

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Education Report Summary 2017-2018

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This winter the BBO outreach education program began in September when schools were contacted for bookings and the previous talks were reviewed and revised. The presentations operated from October 3rd 2017 until May 31st 2018. A total of 178 presentations were given to audiences ranging from pre-kindergarten up to seniors (Table 1). The majority (80%) of the presentations were to school classes attended by approximately 6920 students at 71 different schools. Most of the school presentations were to younger classes rather than to older classes (Figure 1). The education program was concentrated in Edmonton and surrounding area but also reached across Alberta to Andrew, Calgary, Camrose, Cochrane, Drayton Valley, Fort Saskatchewan, Hinton, and Millet.

The other presentations were to youth and adult groups attended by about 1200 people (Table 2). The majority of these presentations were to girl guides and boy scouts. Most were in the evenings. In addition to presentations, BBO staff and volunteers displayed the club information and an owl at 13 events including high school career fairs, retail store events and personal parties.

Figure 1. The number of presentations to groups of school classes and organizations.

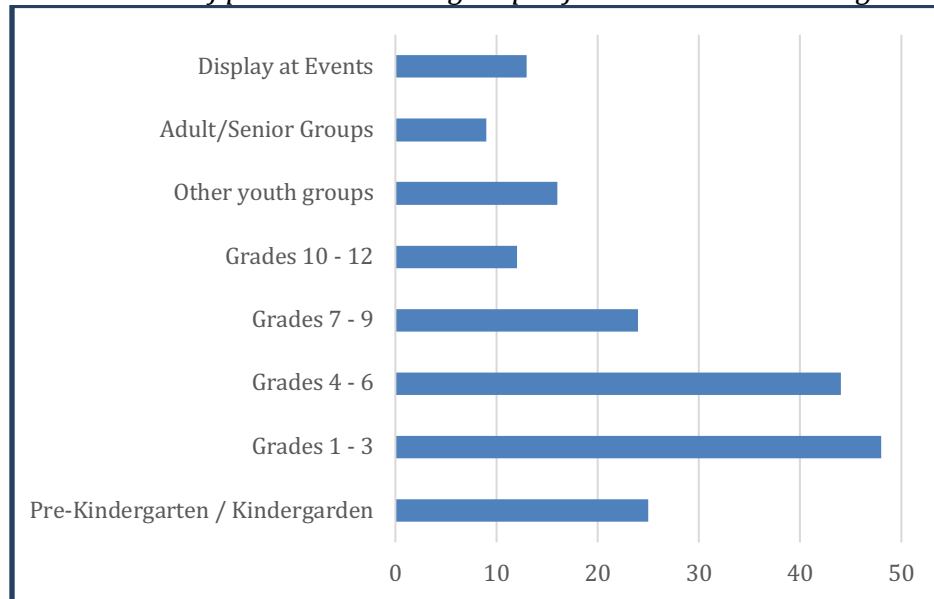


Table 1. Details of the number of presentations by school grades and groups.

| Number of Presentations | Grade Level | Number of Presentations | Girl Guides/Boy Scouts Groups |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 25 | Pre-K/Kindergarten | 4 | Brownies |
| 18 | Grade 1 | 3 | Girl Guides |
| 16 | Grade 2 | 1 | Pathfinders |
| 14 | Grade 3 | 5 | Scouts |
| 15 | Grade 4 | | |
| 19 | Grade 5 | Number of Presentations | Other Locations |
| 10 | Grade 6 | 3 | Seniors Homes |
| 12 | Grade 7 | 3 | Adults with Disabilities |
| 6 | Grade 8 | 2 | Nature Clubs |
| 6 | Grade 9 | 1 | Library |
| 3 | Grade 10 | 1 | Students with Special Needs |
| 9 | Grade 11 | 1 | Big Brothers Big Sisters Group |
| 0 | Grade 12 | 1 | Home school group |

Table 2. Types and number of other events attended.

| Number of Events Attended | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| | 1 | Book Launch | 1 | Parent/Teacher Night |
| | 4 | Wildbird General/ Unlimited stores | 1 | Dark Skies Telus World Of Science |
| | 1 | Birthday Party | 5 | High School Science Career Fairs |

All school presentations were targeted at topics from the Alberta School Curriculum's Program of Studies for each school grade (<https://education.alberta.ca/>). The BBO presentations focused on bird conservation and related environmental issues. The topic of climate change was incorporated into all pre-existing presentations this winter. As well, 6 new presentations on climate change were created for junior high and high school students. These presentations were offered to schools to help connect students with current environmental issues surrounding birds, their conservation and climate change.

