



Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update October 12 - 18, 2023

We find ourselves well into late fall here at the BBO. Our owl banding efforts are still in full swing though and we set a station record for daily owl captures with 18 saw-whets and 1 long-eared owl banded. We continue to deploy Motus tags on saw-whets and host visitors for owl banding events. We also reached the milestone of 250 owls captured for the season. Our songbird banding program has tapered down for the season with only single digit daily captures.

This week we've had a series of fun bird sightings. All except one of these noteworthy sightings are associated with late fall migration. An immature golden eagle was seen soaring over the natural area. A northern shrike was spotted perched on the Motus tower. We had a second Townsend's solitaire sighting for this fall. Solitaires are Rocky Mountain breeders that will often disperse eastwards to winter around junipers or other fruiting trees. They are an



Figure 1. Townsend's solitaires are a charming and elegant bird that can be found wintering in association with fruiting trees and shrubs.



Matthew Plante

Figure 2. In the past century, house finches have experienced a dramatic range expansion from southwestern US and Mexico all across North America, making use of human-altered habitats.

uncommon winter resident in

the Edmonton area. A flock of pine grosbeaks visiting the observatory was also a clear sign of impending winter. Finally, a lone house finch was seen at the station. Despite being one of the most common birds in North America, they are rarely seen at the BBO. In our area, both house finches and house sparrows are associated with areas of denser human settlement. We only seem to see the odd strays of either species here.

This week we thank the following volunteers for their contributions to the BBO's operations: Christine, Peter, Madi, Gabby, and Rachel!

Table 1: Migration Monitoring banding totals for Standard Nets.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Black-capped Chickadee	1	10				11
Brown Creeper	1					1
Downy Woodpecker		1				1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	1				2
Hairy Woodpecker		1	1			2
Slate-coloured Junco	2	1				3
White-breasted Nuthatch		1				1
Wilson's Warbler	1					1
TOTALS	6	15	1	0	0	22

379.5 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

5.8 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 2: Migration Monitoring banding totals for Experimental Nets.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
American Tree Sparrow	3					3
TOTALS	3	0	0	0	0	3

75 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

4.0 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	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Northern Saw-whet Owl	41	1				42
Long-eared Owl	1					1
TOTALS	42	0	0	0	0	43

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

NSWO Male (27 captures)

2 Banded at the BBO >90 days prior to recapture (e.g., in a previous year).

48 playback hours

3 Banded at a location other than the BBO

56.3 captures/100 playback hours

4 Caught in a mist-net but not banded (e.g., escaped net).

NSWO Female (9 captures)

42 playback hours

21.4 captures/100 playback hours

Boreal Owl (4 NSWO captures)

47 playback hours

8.5 captures/100 playback hours

Long-eared Owl (1 LEOW capture; 2 NSWO captures)

46.5 playback hours

6.5 captures/100 playback hours