

Newport Forest

Je03/00

2:20 - 4:120 pm

Weather: 20C, mixed sun/cloud, no breeze

Purpose: to pull Garlic Mustard from one of the experimental plots

Participants: Kee, Nic

We parked in the same spot as on the May 30 visit. This time I noticed that a large Basswood was growing on the cliff edge not far from the Balck Maple noted last week. It is in a rather decayed state, with two major side branches now dead. However, it still has an active crown.

We waded the creek, noting the usual tracks, and proceeded to the old Beech wolf tree whence we turned north and came to the experimental plots, guided by a coca-cola can we had set on a snag last week. We found the boundary twine cut in two places and at first it looked like a knife cut, which made me indignant. Then a closer examination revealed a somewhat frayed cut, as if gnawed by a rabbit.

Anyway, moving and stepping as gingerly as possible, we pulled 161 Garlic Mustard Plants from the one plot, leaving those in the other plot intact. I had intended to do some kind of plant count, but it was quickly obvious that with the vegetation so thick, it would be impossible. (So I decided that at some point in the future, we would also pull all the Gm from the other side, and then pull ALL the remaining plants, ID-ing them at leisure.)

We decided to start heading back out, but stopped for a lunch of cheese sandwiches on a sandy spot by the creek bank on the outside of the bend. Little did we know that a Great Blue Heron was standing almost directly behind me, behind a willow at my back, in fact. Bored with the conversation between Nic and me, it suddenly flew off with a great whuffing of wings, startling both of us. (My impression was of a bird that had rarely encountered humans.)

It is pleasant to get away from the heavy clay of A'Nowaghi and find here, in the creek valley, so much sand and gravel! The water has clarified greatly in recent weeks and now looks almost impid. I will keep my eyes open for fish in the future.