Using the website SurveyMonkey.com, the BBO education program conducted follow up feedback surveys to monitor the quality of presentations and audiences opinions of the program. The response from audiences were phenomenal!

54 online questionnaires were completed; 47 were from school teachers, 3 from senior homes, 1 from a children's day home and 1 from a children's after

school group. The majority of responses were very complementary. Across the six categories of assessment, 70-96% of responses found the program quality to be excellent (Table 3)!

Table 3. When asked: “How would you rate the following program components?”

| | POOR | BELOW EXPECTATIONS | AVERAGE | GOOD | EXCELLENT | N/A | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| Topic | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 3.77% 2 | 96.23% 51 | 0.00% 0 | 53 | 4.96 |
| Quality of Powerpoint component | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 3.70% 2 | 11.11% 6 | 79.63% 43 | 5.56% 3 | 54 | 4.80 |
| Pricing | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 5.56% 3 | 20.37% 11 | 72.22% 39 | 1.85% 1 | 54 | 4.68 |
| Presenter | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 3.85% 2 | 5.77% 3 | 90.38% 47 | 0.00% 0 | 52 | 4.87 |
| Additional activities or crafts (if applicable) | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 5.66% 3 | 22.64% 12 | 39.62% 21 | 32.08% 17 | 53 | 4.50 |
| Interactions with the educational owl (if applicable) | 0.00% 0 | 3.70% 2 | 0.00% 0 | 7.41% 4 | 88.89% 48 | 0.00% 0 | 54 | 4.81 |

Most responses (92%) agreed that the impacts of climate change on birds were introduced in an age appropriate manner and 78% of responses believed the viewer’s understanding of climate change increased. Which is understandable when considering BBO educators were trying to present the topic of climate change to students as young as Grades 1 and 2.

98% of responses said they would recommend the BBO education program to other teachers and would participate in the educational program again! It should be noted that the one school that say they “might” participate and recommend the program to others, is a school that had a peregrine falcon attend their talk instead of an owl and unfortunately, the falcon was not a hands-on bird for students to pet.

Some highlight comments included in this year’s online responses are as follows;

“Thank you for offering this worthwhile program. Our urban children do not get out of doors in the same way I believe we used to.” – Velma E Baker School

“Love the work that BBO does. The quality of research and their top-notch educational outreach programs is superb.” - EPSB

“Excellent presentation! Students really enjoyed the information as well as the opportunity to interact with an owl. Would definitely have the BBO return to my school!” – Kim Hung School

"I would highly recommend this presentation to other educators!"
– Namao School

Overall, the 2017/2018 Beaverhill Bird Observatory Education Program was a great success! The program's outreach has increased significantly this past winter with presenters now travelling outside of Edmonton to give programming and the number of students reached continues to grow. Hopefully this trend will continue in the 2018/2019-winter year!

This BBO program was supported by Community Environment Action Grant from the Alberta Climate Change Office for which we are thankful. BBO thanks Meghan Jacklin and Sara Pearce Meijerink who gave the vast majority of presentations. We also thank Kevin Methuen, Amelie Roberto-Charron, Helen Trefry, Steve Anderson and Geoff Holroyd who attended one or more presentations. Gord Court kindly loaned Colonel, a Barred Owl for some presentations. We also thank Bill and Pam who volunteered to transport the owl between its home and Sherwood Park most days it was needed. And finally a huge thank you to Phil and Helen Trefry who provide stalls in a barn for our two imprint Saw-whet Owl, Ray and Ricky.

Figure 2. Sara and Ray discussing birds and climate change to students.

