

Newport Forest

August 5 2000

2:00 - 5:15 pm

Weather: sunny, scattered cloud, 25C, light gusting wind from W

Purpose: to extend trails and celebrate birthday

Participants: Pat, Kee

We drove without incident to the OCF entrance and proceeded to the beginning of the OCF trail. Given the great amount of rainfall in recent weeks, we were not surprised by the enormous numbers of mosquitoes. While Pat clipped overhanging foliage from the trail sides, I went ahead and cleared another 20-30 m of trail, chipping in as I went. We disposed of four bags of chips this way, also in re-chipping some of the sparser stretches of trail. We are now a good half way along the south side of the Hogsback. We went ahead to the older part of the forest, but not as far as the deer-hunting blind. We could see the hydro clearing directly ahead, however. Coming out, Pat encountered some stinging nettles. She also spotted a large wasp nest hanging from a Hawthorn about 10 m from the trail entrance. We inspected the occupants through binoculars. They most closely resembled Bald-faced hornets but a specimen would have to be examined before we can be sure. At this point Pat saw a very large Swallowtail with brown bands on the wings, a probable Giant Swallowtail.

We adjourned to the Landing. I arrived first, seeing in quick succession a Cottontail (by the chairs), a large turtle (too fast to see, as usual), and a Great Blue Heron (taking off from the shore about 30 m downstream from the Landing). We built a fire and retrieved the birthday materials from the van: food and drink bags, roasting grill, birthday cake, etc. While I busied myself dropping wieners into the fire, Pat spotted a Hummingbird Moth hovering by some flowers. She also saw a Bronze Copper, a Red-spotted Purple and a Monarch. The Monarda are all still in flower, although apparently nearing the end of their cycle. Pat also spotted a Tiger Swallowtail on some Monarda near our table and, later, an Eyed Brown (or Appalachian Brown) on the track.

After our repast, I went down to the spot where the turtle had been basking. It had left some claw marks, including large punctures reminiscent of the toes of a Snapping turtle. While I was by the river, Pat saw a rather young thrush-like bird with a forked tail, essentially two large, separated feathers.

We left the property, locking the gate after us, and proceeded on to Eva Newport's place, where we had coffee with Eva and discussed the plaque for her deceased son, Lorne Thomas.

New Species:

Hummingbird Moth

Hemaris thysbe

Landing

Stinging Nettle

Urtica dioica

OCF