



Volume 20, Number 3

August 2007

## STEAKS and SAW-WHETS

*September 28 and 29, 2007*

*at Beaverhill Bird Observatory*

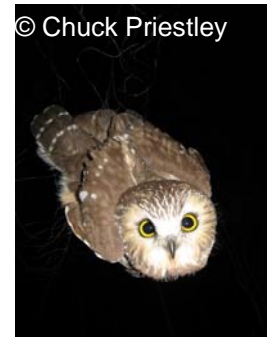
Join the Beaverhill Bird Observatory volunteers, staff and executive for an evening barbeque and netting of saw-whet owls. Steaks, chicken, hotdogs, veggie burgers, corn, potatoes, and all the fixings are served. An assortment of homemade desserts is followed by setting up mist nets to capture saw-whet owls on migration. This annual event sells out quickly so please book early to ensure your spot!!

**Time:** Dinner is served between 6:00 and 8 p.m. Nets go up at 8:15 p.m.

**Cost:** \$25 for adults, free for kids under 12.

**Contact:** For more information and to register, contact Chuck Priestley at (780) 984-6957 or e-mail [charles@ualberta.ca](mailto:charles@ualberta.ca).

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## Edmonton Bird Banding Society – Banding Results from May and June 2007

*by Janos Kovacs*

The Edmonton Bird Banding Society was incorporated in 2003 and conducts migration banding at the Strathcona Science Park. Previously, banding was conducted on a casual basis since 1995.

Migration started slowly in May 2007 but by mid-May it improved. In June, unfortunately, the weather did not co-operate with wind and rain on many of the banding days. We finished our spring migration banding on June 4, 2007. During four Sundays of banding we set six nets for a total of 82 net hours. We captured 80 birds of 22 species (see table following page). The top three species were the Clay-colored Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, and Yellow Warbler.

Volunteers Jonathan Martin-Demoor, Doug Hube, Jim Farigini, and Janos Kovacs carried out all the netting and banding operations.



© Allicia Kelly

**Results of 2007 spring migration banding at the Strathcona Science Park.**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Birds Banded</b>	<b>Capture Rate Birds/100 net hours</b>
Alder Flycatcher	1	1.19
American Goldfinch	2	2.44
American Robin	3	3.66
Baltimore Oriole	1	1.19
Black-capped Chickadee	2	2.44
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	1.19
Chipping Sparrow	5	6.10
<b><i>Clay-colored Sparrow</i></b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15.9</b>
Downy Woodpecker	1	1.19
Hermit Thrush	1	1.19
Least Flycatcher	3	3.66
Lincoln's Sparrow	2	2.44
Orange-crowned Warber	1	1.19
Red-eyed Vireo	1	1.19
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	1.19
Savannah Sparrow	3	3.66
Song Sparrow	2	2.44
Swainson's Thrush	3	3.66
Tennessee Warbler	1	1.19
White-crowned Sparrow	1	1.19
<b><i>White-throated Sparrow</i></b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9.76</b>
<b><i>Yellow Warbler</i></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7.32</b>
<b>Total Banded</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Recaptures</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Total Birds Captured</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>97.6</b>

## Raptor Banding

Beaverhill Bird Observatory staff went out raptor banding with Al DeGroot and Hardy Pletz this spring. Allicia Kelly and Anna Daku helped with banding Great Horned Owls, around Beaverhill Lake. Here are a few photos they took during the excursion. Thanks to Al and Hardy for their help in teaching staff.



# The OWL FILES

## Preliminary Results Alberta Nocturnal Owl Survey 2007

The 2007 owl survey is finished and data from 27 routes have been submitted to date. There have been many owls detected, indicating that it was probably a productive year for owls. Six species have been observed: Barred Owl, Boreal Owl, Great Gray Owl, Great Horned Owl, Long-eared Owl, and Northern Saw-whet Owl. If you completed your survey this year, **PLEASE** submit your data now, so we can tally the results and submit the data to Bird Studies Canada. If you were not able to complete the survey, but are still interested in participating next year, please let us know so we do not reallocate your route to someone else.



