

Newport Forest

April 17 2001

2:00 - 5:00 pm

Weather: mixed sun/cloud, 5C, very windy, gusting to 30

Purpose: to plant more trees from Forest City Tree Project

Participants: Nic, Kee, Darren & Tyson

Darren arrived at the gate just as we did, so we drove down to the trailer en suite, parked, and set out to examine the trees Nic and I planted last time. Almost ALL the trees by the trailer had been dug up, as well as several on the upper creek bluffs, but not the two on the terrace. What had done this mayhem? We thought raccoons but later, Pat opined that perhaps skunks were a more likely culprit. She thought they might have smelled the delicious earthworms in our London soil and had gone after them. There was, in fact, none of the “dismantling” activity one so often sees when raccoons are up to mischief, instead, merely a determined digging that uprooted the trees as a matter of course.

We laboriously replanted the uprooted trees and put new, larger, freshly cut cages around all the trees. In addition, to those around the trailer we added pickets of fresh bamboo stakes inserted deep into the ground. This, we thought, would discourage further digging, but we’ll see how effective they are on the next visit. In all we lost two Alternating Dogwoods and added a KC to the trees on the bluff.

We took two Chinkapins up to the Hogsback and planted them at the east end. In the RSF we noticed that the forest floor, at least at the west end, was CARPETED with Trout Lilies. We found some Bloodroot blooming, so Darren took a picture (see next) and I shot a slide. Darren also found some Cutleaf Toothwort and photographed that also.

As it has so far evolved, the planting operation involves a steel mesh collar up to the first branch or top of standard, a bamboo stake driven into the ground right beside the collar and tied to it, a broad yellow ribbon tied to the top of the stake. In the next planting, I will add a granular product called “Critter Ridder,” with active ingredients of piperine and essence of pepper, basically pepper spray in solid form. If that seems to work, we’ll make it standard procedure.