

BEAVERHILL BIRD OBSERVATORY UPDATE JUNE 5-11, 2007

LOCALLY BREEDING SPECIES have dominated our net captures this week, indicating that most migrating birds have already passed through on the way to their breeding grounds further north. This is normal for this time of year, and official Spring Migration Monitoring ended, fittingly, on June 10.

The average capture rate of Spring Migration Monitoring (22.84 birds/100 net hours) increased for the first time since 1998, which is very encouraging (Figure 1). During mist-netting (not including nest side banding) between May 1 and June 10, we banded 320 birds from 43 different species and caught an additional 93 unbanded or already banded birds. The top five species caught this spring were (numbers): Clay-coloured Sparrow (69), Least Flycatcher (67), Myrtle Warbler (34), Yellow Warbler (22) and Swainson's Thrush (18).

The BBO takes care of a trail of bird boxes on Rowan's Route, nearby grid roads and along Francis Point. This is a small portion of the "Bluebird trail" Elson Olorenshaw began in 1995, though Tree Swallows, Mountain Bluebirds and House Wrens have all nested in these boxes in the past. Since banding was slow this week, we got our bird "fix" from banding Mountain Bluebird nestlings and finding young Tree Swallows (too small to band... yet) in Elson's boxes.



L-R: Male and female Mountain Bluebird nestlings



Least Flycatcher- 2nd most common spring capture

on standardized routes). This means we aren't always working around the lab, so if you are planning to visit us between now and August 1, give us a call at the lab (819-9927) to find out where we'll be.



Clay-coloured Sparrow- most common capture this spring



A bluebird shows off the Natural Area

Nestlings have enormous gapes that allow them to open their still-soft beaks extra wide to receive food, and their parents caught and delivered some fat grubs while we sat nearby. The bluebird nestlings are growing out their flight feathers (wings and tail), and we saw two distinct shades of blue. The brighter blue birds will be males while the paler, teal-coloured feathers will belong to females. We'll be doing more nest searching and nest-side as well as nest box banding over the summer, and you are welcome to join us for an afternoon!

Our daily schedule out here now changes as we begin collecting data for "MAPS". Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship is a North American-wide program that focuses on locally breeding bird species. Comparing data such as the number of adult birds caught at the beginning of MAPS to the total number of birds (adults and fledged nestlings) caught in late July provides insight into bird populations. MAPS began in 1989 and the BBO has been part of this program since its pilot year. This program is based on 10 day periods, during which we operate 10 mist nets at 3 different locations in the Natural Area (BLAB, PARK, and WEIR stations) and conduct point counts (recording all the birds we see or hear

-Alicia and Anna

Table 1: Results from Spring Migration Monitoring June 5- 10, 2007.

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Alder Flycatcher	2	0	0	0	0	2
American Robin	2	0	0	0	0	2
Clay-colored Sparrow	3	2	0	0	0	5
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
House Wren	0	2	0	0	0	2
Least Flycatcher	4	2	1	0	0	7
Song Sparrow	1	1	0	0	0	2
Warbling Vireo	2	0	0	0	0	2
Yellow Warbler	0	2	0	0	0	2
Total	15	9	1	0	0	25

Net Hours: 191.0 NH

Capture Rate: 13.09 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).

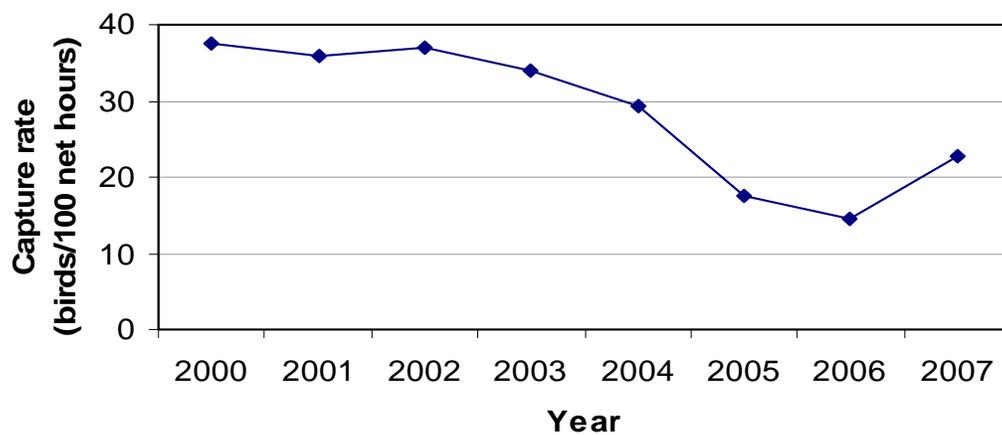


Figure 1. Comparison of spring capture rates (birds/ 100 NH) at the BBO from 2000 to 2007.



Female Mountain Bluebird



Bluebird nestling showing off his Einstein look (and big yellow gape)



Male Mountain Bluebird

Table 2: Results from Spring Migration Monitoring and nest side banding from May 1 to June 11, 2007.

Species	Banded	Recapture	Foreign	Other	Total
Alder Flycatcher	5	0	0	0	5
American Goldfinch	4	0	0	0	4
American Redstart	5	0	0	0	5
American Robin	9	2	0	2	13
Baltimore Oriole	1	2	0	0	3
Black-and-White Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	5	7	0	2	14
Brown-headed Cowbird	12	6	0	2	20
Blue-headed Vireo	1	0	0	0	1
Blue Jay	1	0	0	0	1
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Brown Creeper	1	0	0	0	1
Canada Warbler	2	0	0	0	2
Clay-colored Sparrow	60	9	0	2	71
Chipping Sparrow	6	0	0	1	7
Common Yellowthroat	3	0	0	1	4
Gray Catbird	1	0	0	0	1
Hairy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	1
Hermit Thrush	5	1	0	1	7
House Wren	10	8	0	4	22
Least Flycatcher	57	10	0	2	69
Lincoln's Sparrow	6	0	0	1	7
Magnolia Warbler	2	0	0	0	2
Mountain Bluebird	13	1	0	0	14
Mourning Warbler	1	0	0	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	34	0	0	1	35
Orange-crowned Warbler	5	0	0	1	6
Ovenbird	4	0	0	0	4
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	0	0	0	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	0	0	0	6
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	0	0	0	1	1
Red-eyed Vireo	4	0	0	0	4
Savannah Sparrow	4	0	0	0	4
Slate-colored Junco	1	0	0	1	2
Song Sparrow	5	8	0	1	14
Swamp Sparrow	1	0	0	0	1
Swainson's Thrush	18	0	0	0	18
Tree Swallow	28	13	0	0	41
Traill's Flycatcher	3	1	0	0	4
Warbling Vireo	3	0	0	0	3
White-crowned Sparrow	2	0	0	0	2
White-throated Sparrow	10	0	0	0	10
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	0	0	0	2
Yellow Warbler	13	9	0	1	23
Total	358	77	0	24	459

Net Hours: 1812.85 NH (Spring Migration Monitoring only)

Capture Rate: 22.84 birds/ 100 NH (Spring Migration Monitoring only)

All Mountain Bluebirds and 25 Tree Swallows from nest side banding.