

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update June 30 to July 9, 2008



Once again, this round was all about the Least Flycatchers. With 13 newly banded, and 13 recaptures, Flycatchers accounted for nearly 3/4^{ths} of our captures.

It's interesting to note that as the season progresses, our ratio of new bands to recaptures is getting a lot smaller. In our first MAPS round only 2 of the 23 Least Flycatchers we caught were recaps, that's less than 10%. In this third round 50% were recaps. This is, of course, to be expected—now that the birds we're catching are no longer migrants on their way through, but are summer residents that have decided to stick around to raise a family. By “crunching the numbers” in the fall, comparing the rate at which we are catching new birds and re-catching previously banded birds, we will be able to come up with a pretty good estimate of the total population of Least Flycatchers (and other species) in the area—even if we haven't caught every single one. By comparing these population estimates over many years, we are able to watch for trends in the songbird populations, which can in turn inform management and conservation decisions in the local area, but also at much larger scales. That's a lot of work for these Flycatchers!



One capture that I was pretty excited about was a House Wren at our easternmost MAPS station, WEIR. There have been several House Wrens hanging around our nets, both out at the MAPS stations and around the lab, but they've been sneaky enough to completely avoid our nets...until now. I've been banding in Alberta for almost ten years, so it's pretty exciting for me to catch a species that I haven't banded before. It's always really neat to

see a species up close, and to get a feel for it in the hand. I'll just mention again, that we always welcome visitors and volunteers out at the lab, if the idea of getting a feel (literally) for the local birds sounds good to you.

Like last shift, there was a species that I was happy to observe on our point-count surveys, that didn't end up in our nets: Tennessee Warbler. In fact, there were two of them in different areas out at the WEIR station. I haven't seen, heard, or caught any of these guys this year, and all of a sudden there's two of them singing away... what a treat.



—JMDR

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Least Flycatcher	13	13	0	0	0	26
Hermit Thrush	1	2	0	0	0	3
Warbling Vireo	2	0	0	0	0	2
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clay-colored Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
House Wren	1	0	0	0	0	1
Veery	0	1	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	20	16	0	0	0	36

Net Hours: 180

Capture Rate: 20 /100 NH

- 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).



Early morning mist on the way out to the WEIR station.