	←	→	Sept 26 (BBO)	Transient
<b>Grouse</b>					
Gray Partridge	← SGF	←	Sept 27 (BP)	Oct 27 (BP) →	Year round resident; Breeding
Ring-necked Pheasant	*May 24 (JN)	(JB)	*****	*****	Occasionally raised and released in area
Ruffed Grouse	← SGF	←	→	Nov 6 (RF) →	Year round resident; Breeding
Sharp-tailed Grouse	*May 23 (MB)	*****	*****	*****	Historically bred in area
••Wild Turkey	March 31 (FW)	*****	*****	Sept 17 (RF)	Sept 28, 1996 (BBO)-locally released bird
<b>Rails and Coots</b>					
Yellow Rail	*June 7 (BBO)	*****	*****	*Aug 25 (BBO)	Breeding
Sora	May 5 (BBO)	←	→	Aug 31 (BP)	Breeding
American Coot	SGF	←	→	Sept 23 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Cranes</b>					
Sandhill Crane	SGF	May 20 (BBO)	Aug 31 (BP)	Oct 20 (BBO)	Transient - 1 bird on Aug 16 (BBO)-S&F M
<b>Plovers</b>					
Black-bellied Plover	May 24 (MB)	June 1 (BP)	Sept 14 (RF)	Oct 12 (BBO)	Transient - 1 bird on Aug 4 (BP)-S&F M
American Golden-Plover	*May 15 (RF)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Semipalmated Plover	*****	*June 19 (BBO)	Aug 11 (BP)	Aug 25 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Killdeer	SGF	←	→	Aug 31 (BP)	Breeding
<b>Avocets</b>					
American Avocet	SGF	←	→	Aug 29 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Sandpipers</b>					
Greater Yellowlegs	April 25 (RF)	June 29 (BP)	Aug 4 (BP)	Oct 22 (BBO)	Transient
Lesser Yellowlegs	April 25 (RF)	June 29 (BP)	Aug 4 (BP)	Oct 22 (BBO)	Transient
( <i>yellowlegs sp.</i> )				Nov 2 (DD)	
Solitary Sandpiper	May 9 (BBO)	May 24 (BBO)	July 9 (BBO)	Aug 31 (BBO)	Transient
Willet	May 5 (RF)	←	→	Aug 23 (BBO)	Breeding
Spotted Sandpiper	SGF	←	→	Aug 25 (BBO)	Breeding
•Upland Sandpiper	*(JB)	Pr.Rec.: July 20 & Aug 25, 1991 (DD); Aug 28, 1995 (BC)			
•Whimbrel	*May 24 (RD)	Pr.Rec.: May 13 to 30 for 1991, 1992, 1995 & 1996			
Hudsonian Godwit	*May 25 (RF)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Marbled Godwit	SGF	←	→	Sept 27 (BP)	Breeding
Ruddy Turnstone	*May 28 (RF)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring Migrants
Red Knot	May 28 (RF)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring Migrants
Sanderling	*****	*****	*Aug 25 (BBO)	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Semipalmated Sandpiper	May 17 (BBO)	May 25 (RF)	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Least Sandpiper	*****	*****	*Aug (EJ)	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
White-rumped Sandpiper	*May 24 (RD)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Baird's Sandpiper	*May 24 (RD)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
( <i>peep sp.</i> )	May 7 (BBO)	June 3 (BBO)	*****	Oct 10 (BBO)	
Pectoral Sandpiper	SGF	May 25 (RF)	Aug 11 (BP)	Oct 18 (DD)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Stilt Sandpiper	*May 24 (RF)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	May 24 (RD)	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Short-billed Dowitcher	May 25 (RF)	*****	*****	Sept 28 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Long-billed Dowitcher	May 15 (RF)	*****	Sept 14 (RF)	Oct 18 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
( <i>dowitcher sp.</i> )	SGF	MSC	June 29 (BP)	Nov 2 (DD)	
* Common Snipe	April 25 (RF)	←	→	Nov 2 (DD)	Breeding
<b>Phalaropes</b>					
Wilson's Phalarope	May 15 (RF)	←	→	Aug 8 (BBO)	Breeding
Red-necked Phalarope	May 16 (BBO)	May 28 (BBO)	*****	*July 30 (BBO)	Transient
<b>Jaegers</b>					
•Long-tailed Jaeger	Aug 31 (CF)	Pr.Rec.: Sept 8 - 12, 1977 (DD)			