© Lisa Priestley

## Backyard Birding in Tofield

by Chuck Priestley

August has been an exceptional month for birding in the town of Tofield. Our house backs on to a small woodlot on the northwest side of town. We always remark at the variety of trees in our yard, jack pine, white spruce, aspen, maple, tamarack, paper birch, an apple tree, a flowering plum, and about eight shrub species. Their diversity makes for interesting birding.

During the days August 17 to 22, we counted 30 species in our yard, and flying over. Following is the list of species we have observed.



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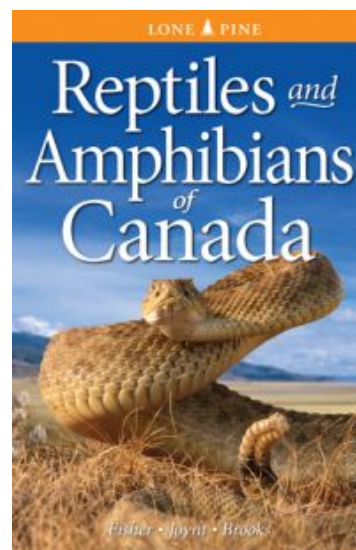
© Chuck Priestley

American Crow	House Finch	
American Goldfinch	House Sparrow	
American Redstart	Least Flycatcher	
American Robin	Merlin	
Black-billed Magpie	Myrtle Warbler	
Black-capped Chickadee	Northern Flicker	
Blue Jay	Northern Flicker	
Cape May Warbler	Orange-crowned Warbler	
Cedar Waxwing	Ovenbird	
Common Grackle	Philadelphia Vireo	Tennessee Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Pine Siskin	Warbling Vireo
European Starling	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Wilson's Warbler
Franklin's Gull	Red-eyed Vireo	White-throated Sparrow

## **Book Review – “Reptiles and Amphibians of Canada”**

**by Lisa Priestley**

Chris Fisher, Amanda Joynt, and Ron Brooks have authored this wonderful identification book to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Canada. The front cover immediately draws your attention to one of Canada’s most striking reptiles, the Prairie Rattle snake. The book covers 84 species of reptiles and amphibians found in Canada, plus 9 other species that are introduced, migratory or extirpated. This well illustrated book offers educational information for everyone, from the novice to expert herpetologist (that’s a person who studies reptiles and amphibians). The Introduction talks about the origins of this group of animals, and delves into the biology that makes these animals unique. The section on Good and Bad is particularly interesting as it touches on the reasons people fear or dislike these creatures. Once these Misconceptions are laid to rest, the "It Ain't Easy Being Green" section provides excellent information regarding the endangered status of one third of the species in the book, including two thirds of Canada's reptiles. There is also information on handling and interacting with these creatures.



I particularly like that there are both drawn images and photographs to help with identification. The book is laid out so that each species description has sections to address identification, length, distribution, selected sites, preferred habitat, activity patterns, reproduction, food, call, similar species and also the French name. Finally there is a map of Canada that points out some parks hotspots to go in search of these elusive animals.

"The Reptiles and Amphibians of Canada" is available at bookstores, on the web and directly from Lone Pine Publishing at [www.lonepinepublishing.com/ordering](http://www.lonepinepublishing.com/ordering).

Laminated softcover, 208 pages, 93 species of reptiles and amphibians  
ISBN-10: 1-55105-279-2 ISBN-13: 978-1-551-5-279-3  
Publication Date: 15 May 2007, Price \$18.95 CDN  
Publisher: Lone Pine Publishing

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### **Membership Information**

\$10/yr for an individual,  
\$20/yr for a family,  
\$25/yr Supporting,  
\$25/yr Corporate, \$100/yr Sustaining,  
\$500 (one time) Life Time Membership

Cheques can be made to the Beaverhill Bird  
Observatory and sent to:  
Box 1418, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2N5



The newest member of Beaverhill Bird Observatory, Kate Priestley, checking out an American Goldfinch at the Ellis Bird Farm, during the Bluebird Festival.

### **NEXT WILLET ISSUE**

Material for the next newsletter should be sent to: Lisa Priestley, Editor, Box 1418, Edmonton, AB T5J 2N5. Email: [lisa@beaverhillbirds.com](mailto:lisa@beaverhillbirds.com) . Articles and photos can be on bird banding, bird watching, wildlife viewing, personal nature photos, etc. Deadline: December 15, 2007