

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update August 14 – 20, 2009



Hatch year male Wilson's Warbler

Another bunch of great fall migrants came through the natural area this past week, Ashley came back from one net check with no less than three different warbler species! She had Magnolia Warblers, a Cape May Warbler, and an American Redstart all in the same catch, I will admit I was a bit jealous. We also caught a great little bird identified by his yellow body plumage, olive upperparts, and dark black cap. The Wilson's Warbler was quite a treat, and while we hope to catch more, you just never know we took a lot of pictures of him. After the photo shoot he was released and gave us a saucy 'chip!' before flying off into the trees. The warblers have been rolling in and we look forward to more colourful surprises in the nets.

This week also yielded the capture of a bird I have been waiting three years to band, the Northern Flicker. While this species is regularly caught at BBO, I have never been around to see it. The first 'almost' capture happened when Ashley and I watched it hit net 2X and bounce out (so disappointing!). The next time I heard some 'big-bird' flapping in the net as I walked around the corner to net 43, and lo and behold there it was. After banding and releasing this individual, Ashley found the same bird in net 41 on the next net check, and she immediately released him. While we can't be sure, the one that bounced out of net 2X may well have been the same individual! For an interesting size comparison, this Northern Flicker weighed 126.8 g and needed a size three band. The Sharp-shinned Hawk (male) that we caught this week that takes the same size band weighed 88.6 g. The Flicker is a solid bird!



The Northern Flicker

We had a number of visitors this week, Judy and George from Edmonton joined us for the last bit of banding on the 16th, and Ashley's brother Daniel Thorsen came out for the whole day of the 20th (and got up with us first thing in the morning too!). Also on the 16th we were honoured with a visit from Dr. Peter Dunn, a man who was involved in the very early days of BBO and conducted his graduate work on Tree Swallows in the Natural Area. He helped build the lab that we are still using, and despite exterior upgrades, he told us the inside looked almost exactly like it did 20 years ago! Peter now works as a professor at the University of Wisconsin, still working on Tree Swallows, and is also involved in the Golondrinas de las Americas Project that BBO is recently joined with (Jenny and Tyler's work this year).

We finished the repairs to the raptor traps during this week, so they are ready to set!

Table 1. Results from Fall Migration Monitoring, August 14 - 20, 2009.

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Alder Flycatcher	3	0	0	0	0	3
American Redstart	3	0	0	0	0	3
Black-capped Chickadee	1	1	0	0	1	3
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clay-coloured Sparrow	9	1	0	0	1	11
Chipping Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Cape May Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	1
Eastern Phoebe	3	0	0	0	0	3
Least Flycatcher	22	2	0	0	1	25
Magnolia Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ovenbird	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	0	0	0	0	1	1
Song Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tennessee Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Traill's Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wilson's Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Yellow-shafted Flicker	1	0	0	0	2	3
Yellow Warbler	3	1	1	0	0	5
Total	59	5	1	0	6	71

Net Hours: 500.25 NH

Capture Rate: 14.19 birds/ 100 NH

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO.

2 Banded at the BBO > 90 days prior to recapture (e.g. in a previous year).

3 Banded at a location other than the BBO.

4 Caught in a mist-net but not banded (e.g. escaped net).



Top left; Magnolia Warbler. Top Right; American Redstart. Bottom Left; Field of Foxtail Barley. Bottom Right; Sharp-shinned Hawk.