

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly update - May 22nd to 28th

It's all action at the BBO as we finally enter the peak weeks for spring passerine migration. Over the past seven days, we've seen a steady increase in capture rate, and the species caught continue to diversify. Some of these fresh arrivals are familiar faces, as we've seen our first-of-season Warbling Vireos, American Redstarts, and Alder Flycatchers grace the nets. Others are boreal breeders, pausing briefly before the last leg of their long journey to the northern forests. Mourning Warblers, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and a Veery are some standouts amongst the many highlights. In addition to the new birds, the ubiquitous Yellow Warblers have increased in number, and are now rivalling Clay-coloured Sparrows and Least Flycatchers for each day's most common capture.



This Veery entertained us all at Big Birding Breakfast!



An adorable Ovenbird!

Monday the 22nd was the BBO Birdathon, as biologists headed out after banding in an effort to tally as many different species as possible. The grand total was 110, including a wide variety of birds - from Sprague's Pipit, to Barrow's Goldeneye, to an early-arriving Connecticut Warbler. The Connecticut was exciting, as it was the first of its' kind reported in the province this year!

Big Birding Breakfast took place on the 27th and 28th, and saw more than 80 people visit the station across two days. It was a great time, as visitors and volunteers alike were treated to our best banding day so far, not to mention an amazing breakfast! Over the course of the weekend, visitors saw more than 130 birds banded, met Keith the Red-tailed Hawk, and tossed feathers for the ever-amusing Tree Swallows.

Finally, the BBO team has begun to find nests for many different species. American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts have been seen on nests during shorebird surveys, and Least Flycatchers, House Wrens and others have begun constructing and even sitting on nests. Some birds are further along - most of our Canada Geese are now being followed by a fluffy yellow trail of newborn goslings.



Some older male Yellow Warblers have a lot of orange in the crown.

Table 1: Migration Monitoring (standard nets)

SPECIES	BANDED	REPEAT ¹	RETURN ²	FOREIGN ³	OTHER ⁴	TOTAL
Downy Woodpecker			1			1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2				2
Alder Flycatcher	1					1
Traill's Flycatcher	1					1
Least Flycatcher	28	5	2			35
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1					1
House Wren	10	1				11
American Robin		1				1
Swainson's Thrush	20					20
Veery	1					1
Warbling Vireo	3					3
Yellow Warbler	6	4	5		2	17
Mourning Warbler	1					1
American Redstart	1					1
Ovenbird	1					1
Clay-coloured Sparrow	4	1	1			6
White-throated Sparrow	4	2				6
Brown-headed Cowbird	1				1	2
Baltimore Oriole	9	14	6		1	30
Red-winged Blackbird	1					1
TOTALS:	93	30	15	0	4	142

538.5 net-hours

26.4 captures / 100 net-hours

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

2 - banded over 90 days ago, at the BBO

3 - banded at a location other than the BBO

4 - caught but not banded (e.g. escaped)

Table 2: Migration Monitoring (experimental nets)

SPECIES	BANDED	REPEAT ¹	RETURN ²	FOREIGN ³	OTHER ⁴	TOTAL
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1				1
Traill's Flycatcher	1					1
Least Flycatcher	36	2	1		1	40
House Wren	1	1	1			3
Grey Catbird	2					2
Tree Swallow	3	1				4
Warbling Vireo	2		1			3
Yellow Warbler	45	3	5		1	54
Mourning Warbler	1					1
American Redstart	2					2
Tennessee Warbler	1					1
Common Yellowthroat	5					5
Savannah Sparrow	1					1
Chipping Sparrow	2					2
Clay-coloured Sparrow	64	11	3		2	80
White-throated Sparrow	1					1
Baltimore Oriole	10	4	1			15
American Goldfinch	2					2
TOTALS:	179	23	12	0	4	218

160.5 net-hours

135.8 captures / 100 net-hours

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

2 - banded over 90 days ago, at the BBO

3 - banded at a location other than the BBO

4 - caught but not banded (e.g. escaped)