

The air from its wings

By April McCrum

This was my second year doing the nocturnal owl survey in Restoule and it ended up being another successful one! There sure is a healthy population of Barred Owls in this region of Ontario, at least there was during the evening of April 21.

A total of seven Barred Owls were identified, with six of them landing in trees right beside the car. Connie Hergott and her son, Josh, came with me to do the survey and they proved to be great assistants.

I noticed the owls didn't do a lot of calling. They seemed more curious when the calls were played, and those that did call did so after the second and third taped calls.

There was one owl in particular that was quite intrigued when the calls were being played, or more probably wasn't pleased that another owl was in its territory! It first landed in a tree near our vehicle and then after every Barred Owl call played, it would swoop across the road to another nearby tree. It continued to do this and each time it tried to get closer to the CD player. At one point, the owl came so close to us that we had to duck so it wouldn't hit us. As we ducked, Connie and I could feel the air from its wings. It was pretty amazing being so close to such a large bird. Still, I was glad it didn't land on one of our heads!

I will be looking forward to the owl survey next year to know how many owls I will hear and see.

