Beaverhill Bird Observatory

Weekly Update October 18-27, 2026



The snow may have shut us down for the season, but at least it looks stunning!

And just like that, it's over! This field season was full of twists and turns, and naturally it concluded with a somewhat hectic finale.

This week marked the end of our songbird migration banding. Captures have been a slow trickle for several weeks now, and this week's captures were entirely composed of our winter residents. A generous serving of American Tree Sparrows did keep our capture numbers relatively high, and we also got our first Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers of the season! The Hairy Woodpecker was our final bird captured this year, and she was an interesting one: she was originally banded at the BBO back in 2021, making her at least 5 years old!

Owl banding was slow but steady as that migration begins to trail off as well. We did catch 3 Long-eared Owls this week, which was extremely exciting! We had only caught 2 of these birds until this point in the season. The full moon likely helped increase our captures, as larger owls like Long-eareds are more active hunters on brighter nights!

Sadly, all good things must come to an end. Throughout the week snow lingered on the forecast, with the total snowfall predicted only increasing throughout the week.

Despite the chaos it was another fantastic season at the BBO, made all the more special by the amazing people who work there. While we're looking forward to transitioning to our BirdSmart Education program over the winter, we all can't wait to get started in the field again next spring! Until next year!



This female Hairy Woodpecker was the last bird captured on fall migration monitoring this year.



The BBO team after closing down the lab in record time! Always a pleasure working with these nerds!

Table 1. Migration Monitoring Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat[1]	Return[2]	Foreign[3]	Other[4]	Total
American Tree Sparrow	11					11
Downy Woodpecker	1					1
Hairy Woodpecker			1			1
White-breasted Nuthatch	1					1
TOTALS	**13**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**14**

103 net-hours

13.6 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. Owl Monitoring Banding Totals

Species	Banded	Repeat[1]	Return[2]	Foreign[3]	Other[4]	Total
Long-eared Owl	3	0	0	0	0	**3**
Northern Saw-whet Owl	30	0	1	0	0	**31**
TOTALS	**33**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**34**

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 Lure 1 (17 captures)
52 playback hours
32.7 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Male Lure 2 (10 captures)
52.5 playback hours
19.0 captures/100 playback hours

NSWO Female (1 captures)
53.5 playback hours
1.9 captures/100 playback hours

Long-eared Owl Lure (2 captures)
48 playback hours
4.2 captures/100 playback hours

Boreal Owl Lure (4 captures)
48 playback hours
8.3 captures/100 playback hours