

## Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update September 1 to 14, 2008

You are now with someone new for the final five fall updates. Lisa Priestley here again, haven't heard from me since last fall. As executive director and mostly responsible for coordination of our various programs, this is now my time to be in the field. A welcome time in the evening of quiet and peace, as my two young children Sam (2½) and Kate (15 mths) are running circles all day long. I am working with Robin on songbirds on occasion but am mostly responsible for the Saw-whet Owl migration monitoring. Robin will be continuing work on the songbirds until Oct. 9, and I will at the lab through mid-Nov. (brrrr I can feel the cold creeping in).

So now that we have been formally introduced let's get into what has been happening at the lab for the past two weeks. Our early September was a trial (sporadic banding) because our fall bander did not have a permit yet, but thanks to the quick turn around time at the banding office Robin received her permit on September 11 and was able to run nets on her own. Our net hours suffered a bit, but we had a wonderful diversity of birds captured and the number of captures increased a lot. We almost caught more birds in one day than we did all of the last week of August.

Species	Banded	Repeat <sup>1</sup>	Return <sup>2</sup>	Foreign <sup>3</sup>	Other <sup>4</sup>	Total
American Redstart	1	0	0	0	0	1
American Robin	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-billed Magpie	1	0	0	0	0	1
Bay-breasted Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	9	14	1	0	1	25
Blue-headed Vireo	1	0	0	0	0	1
Blackpoll Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Clay-colored Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
House Wren	1	0	0	0	0	1
Least Flycatcher	6	0	0	0	0	6
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	0	0	0	0	3
Magnolia Warbler	2	0	0	0	1	3
Myrtle Warbler	65	0	0	0	0	65
Orange-crowned Warbler	11	0	0	0	1	12
Ovenbird	4	0	0	0	0	4
Pileated Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	0	0	0	0	7
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	0	0	0	0	1
Slate-colored Junco	4	0	0	0	0	4
Song Sparrow	1	1	0	0	0	2
Swainson's Thrush	5	0	0	0	0	5
Tennessee Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown Thrush species	0	0	0	0	1	1
Varied Thrush	1	0	0	0	0	1
Warbling Vireo	2	0	0	0	0	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wilson's Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-throated Sparrow	2	0	0	0	0	2
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>161</b>

*Net Hours:*            501.1  
*Capture Rate:*        32.1

<sup>1</sup> Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO.  
<sup>2</sup> Banded at the BBO > 90 days prior to recapture (e.g. in a previous year).  
<sup>3</sup> Banded at a location other than the BBO.  
<sup>4</sup> Caught in a mist-net but not banded (e.g. escaped net).

The highlight of this banding round was definitely the Pileated Woodpecker!! This species has only been observed twice over the last five years in the fall. This year, one decided to visit our nets. Quite a catch as this is the first one ever banded for Beaverhill Bird Observatory. I was at the lab waiting for Robin to return from the front nets when I heard the screaming call, at first thinking it was an Accipiter. We were definitely happy about that capture. Other rare species included a Varied Thrush and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. A lot of Myrtle Warblers moving through now, and we are catching quite a few Red-breasted Nuthatches this year. It was interesting banding with both my kids on a few mornings, with Kate on my back and Sam walking alongside. Whatever it takes to collect the data.



Saw-whets began on September 9. No owls captured the first night, but the next night our first owl appeared. With four nights of banding I captured two owls. Always slow at the beginning, but it will pick up as we go. Other observations during night banding were Northern Flying Squirrels, Sandhill Cranes, White-fronted Geese, skunk, Great Horned Owl hooting, and two Long-eared Owls flushed. I'm hoping to catch a Long-eared, we'll see.

The foxtail barley seeds have invaded the Natural Area in amazing quantities. The last time we had such an invasion was in fall 2005. It is amazing to drive through a pile taller than the top of my full size pick-up truck. Some drifts are more than 7 feet tall. We can only hope the Short-eared Owls will follow as they did in winter 2005/06 when more than more than 200 were observed. What an amazing sight.

I think I will leave it there. I hope this update encourages you to visit the bird observatory for either songbirds or owl or both. We have our annual Steaks and Saw-whets event coming up first weekend in October. Better register soon as Saturday is almost full and Friday is filling fast. This fun filled evening starts with a barbeque with all the fixings and finishes with netting of saw-whet owls.



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