Species	First Record	Last Spring	First Fall	Last Record	Status
<b>Gulls</b>					
Franklin's Gull	April 25 (RF)	←————→		Oct 19 (BP)	Breeding
Bonaparte's Gull	SGF	*****	July 16 (BBO)	Sept 28 (BBO)	Transient
Ring-billed Gull	April 25 (RF)	←————→		Oct 4 (BBO)	Breeding
California Gull	April 19 (BP)	June 10 (BBO)	Aug 4 (BP)	Sept 10 (BBO)	Breeding - failed nesting 1993 and since
Herring Gull	May 15 (RF)	(JB)	*****	*****	Transient
(gull sp.)				Oct 28 (BBO)	
<b>Terns</b>					
Common Tern	May 12 (BBO)	←————→		Sept 3 (BBO)	Breeding
Forster's Tern	see tern sp.	*****	Sept 6 (BBO)	Oct 18 (BBO)	Breeding
Black Tern	May 21 (BBO)	←————→		Aug 15 (BBO)	Breeding
(tern sp.)		Many white tern sightings from May to October			
<b>Doves</b>					
Rock Dove	← SGF	←————→		Nov 6 (RF) →	Year round resident - urban / farm
Mourning Dove	SGF	←————→		Sept 17 (RF)	Breeding?
<b>Owls</b>					
Great Horned Owl	← April 26(BP)	←————→		Oct 19 (BP) →	Year round resident; Breeding
Snowy Owl	←————→	April 13 (BP)	Nov 28 (NAH)	←————→	Transient Winter visitor
Short-eared Owl	April 26(BP)	←————→		Nov 2 (DD)	Breeding; Occasional winter visitor
*Long-eared Owl	*Aug (EJ)	Pr.Rec.: Oct 2, 1988 (BBO); 1992-nest w/3 young (BBO); May 30, 1994 (BBO); Aug 29, 1995 (BBO)			
*Northern Saw-whet Owl	April 25 (PN)	Aug (EJ)	Pr.Rec.: one nest 1987 (RE); Sept 6, '91(EJ)banded; Oct 4&5, '95 (BBO); Aug 25, '96 (EJ)		
<b>Nighthawks</b>					
*Common Nighthawk	*Aug (EJ)	Pr.Rec.: Aug 28, 1988(BBO); May 31, 1992(SJ); May 30, 1993 (MSC); June 2-13 (BBO)& Aug 18, 1996(BBO)			
<b>Hummingbirds</b>					
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	May 31 (BBO)	June 7 (BBO)	*****	*****	Breeding
<b>Woodpeckers</b>					
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	May 28 (BBO)	May 30 (BBO)	*****	*Sept (EJ)	Transient
Downy Woodpecker	← SGF	←————→		Oct 29 (BBO) →	Year round resident; Breeding
Hairy Woodpecker	← SGF	←————→		Nov 6 (RF) →	Year round resident; Breeding
Northern Flicker	April 25 (RF)	←————→		Sept 21 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Flycatchers</b>					
*Olive-sided Flycatcher	Aug (EJ)	Pr.Rec.: May 26 (SJ) & 31 (BBO), 1991; Aug 14, 1994 (JB)			
Western Wood-Pewee	May 28 (BBO)	June 8 (BBO)	*Aug 31 (BP)	*****	Breeding?
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	*****	*****	*Aug (EJ)	*****	Transient
Alder Flycatcher	May 29 (BBO)	←————→		Sept 10 (BBO)	Breeding
(Trall's Flycatcher)	May 28 (BBO)	←————→		Sept 3 (BBO)	includes Alder & (rarely) Willow Flycatcher
Least Flycatcher	May 15 (RF)	←————→		Sept 19 (BBO)	Breeding
Eastern Phoebe	SGF	July 1 (BP)	Aug 31 (BP)	Sept 27 (BBO)	Breeding
Say's Phoebe	*****	*****	*Aug 31 (BP)	*****	Transient
Eastern Kingbird	May 23 (BBO)	←————→		Aug 29 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Shrikes</b>					
Northern Shrike	←————→	March 31 (FW)	Sept 27 (BP)	Oct 27 (NAH) →	Winter transient
<b>Vireos</b>					
Blue-headed Vireo	May 30 (BBO)	July 5 (BBO)	Aug 26 (BBO)	Sept 10 (BBO)	Transient; formerly Solitary Vireo
Warbling Vireo	May 24 (BBO)	←————→		Sept 11 (BBO)	Breeding
Philadelphia Vireo	*****	*****	Aug 14 (BBO)	Aug 26 (BBO)	Transient
Red-eyed Vireo	May 13 (BBO)	←————→		Sept 9 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Jays and Crows</b>					
Blue Jay	← May 6 (BBO)	May 24 (BBO)	Sept 3 (BBO)	Oct 3 (BBO) →	Summer transient; Winter resident
Black-billed Magpie	← March 1 (FW)	←————→		Nov 6 (RF) →	Breeding; Year round resident
American Crow	April 25 (RF)	←————→		Oct 29 (BBO)	Breeding
Common Raven	← March 1 (FW)	July 30 (BBO)	Sept 2 (BBO)	Nov 6 (RF) →	Breeding
<b>Larks</b>					
Horned Lark	SGF	June 1 (BP)	*****	*****	Breeding
<b>Swallows</b>					
Purple Martin	SGF	*****	Aug 16 (BBO)	Aug 21 (BBO)	Breeding (Tofield and farms); Transient otherwise
Tree Swallow	SGF	←————→		Sept 13 (BBO)	Breeding
Bank Swallow	*May 15 (BBO)	*****	(JB)	*Sept 13 (BBO)	Transient
Cliff Swallow	May 15 (RF)	May 18 (FW)	*****	*****	Breeding
Barn Swallow	May 5 (RF)	←————→		Sept 13 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Chickadees</b>					
Black-capped Chickadee	← SGF	←————→		Nov 6 (RF) →	Breeding; Year round resident
<b>Nuthatches</b>					
Red-breasted Nuthatch	June 26 (BBO)	←————→		Oct 15 (BBO)	Breeding?
White-breasted Nuthatch	←————→	*June 30 (BBO)	Sept 24 (BBO)	Sept 25 (BBO) →	Transient; Winter visitor

