

Weekly Update: August 1 – 10th

Hello again folks. Fall migration is upon us! There are new sounds in the air and new sights seen through our binoculars on a daily basis. Often we hear a sound and think “that sound is familiar” ... obviously a bird from spring migration whose song or call has been burned deep into our memories.

We haven't seen too many birds in our nets these past ten days, although we have begun to witness the congregation and migration of many species. A total of 85 birds were handled during the past week, with 64 new birds being banded. Please see the chart below for detailed totals.

Species	New	Recaptured	Recovered	Total
Black and White Warbler	1	0	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	11	5	1	17
Clay-colored Sparrow	0	1	0	1
Hermit Thrush	1	1	0	2
House Wren	2	1	0	3
Least Flycatcher	25	5	3	33
Myrtle Warbler	3	1	0	4
Swainson's Thrush	1	0	0	1
Traill's Flycatcher	4	0	0	4
Warbling Vireo	7	1	0	8
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	8	1	1	10
Total	64	16	5	85

On a daily basis, both morning and night, we witness a large murder of crows in the aspen trees. The noise they make is deafening, but it is such a wondrous sight. The size of the group varies from 200 to 1000 individuals, and I can only imagine that it will get larger. Tessa says it reminds her of Hitchcock's movie “The Birds”. I have yet to see this film, and I think I will wait until the crows have moved on before I watch it!

We have also noticed an increase in raptors over the past few days. American Kestrels, Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers, Cooper's Hawks, Short Eared Owls, Long-eared Owls and Northern Saw-whet Owls have been seen. It is always a welcome sight to look up into the sky and see a soaring buteo or hear the warning call of the Cooper's Hawk or the characteristic flight pattern of the Short eared owl. Lately the common nighttime activity at the BBO is calling in the Long-eared owls. These owls, along with Northern Saw-whet owls, frequent the lab area on a nightly basis and it is wonderful to watch the owls swoop low and then quickly swoop up towards a tree branch. We have also seen a few bats during these owl prowls.

Speaking of raptors, we banded a young Cooper's hawk on August 3. We accompanied Chuck and Lisa out to the nest basket located behind the BBO lab

and found three nestlings, which soon became fledglings. Fortunately, for us anyway, one of the young Cooper's wasn't a very strong flier and Lisa managed to grab him out of the tree he was perched on. So this young one was banded and placed back into the basket. Since then we have heard it begging for food and we are beginning to wonder when it will leave the nest, permanently. I am sure my parents often wondered the same thing about me!

Lister Lake is also booming with activity. Filled with Mallards, Northern Shovelers and shorebirds, this water body is one of my favorite spots to visit in the early evening. On August 1st we saw 8 American White Pelicans and 5 Black Necked Stilts were spotted on August 3rd. A Double Crested Cormorant (one of Crystal's favorite birds) was seen with the pelicans on August 8th.

I cannot wait to see what other species decide to stop by the Beaverhill natural area, and hope that we have the opportunity to see many interesting fall migrants in hand. See you at the BBO!

Cheers,
Jill, Crystal and Tessa