

Beaverhill Bird Observatory Education Report Summary 2018-2019

By: Stephanie Thunberg, Sara Pearce Meijerink, Emily Grose, Karambir Singh and Geoff Holroyd

July 6, 2019

This winter the BBO outreach education program began in September when schools were contacted for bookings. The presentations operated from September 22nd, 2018 until June 20th, 2019. A total of 245 presentations were given to audiences ranging from preschool to seniors. The majority (85.71%) of presentations were to school classrooms reaching approximately 5734 students and 434 adults from 88 different schools. It is important to note that some schools were visited more than once within the 2018/2019 program. Similar to last year, most of the presentations were delivered to younger grades (Figure 1). The education program was concentrated within Edmonton and the greater Edmonton area. However, this year the geographical outreach of the education program expanded to Stettler, Barrhead, Stony Plain, Morinville, Mulhurst, Drayton Valley, Camrose, Wetaskiwin, St. Albert, Ardrossan, Cochrane and Calgary.

Other presentations were given to approximately 13,051 people at 41 adult and youth group organizations. Together seniors' homes, adult presentations and youth groups, including Scouts, Brownies and Beavers covered the majority of the non-school presentations (Table 1), reaching approximately 786 people from 35 presentations. In addition to presentations BBO staff and volunteers attended 14 events reaching approximately 12,237 people. The Oil Kings Hooky Hockey event had the largest impact, reaching over 10,000 people. At that event BBO staffed its display and our head biologist was featured on the Videotron for two – 5 minute presentations to all the hockey fans. This year 88 people were reached through 5 birthday parties attended by BBO staff in Calgary and the Greater Edmonton Area. Additional people were reached during events, such as; science fairs, retail store events, private parties, festivals and hockey games. During events, staff manned an educational booth complete with BBO program information and a live owl.

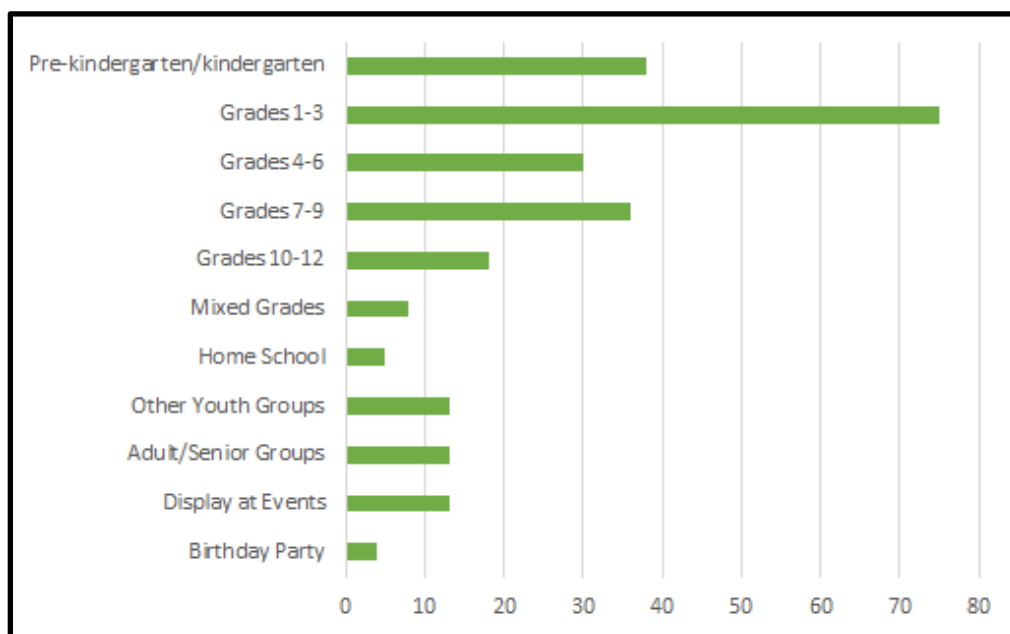


Figure 1. The number of presentations to groups of school classes and organizations.

Table 1. Details of the number of presentations by school grades and groups given by BBO Education Staff

Number of Presentations	Grade Level	Number of Presentations	Girl Guides/Boy Scouts Groups
38	Pre-K/Kindergarten	7	Brownies
21	Grade 1	3	Girl Guides
26	Grade 2	0	Pathfinders
27	Grade 3	3	Scouts
9	Grade 4		
10	Grade 5	Number of Presentations	Other Locations
11	Grade 6	7	Senior Homes
22	Grade 7	4	Adults with Disabilities
11	Grade 8	1	AMA
3	Grade 9	2	Library
3	Grade 10	1	City of Edmonton (Westwood office)
13	Grade 11	2	Universities (Grant MacEwan & U of A Augustana Campus)
2	Grade 12	5	Homeschool groups
9	*Mixed Grades		

* A single presentation with students from more than one grade.

Table 2. Details of the type and number of other events attended by BBO Education Staff.

Number of Events Attended			
	1	Oil Kings Hockey Game	1
	2	Wildbird General/ Unlimited stores	1
	5	Birthday Party	1
	1	Stettler Explore More	1
	1	MacEwan University	1
	1	Camrose Purple Martin Festival	1
		Evangel Assembly	
		WILDNorth Christmas Event	
		Nature Kids Family Event	
		BLESS Event - Lois Hole	
		High School Science Fair	
		Don't Hibernate Fair	

All school presentations were targeted at topics from the Alberta School Curriculum's Program of Studies for each school grade (<https://education.alberta.ca/>). BBO's presentations focused on bird conservation, climate change and related environmental issues. Two new presentations, "Falcons of Alberta" and "How Birds Survive Winter" were developed targeting Grades 1-4, Scouts and Brownie groups.