Species	First Record	Last Spring	First Fall	Last Record	Status
<b>Vrens</b>					
House Wren	May 22 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 23 (BBO)	Breeding
Marsh Wren	SGF	↔	↔	Oct 5 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>(In)lets</b>					
Golden-crowned Kinglet	*****	*****	Sept (EJ)	Oct 22 (BBO)	Transient; Fall migrant
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	May 8 (BBO)	May 15 (BBO)	Aug 21 (BBO)	Sept 27 (BBO)	Transient
<b>Thrushes</b>					
Mountain Bluebird	April 13 (BP)	May 19 (BBO)	*****	Sept 27 (BBO)	Breeding
Veery	*June 26 (BBO)	*****	*****	*****	Breeding
Gray-cheeked Thrush	*****	*****	*Aug 21 (BBO)	*****	Transient
Swainson's Thrush	May 11 (BBO)	↔	↔	Aug 29 (BBO)	Breeding
Hermit Thrush	May 8 (BBO)	↔	↔	Oct 16 (BBO)	Transient; Breeding?
American Robin	April 25 (RF)	↔	↔	Oct 26 (BP)	Breeding
<b>Catbirds</b>					
Gray Catbird	June 8 (BBO)	*****	*****	Aug 29 (BBO)	Breeding?
<b>Starlings</b>					
European Starling	March 31 (FW)	↔	↔	Nov 6 (RF)	Breeding; occasionally overwinters
<b>Pipits</b>					
American Pipit	*SGF	*****	*****	*****	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Sprague's Pipit	*****	*****	*****	*Sept 17 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Waxwings</b>					
Bohemian Waxwing	*****	*****	Nov 6 (RF)	↔	Winter transient
Cedar Waxwing	May 31 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 16 (BBO)	Breeding
<b>Wood Warblers</b>					
Tennessee Warbler	May 21 (BBO)	June 3 (BBO)	July 20 (BBO)	Sept 14 (BBO)	Transient
Orange-crowned Warbler	May 9 (BBO)	May 28 (BBO)	Aug 20 (BBO)	Sept 27 (BBO)	Transient
*Nashville Warbler	*****	*****	*Aug (EJ)	*Sept 17 (BBO)	Pr.Rec.: Aug 1992 (EJ); Fall 1994 (EJ)
Yellow Warbler	May 5 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 20 (BBO)	Breeding
Magnolia Warbler	*****	*****	Aug 20 (BBO)	Sept 23 (BBO)	Transient
Cape May Warbler	*May 28 (BBO)	*****	Aug 14 (BBO)	Sept 11 (BBO)	Transient
Yellow-rumped Warbler	May 6 (BBO)	June 2 (BBO)	Aug 3 (BBO)	Sept 29 (BBO)	Transient
Black-throated Green Warbler	*****	*****	Aug 23 (BBO)	Sept 11 (BBO)	Transient
*Townsend's Warbler	*Aug 19 (BBO)	*Aug 21 (BBO)	Pr. Rec.: Aug 10 (JF) & 25 (SJ), 1991; Aug 24, 1992 (KH); Spring 1994 (EJ)		
Palm Warbler	*May 20 (BBO)	*****	Aug 31 (BBO)	Sept 25 (BBO)	Transient
*Bay-breasted Warbler	*****	*****	*Aug (EJ)	Pr.Rec.: Sept 21, 1991 (EML); Aug 31, 1992 (EJ); Fall 1994 (EJ)	
