

**Newport Forest**

April 1 2001

1:50 - 4:50 pm est  
2:50 - 5:50 pm edt

**Weather:** SE breeze, mixed sun/cloud, 10C

**Purpose:** to ground-truth new map & extend creek trail

**Participants:** Kee, Nic

We stopped twice on the Fleming Line, once to note the use of adjacent fields and to ask Harvey Newport about fields we couldn't see, the second time to ask similar questions of Edgar Hurdle and to ask him to check the new battery for the trailer. Before going in, we also inspected the two new bluebird boxes.

At the trailer, we found only enough birdseed to fill the Shagbark feeder. We set to work on the creek trail, adding three more steps, then entering the more level portion, which we should easily finish on the next (maintenance) visit. In terms of total effort, we are about half finished the portion of trail that leads down to the creek. As we worked, we ran into a patch of soil that was liberally infiltrated with the bulbs of small liliaceous plants, probably spring ephemerals. We picked out as many as we could (about 100) and placed them in a bag with a little water to take home.

We decided next to walk the Hogsback circuit to plot as many of the twists and turns of the trail as we could. Coming up the Hogsback from the Blind Creek side, I heard a kind of wild-sounding yelp that I associate with a fox. It came from the eastern side of the Hogsback. Then, as we ascended the west end, we heard a kind of gobbling/clucking sound. Passing near the power lines, Nic saw a large bird fly off, he thought a wild turkey.

We descended into the Riverside Forest, finding it impossible to log every bend in the trail. However, we got the major trends with the aid of the compass. Along the shore we found numerous tracks in the soft mud: a small dog or fox, several deer, wild turkey, and raccoon. Along the river bluffs, we found groundwater leaking out of the hill, causing the trail to slump in several spots. The river is still relatively high, just below the lower banks.

We returned to the trailer for a quick break, then used the new trail to visit the creek and check the deer. The water there was also still high, about a foot above "normal." It has turned a pale green, like dilute limeade, probably just algae. The deer looked pretty much like last time, chest cavity now empty, but with fur still on much of the hide. We could have crossed to look at it more closely, but there were still things to do.

Back at the trailer, Nic climbed up on the roof to secure the vent cover, which had blown off again. We then closed up and headed out.

Although there was little time to bird-watch, I saw or heard the following birds at the feeder or in the New Creek Forest:

**birds:**

Blue Jay; Cardinal; American Robin; White-breasted Nuthatch; Red-bellied Woodpecker; Slate-colored Junco; Mourning Dove; Chickadee.