

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update August 15-21, 2006

The leaves are starting to turn yellow in places, and while it is a bit tedious to pull the falling leaves out of the mist nets, it's great to see all the fall migrants and breathe the fresh fall air. The number of birds captured in the mist nets continues to increase. The nets were hit with a couple of especially busy banding days this week- catching more than double the number of birds caught on any previous day of netting this year. Fall migration is well under way!



Western Tanager



The tiny American Redstart

Tennessee Warblers and American Redstarts are the most common birds migrating through the area now, but several other species are showing up as well. New species for this year include the Cape May Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush. We were excited to catch a gorgeous Western Tanager as well- this is just the fourth time this species has been caught at the BBO in the last seven years. Pine Siskins, Purple Finches, and a Blue Jay have been checking out the birdfeeder, though unfortunately not the nets (yet).

Recently it seems there are more woodpeckers in the Natural Area, calling from all directions and foraging on trees near the lab. Yellow-shafted Flickers have even been in the yard checking out the feeder. And while Downy Woodpeckers have been a fairly reliable sight throughout the summer, only recently did we hear the higher pitched "peek" of the Hairy Woodpecker. Soon after he was caught and banded. The Hairy Woodpecker is much bigger than the typical birds we handle, with a wingspan of 15 inches. What an incredible bird!



Hairy Woodpecker

We spent an afternoon this week in search of migrating shorebirds. The shorebirds managed to evade us, but the numerous hawks made the trip worthwhile. Over 30 hawks, 5 falcons and plenty of Eastern Kingbirds were seen on the grid roads near the Beaverhill Natural Area. The birds of prey were busy- a Red-tailed Hawk, a Swainson's Hawk, and an American Kestrel were all seen hunting and perching to eat their catch (and in the case of the Swainson's Hawk, feeding its young who are *still* begging for food- these are the young birds we banded a few weeks ago). Closer to home, a Broad-winged Hawk perched on top of the lab one morning, giving us a fantastic look at this less-common raptor.

Our weekly butterfly survey turned up the first Purplish Copper of the year, and the first fall Mourning Cloak butterfly made its appearance on the 16th. This butterfly overwinters as an adult, surviving our cold climate to emerge in the spring with worn out, faded and tattered wings. Their offspring are emerging now and are very fresh and colorful.

Thanks to Caroline and Larry Brooks who spent a busy morning at the lab helping scribe data and check nets. Visitors are always welcome, and there are definitely some cool birds around. Come on out!

-*Allicia and Katie*

Table 1: Results from Fall Migration Monitoring August 15-21, 2006.

Species	Banded	Recapture	Foreign	Other	Total
Alder Flycatcher	3	0	0	0	3
American Redstart	22	0	0	1	23
Baltimore Oriole	1	0	0	0	1
Black-and-White Warbler	1	0	0	1	2
Black-capped Chickadee	7	10	0	0	17
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Canada Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Cape May Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Clay-coloured Sparrow	6	0	0	1	7
Eastern Phoebe	1	0	0	0	1
Hairy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	1
House Wren	1	1	0	0	2
Least Flycatcher	12	8	0	0	20
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	0	0	0	1
Magnolia Warbler	6	0	0	0	6
Mourning Warbler	0	0	0	1	1
Myrtle Warbler	14	0	0	0	14
Northern Waterthrush	2	0	0	1	3
Ovenbird	8	0	0	1	9
Philadelphia Vireo	1	0	0	0	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	0	0	0	2
Red-eyed Vireo	7	0	0	0	7
Slate-coloured Junco	1	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	1	0	0	0	1
Swainson's Thrush	2	0	0	0	2
Tennessee Warbler	22	0	0	0	22
Traill's Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	1
Warbling Vireo	6	1	0	0	7
Western Tanager	1	0	0	0	1
Wilson's Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	16	2	0	2	20
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	151	22	0	8	181



Blackpoll Warbler in its less dramatic fall plumage