

Motus Wildlife Tracking Program 2020 report

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The Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Motus) is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals. Motus is a program of Birds Canada in partnership with collaborating researchers and organizations. We are in the process of installing two towers at Calvert County Parks that will contribute data to the collaborative network. These data will also be used by CHESPAX to create a lesson for students to learn about migration while analyzing the data collected by these towers. In the future we hope to be deploying our own tags on Barn Owls and American Kestrels to better understand their movements and improve our conservation efforts of these species.

SKILLS NEEDED

- Need their own reliable transportation

VOLUNTEER DUTIES

At time this program is still being developed and there were no volunteer opportunities in 2020. We are hoping to create some opportunities for volunteers in the future. These may include:

- Assist with collecting/downloading data from tower sites
- Analyzing and organizing the data that is collected

REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

These will be adjusted as opportunities are created

- Travel in the field to tower sites
- Keeping nest sites or known locations of sensitive species confidential

TRAININGS

- Learn and demonstrate ability to properly download data from a tower field site
- Once trained, you will receive a certificate that you can upload as a Qualification on your profile. You can then respond to be a volunteer in different opportunities.

PROJECT DATES

- At this time we are still working on getting the towers installed which will be done by staff

Summary of 2020 Activities

We have gathered the materials for our two towers and have selected two sites, Kings Landing Park next to Wisner Hall and Gatewood Preserve near the pole barn. We had Unisource pour a footer for the tower at Kings Landing. We had Larry's Electric install a power outlet in the closet where we will be keeping the sensor gnome (brain of the tower). We were getting ready to install the tower and antennas but we were presented with installation issues after the county electrician brought up how we planned to ground the tower. We are now (1/28/21) waiting to meet with Larry's Electric and Jim Yorio, the county electrical inspector, to determine the best way to continue.

The Gatewood tower installation was stalled due to SMECO not being able to come out to install the power pole that will have our antennas mounted to it. This was due to a lawsuit against SMECO about poles being given away and COVID-19 restrictions. We are currently looking for other companies that may be able to do the install. We are still looking into information on how we will ground these antennas. We will develop a grounding plan after the meeting regarding the Kings Landing Tower.

Future Plans

We are hoping to have these towers up and running before the fall of 2021. In 2022 it would be great to start outfitting some Barn Owls with some tags. We will work with Dave Brinker to obtain tags and learn the best attachment method for Barn Owls.

Supporting Calvert County's nature parks and natural spaces



CALVERT STEWARDS

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A partnership between Calvert Nature Society and Calvert County Natural Resources Division

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CALVERT STEWARDS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
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Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: www.calvertparks.org

Calvert County Natural Resources Division:
www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources

