

Newport Forest

November 15 2000

1:10 - 5:15pm

**Weather:** cloudy, cold 5C, breeze from west

**Purpose:** to complete the bridge and put up NO HUNTING signs

**Participants:** Kee, Nic

Anticipating finishing the bridge, we carried our tools down to Fleming's Creek and along the bank to the Ash log, still only partially clothed in planking. On the way, we spotted a muskrat run that headed down an upper terrace, across the level part, then down into the creek. It was slick with wet clay and the part nearest the river resembled an Otter slide.

Nic set to sawing boards on the bridge, while I waded out into mid-stream and began the laborious business of fitting stringers, a job that is complicated by subtle twists and turns in the log's shape. Sometimes, I had to shave the log with a chisel so that it would take a stringer flush. Sometimes (usually), I had to cut a stringer short so that it would fit the log better. Each stringer was placed so that its upper edge was 1/4" to 1/2" above the level of the log, then ailed in with 4" nails.

Before the boards were nailed down with 3" nails, the log and stringers were painted with wood preservative, which would occasionally drip into the creek. Nasty, toxic stuff, of course. By 4 pm, Nick had added planking right up to the centre post and I had extended the stringers halfway from there to the other shore of the flats. Since we had yet to post some signs, we decided to leave the rest of the construction for another day. Besides, my feet were freezing from working in rubber boots in the cold current. We packed up the tools and headed back. Noticing a Chickadee on a branch nearby, I demonstrated "pishing" to Nic. Within about a minute, we had a good dozen, flitting across the creek from the forest. Nic wondered how anyone could possibly have discovered the art of pishing.

We then walked the Riverside Trail, posting two NO HUNTING signs at the landing and five more along the river, concentrating them directly across from what we thought might be a hunting camp, with the red cabin and the three parked trailers. I was surprised to see that the Riverside Forest was quite open-looking near the river. We then followed the trail over the Hogsback and back through Blind Creek Forest just as the sun was setting.

**Sightings:** Muskrat run, Chickadees.