

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update Oct 15, 2020 – Oct 21, 2020

This past week marks the official end of daytime migration monitoring. On October 20th, we ran our last daytime census of the season and began to channel all our efforts into continuing owl monitoring. As would be expected from the end of fall migration, these last few censuses have been very quiet, finding little more than resident chickadees, nuthatches and woodpeckers, and the occasional straggling flock of Northern Shoveler and other late waterfowl. Of some interest was a flock of 23 Pectoral Sandpipers that were spotted at the weir one morning, but they were quick to move on.

Owl monitoring has had a bit of a tumultuous week. An unexpected cold snap made keeping our drinking water unfrozen a constant struggle, and our owl captures dropped off a cliff for unknown reasons. BBO staff speculated wildly over what could have caused the sudden drop in numbers: theories ranged from a poor breeding year to the cold snap discouraging movement. The answers will likely not be known until later this winter, when our owl data is further analyzed.

Nonetheless, our staff have not been discouraged, and continue hosting the public for owl nights. On occasions when the owls make us wait, our visitors have still been able to see Rickie, our educational Northern Saw-Whet Owl. Not only does this offer a guaranteed chance for our guests to see a live owl up close, but it also serves as important training for Rickie for the upcoming winter education season.

As the season begins to taper off, we have started making plans for the winter season. Data needs to be analyzed, half-finished reports need to be published, and we anticipate delivering a large volume of educational webinars over the winter. Hopefully our owl numbers pick up again at some point, and leave this past week as something for later analysts to puzzle over.

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Northern Saw-whet Owl (M)	10	1	1			12
Northern Saw-whet Owl (F)	3					3
Long-Eared Owl	0					0
Boreal Owl*	0					0
TOTALS	13	1	1	0	0	15

NSWO (M) Playback Hours: 48.5

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

Capture rate: 24.7 birds/100 playback hours

2 Banded at the BBO >90 days prior to recapture (e.g. in a previous year).

NSWO (F) Playback Hours: 48.5

3 Banded at a location other than the BBO

Capture rate: 6.2 birds/100 playback hours

4 Caught in a mist-net but not banded (e.g. escaped net).

LEOW Playback Hours: 27.5

*All captures in the Boreal Owl net were NSWO

Capture rate: 0 birds/100 playback hours

BOOW Playback Hours: 26

Capture Rate: 0 birds/100 playback hours