

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Report Sept 15, 2020 – Sept 21, 2020

Another exciting week of migration has passed at BBO. Snow Geese continue to fly overhead in the hundreds, along with occasional flocks of Sandhill Crane. In addition, the weir area continues to be populated by passing flocks of various ducks and passing flocks of Wilson's Snipe and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. Our resident Pied-Billed Grebe also can be spotted diving in the pond beside the weir nearly every morning, and our visits there are greeted by angry *chiks* from the local Marsh Wrens. Eventually, they will give way to small groups of sparrows as the season progresses.

Owl monitoring has also been progressing steadily. We have been hosting visitors four nights a week to great success, and recently opened up another two nights for the public to come and observe the owl monitoring process. While numbers remain a little slow, there are signs that owl migration is beginning to pick up. Earlier this week, we captured five Northern Saw-whets, and on the 21st we captured seven, along with our second Long-Eared Owl of the season!

In the event that our owl capture rate is low, our visitors have still been

entertained by Stella and Gilbert, our resident Northern Flying Squirrels, and their offspring. Every now and then a sudden crash from the woods heralds one of the inexperienced young misjudging a jump and thumping down into the leaves, to our great amusement. Hopefully they continue to stay near the central clearing and away from our nets; while they are very cute from a distance, every member of the BBO staff can attest to their particular viciousness when accidentally caught in our owl nets.



Aging a Northern Saw-Whet Owl by examining its wing moult pattern

Also making an appearance has been Rickie, our ambassador owl, who has been giving our visitors a guaranteed chance to see a Saw-whet Owl up close when our nets are empty. Bringing her out is doubly important: in addition to giving our guests an opportunity to see an owl, this also gives us an opportunity to get Rickie used to being around people again; during the six months that we were unable to bring her into classrooms, Rickie forgot most of her training and was somewhat less than friendly. She has now remembered her job, and has readjusted well to being around people once more.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to Martine Dumont, who has been volunteering with us this past week. We are excited to see what the season will bring next!



Shane, our assistant biologist, preparing to release our season's second Long-Eared Owl

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Northern Saw-whet Owl (M)	13	1		1	1	16
Northern Saw-whet Owl (F)	2					2
Long-Eared Owl	1					1
TOTALS	16	1	0	1	1	19

NSWO (M) Playback Hours: 41.5

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

Capture rate: 38.5 birds/100 playback hours

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

NSWO (F) Playback Hours: 41.5

3 Banded at a location other than the BBO

Capture rate: 4.8 birds/100 playback hours

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

LEOW Playback Hours: 29.5

Capture rate: 3.4 birds/100 playback hours