

Newport Forest

Sp03/00

4:00 - 6:20 pm

Weather: cloudy, later clearing, coolish 25C, breeze from W

Purpose: to investigate meadow and ravine flora (and to conduct tour)

Participants: Kee, Pat (John & Betty Miszczyk & families)

After attending the pow-wow at Moraviantown, we drove to Newport Forest and parked at the lower end of the upper meadow, just south of the power lines. We walked the meadow across to an adjacent ravine, noting plants as we went. (These are not listed as “new species” below, although many of them are. Pat corrected some of the common names, added scientific binomials, and entered the plants in her data base.)

Calico Aster	Birdsfoot Trefoil
Wild Carrot	Scotch Thistle
New England Aster	Canada Goldenrod
Cinquefoil	Lance-leaved Goldenrod
Yellow Clover	Milkweed
Red Clover	Timothy Grass
Curly Dock	Ragweed
Teasel	Blue Aster
Yarrow	Old-field Goldenrod

As we neared the ravine, Pat noticed dessication cracks had formed in the clayey meadow soil. We also saw a Great Spangled Fritillary, a large Beefly and several Honey Bees.

We followed the edge of the ravine scrub, noting (as expected) a great many Hawthorns, some young Black Walnuts, Riverbank Grape, Grey Dogwood, White Ash, Domestic Apple (escaped), and White Snakeroot. The ravine scrublands blend imperceptibly into what might be called ravine forests right next to the Old Creek Forest. From the depths of those woodlands we heard an unfamiliar bird calling, liquid notes of “Colliwick-wick-wick.”

We walked back to the van, then drove down to the end of the bluff, where we parked once again and descended to Fleming’s Creek at the ford. The creek continues to be low, the water much clearer. While Pat walked the shoreline, I went into the floodplain to locate the young Tulip Trees I had planted last spring. Tall wildflowers and brambles choked the sunny spots in which I had planted them (something I should have thought of then). In any case, I located none of

them and so have no idea how they're doing. Recrossing the creek, I noticed two complete valves of what looked like another Wabash Pigtoe (mussel). I collected them. I also noticed an Ebony Jewel-wing flutter across the creek, surely the last of the season.

Ascending back to the van, we were greeted by the arrival of the Miszczyks, whom we had invited down for a tour. Our two vehicles moved on the the OCF entrance and we went out to the Landing: John, Betty, Eric and Luke and their partners. One of the latter stayed with Pat, while I took the others on the 1.5 km circuit around the Hogsback. John agreed that if he were free, he would accompany me down the river to Moraviantown by canoe at an unspecified date in the fall.

Late for our appointment with Eva Newport, we arrived to find Eva, her other son, Jim, and his wife, Elaine, waiting for us. Jim enjoyed talking about the "farm," as everyone seems to call it, especially his adventures on the river. He recalled with relish the many Pickerel they had taken over the years with dip nets (like the Delawares did, as reported earlier). Some narrows between a small island (downstream) and the Riverside Forest. made an excellent fishing spot. Once, Eva and her husband, Duke, were caught dip-netting by a local game warden. They only evaded capture by fleeing into the woods! Jim also recounted gravel-mining from the river bed, noting how rich deposits could be wiped out in a season or two by subtle changes in river currents. There were also deep "swimming holes" which would mysteriously fill in a year or two after extensive, multi-year use.

New Species: See two lists on first page of this report.