

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory Summary for September 1-15, 2004

Welcome to another instalment of the BBO summaries. The first two weeks of September has been great for me (Matt Hanneman) at the BBO, despite the unseasonably cold temperatures and lousy weather. Fall is always my favourite time of year as I watch the leaves slowly change from green to gold. September also happens to be the best time to watch the migration as all kinds of species pop up along their journey south. This will now be my third season at the BBO and it keeps getting better. I must say, it's hard to stay away with all the fun to be had here. However I have some big shoes to fill as I take over from the excellent job the summer staff have done thus far. "Get on with the birds", you must be saying. We'll, say no more.

The first of the Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes have arrived, declaring the ensuing winter season. Later songbird migrants have also landed, such as the Dark-eyed Junco and American Tree Sparrow. Raptor watching has also been at its best and it is not uncommon to see more than 20 Red-tailed Hawks and several Northern Harriers in the skies at the same time with the odd Bald Eagle soaring over, and a Peregrine Falcon chasing the ducks along the shore. Fall is also known for all kinds of unusual sightings and at the BBO we happened to see a Boreal Chickadee at the feeder and a Pileated Woodpecker at the edge of the Natural Area, which have not been previously sighted here.

### ***Migration Monitoring Results***

BBO bird watching may be great, but low numbers of songbird captures continue to plague us at the BBO. Even with fall migration at its peak we only managed to capture 256 birds (226 banded) in the 12 days of banding. With this being an average of only 21.3 birds per day it is barely enough to keep us busy. However, phenomenal species diversity more than made up for the dismal show of abundance. There was a whopping 37 species captured during the two weeks with some rare species contributing to that total. Sixteen of these species came from the wood warbler family alone. Our excitement could not be contained and we pranced about with glee when a Chestnut-sided Warbler was found in the nets. With only two other captures on record at the BBO, it is not hard to see what all the fuss is about. If it couldn't get any better, a Nashville Warbler was also banded, making it only the sixth capture on record. To top it off, two Bay-breasted Warblers and a Philadelphia Vireo were also among those captured (Table 1).

### ***Northern Saw-whet Owls***

I'm also new to the summaries, but not new to the BBO. I've (Lisa Priestley) been enjoying the fall migration as well, and although I'm working on the saw-whets, I'm more of a morning person, and frequently get up to see what Matt's been catching. Saw-whet monitoring was started on August 15 this year. We've had some success to date, though we think that future monitoring should start in September due to the paucity of captures in August. Presently, the nets are running four hours, starting an hour after sunset. We've captured eight owls to date (272 net hours). The owls are just starting to move and we expect an increase in the numbers as move into the main migration season.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Captures</b>
August 9	1 hatch year female
August 26	1 hatch year female
September 6	1 after second year female (recapture of the female that nested nearby)
September 13	1 hatch year unknown, 2 hatch year females
September 15	1 hatch year unknown, 1 hatch year female

Table 1. Total fall migration captures in September 1 -15 at the BBO, 2004.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Banded</b>	<b>Repeats</b>	<b>Recoveries</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0	0	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	1
Traill's Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	1
Least Flycatcher	13	0	0	0	13
Black-capped Chickadee	12	13	0	0	25
Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	0	0	0	7
House Wren	4	0	0	0	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	11	0	0	0	11
Swainson's Thrush	17	0	0	1	18
Hermit Thrush	1	2	0	0	3
Blue-headed Vireo	2	0	0	0	2
Warbling Vireo	2	0	0	0	2
Philadelphia Vireo	1	0	0	0	1
Red-eyed Vireo	4	0	0	0	4
Tennessee Warbler	17	0	0	0	17
Orange-crowned Warbler	15	0	0	0	15
Nashville Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	9	1	0	0	10
Magnolia Warbler	12	1	0	0	13
Cape May Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	7	4	0	0	11
Western Palm Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Bay-breasted Warbler	2	0	0	0	2
Blackpoll Warbler	4	0	0	0	4
Black-and-White Warbler	3	0	0	0	3
American Redstart	14	1	0	1	16
Ovenbird	11	0	0	0	11
Northern Waterthrush	5	4	0	1	10
Mourning Warbler	6	0	0	0	6
Common Yellowthroat	3	0	0	0	3
Wilson's Warbler	16	1	0	0	17
Canada Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Lincoln's Sparrow	8	0	0	0	8
White-throated Sparrow	6	0	0	0	6
White-crowned Sparrow	4	0	0	0	4
Slate-colored Junco	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>256</b>

### **Raptor Traps**

A GREAT year for migrating raptors. We've seen huge numbers of Red-tailed Hawks and Harriers moving through the area. The traps have been very successful this year, with 19 captures to date (Table below)! Good species diversity too, and in particular we have to mention the first hatch-year Short-eared Owl banding of BBO's history!!

<b>Species</b>	<b>Number</b>
Great Horned Owl	1
Long-eared Owl	2
Short-eared Owl	1
Cooper's Hawk	2
Red-tailed Hawk	10
Black-billed Magpie	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

### ***Other Work***

The greatest addition to the lab cannot be revealed yet. The unveiling will be at the Steaks and Saw-whets event September 24 and 25. Thanks to hard work by board members Chuck Priestley and Enrique Valdez (welcome back to Canada from Mexico), we are truly much more comfortable out here. Other work included fall cleaning, including two truck loads of stuff for the dump. We painted, worked on signage, and a created new colour map of the Natural Area trails.

So, as you can see, our fall has been quite busy to date. You must come out and check out the various new additions to the lab. Hope you can come visit us, the fall colours are beautiful!! and so are the birds.

Cheers,

Matt Hanneman and Lisa Priestley

PS: Did we mention Steaks and Saw-whets in September 24-25 this year, see you there.



Short-eared Owl a first at BBO!!! (photo Lisa Priestley)