

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update June 20 – June 29, 2025



An adorable Swamp Sparrow caught at SOPO this week. These rusty sparrows do prefer wetlands as their name implies.

Another round of MAPS went by this week, with captures slowing down compared to the high totals last week. SOPO was the first station to be run, managing 45 captures over the course of the full morning. During that morning we caught 3 different Swamp Sparrows – our first time capturing the species this year! Other common species included the usual Yellow Warblers and Red-winged Blackbirds. BLAB was run next and caught 22 birds, mostly Least Flycatchers as is typical for that station. We ran LILA last on the 24th and caught just 25 birds, largely due to wind forcing us to close some of our more productive nets throughout the morning. We did however hear another Black-billed Cuckoo singing in the area! Black-billed Cuckoos are typically rare in Alberta but seem to be experiencing an irruption in the province this year.

With MAPS finished we focused most of our effort on banding Tree Swallow nestlings! The BBO has over 200 Tree Swallow nesting boxes that are monitored by student interns, and when the little chicks are about 11 days old they are old enough to band! We banded over 150 Tree Swallows this week: thank you to volunteers Amy, Meghan, Emily, and Kelsey who came out to help!

The staff enjoying some Tree Swallow nestling banding. Not pictured: approximately 60,000 mosquitoes.



Other tasks completed this week include surveys of the Forest Breeding Bird Grid, Lister Lake, and the local Least Flycatcher nests. The time between MAPS rounds has also given us the chance to get caught up on data entry and data submission as well as various other maintenance tasks around the lab. Somehow it's already late June, which means just a few short weeks until we begin fall migration monitoring!

Table 1. SOPO Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Trail's Flycatcher	1					1
Least Flycatcher	5	2	1			8
American Robin	1					1
Yellow Warbler	9	4	1		1	15
Song Sparrow	1		1			2
Swamp Sparrow	3	1				4
Red-winged Blackbird	4	1	1		1	7
Brown-headed Cowbird	2		1			3
Baltimore Oriole	1					1
American Goldfinch	1					1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1					1
TOTALS	29	8	5	0	2	44

60 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

73.3 captures/100 net-hours

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).

Table 2. BLAB Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Least Flycatcher	5	3	3			11
American Robin	2	1				3
Warbling Vireo	1		1			2
Yellow Warbler		1	1			2
Red-winged Blackbird			1			1
Baltimore Oriole		1				1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		2				2

TOTALS	8	8	6	0	0	22
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55 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

40.0 captures/100 net-hours

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).

Table 3. LILA Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1					1
Least Flycatcher	3	4			1	8
Northern House Wren	1		1			2
American Robin					1	1
Cedar Waxwing	1					1
Warbling Vireo	1		1			2
Yellow Warbler	1	1				2
Common Yellowthroat	2					2
Brown-headed Cowbird		1	1			2
Baltimore Oriole	1	1				2
Common Grackle	2					2
TOTALS	13	7	3	0	2	25

50 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

50.0 captures/100 net-hours

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).