Blackpoll Warbler	May 7 (BBO)	June 8 (BBO)	Aug 20 (BBO)	Sept 23 (BBO)	Transient
Black-and-white Warbler	*May 9 (BBO)	*****	Aug 21 (BBO)	Sept 6 (BBO)	Transient
American Redstart	*May 21 (BBO)	*****	Aug 8 (BBO)	Sept 14 (BBO)	Transient
Ovenbird	*May 24 (BBO)	*****	Aug 20 (BBO)	Sept 6 (BBO)	Transient
Northern Waterthrush	*****	*****	Aug 17 (BBO)	Oct 5 (BBO)	Transient
*Connecticut Warbler	*Aug 23 (BBO)	*Sept 6 (BBO)	Pr.R.: My 25 (EJ), Jun 8 (TT) & Aug 22 (BC) 1991; May 30, 1993 (MSC); Fall '94 (EJ); Aug 25, '96 (EJ)		
Mourning Warbler	*****	*****	Aug 21 (BBO)	Sept 10 (BBO)	Transient
MacGillivray's Warbler	*****	*****	*Aug 17 (BBO)	*****	Transient
Common Yellowthroat	May 6 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 24 (BBO)	Breeding
Wilson's Warbler	*****	*****	Aug 7 (BBO)	Sept 27 (BBO)	Transient
Canada Warbler	*****	*****	Aug 14 (BBO)	Sept 4 (BBO)	Transient
(warbler sp.)					
<b>Tanagers</b>					
Western Tanager	May 20 (BBO)	June 3 (BBO)	*Aug 28 (BBO)	*****	Transient
<b>Native Sparrows</b>					
American Tree Sparrow	SGF	May 24 (RF)	Sept 21 (BBO)	Oct 28 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Chipping Sparrow	May 12 (BBO)	June 9 (BBO)	*****	*Oct 4 (BBO)	Breeding
Clay-colored Sparrow	May 5 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 23 (BBO)	Breeding
Vesper Sparrow	May 8 (BBO)	↔	↔	Sept 20 (BP)	Breeding
Savannah Sparrow	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 14 (RF)	Breeding
Lecoate's Sparrow	SGF	↔	↔	Aug 14 (BBO)	Breeding
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow	SGF	↔	↔	Sept (EJ)	Breeding; name altered
*Fox Sparrow	*(JB)		Pr.Rec.: 1985 (1 banded); 1989 (2 banded); May 14 & Sept 24, 1994 (BBO)		
Song Sparrow	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 10 (BBO)	Breeding
Lincoln's Sparrow	May 8 (BBO)	May 23 (BBO)	Aug 23 (BBO)	Sept 27 (BBO)	Transient
Swamp Sparrow	*****	*****	Aug 23 (BBO)	Sept (EJ)	Breeding
White-throated Sparrow	May 12 (BBO)	May 30 (BBO)	Aug 10 (BBO)	Sept 25 (BBO)	Breeding; 1 bird on July 17 (BBO)
White-crowned Sparrow	May 7 (BBO)	May 16 (BBO)	Sept 17 (BBO)	Sept 28 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Dark-eyed Junco	SGF	May 5 (BBO)	Sept 14 (BBO)	Oct 27 (BBO)	Transient - Spring & Fall Migrants
Lapland Longspur	SGF	May 5 (BBO)	*****	*****	Transient
Snow Bunting	April 13 (BP)	May 5 (BBO)	Oct 19 (BP)	Nov 2 (DD)	Transient; occasional winter visitor

