

2007 Owl Survey Summary

Owl surveys were conducted at Cascade Valley and Goodyear Heights Metro Parks for the park inventories this year. Approximately one site per 100 acres of land was surveyed in each park for eastern screech owl (EASO), barred owl (BADO), great-horned owl (GHOW), saw-whet owl (NSOW), and long-eared owl (LEOW). Five sites were surveyed in Cascade Valley and four in Goodyear Heights. Each site was visited twice a month in January, February and March.

Table 1 lists the species recorded in Cascade Valley and Goodyear Heights during the 2007 owl calling surveys. Barred owls were documented in both parks. Eastern screech owls were recorded in Goodyear Heights. The screech owls were heard each month at Goodyear Heights in the Alder Pond area. Clearly the survey site fell within a male's territory, and there was likely a nesting female nearby.

A great-horned owl was documented in March at Cascade Valley in the Oxbow Area. Because nesting begins in December or early January, this species is likely nesting in the immediate area. There are many potential cavities in that locale.

Table 1. Results of the Owl Calling Surveys at Cascade Valley and Goodyear Heights Metro Parks, 2007.

| | EASO | BADO | GHOW | COYOTE |
|------------------|------|------|------|--------|
| Cascade Valley | | X | X | X |
| Goodyear Heights | X | X | | |

Coyotes were also recorded in Cascade Valley during the owl calling survey. They were recorded in January and March at the same site, the Schumacher Area. Coyotes are often documented during owl calling surveys. They are a nice addition to the program.

Eastern screech owls and barred owls were documented in Goodyear Heights Metro Parks. Both species are common in this region and were expected residents in the park.

The owl surveys will continue in park inventory location in 2008. Long-term monitoring for this program will be conducted in 2009.

Table 2. Long-term monitoring schedule

| Survey | 2008 LTM | 2009 LTM | 2010 LTM | 2011 LTM |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Owl | | X | | |
| Hawk | | | X | |
| Coyote | X | | | X |

Raptor Survey Protocol

- 1) Begin owl survey at approximately 8:00 pm, hawk survey after 9:00 am. Drive to site #1. Turn vehicle motor and lights off. Quietly proceed to calling location. Remain quiet and listen for unsolicited raptor calls for 2 minutes.
- 2) Broadcast vocalizations for first raptor species for 30 seconds, rotating speaker 90 degrees. Listen for 2 minute.
- 3) Repeat step 2 for each of the raptor species being surveyed. Be sure to rotate speaker 90 degrees during each vocalization broadcast.
- 4) After broadcasting the last raptor species, listen for 5 minutes.
- 5) If an auditory or visual response occurs, record the site location in the site column and each individual responding raptor by species in the species column of the data sheet. Use the following abbreviations:

GHO—Great Horned Owl
EASO—Eastern Screech Owl
BAOW—Barred Owl
UNK—Unknown
LOEO—Long eared Owl
SAWO – Saw whet Owl

CHA—Cooper’s Hawk
BWH—Broad-winged Hawk
RSH—Red-shouldered Hawk
RTH—Red-tailed Hawk
SSH – Sharp-shinned Hawk
AK - American Kestrel
TUVU – Turkey Vulture

- 6) For each individual responding raptor, record the compass direction in the direction column using one of the following headings: N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW.
- 7) For each individual responding raptor, record the distance as one of the following classes using letter A, B, C, or D.
 - (A) less than 0.5 mile, loud and close
 - (B) 0.5 mile to 1.0 mile, clear and moderately loud
 - (C) 1.0 – 1.5 mile, audible but difficult to distinguish.
 - (D) Visual response, raptor visually observed at calling station.
- 8) Record the date, crew members, temperature, wind direction and speed for each survey on the data sheet as indicated.

Equipment Checklist

Clipboard
Data Sheets
Pencil/Pens
Flashlight

Map of Calling Stations
Compass
Wildlife Caller
CD of Raptor Vocalizations

Radio
Raptor ID Books
Binoculars