

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update April 27 – May 7, 2024



This Yellow-rumped Warbler is a hybrid between two subspecies: note that the throat is half yellow, half white!

We're back! The BBO staff returned to the field station on April 26 to prepare for the Snow Goose Festival. The festival ran from April 27-28, and featured tons of fun events as well as tours out to the BBO station to watch bird banding! During these banding demonstrations, we captured over 40 Myrtle Warblers in a single net check, as well as 4 Myrtle Warbler x Audubon's Warbler intergrades. The Audubon's Warbler is a subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler found in the mountains, so seeing these intergrades is a very unusual occurrence!

Other events at the Snow Goose Festival included tour busses out of the Tofield arena to try and find Snow Geese and other migratory birds. Many species seemed to be arriving earlier than usual, which made for excellent birding. When the observation from all the tour busses and birders were tallied, over 110 species were seen over the course of the weekend! A huge thank you to all the tour guides and other volunteers who made the festival possible!

Our spring migration monitoring officially began the day after the festival on April 29, and we quickly caught a snappy-looking White-crowned Sparrow as our first bird of the season. Shortly after, we were also lucky enough to catch a Sharp-shinned Hawk! We don't catch many of these birds, and we usually only catch them in the fall, so this was a great highlight for the first day! Some early warblers are already moving through the natural area, including an extremely early pair of Black-throated Green Warblers that were seen on May 1.



This dapper White-crowned Sparrow was our first capture of spring migration!

Between bouts of terrible weather, we also welcomed our new field staff to the BBO! Ethan Denton will be returning from last year's staff, and we would like to welcome Emelie Dykstra and Xavier Quantz to the team this year! We're looking forward to a great summer of bird nerding and research with all of you!



This Sharp-shinned Hawk was quite a surprise, but a welcome one!

Table 1. Standard Migration Monitoring Banding Totals

| Species | Banded | Repeat ¹ | Return ² | Foreign ³ | Other ⁴ | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Black-capped Chickadee | | 2 | 1 | | | 3 |
| Orange-crowned Warbler | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| Myrtle Warbler | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| White-crowned Sparrow | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| American Robin | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 |
| Slate-coloured Junco | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Lincoln's Sparrow | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| TOTALS | 13 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 18 |

276.5 net-hours

6.5 captures/100 net-hours

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).

Table 2. Experimental Nets Banding Totals

| Species | Banded | Repeat ¹ | Return ² | Foreign ³ | Other ⁴ | Total |
|------------------------|----------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Black-capped Chickadee | | 2 | 2 | | | 4 |
| TOTALS | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5 |

20.5 net-hours

1 Banded recently (within 90 days) at the BBO

24.4 captures/100 net-hours

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).