Early 2019, BBO staff attended 2 teachers' conventions, complete with a booth and owl in efforts to promote the BBO's educational programs. With great success, the education program gained an increase number of spring bookings never seen before. Owing to increased promotion, the education program should continue to grow!

This year Sara Pearce Meijerink attended the Climate Change Recharge Conference in Canmore providing additional information and insight on how to further refine BBO's educational presentations. In the future, BBO's presentations will be more story based, with a greater emphasis on solutions and individual empowerment to genuinely connect with students and our other audience members.

The BBO education program continued using the website surveymonkey.com to monitor presentation quality and to collect audience opinions from follow-up feedback surveys. The responses from audiences continued to be outstanding. This year 75 questionnaires were completed; 63 were from school teachers, 8 from children's after-school groups, 2 from senior homes, and 2 from Girl Guides of Canada. The vast majority of feedback was positive across all 6 categories of assessment, with exception to additional activities or crafts (if applicable). A grand total of 70-96% of respondents reported the program to be excellent (Table 3)! The relatively lower rating for additional activities or crafts may be from teachers selecting lower scores rather than N/A if their classroom did not receive any activity sheets due to time constraints. Activities and crafts may receive additional refinement for the 2019/2020 education program especially for younger aged

children when environmentally geared activities interest the students more than listening to a presentation.

Table 3. When asked: “How would you rate the following program components?”, participants ranked each category for their received education program including: ‘Topic’, ‘Quality of PowerPoint component’, ‘Pricing’, ‘Presenter’, ‘Additional activities and crafts (if applicable)’, and ‘Interactions with the educational owl (if applicable)’ using a five point scale. A rank of ‘Poor’ earns 1 point, Below Expectations earns 2 points, Average earns 3 points, Good earns 4 points, and Excellent earns the maximum 5 points for the corresponding category.

	Weighted Average	Raw Total of Respondents	N/A	Poor	Below Expectations	Average	Good	Excellent
Topic	4.95	74	0	0	0	0	4 5%	95%
Quality of PowerPoint component	4.69	75	0	0	1%	4%	19%	76%
Pricing	4.47	74	5%	0	0	1%	24%	74%
Presenter	4.96	74	0	0	0	0	4%	96%
Additional activities and crafts (if applicable)	3.27	73	29%	0	0	4%	32%	63%
Interactions with the educational owl (if applicable)	4.92	74	0	0	0	0	8%	92%

The majority of respondents (95%) believed the impacts of climate change on birds was introduced in an age appropriate manner and 87% of respondents thought the presentations increased the viewers’ understanding of climate change on birds and our environment.

An astounding 99% of teachers would recommend BBO’s education program to other teachers and 96% of respondents would participate in the education program again! Only 1 teacher would ‘maybe’ recommend the program to other teachers, and only 3 respondents would ‘maybe’ participate in the educational program again. We are very pleased with these high scores from teachers.

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

"Emily was amazing and so kind with the students. She answered all of their questions and gave them lots of time with Rikki!!"

- Belvedere School

"This was an amazing experience and outstanding value. Sara and Rickie were awesome!"

- Private Home Booking

"Kam was very personable with the kids and his energy and enthusiasm were appreciated. He was very knowledgeable and could answer our questions. The kids LOVED learning about the owls of Alberta and their life cycle but truly having a live owl in the classroom was just so meaningful! Our principal, Darren Sweeney, loves owls and made a special trip down to our room to take a peek!"

- Velma E Baker School

"Stephanie is a natural speaker and teacher. She engages and interacts with the students flawlessly. Her in depth knowledge and passion for the topics is infectious. She and Ricky were an absolute pleasure. Would highly recommend Stephanie and Ricky to my colleagues."

- A.E. Cross School

The 2018/2019 Beaverhill Bird Observatory Educational Program experienced continual growth and success. Not only is the program expanding its geographical range across the province, but is gaining notoriety from small private birthday parties, to large organizations such as the Edmonton Oil Kings! Hopefully this upward trend will carry on throughout the 2019/2020 program too!

This BBO program was supported by Community Environment Action Grant from the Alberta Climate Change Office and TD Friends of the Environment Fund, for which we are thankful. BBO thanks Emily Grose and Sara Pearce Meijerink who gave the vast majority of presentations, and Karambir Singh and Stephanie Thunberg who delivered presentations from late April to June. We also thank Kevin Methuen, Helen Trefry, Steve Anderson, Meghan Jacklin, Alyssa Bohart and Geoff Holroyd who attended one or more presentations. Thank you to Gord Court, Alberta Environment and Parks, who kindly loaned us Colonel, a Barred Owl and Vinnie, the Peregrine Falcon for some presentations. We also thank Bill and Pam who volunteered to transport the owl between its home and Edmonton most days it was needed. Finally, a huge thank you to Phil and Helen Trefry who provide stalls in a barn for our two imprint Saw-whet Owls, Ray and Rickie, and raised Moxie, the imprint Peregrine Falcon.

This report was written in memoriam of Moxie the Peregrine Falcon and Colonel Slade the Barred Owl, both who passed away during the 2018/2019 Education year. The BBO thanks both Moxie and Colonel Slade for their service in the BBO Education Program and will remain in our hearts. They will both be missed.



Figure 2. Colonel Slade at the Wild Bird General Store discussing bird conservation to the public.



Figure 3. Helen Trefry and Moxie talking to the public about Beaverhill Bird Observatory at Hastings Lake Hall