

**Newport Forest**

**April 27 2001**

**1:45 - 5:10 pm**

**Weather:** sunny, clear, N wind, gusting to 20, 12 C

**Purpose:** to plant more trees and to prepare trails for Saturday tour

**Participants:** Kee and Nic

Against my better judgment, I drove down to the trailer. The ground has turned somewhat firmer in recent days, as it dries out, however. We unloaded several items for the trailer, including soft drinks and a first aid kit.

While I went down to the creek, Nic filled the two feeders. At the bottom of the creek trail I saw two or three Red Admirals and a Mourning Cloak. The creek level is noticeably down and an easy wade across the rapids with rubber boots. The water is also now much clearer. The two Serviceberries we planted there have remained planted with no signs of molestation. I waded the creek and took two pictures of the deer, its hide covered with flies and still giving off quite a smell.

Back “upstairs,” we found that the two Serviceberries we had planted on the lower bluffs had been uprooted, so we had to replant them. Both had been treated with Critter Ridder and I now have less faith in that product than ever. We watered all the plants by the trailer and then went to the upper bluffs, finding all the trees there, including those on the terrace in good shape. On the way up, I spied a Praying Mantis egg case on a stem, but couldn’t recall if we’d seen Praying Mantis on the property before. Near the upper bluffs we were greeted by a Towhee which sang us a beautiful liquid song to accompany our watering operations. We then took a break at the trailer which Nic took advantage of by making more tree-collars. We are nearly out of bamboo stakes.

After a short break, we set to work in the regeneration zone. First, the Ohio Buckeye by the beanfield had been uprooted and had to be replanted. The rest of the trees had not been bothered, however. We went on to plant 7 Red Oaks and 2 Sugar Maples in random locations. (Some of these trees have no stakes to mark their locations.) Back at the trailer, I scattered several handfuls of dog biscuits down the lower bluffs.

We then set out for the river along Edgar’s Road. The river has now dropped low enough to expose the roots of the gravel bars. I scattered some more DBs around the Landing before we set off to cross the river bluffs. The trail there is in good shape, except for one patch about two metres wide where the ground water oozes out of the Hogsback, turning the clay rather soupy and soft. Nic and I had brought

three boards with us to provide a walking surface, but the result of their placement was not ideal.

Just inside the RSF, very near the river, we added some badly-needed lining, then proceeded into the forest interior, lining as we went. There are still a great many gaps, however. Our main aim to-day was to fill in enough gaps that someone walking the trail would always be able to see at least some liners ahead of them, and so know where the trail was. While searching through the woods for suitable liner logs and branches, Nic twice found Garter Snakes. He picked up the first and I photographed it in his hand. We did not molest the second snake as it was gravid with a recent meal, possibly a frog.

The RSF interior is a sea of Trout Lilies, most of them white. Yet everywhere we saw many different spring ephemerals such as Spring Beauty and (I think) Virginia Bluebells. While searching for good logs, I located a nice patch of blue flowers with rounded, elliptical entire leaves. I thought they might be Dutchman's Breeches or Blue Kohosh, but I took particular care with the photos, so Pat can probably ID them later.

We worked our way up into the Hogsback, noting that the two planted trees within view of the trail were still planted. Before it descends on the other side, the trail passed a rather extensive patch of May Apples growing in the light of the hydro right-of-way opening. Then down into the BCF, where I saw what I thought was a Tiger Swallowtail but which Pat (later) said was probably an exceptionally colourful Mourning Cloak. From the trail, Nic spotted a large round object on a distant stump, so we went over to investigate. It proved to be an e-n-o-r-m-o-u-s polypore about half a metre wide and composed of several interconnected/fused caps. I did not inspect it closely, although it resembled an older Ganoderma. Instead I took a photo. While wandering that section of the BCF I spotted several newly emerged Jacks-in-the-Pulpit, the pulpits only recently opened for business. Besides the Towhee, we saw or heard Blue Jays, Cardinals, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, there being little time to watch birds on such a busy day.