

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update, May 1-14, 2012



A handsome Chipping Sparrow

Welcome to the 2012 season at the BBO! The staff this year consists of myself (Meaghan Bouchard) and Amélie Roberto-Charron, and we are both very excited for the summer of birding ahead.

Irene showed up just in time for the first catch of the year, a handsome Northern Flicker! A bit of a handful for fingers that haven't extracted a bird in six months, but we all really enjoyed him. We caught the female the next day. The nets have been busy with a fun variety of sparrows (White-throated and White-crowned, Chipping, Clay-coloured, Lincoln's and Song sparrows), and the regular assortment of thrushes (Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, and the American Robin). We have caught a good number of

Myrtle Warblers, who are typically the first ones to come through in the spring, and enjoyed the little Orange-crowned Warbler.

The feeders have been busy, but mostly acting as the bachelor hangout! A handful of Red-winged Blackbirds, a dozen Brown-headed Cowbirds and several American Goldfinches have been frequenting the feeder, but without a female in sight.

The Tree Swallows are back at all three of the nest box grids, as were a couple of pairs of Mountain Bluebirds. None of the swallows had started nesting yet, but one bluebird nest had 3 eggs on May 11th. Geoff Holroyd was also out this spring to install several new boxes on the road grid, as well as replace some that were starting to wear down after almost 30 years of service.

Lister Lake has standing water again this year, though the levels are lower than last year (no water is flowing over the weir itself). We are hearing lots of ducks and geese in the mornings, and have seen some large flocks of Snow Geese, Greater-white Fronted and Canada Geese flying over. Unfortunately very few Sandhill Cranes spotted though; we only saw a couple of small groups riding the thermals.



The water at Lister Lake

The regular gang of mammals have also been spotted in our first few weeks here. The northern flying squirrel, porcupine, white tailed deer and cottontail rabbit have all been seen around the lab, as well as a short tailed weasel that was bounding down BBO Boulevard.



The northern flying squirrel

The lab has also been busy with visitors and volunteers! Irene has been out to visit and take in the birding action, as have Julia, Pat, Chris and Jeremy, and Nicholas. Thanks Calvin for showing up right at dawn and helping with the banding (and ageing all those Myrtle Warblers), and to Donna and company for bringing their amazing photos to share with us. A huge thank you to the gentleman who trekked in through the winter to fill and repair the feeders, as well as to hang a few new ones for the woodpeckers and chickadees.

Table 1. Results from Migration Monitoring May 1-14, 2012.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
American Robin	2	0	1	0	0	3
Black-capped Chickadee	1	1	3	0	1	6
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	0	0	0	0	1
Chipping Sparrow	6	0	0	0	2	8
Clay-coloured Sparrow	5	0	0	0	0	5
Hermit Thrush	3	0	0	0	1	4
Least Flycatcher	4	0	0	0	0	4
Lincoln Sparrow	1	0	0	0	1	2
Myrtle Warbler	38	0	0	0	2	40
Northern Flicker	2	0	0	0	0	2
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ruffed Grouse	0	0	0	0	3	3
Song Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Swainson's Thrush	3	0	0	0	1	4
Tree Swallow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-crowned Sparrow	5	0	0	0	0	5
White-throated Sparrow	11	0	0	0	0	11
	87	1	4	0	11	103

Net Hours: 704 NH

Capture Rate: 14.63 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).