

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly update - September 27th to October 3th, 2026

As fall marches ever closer to becoming winter, the weather has changed sharply. Our mornings have been regularly sub-zero, and chill winds mark our afternoons. The birds have also felt this change, with songbird migration all but completed. There are still a few hardy species that are just beginning their migration, including American Tree Sparrow, Brown Creeper, and Northern Shrike.



Likely our final Myrtle Warbler (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) of the year.



White-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*) show off their black-and-white underwings as a threat display. Do you feel threatened?

The change in weather and slowing of migration both meant that the songbird monitoring was very slow. This week only 25 birds were captured from five different species, marking our lowest capture rate and diversity of the fall. Despite all this, there were still a few exciting birds to liven our mornings, including a Golden-crowned Kinglet and a White-breasted Nuthatch! This week's captures also included what is likely, and sadly, our final Myrtle Warbler of the fall. With a total of 496 captured this fall, the Myrtle Warbler is once again our most numerous fall capture.

While the state of songbird monitoring is all doom and gloom, this couldn't be farther from the case with owl monitoring. In fact, this week is the first of the fall where owl captures exceed songbird captures with 76 total birds! While almost all these captures are accounted for by Northern Saw-whet owls, one Long-eared Owl was also captured.

Our ticketed Owl and Songbird events both continued through this week, though songbird events will soon be concluding. Another exciting development this week was that WildNorth, a wildlife rehab center, chose the BBO as the release site for an orphaned Northern Flying Squirrel. Considering that Flying Squirrels are highly social and the BBO has healthy population, we are an ideal release location.



Northern Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*) were our most numerous capture this week.

Table 1. Fall Migration Monitoring banding totals

Species Name	Banded	Repeat	Grand Total
Black-capped Chickadee	1	1	2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1		1
Myrtle Warbler	18	1	19
Slate-coloured Junco	2		2
White-breasted Nuthatch	1		1
Grand Total	23	2	25

195.5 net-hours

12.8 captures/100 net-hours

Repeat - banded 90 or fewer days ago, at the BBO

Table 2. Owl Migration Monitoring banding totals

Species Name	Banded	Repeat	Grand Total
Long-eared Owl	1		1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	74	1	75
Grand Total	75	1	76

NSWO Male (70 captures)

90.0 playback hours

77.8 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Female (5 captures)

45.0 playback hours

11.1 captures/100 playback hours

Long-eared Owl (0 captures)

37.5 playback hours

0 captures/100 playback hours

Boreal Owl (1 captures)

29.0 playback hours

3.4 captures/100 playback hours