

BEAVERHILL BIRD OBSERVATORY UPDATE AUG 15-21, 2007

THIS WEEK GOT OFF TO A CRAZY BUT EXCITING START with a Northern Saw-whet Owl captured in an early morning check of our songbird nets. Banding a Saw-whet Owl is not that unusual at the BBO, but normally these owls are caught in the fall, after dark, in slightly larger nets set up specifically to catch them. However, we are always glad to see one in a net!



Northern Saw-whet Owl

The first early flocks of White-fronted Geese have been seen flying overhead and stopping in nearby fields, and a Wilson's Warbler and Purple Finch were heard or seen around the lab this week.



A Blackpoll Warbler shows off the yellow soles of its feet

We also banded Magnolia Warblers and a Blackpoll Warbler for the first time this fall. Several warbler species that have distinctive plumages in the spring replace their obvious markings with very similar fall feathers. Banders occasionally use some especially quirky features to tell similar-looking species apart. In the fall, Blackpoll Warblers look very much like Chestnut-sided Warblers (an uncommon capture at the BBO), but only the Blackpoll Warblers have yellow soles on their feet. Unfortunately, while these features they are fast and effective when you have the bird in-hand, they aren't much help when trying to identify a bird through binoculars.

Members of the Edmonton Nature Club and Red Deer Nature Club visited the lab on Saturday morning. A few of the mixed flocks of warblers flitting through the trees were caught in the early morning, but banding quickly slowed down. However, juvenile Soras and Red-necked Grebes were seen amidst the numerous birds at Amisk Creek and Black-bellied Plovers, Killdeer, Semipalmated Plovers and Baird's Sandpipers were seen feeding at Mundare Beach on the east side of Beaverhill Lake. A perched Peregrine Falcon also offered the group great views before heading out to stir up the hundreds of ducks and geese on the water.

We are starting to catch more birds- that is, on days when the weather cooperates with banding. Thanks to Lisa Priestley who spend a morning banding on our day off (and was fortunate to see a moose in the Natural Area) and to Jessie Best who volunteered on a busy banding morning.

-Alicia and Anna



Edmonton and Red Deer Nature Club visit



Jessie shows off a Yellow Warbler

Table 1: Results from Fall Migration Monitoring Aug 15-21, 2007.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Alder Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
American Redstart	4	0	0	0	0	4
Black-capped Chickadee	3	2	0	0	1	6
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clay-colored Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	0	3	0	0	0	3
Hermit Thrush	0	2	0	0	0	2
Least Flycatcher	28	2	1	0	0	31
Magnolia Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Myrtle Warbler	6	0	0	0	0	6
Northern Waterthrush	4	0	0	0	0	4
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ovenbird	4	0	0	0	0	4
Philadelphia Vireo	1	0	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Swainson's Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tennessee Warbler	6	0	0	0	0	6
Warbling Vireo	7	0	0	0	0	7
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	0	1	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	17	2	1	0	0	20
Total	89	12	2	0	1	104

Net Hours: 322.75 NH

Capture Rate: 32.53 birds/ 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).



Foxtail Barley growing on the east side of Beaverhill Lake