

Weekly Update September 17th to September 23rd 2016

This week has definitely marked the slowing of our songbird migration here at the BBO. Our number of songbirds caught has dropped significantly compared to past weeks, and we are starting to catch more Slate-coloured Juncos than anything else, along with some American Tree Sparrows. There are a few warblers hanging around, including Myrtle Warblers and Orange-crowned Warblers, but we are seeing significantly more of our late migrating Juncos and Tree Sparrows. These species migrate early in spring, and late in fall, and are some of the last songbird species we will catch this year besides the chickadees and woodpeckers that we get year-round. There is a positive side to this though! soon we will find ourselves catching a lot of owls!!!



Slate-coloured subspecies of the Dark-eyed Junco species.

Speaking of owl captures, this past week has been quite productive. Although there have been a few slower nights, there were also several night of captures between 10 and 16 owls. This is quite a good amount for so early in the season, and we can only hope for as busy an owl season as we had last year. So far it seems promising, and we have noticed quite a large mouse population this year, and we are crossing our fingers for another great owl year.

Besides songbirds and owls, overhead migration is still in full swing. This week saw many Canada, Greater White-fronted, and Snow Geese flying overhead, along with many species of ducks. We have greatly enjoyed the frequent sounds of Sandhill Cranes as they fly overhead. We also saw a sizable flock of Barn Swallows passing through, and observed the first Rough-legged Hawk near the Observatory! Rough-legged Hawks are late migrating raptors, and they are named for the feathers that grow on their legs, whereas many other raptors have bare legs.

A big project that we wiped off our list this week was the installation of 26 new bat boxes in the natural area! We have installed these boxes in hopes of improving bat habitat. We placed them several meters high on trees in a circle loop through the natural area. We did this in preparation for the return of our bats next year, as we have stopped seeing bats in our existing boxes this week. They have moved on to a better location to overwinter.

Thanks Connor, Alyssa, and Alyshia, Steve, Sara, Jeremy, Kendia and Heather, Robyn, Julia and friend, Irene, Sydney and Craig, for your time and help! Thank you also to Lakeland College class with instructor Chris Olsen for visiting us.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Black-capped Chickadee	2	1	1	0	0	4
Hermit Thrush	1	2	0	0	0	3
Orange-crowned Warbler	5	1	0	0	0	6
Myrtle Warbler	5	0	0	0	0	5
White-crowned Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
American Tree Sparrow	4	0	0	0	0	4
Slate-coloured Junco	26	8	0	0	0	34
Total	44	12	1	0	0	57

Birds Caught 57
Net Hours 192.25
Capture Rate: 29.65

Capture Rate was 29.65 birds/100 Net Hours.

Species	Banded	Repeat¹	Return²	Foreign³	Other⁴	Total
Northern Saw-whet Owl	55	0	0	0	0	55
Long-eared Owl	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	55	0	0	0	1	56

Birds Caught 56
Net Hours 155
Capture Rate: 36.13

Capture Rate was 36.13 birds/100 Net Hours.

- 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).