

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly update - Aug 9th to 15th, 2025



Figure 1. The participants of the 9th Annual Young Ornithologist Workshop.

This week marked the 9th Annual Young Ornithologist Workshop! The Young Ornithologists (YOs) were kept busy through the week with a variety of activities. These included the tried and true events like daily banding, a banding and aging presentation by Jon Van Arragon, Tree Swallow presentation and Hummingbird banding with Geoff Holroyd, Butterfly catching with Dave Lawrie, a visit to the Trefry's falconry, watching The Big Year, and a big birding day led by Irene Crosland where the YOs got more than 100 species! In addition to all that, there was a new activity added this year and one continued from last year. First, Geoff took the YOs to collect failed eggs from the Purple Martin nest boxes and helped them dissect these eggs to learn more about the reason these nests may have failed. Next, the YOs completed a Bioblitz for a second year. This Bioblitz resulted in the cataloging of 219 species of plants, fungi, insects, birds, and more!



Two Young Ornithologist learning the techniques needed to process a pair of American Goldfinches (*Spinus tristis*).



The white eye ring of the Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*) is diagnostic among sparrows.

Ovenbirds, a Vesper Sparrow, and a Wilson's Warbler, to name a few. The highlight at SOPO was a Marsh Wren and the only day that we banded at DUDR was very slow and didn't turn up any notable birds. At all three stations, the two most common species, Least Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler, composed over half our captures.

One major change from previous years of the Workshop was that the staff chose to run it a week later than usual. This meant that the Workshop did not happen consecutively with MAPS, giving the YOs and staff greater freedom on when and where to band. The staff chose to band at the SOPO station as well as a new station along Duck Drive which we have dubbed DUDR in addition to standard Migration Monitoring. Unfortunately, these three stations were relatively slow throughout the week. Despite the slowness, Migration Monitoring nets caught several cool birds including several Magnolia Warblers, a Mourning Warbler, a bevy of



As one of the smallest birds in Alberta this Wilson's Warbler (*Cardellina pusilla*) weighed just 7.2 grams.

Another exciting addition to this year's Workshop was the opening of owl nets before the official start to the owl season on



The dark brown juvenile plumage on this Northern Saw-whet Owl's (*Aegolius acadicus*) face and body tell us that it hatched recently.

September 1st. This year has seen historic numbers of owls across Alberta and the BBO has been no different. To cache in on this abundance, the owl nets will be opened in August whenever there are hands on deck to do so. The two nights of owl banding that the YOs participated in weren't the busiest, but two Northern Saw-whet Owls and a Long-eared Owl were more than enough to keep the YOs and staff entertained. The late bed time afforded by running owl nets also gave the perfect excuse to watch the meteor shower that reached its peak this week.



Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus*) can be identified by their orange facial disc, long ear tufts, and perpetually surprised expression.

Table 1. Migration Monitoring Banding Totals.

Species	Banded	Repeats ¹	Returns ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Totals
Black-capped Chickadee		2				2
Cedar Waxwing	2					2
Clay-colored Sparrow	3					3
Downy Woodpecker			1			1
Hairy Woodpecker	1	1				2
Least Flycatcher	37	10			1	48
Magnolia Warbler	4					4
Mourning Warbler	1					1
Northern House Wren	1	3				4
Northern Waterthrush	1					1
Ovenbird	5					5
Song Sparrow	1					1
Swainson's Thrush	2					2
Tennessee Warbler	4					4
Traill's Flycatcher	5					5
Vesper Sparrow	1					1
Warbling Vireo	3					3
Wilson's Warbler	1					1
Yellow Warbler	18		1			19
Totals	90	16	2		1	109

554.5 net-hours

19.7 captures/100 net-hours

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).

Table 2. Non-standard SOPO Banding Totals.

Species	Banded	Repeats ¹	Returns ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Totals
Trill's Flycatcher	1					1
Least Flycatcher	9	1				10
Black-capped Chickadee	4	6				10
Northern House Wren	1					1
Tennessee Warbler	1					1
Yellow Warbler	8	4	1			13
Myrtle Warbler	1					1
Song Sparrow	1					1
American Goldfinch	1					1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1				1
Warbling Vireo	1					1
Cedar Waxwing	1					1
Marsh Wren	1					1
Totals	30	12	1			43

36.0 net-hours

119.4 captures/100 net-hours

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).

Table 3. DUDR Banding Totals.

Species	Banded	Repeats¹	Returns²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Totals
Least Flycatcher	7		2			9
Black-capped Chickadee		2				2
Warbling Vireo	1					1
Yellow Warbler	2	1				3
Totals	10	3	2			15

22.5 net-hours

66.6 captures/100 net-hours

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).