

**Newport Forest**

April 22 2001

1:45 - 4:45 pm

**Weather:** sunny, turning cloudy, warm 20C, no breeze

**Purpose:** to plant trees

**Participants:** Kee, Nic

It has been raining lately and the ground was very greasy, coming in. Both in the Upper Meadow and down by the trailer, we heard a great many birds calling, some of the songs being unfamiliar to me. We checked the trees in the vicinity of the trailer. None had received any further disturbance. While Nic filled the feeders, I went to the creek to fill the two watering jugs. As I filled the jugs, occasional wafts of decaying deer came to me on errant currents of air. The carcass is still in the same position, looking somewhat more collapsed than before. Nearby, a Cardinal called with unusual vigour and both the New and Old Creek Forests literally rang with calls.

Nic came down to assist and I took a break to photograph as many spring ephemerals as we could find. These included White and Yellow Trout Lilies, a small violet by the creek, Spring Beauties and one or two others.

We returned to the trailer, then walked the tree line of the Creek Bluffs toward the Upper Meadow. We planted two Serviceberries just 20 m north of the deer blind and left the remaining two Serviceberries there. None of the trees further on had been disturbed, either. On the high terrace just below the open bluffs, we found both the Tulip Tree and the Honey Locust in good shape, as well. Nic located two patches of Bloodroot growing along the edge of the terrace and I took some photos. We put some "Critter Ridder" on these trees, as well as all the trees back to (and at) the trailer. On the way we picked up the two unplanted Serviceberries.

It was only then that we noticed that the walnuts in the bushel basket had been raided by local rodents. There was only a handful of nuts left and the ground around the basket was littered with shells. We took a wee break, sitting in the lawn chairs outside the trailer and listening to the Spring Peepers over in the BCF. The air around us was filled with early insects, mostly small wasps and flies, passing to and fro on urgent missions. After the break, we went down to the creek where we planted the remaining two Serviceberries just above the (normal) high water level. A Red-bellied Woodpecker called from the New Creek Forest.

Nic busied himself by cutting out sandscreen blanks to make tree-guards. As he clipped, a Polistes wasp landed on his arm and I recorded it.

All prepared, we took the remaining trees, bags, watering jugs and tools with us to Edgar's Road. We planted the Bur Oak just west of ER, near the low spot. We planted the two Sycamores east of ER, on the other side from the Bur Oak, one about 20 m from the road, the other about 50 m. As we finished, I heard a peculiar bird call, a kind of steady, hoarse squeak on a rising note, repeated three times.

At the River Landing, just as a flock of Canada Geese made their way downriver, a Great Blue Heron flew off in the opposite direction. It began to spit rain. I took two photos of the River Bluffs and we went back along ER, checking the trees planted a few days ago, as we went. Neither had been disturbed, but we put Critter Ridder on them, anyway.

We went in the BCF trail about 100 m and spent about 1/2 hour gathering logs and lining the trail with them, completing about 50-60 m of trail. Out in the LM again, we planted a Black Walnut across from the big Black Walnut with the feeder on it. We added a new Redbud nearby for good measure and that pretty well completed the placement of our FCTP trees in Newport Forest for this year. Before closing up and leaving, we noticed a brand new (Formicine) ant mound just south of the trailer. It was already a good 10 cm high.

Coming out, we almost didn't make it, nearly miring ourselves in some of the softer patches. By the way, while driving the Beattie Line, a plover-like bird flashed directly past the front of the van. I would have said it was a Killdeer, but the belly was strikingly pale orange-yellow.

**Birds:** Chickadee, WB Nuthatch (near trailer); Red-bellied Woodpecker (FCF); Canada Goose, Great Blue Heron (River)

**New Species:**

Paper Wasp            *Polistes* sp. LM