

Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update September 20-26, 2026

What an exciting week! Songbird banding saw a huge rush of birds this week, and we finally managed our first 100+ bird days on September 21st and 23rd! Most of our captures this week were Myrtle Warblers, but other exciting captures like our first Oregon Junco and Hermit Thrush of the year added some variety to the mix. Another interesting capture was one of our Myrtle Warblers – which had a form of leucism (pigment deficiency)! This bird had white toes and outer flight feathers, but otherwise looked like a normal individual. Later in the week a string of windy and cold mornings limited our banding hours, so only time will tell whether the increased pace will continue.



A leucistic Myrtle Warbler – note the white outer wing feathers and white toes!

This week we also hosted our annual Supper and Saw-whets event! On Friday and Saturday we hosted 50 visitors each night for a delicious home-cooked dinner in the woods. There was live music courtesy of harpist Mikayla Bortscher, face



A Long-eared Owl. These birds are larger than Saw-whets and are named for the distinctive tufts (or "ears") on their head.

painting courtesy of staff member Emelie, kids crafts courtesy of staff member Willow, and the chance to meet education owls Nina and Tansi! While the weather conditions weren't ideal for the evening's owl banding, we caught at least 1 owl both nights! Thank you so much to everyone who came out, Supper and Saw-whets is always a joy to host!

Owl banding was steady throughout the week with 18 Saw-whet Owls caught in total, as well as our first Long-eared Owl of the season! We usually catch around 10 Long-eared Owls each season at the BBO, but this year seems off to a slow start. With the moon getting full, we hope more Long-eared Owls will be

Thank you to our volunteers who made this busy week possible: Geoff, Helen, Adam, Stefanie, Carmen, Camille, Richard, JP, Gabby, Kelsey, Sarah, Emilie, Irene, Erica, Elyse, Ellen, Bannor, and Quinn. We couldn't do it without you!

Table 1. Migration Monitoring Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Bay-breasted Warbler	1					1
Black-capped Chickadee		8	1			9
Common Yellowthroat	2					2
Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow	4				1	5
Hermit Thrush	1					1
Lincoln's Sparrow	4					4
Myrtle Warbler	246	6			3	255
Northern House Wren	1					1
Orange-crowned Warbler	22	1				23
Oregon Junco	1					1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1					1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3					3
Slate-colored Junco	11	1				12
Swainson's Thrush	1					1
Swamp Sparrow	1					1
Unspecified Yellow-rumped Warbler	2					2
Varied Thrush					1	1
Western Palm Warbler	2					2
White-throated Sparrow	10					10
Wilson's Warbler	1					1
TOTALS	314	16	1	0	5	336

441.5 net-hours

76.1 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 1. Owl Monitoring Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat ¹	Return ²	Foreign ³	Other ⁴	Total
Long-eared Owl	1	0	0	0	0	1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	18	0	0	0	0	18
TOTALS	19	0	0	0	0	19

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).

NSWO Male 1 (12 captures)

40.5 playback hours

29.6 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Male 2 (5 captures)

40.5 playback hours

12.3 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Female (1 captures)

26 playback hours

3.8 captures/100 playback hours

Long-eared Owl (1 captures)

34.5 playback hours

2.9 captures/100 playback hours

Boreal Owl (0 captures)

6.5 playback hours

0 captures/100 playback hours