Species	First Record	Last Spring	First Fall	Last Record	Status
<b>Cardinals</b>					
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	May 18 (FW)	June 2 (BBO)	Aug 3 (BBO)	Aug 23 (BBO)	Transient
<b>Blackbirds and Allies</b>					
Bobolink	May 24 (RF)	June 19 (BBO)	*****	*****	Breeding; Spring and Summer
Red-winged Blackbird	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 14 (RF)	Breeding
Western Meadowlark	April 19 (FW)	↔	↔	Sept 27 (BP)	Breeding
Yellow-headed Blackbird	SGF	↔	↔	Aug 12 (BBO)	Breeding
Rusty Blackbird	*SGF	*****	*****	*Oct 19 (BP)	Transient
Brewer's Blackbird	SGF	↔	↔	Sept 17 (RF)	Breeding
Common Grackle	*SGF	*****	*****	*Sept 26 (RF)	Transient
Brown-headed Cowbird	May 6 (BBO)	↔	↔	Aug 12 (BBO)	Breeding
Baltimore Oriole	May 23 (BBO)	↔	↔	Aug 26 (BBO)	Breeding
(blackbird sp.)				Sept 27 (BBO)	
<b>Finches and Grosbeaks</b>					
Pine Grosbeak	*****	*****	*Oct 28 (BBO)	*****	Transient
Purple Finch	SGF	June 21 (BBO)	*****	*****	Transient
*Red Crossbill	*April 26 (BP)	*****	*****	*****	Pr.Rec.: July 31, 1992 (JDx/KH) (3 banded)
Common Redpoll	← *****	*****	Oct 27 (BBO)	Oct 29 (BBO) →	Transient; Winter visitor
Pine Siskin	May 31 (BBO)	↔	↔	Oct 19 (BBO)	Breeding? Transient
American Goldfinch	May 23 (BBO)	↔	↔	Oct 15 (BBO)	Breeding
Evening Grosbeak	← *****	*****	Oct 5 (BBO)	Oct 28 (BBO) →	Transient; Winter visitor
<b>Weaver Finches</b>					
House Sparrow	← SGF	↔	↔	Nov 6 (RF) →	Breeding; Year round resident; Urban/farm
<b>Regularly Occurring Species that were NOT recorded in 1997:</b>					
	<b>Previously Recorded:</b>				
Greater Scaup	April 8, 1990 (DN); April 14, 1991 (DN); June 5, 1992 (SJ); May 13 (BBO) & 30 (MSC), 1993; April 20, 1995 (BC); May 4 (JB) & 28 (BBO), 1996				
Barrow's Goldeneye	May 26, 1992 (BC); June 20, 1993 (BC); Aug 4, 1994 (?); July 4, 1995 (BC); May 5, 1996 (BC)				
Hooded Merganser	May 18 (EML), 26 (MSC), 1991; May 27, 1992 (RF); Sept 26, 1992 (BHLG); July 20 & Aug 4(?), 1994; July 4, 1995 (BC); July 26, 1996 (BC)				
Prairie Falcon	July 25, 1990 (DD); July 13 & Aug 16, 1992 (DD); Aug 4, 1994 (?); July 21 & Sept 13, 1995 (DD); June 30 (BBO)				
