

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update August 30 – September 5, 2023



Blue Jays don't have any blue pigment, they get their colour from microscopic structures in their feathers that scatter light!

After an absolutely hectic few weeks of songbird banding, things slowed down significantly this week in terms of captures. That doesn't mean we were lacking for exciting captures though! We caught another Pileated Woodpecker, and the first Connecticut Warbler and Pine Siskin for the fall migration season. But the best capture of all was not one, but TWO Blue Jays! A class from Red Deer Polytechnic university was lucky enough to be visiting when we caught them. John Acorn's class also came out for a morning of songbird banding this week.

This week also saw the start of our owl migration monitoring! Our nets opened on September 1, and head biologist Jana was pleasantly surprised when she caught an owl on her very first night of monitoring. While we usually expect the first few nights to have no captures, things seem to have started moving early this year.

Despite owl monitoring only just beginning, we already had a very exciting capture this week: a foreign owl originally banded at Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory! We recaptured this second-year owl on September 4th and found out it had

originally been banded up at LSLBO last fall. Foreign recaptures provide us with valuable data about the movements of our owls, and they don't happen that often. Thanks for visiting us little guy, and best of luck on your migration!

Thank you to our volunteers this week: Sian, Carolyn, David, Kylli, and Gabby. We really appreciate your help during this busy time of the year! An extra-special thank you to Geoff and Irene for running owls during staff days off.

This second-year Saw-whet Owl was kind enough to visit us after being banded at Lesser Slave Lake last year.



Table 1. Standard Migration Monitoring Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Bay-breasted Warbler	2					2
Black-capped Chickadee	1	4				5
Blue Jay	1					1
Blackpoll Warbler	9					9
Connecticut Warbler	1					1
Common Yellowthroat					1	1
House Wren		2				2
Least Flycatcher	2					2
Magnolia Warbler	3					3
Mourning Warbler	1					1
Myrtle Warbler	33	1				34
Orange-crowned Warbler	4					4
Ovenbird	3					3
Pine Siskin	1					1
Pileated Woodpecker	1					1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3					3
Red-eyed Vireo	2					2
Slate-coloured Junco	3					3
Swainson's Thrush	12					12
Tennessee Warbler	1	1				2
Traill's Flycatcher	2					2
White-breasted Nuthatch	1					1
Western Palm Warbler	3					3
Yellow Warbler	1	1				2
TOTALS	90	9	0	0	1	100

527.5 net-hours

18.9 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. Experimental Nets Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Alder Flycatcher	1					1
American Redstart	2					2
Black-capped Chickadee	2	1	2			5
Blue Jay	1					1
Blackpoll Warbler	3	1				4
Clay-coloured Sparrow	2					2
Least Flycatcher	1					1
Lincoln's Sparrow	3					3
Magnolia Warbler	1					1
Myrtle Warbler	39	2				41
Northern Waterthrush	1					1
Orange-crowned Warbler	2					2
Ovenbird	1					1
Red-eyed Vireo	1					1
Swainson's Thrush	1					1
Tennessee Warbler	2					2
Traill's Flycatcher	3					3
Warbling Vireo	1					1
Western Palm Warbler	5					5
White-throated Sparrow	5					5
Yellow Warbler	15					15
TOTALS	92	4	2	0	0	98

110.5 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

88.7 captures/100 net-hours

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. Owl Monitoring Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Northern Saw-whet Owl	3			1		4
TOTALS	3	0	0	1	0	4

NSWO Male (2 captures)

16 playback hours

12.5 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Female (2 captures)

11.5 playback hours

17.4 captures/100 playback hours

Long-eared Owl

15 playback hours

0 captures/100 playback hours