

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update August 29 – September 11, 2009



Ashley with a Red-breasted Nuthatch

Well with this round I had to say goodbye to Ashley as she headed back to school for her second year at NAIT. Best of luck with the year ahead and hope you'll be able to make it out to BBO during the fall once in a while Ashley! Despite the fact that I was expecting to get tons of birds as soon as Ashley was gone (Murphey's Law), the numbers have remained very low, with only a total of 103 birds caught during this two week time period. The species diversity however, has been pretty awesome with 31 different species caught.

New species for this round captured on their way south included Mourning, Orange-crowned, Western Palm, and Blackpoll Warblers, Willow, and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, as well as Vesper Sparrow, Broad-winged Hawk, Swainson's Thrush, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. What!? Broad-winged Hawk? Yes that's right, a juvenile has been hanging around the lab for a few days now, and while I got a good look a few times I was really hoping he would make it into one of my raptor traps. I didn't even consider that it could get caught in one of the mist-nets, but sure enough I found him upside down in Net 4 on one early morning check. Now that was a very cool bird to catch, and a rare one to even get to see out here! He has been spotted since, sporting his shiny band.

The drop-lid raptor traps have now been up and running daily, and in total 345.5 trap hours were accumulated in this round. Unfortunately all that trapping effort has not yet translated into captured raptors! The very first night the traps were set there was certainly some interest as I walked past Trap #1 to check it before bed. I set this trap in the same location Ashley had her Long-eared close encounter, and sure enough as I shone my headlamp over two eyes looked back at me! The Long-eared stared quizzically at me from the edge of the trap, and then went back to studying just how to get at the mouse. Unfortunately the trap was still open in the morning, so he wasn't willing to take the plunge inside. I'm still hoping to get a few more traps set out in the coming weeks to increase the chance of catching any one of those big birds with sharp talons and a hooked beak.



One of four drop-lid raptor traps

There is certainly some mass fall movement by some of the bigger birds now, Greater White-fronted Geese are heard daily flying south over the natural area. Sandhill Cranes have also been spotted in smaller groups, but heading invariably south. As usual the trees out here are turning yellow much sooner than those in Edmonton. With fall in full swing, that means it is time for Saw-whet owl monitoring to start! Two evenings of running the Saw-whet nets in this round haven't turned up any individuals yet, but they are on their way. Don't forget about Steaks and Saw-whets happening October 3rd and 4th this year, it is always a great event!

Happy to have visitors this round; Tamara Hauglum and her puppies Koda and Rio, Lisa with Sam and Kate (twice!), Isaac Calon, two new U of A professors from Idaho, as well as Lisa and Todd Mahon, and Ashley Thorsen.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Lincoln's Sparrow

Red-breasted Nuthatches

Table 1. Results from Fall Migration Monitoring, August 21 - 28, 2009.

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Alder Flycatcher	3	0	0	0	0	3
American Redstart	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	5	7	0	0	0	12
Blackpoll Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Broad-winged Hawk	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clay-coloured Sparrow	1	1	0	0	0	2
Cape May Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	1
House Wren	3	0	0	0	0	3
Least Flycatcher	6	0	0	0	0	6
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Magnolia Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Mourning Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	17	1	0	0	0	18
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ovenbird	9	0	0	0	0	9
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	0	0	0	0	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	0	0	0	1	1
Slate-coloured Junco	1	0	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	2	0	0	0	1	3
Swainson's Thrush	2	0	0	0	0	2
Tennessee Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
Traill's Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vesper Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	1
Willow Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wilson's Warbler	6	0	0	0	0	6
Western Palm Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	2
White-throated Sparrow	2	0	0	0	1	3
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1	0	0	0	0	1
Yellow Warbler	8	1	0	0	1	10
Total	89	10	0	0	4	103

Net Hours: 789.00 NH
 Capture Rate: 13.05 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).