Dunlin	May 20 TT & 26 (DD), 1991; May 27 (RF); May 3 (RF/DD) & 15 (BBO), 1993; April 23, 1994 (EML); May 21, 1995 (BC/BS); May 10 (BBO) & 19 (RD), 1996				
Boreal Chickadee	July 31 (ED), Oct 6 (BC), 1991; May 1992 (EJ); Sept 14 & Oct 5, 1994 (?)				
Sedge Wren	June 1 (BBO) & Aug 2 (SJ), 1991; May 31 & Aug 2 (SJ), 1992; June 20, 1993 (BC); Aug 2, 1994 (JB)				
Hoary Redpoll	Dec 20 (DN) & Dec 29 (MY), 1991; Jan 12, 1992 (DN); Jan 3, 1993 (MY)				
<b>Accidental and Very Rare Species NOT Recorded in 1997</b>					
	<b>Previously Recorded:</b>				
Red-throated Loon	Oct 3, 1979 (DD); Aug 12, 1992 (BC)				
Clark's Grebe	only record - Sept 15, 1990 (EML)				
Great Egret	June 7 - 11, 1987 (PD); May 30, 1991 (JH)				
Turkey Vulture	Aug 26, 1967 (DD); May 29, 1994 (JB)				
Brant	May 8, Sept 13, Sept 24 1979 (DD); April 8, 1991 (PN); April 18 - 21, 1995 (RD)				
Wood Duck	May 3, 1980 (RE); May 29, 1985 (DD); June 9, 1996 (MP)				
Am Black Duck	Aug 23, 1887 (BT); Aug 12, 1992 (BC); Oct 4, 1994 (BC)				
Harlequin Duck	undated record S&S; Sept 21, 1991 (TT); June 13, 1996 (TT)				
Surf Scoter	May 19, 1986 (PD); May 26, 1991 (PR); Oct 11, 1984 (?)				
Ferruginous Hawk	May 25, 1991 (GH); May 10, 1993 (BBO); May 16, 1993 (DD); May 19, 1996 (RD)				
Golden Eagle	April 13 & 22, 1990 (DN); April 1, 1993 (DD); April 29, 1995 (RD); May 24, 1995 (BC)				
Virginia Rail	May 20, 1990 (RE); June 1, 1991 (ET); June 11 1991 (TT); May 31 1992 (SJ); July 16, 1996 (BBO)				
Piping Plover	breeding - 1993 & 1995; May 14, 1994 (BC); May 25 (RD/MB) to June 6 (RF/MB), 1996 (nesting)				
Black-necked Stilt	breeding record 1977; May 3, 1980 (RE); June 18, 1992 (KH); June 12, 1993 (JDx)				
Western Sandpiper	May 20, 1990 (RE); July 2, 1993 (AH); May 6, 1995 (RD); May 12, 1996 (BC)				
Ruff	May 8, 1978 (DD); April 25, 1993 (TT)				
Red Phalarope	Sept 27, 1990 (DD)				
Little Gull	Aug 26, 1989 (DD); Sept 12, 1996 (JDx)				
Mew Gull	Aug 8, 1988 (DD); Sept 7, 1991 (DD)				
Glaucous Gull	March 31, 1985 (GH); May 11, 1992 (SJ)				
Sabine's Gull	Sept 5, 1975 (DD); Sept 21 & Oct 13, 1991 (TT)				
Caspian Tern	May 4, 1985 (RE); July 8, 1991 (BC)				

