

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update May 17 to 24, 2008

This was a pretty exciting week for us here at BBO. The aspen all around the lab was leafing out to a brilliant fresh green, and we saw a wave of new species moving through the natural area here, making for some pretty great banding early in the week.

Matt Hanneman and family covered the Sunday banding and caught 18 birds and 11 species. The highlights were a Northern Waterthrush (which, despite the name, is a warbler species, not a Thrush), and an Ovenbird (which, despite the name, is also a warbler species, not an appliance). Both these species are boreal breeders and stop by the Beaverhill area only briefly on their way north.



On Monday I was out by myself for the morning as Robin enjoyed a long weeked camping trip and had a very busy morning—catching 24 birds from 12 species. My favourites were a Blackpoll Warbler and a Black-and-white Warbler, and the rest of the captures were a nice mix of warblers, sparrows, thrushes, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Least Flycatcher, and a couple Brown-headed Cowbirds. I also got to see a Northern Flying Squirrel near the lab first thing in the morning—the first one I've seen out there. After such a busy morning, I was very happy to have my whole family join me for the afternoon to check some Tree Swallow nestboxes, and to fire up the bbq and grill up some excellent bratwursts.

Things slowed down the next couple of days, as a low pressure system roared in early Tuesday morning and stuck around for a few soggy mornings. It was windy enough Tuesday that we were not able to open the nets at all, which is always a little disappointing, but does allow us to catch up on things like data entry, net repair, and getting set up in the new addition to the banding lab (thanks to Al DeGroot's fine framing and carpentry skills).



The wind was gone Wednesday, but it was cloudy all morning, and a light drizzle turned to rain around 9 o'clock, forcing us to close up early. And the same thing happened Thursday. We did catch two new species in the short time we were open though, a Gray Catbird and a pair of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Grosbeaks are large (relative to say a warbler) and beautiful birds, but go have a look at a picture of one, and imagine that beak pinching down on your fingers... ouch.

Friday morning the weather had cleared up, but I was away from the lab that morning (I'll get to why in a minute), so Robin spent the day checking Bluebird boxes. She found three Mountain Bluebird nests, one with four eggs in it, and a whole bunch of Tree Swallow nests full of eggs.

There was no banding Saturday morning either, but it did see the arrival of a new “species” for me—a daughter! Juniper Lilie was born late Saturday morning, a very healthy 7lbs 12oz, but was unfortunately already too big to fit any of the bands that we have out here. Drop by the lab sometime, and, like any first-time parent, I'd be more than happy to tell you all the cute things she does and to show off some pictures.

—JMDR



Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Least Flycatcher	10	0	0	0	0	10
Swainson's Thrush	10	0	0	0	0	10
White-throated Sparrow	9	1	0	0	0	10
Myrtle Warbler	7	0	0	0	0	7
Brown-headed Cowbird	4	2	0	0	0	6
Clay-colored Sparrow	4	0	0	0	0	4
Chipping Sparrow	4	0	0	0	0	4
Blackpoll Warbler	3	0	0	0	0	3
Orange-crowned Warbler	3	0	0	0	0	3
Yellow Warbler	3	0	0	0	0	3
Lincoln's Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2	0	0	0	0	2
White-crowned Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
American Robin	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-and-White Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	0	1	0	0	0	1
Gray Catbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Northern Waterthrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ovenbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	0	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	70	4	0	0	0	74

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).

Net Hours: 239.5

Capture Rate: 30.9 / 100 NH