

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update September 26 - October 2, 2025

Amongst the dipping autumn temperatures, spirits soared very high at the Beaverhill Bird Observatory this week! *Supper and Saw-whets*, the annual large owl banding event, took place on September 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> and hosted 86 joyous participants. Guests were served a warm, home-cooked meal and were entertained with a face-painting station, an Albertan owl trivia game, and a crafting table! Education owls Tansi and Nina took turns captivating the crowds and, of course, the highlight of the evenings was watching the extraction and banding of Northern Saw-whet Owls! Eleven Saw-whet Owls were caught on the 26<sup>th</sup> and one was caught on the 27<sup>th</sup>, making for two lovely, informative nights!



*As pretty as a picture! The delightful BBO banders and volunteers flash smiles while processing an owl at Supper and Saw-whets (left to right: Matt, Emelie, Xavier, Jana, and Linda).*

*Photo credits: Wilma Schultz*



*Left: A precious Northern Saw-whet Owl! Photo credits: Wilma Schultz.*



*Right: BBO Chair Geoff Holroyd took a seat at Emelie's face painting booth on the first night of Supper and Saw-whets!*

Songbird numbers dwindled this week, only yielding 88 captures (Table 1). The most abundant species was still the Myrtle Warbler with 46 captures. Somewhat surprisingly, a very late Northern House Wren was caught on September 28<sup>th</sup>! On the flip side, Northern Saw-whet Owl captures from this week have accounted for just under half of the total captures for the season (22/46) (Table 2)! This is still considerably lower than expected for this time of year, so hopefully more owls show up in the coming weeks.

Other happenings around the BBO include the outhouse getting pumped, wrapping up project reports, nights of thick fog and aurora performances, and the frequent observation of a bull moose, nicknamed “Marv”, around the lab and net lanes! The 27<sup>th</sup> was also the last day volunteer Linda Aldridge spent at the BBO after nearly a week. Her warmth and extraordinary dedication will be missed, and we all hope she visits again soon!

*Supper and Saw-whets* would have been truly impossible without the generous help from numerous staff and volunteers. A heartfelt thank-you goes to Helen Trefry, Jana Teefy, Geoff Holroyd, Christie and Peter Campbell, Sian Ford, Julianne Hayes, Linda Aldridge, Matt Halfacre, Emelie Dykstra, Xavier Quantz, and Jon van Arragon for their assistance in setup, meal preparation, guest engagement, scribing and banding, and clean-up.

**Table 1. Songbird Banding Totals**

<i>Species Name</i>	Banded	Repeat <sup>1</sup>	Grand Total
American Tree Sparrow		4	4
Black-capped Chickadee		8	10
Clay-colored Sparrow		1	1
Downy Woodpecker			1
Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow		1	1
Hermit Thrush		2	2
Myrtle Warbler		42	4
Northern House Wren		1	1
Orange-crowned Warbler		6	6
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		3	3
Slate-colored Junco		2	2
White-throated Sparrow		1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>71</b>	<b>17</b>
			<b>88</b>

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

Net hours: 439

20 captures/100 net-hours

**Table 2. Owl Banding Totals**

<i>Species Name</i>	Banded	Repeat <sup>1</sup>	Return <sup>2</sup>	Grand Total
Northern Saw-whet Owl	20	1	1	22
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>

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

2 - Banded  $\geq$  90 days ago at the BBO.

NSWO Male 1 (12 captures)

38.8 playback hours

30.9 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Male 2 (4 captures)

38.1 playback hours

10.5 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Female (2 captures)

37.3 playback hours

5.4 captures/100 playback hours

Long-eared Owl (0 captures)

38.8 playback hours

0 captures/100 playback hours

Boreal Owl (4 captures)

35.5 playback hours

11.3 captures/100 playback hours