**Accidental and Very Rare Species NOT Recorded in 1997 (continued)**

Barred Owl	Sept 16, 1995 (BBO)
Great Gray Owl	Spring 1925 (Rowan / RL); Sept 1, 1992 (FF)
Belted Kingfisher	May 22, 1990 (RD); June 18, 1996 (RD)
Pileated Woodpecker	Apr 15, 1988 (EML); Oct 18, 1992 (DN); May 30, 1993 (JH); Sept 16, 1995 (BBO)
Willow Flycatcher	July 29, 1993 (GH) - see Trail's Flycatcher above
Great Crested Flycatcher	July 12, 1987 (RE); Aug 19, 1994 (BBO); July 4, 1995 (BC)
Western Kingbird	June 7, 1979 (RK); June 28, 1993 (BC)
N. Rough-winged Swallow	May 27, 1991 (EJ); June 23, 1991 (DN); May 21, 1993 (JF)
Gray Jay	Oct 18, 1992 (PH)
Brown Creeper	Sept 28, 1990 (EJ); Sept 23, 1992 (BC); Sept 24 - 26, 1994 (KH); Sept 6 & 20, 1995 (BBO)
Winter Wren	Sept 26, 1996 (BBO)
Townsend's Solitaire	Apr 11, 1981 (DD); Apr 27, 1996 (NAH)
Varied Thrush	Sept 26, 1994 (KH)
Northern Mockingbird	May 14, 1975 (DD); July 29, 1993 (JDx/JB)
Brown Thrasher	Breeding (EJ); 1988 (EJ); May 20, 1991 (EML); May 30, 1992 (EH)
Loggerhead Shrike	June 1, 1996 (GS)
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Aug 30, 1990 (SJ); Sept 21, 1991 (EML); Aug 31, 1992 (EJ); Aug 16 & fall, 1994 (EJ); Aug 23, 1995 (BBO)
Blackburnian Warbler	Aug 24, 1989 (SJ); Aug 31, 1992 (EJ); Fall 1994 (EJ)
Indigo Bunting	May 24, 1990 (EJ)
Lark Sparrow	May 18, 1991 (TT)
Lark Bunting	May 15, 1984 (RE); June 15, 1991 (EO); May 26, 1992 (BC)
Golden-crowned Sparrow	Apr 4, 1992 (WF)
Harris' Sparrow	Jan 12, 1992 (DN); Oct 3, 1992 (JL); May 22, 1996 (BBO)
Smith's Longspur	May 13, '82 (?); May 7, '89(?); Sept '91(DD); May 15 (DD) & 16 (BC), '95; Sept 7 & Oct 30, '95 (RD); May 12, '96 (BC)
White-winged Crossbill	Jan 12, 1992 (DN)

**Historical records**

**No records as of 1989:**

Snowy Egret	June 1984 (CMc)
Black Scoter	May 15, 1982 (EJ)
Oldsquaw	Oct 4, 1964 (RL/RT); April 29, 1984 (RE)
Greater Prairie-Chicken	Extirpated - last seen in 1932
Whooping Crane	Oct 1966 (DD)
Wandering Tattler	Sept 2, 1973 (OH)
Long-billed Curlew	undated (S&S)
Surfbird	Sept 21, 1975 (RK)
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Sept 27, 1987 (EML)
Parasitic Jaeger	Oct 15, 1983 (BBO); Jaeger sp. - May 25, 1995 (DD); Sept 6, 1996 (DD)
Iceland Gull	Oct 22, 1926 (RL)
Black-legged Kittiwake	May 15, 1988 (RE)
Arctic Tern	May 11, 1985 (RE)
Ancient Murrelet	Oct 2, 1983 (DD)
Black-billed Cuckoo	Banded in 1986 & 1987; Nest 1987; 1992 (PH) - one bird reported to west of BHL zone
Northern Hawk Owl	Oct 13, 1973 (DD)
Burrowing Owl	May 1983 (RS); rumours of sighting in 1995
Boreal Owl	May 15, 1983 (EJ) - found dead
Red-headed Woodpecker	May 24, 1987 (DN)
Scarlet Tanager	May 11, 1985 (PD)
Baird's Sparrow	May 1989 (RE)
McCown's Longspur	Sept 12, 1977 (MM)
Chestnut-collared Longspur	undated (S&S)

**Unconfirmed sightings:**

Willow Ptarmigan	only record - April 4, 1992 (Cliff Kulak)
Band-tailed Pigeon	only record - June 25 - July 1, 1996 (R. Pellerin)
Rufous-sided Towhee	only record - May 25, 1996 (Brian Hornby)

