

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update May 15-21, 2006

This week was HOT. On Wednesday the temperature was 31° in the shade by 10:30 in the morning, and we had to close the nets early due to the heat. When it is too hot for the birds to wait for us to come along and free them from the nets, we lose net hours, so extremes of anything (wind, rain, heat) slows us a bit. Although numbers are still low, new species of birds are arriving daily at the BBO. New species banded this week are the Least Flycatcher, Trail's Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Clay-coloured Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, House Wren and Ovenbird. We also saw a Sora flashing its bright yellow bill in a roadside wetland this week, which was exciting because while we often hear this bird calling in the Natural Area, they are secretive and rarely seen.

A House Wren arrived this week and immediately chose our territory as his territory, singing and checking out all the nest boxes around the lab. He isn't shy about letting us know when he is annoyed, either. Male Wrens migrate north earlier than females, and stuff every available cavity with sticks (dummy nests) as part of courtship. The female then arrives to inspect these potential sites and selects one to complete for a nest. We will see which site gets chosen!

A highlight for us this week (and for many others who have been waiting a lot longer) was the new stove for the lab, which Al Degroot and Jack delivered with some adventure along the way. The new stove is great and has the added bonus of a working oven. Thanks very much to Al and Jack for installing the stove and for other repairs around the lab!

Lisa Priestley has been at the BBO most mornings, and Christine Boulton and Chuck Priestley each came out for a morning to contribute to our banding training. Thanks to all for helping. Sarah Lord and Krystal Tangen also spent a morning at the lab practice their banding skills-- they are off to Jasper, Alberta to work on Sarah's Master's project studying American Dippers.



Al and Kack moving the old stove out.

John Acorn also came out this week, armed with his butterfly net and more information to help us survey butterflies in the natural area. We spent a great afternoon chasing down birds and butterflies as well as searching for shorebirds. This afternoon we found the first Silvery Blue of the season (my favourite butterfly) and John saw an Anise Swallowtail which is a new species for the natural area. Thanks John for the new butterfly equipment!

The Big Birding Breakfast at the BBO is this Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. If the weather cooperates we'll also be banding swallows in the afternoon. Capturing swallows when they enter their nest boxes involves a variety of techniques- some more dignified than others! Volunteers are welcome to stay and help us out. We hope to see you this weekend!



Sarah with a Clay-coloured Sparrow.

*-Alicia Kelly & Katie Cameron*

**Table 1: Results from Spring Migration Monitoring May 15-20, 2006.**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Banded</b>	<b>Recapture</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	0	1
Clay-colored Sparrow	7	0	2	9
Chipping Sparrow	3	0	0	3
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	0	0	1
House Wren	1	0	0	1
Least Flycatcher	8	0	0	8
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	0	0	1
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	0	0	2
Ovenbird	1	0	0	1
Savannah Sparrow	1	0	0	1
Swainson's Thrush	11	0	0	11
Traill's Flycatcher	1	0	0	1
White-throated Sparrow	3	0	0	3
Yellow Warbler	2	0	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>45</b>



Banding the first Yellow Warbler of the season- photo by Lisa Priestley