

May 11-May 21 Weekly Report

These past ten days have been quite eventful to say the least. The Beaverhill Bird Observatory is looking more and more beautiful with each added day as the leaves continue to gradually introduce themselves to spring. As far as banding goes, what an adventure it has been. I am beginning to both enjoy and anticipate the little surprises that each day holds for us out here at the BBO. Each morning we rise with the sun without any clue of what our day will bring. Will the weather hold for us? Will we catch any birds? What new birds will we meet today?--Are a few of the questions that race through my mind as I step into the fresh morning air.

I am reminded of the unpredictable nature of this job as I examine the difference that one day can make. Our week had been fairly slow, the birds seemed to be taking their time on migration and poor weather conditions on a few of the days had really inhibited our banding. On the fourteenth of May we woke up to a day like any other. The temperature was not ideal for banding (below 0), which meant that we would be setting up nets later than I had anticipated. Once the temperature had finally reached above zero, we quickly set up nets and by the time we had finished, it was already time to do our first net check. The first check produced a few birds in the nets, but surely nothing to be alarmed about. Well, as the morning went on each check seemed to produce more and more birds the majority being beautiful Myrtle Warblers. The weather was cloudy, and towards the end of the day windy, with the added surprise of even a bit of snow! Despite the fact that the weather conditions were not exactly ideal, we had our all time record high with eighty-three birds caught that day...it was amazing...and truth-be-told, even a little crazy. Luckily for us however, we had Christine Boulton as our fearless trainer that day, whose exceptional banding skills carried us through that busy day.

Since our biggest day, we haven't seen the kind of numbers of birds as we did that day, although each morning I wonder "if today will be another day like the fourteenth of May?" So far this spring, such an influx of birds has not been repeated out here at the BBO. This being said, the diversity has definitely increased, with each day producing ever new and exciting finds, such as Evening Grosbeaks, Western Tanagers, Yellow-bellied sapsuckers, and Yellow Warblers (for a complete list, see below). I have also included a pie chart that illustrates the distribution of birds caught in the past ten days. As will be noted, the Myrtle Warblers seemed to be the flavour of the week, with Chipping sparrows, Swainson's Thrush, and White-throated Sparrows following behind as frequently caught birds.

All in all this week has been a real treat and I have learned that you never know what tomorrow will bring. So stay tuned and come on out to the BBO to discover what new adventures and surprises await you there.

Cheers
Crystal and Jill

Species	# New Birds	Repeats	Total Records
American Robin	1	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	1	3	4
Blue-headed Vireo	1	0	1
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	1
Clay-colored Sparrow	11	0	11
Chipping Sparrow	37	4	41
Evening Grosbeak	1	0	1
Hermit Thrush	2	0	2
House Wren	1	0	1
Least Flycatcher	4	0	4
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	0	3
Myrtle Warbler	107	7	114
Orange-crowned Warbler	3	0	3
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1	2
Ruby Crowned Kinglet	1	0	1
Savannah Sparrow	2	0	2
Swamp Sparrow	1	0	1
Swainson's Thrush	13	1	14
Tree Swallow	2	2	4
Warbling Vireo	0	0	1
White-crowned Sparrow	2	0	2
Western Tanager	1	0	1
Western Palm Warbler	2	1	3
White-throated Sparrow	12	0	12
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	3	5
Yellow Warbler	3	1	4
TOTAL	215	23	239

Distribution of Birds Captured at the BBO from May 11 to 21, 2004