Index to 1997 Contributors:	Initials	Name
	BBO	Beaverhill Bird Observatory Banding and Census Records
	JB	Josh Bilyk
	JDx	Jason Duxbury
	DD	Dick Dekker
	BC	Bob Carroll
	EJ	Edgar T. Jones
	RD	Ross Dickson
	RF	Roy Fairweather
	BP	Bob Parsons
	MB	Michael Barr
	BH	Brian Hornby
	FW	Fred Whiley
	JN	Jiri Novak
	CF	Chris Fisher
	PN	Pat Nolan
	JL	Jim Lange
	(JB)	Josh Bilyk - 1997 Habitat Study (no dates given)

Index to Previous Contributors:	Initials	Name	Initials	Name
	JA	John Acorn	EML	Ed Mah-Lim
	JDG	Joan DeGeer	MM	Martin McNicholl
	PD	Peter Dunn	CM	Cathy Mowat
	RE	Rainer Ebel	DN	Dave Nadeau
	JF	Jim Faragini	EO	Elson Olorenshaw
	WF	Warren Finlay	MP	M. Powell
	FF	Frank Fraser	GS	G. Scolton
	PH	Peter Haddock	RS	Ron Slagter
	KH	Kevin Hento	BS	Bob Storms
	OH	Otto Hohn	TT	Terry Thormin
	AH	Art Hughes	ET	Eric Tull
	SJ	Stefan Jungkind	BT	Bruce Turner
	RK	Richard Klauke	JW	Jim Wolford
	RL	Robert Lister		
	CMc	Chel Macdonald		
	MSC	May Species Count		
	NAH	Northern Alberta Hotline Website		

**Sources:**

Bilyk, J.N., M. Barr and G. L. Holroyd. Migratory and Summer Bird Habitat Associations of the Beaverhill Lake Landscape. Beaverhill Bird Observatory. (JB)

Campbell, L. 1990 Annual Report. Beaverhill Bird Observatory.

Dekker, D. 1991. Prairie Water. BST Publications, Edmonton. 144pp.

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Fairweather, R. 1991 Beaverhill Lake Sight Records Report. Beaverhill Bird Observatory.

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Fairweather, R. 1996 Beaverhill Lake Sight Records Report. Beaverhill Bird Observatory.

Jungkind, S. 1990. Ten year summary report 1980 - 1989. Beaverhill Bird Observatory.

Lister, R. 1979 The Birds and Birders of Beaverhills Lake. Edmonton Bird Club Publication. 264pp. (RL)

Salt, W.R. and J.R. Salt. 1976 The Birds of Alberta. Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton. 498pp. (S&S)

Beaverhill Sight Records Zone:	
North Boundary:	Highway 16
South Boundary:	Highway 14
East Boundary:	RR 172 (Ryley and north)
West Boundary:	Secondary Highway 834 (Tofield and north)

# Look for bird bands!

## Why?

Every year, millions of birds are banded by amateur and professional researchers across North America (including between 2 and 3 thousand by Beaverhill Bird Observatory personnel) in an effort to determine migration routes, wintering and breeding grounds and longevity among other topics. Each bird receives its own individual band number so that if you find a banded bird it can be traced to a banding location and date. Every band number traced in this way can provide important information about the topics mentioned above.

## How?

Any bird that can be handled (dead or alive) should be checked for bands on its leg - but take care not to injure a live one or jeopardize its chance of survival. Road and window casualties, predator (including cats) victims, weather and building mortalities can all provide possibilities of finding a bird band.

## When?

Banded birds can be found any time, but migration (March - June and August - October) is the most likely time. Right after storms or low pressure systems are good times to look for bird casualties that might have bands on their legs:

## What do you do if you find one?

Please write down the following information on any banded bird that you find:

- 1) All the numbers on the band
- 2) When (date) the bird was found
- 3) Location (geographic) where it was found
- 4) Species (if you can determine)
- 5) Condition of bird (if dead - how it died)
- 6) How you found the bird (e.g. cat brought it in)

and send this information to:

**Bird Banding Office  
Canadian Wildlife Service  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0E7**

In return you will receive a certificate acknowledging your find and information on the origin (location and date) of the bird.