

Newport Forest

September 16 2000

2:00 - 5:00 pm

Weather: cool 18C, NW wind (light/gusty), cloudy turning sunny

Purpose: to check trail and flora along it

Participants: Kee

This morning I had obtained two flats of seedlings from OSCO 2000, one flat of Tulip Trees, one of Serviceberry - *Amelanchier canadensis*, and two Elderberry shoots.) On the way to the property, I stopped at Harvey Newport's to give him two Tulip Trees and two Serviceberries. Harvey works at Sloan's Nursery and appreciates trees.

By previous arrangement, our neighbour, Randy, came to Newport Forest to borrow our canoe. He was late arriving, so I went down to the lower meadow (stopping to take a photo of the long, winding track in the process) and parked. Randy showed up soon afterward, agreeing to help me plant four Tulip Trees in the RSF. As with the four I planted last spring in the Fleming Creek (new) Forest, I wanted to see whether these would take and, indeed, flourish. And as with the earlier planting, I selected spots that were under open canopy, so the trees would have something to shoot for. (I recognize that it isn't always a good idea to introduce new species, but Newport Forest IS located in the heart of Tulip Tree Country, so to speak. We planted two trees within the first 100 metres of RSF trail, about 30 metres south. We planted the remaining two about 250 metres further along, this time about 20 metres north of the trail.

After Randy left (picking up and loading his canoe at Hurdle's), I took the Blind Creek Trail. (Note the name change from Old Creek Trail, Forest, etc.) Determined to enjoy myself instead of rushing through everything, I stopped frequently to take notes. For example, I found once again that bush or small tree with the dark reddish-brown bark and sporting long, thin white stripes along its length. I cut out an ailing specimen and, when I got it home this evening, ID'd it fairly quickly as a young Bladdernut. Further along, I found two small orb webs stretched between two young trees, both in the same position, parallel to each other about one cm apart, and each sporting a small spider in the middle. It had rained earlier and the webs still glistened in the sunlight, so I took two photos of this striking arrangement.

When I got up on the Hogsback, I decided to take a break, put down my pack, and examine some of the trees there. This forest is still maturing, the larger trees rarely reaching 40 cm in diameter. Of note is a large Sugar Maple "wolf-tree"

with wide-spreading branches and many “apartments” in it. There are lots of Bitternut Hickories there, with a line of American Beech saplings along the north side of the ridge, like young troops about to seize the high ground. There are no mature Beeches right on the Hogsback, however, a peculiar circumstance considering that they thrive in upland forest situations like this. On the ridge itself, however, I found at least two large White Oaks.

I then descended the Hogsback to the “shoulder,” discovering as I went, what I thought was a large Bur Oak. But I gathered some (acorn) caps, knowing these were diagnostic, and when I got home found they belonged to a Swamp White Oak. (Hurrah!) The tree was a good 40 cm dbh.

I continued along the trail to sit, finally, in one of Uncle Cam’s chairs on the drift pile, just up from the shore. The recent rains have swollen the river once again, so I contented myself to simply sit and see what came along. I didn’t have long to wait. First, a Great Blue Heron flew around the bend upstream and alighted gracefully on the river bank right beside the outlet of Fleming’s Creek. I watched it through binoculars, as it picked its way along the bank foliage, occasionally going down to the shore to look for fish. The it stopped and for about five minutes made the same call every five seconds or so, a strange call about half way between a cgrip and a honk, if that means anything. (Pat thoguht this might be a rallying call, prior to migratory flight.) I was interrupted by a flight of two ducks straight down the river, then a few minutes late, by the departure of another (?) Blue Heron to my left, from the bank downstream. How long had it been fishing there?

It was finally time to leave, so I folded up my chair, took it back to the grassy bit, and went out by Edgar’s Road. Along the way, I noticed a very attractive beetle on one of the tall *Helianthus* that line the track. It seemed to be in the longhorn flower beetle family, with attractive green-and-yellow striping across the head (or pronotum) and a curious pattern of chevrons and stripes on the abdomen. My sketch was not adequate to ID the beetle to a certainty, but the pattern of striping closely resembles that of the Locust Borer. I had recorded a bluish or greenish colour for the abdominal stripes, but this may be the background colour.

New Species

Swamp White Oak
Locust Borer

Quercus bicolor
[*Megacyllene robiniae*]

RSF/HBF
BCF/ET