

Newport Forest

September 28 2000

2:10 - 5:00 pm

Weather: scattered cloud, cool 16 C, NW breeze

Purpose: to give Nina Hurdle a tour and continue lining trails

Participants: Kee, Pat , Nic, Nina Hurdle

We drove Nina down to the parking lot, where she told us about a little run-in with Bill Stewart over a plant he had found in the area, being the only location in Elgin Co. he knew of. But Nina could not recall the plant.

Pat agreed to walk with Nina along the BCF trail, while Nick and I went ahead to add more logs and branches to the sides of the trail (“lining” it) so that it will have maximum visibility in the winter. It also makes for a more interesting walk, because you don’t have to keep looking around (in places), wondering if you’ve strayed. During this work, Nic found a tree cricket. Unfortunately, it was in its (last) nymphal stage and very difficult to ID, even if we had suitable reference materials.

We lined about 100 m worth of trail in the BCF, lined a bit up on the Hogsback, then added another 80-90 m worth of lining to a critical portion of the RSF trail. Nic then had the simple but brilliant idea of setting up a few benches along the trail for weary walkers. We came out on the bluffs, spotting Pat and Nina over at the Landing. We joined them there at the picnic area for some soft drinks and chat. The river has dropped about 2 m since our last visit, when it had risen as far as the drift pile.

It was getting on, so Nick and I went out to the Lower Meadow and on to Fleming’s Creek to check the levels there. It had been our original intention to mark a trail through the Floodplain Forest (including Harvey’s portion). Although we could have waded the creek and done at least some of this work, we decided instead to check out a tree that had fallen over the creek about 50 m upstream. Might it be usable as a bridge? We made our way along the creek bluffs, sidehill gouging, until we came to the tree, a solid looking white Ash about 25 cm dbh. Along the way, I found a small stand of young Blue Ash, not pausing to locate the parent tree. The upper end of the ash had caught in a stout-looking willow and we discussed how a stand might be constructed for the other end out of 4x4s, the trunk cut just inside the snag, and the whole tree lowered onto the stand. The next stage would involve lining the trunk with wedge-shaped boards to which two stringers and ultimately planking could all be nailed.