

Newport Forest

April 5 2001

1:45 - 5:20 pm

Weather: sunny, clear, clouding over later, 16C, breeze from SE

Purpose: to finish creek trail

Participants: Nic, Kee

Coming in to the property, Snooper (aka "Pooch") followed us down so, to discourage her, I threw a stick at her as she ran in playful circles around us. It hit her in the muzzle and she let out some pained "yips." I was instantly sorry, but the stick did the trick. Off she went to leave us in peace.

We filled the feeders, then worked for a good two hours to complete the trail down to within about 15 metres of the proposed bridge site. We installed about six more steps before we took a break to refill the chip bag and visit the river landing. As we walked through the Blind Creek Forest, we could hear a chorus of Wood Frogs from some ephemeral pools.

We visited the landing, noting that the river was still fairly high, barely below the first bank. We found recent tracks of deer and one really BIG raccoon.

We came back to the Blind Creek Trail and followed the sounds of the frog chorus to check on the actual source. Based on their sound and appearance, they could only have been Western Chorus Frogs. But while we watched a frog, we heard a remarkable gabbling noise from the west end of the BCF: wild turkeys! Quite a large flock, from the sound of it. (Nina Hurdle told us recently that she saw a lone female go into the East Ravine to build a nest.)

We returned to the trailer for a quick lunch break, noting only White-breasted Nuthatches and the occasional Chickadee around the feeder. I noted an interesting behaviour in the former bird: It would take a single seed, wedge it carefully into a crevice in the bark of the Hickory, then peck away at it, using the crevice as a vise. In other words, it places the seed in a similar situation as its main food item (bark insects), then deals with it in the same way. (tool-use among Nuthatches!)

We finished the trail. I collected some strange-looking moss and took a photo of the van and trailer before we departed.

Birds:

White-breasted Nuthatch; Chickadee; Cardinal (in RL); Robin (in BCf and around

trailer); Blue Jay (in BCF)

New Species

Western Chorus Frog
(already recorded?)

Pseudacris triseriata

BCF/G4