

Newport Forest

June 7 2001

3:00 - 7:15 pm

**Weather:** warm 24C, sunny, still (no recent rain)

**Purpose:** maintenance visit

**Participants:** Kee, Nic, and Pat

We arrived late (owing to a canceled dental appointment) and checked the two "bluebird" boxes along the road before entering the property. We could hear no peepings from the west box, but the engine was running and many birds were calling in the vicinity, so this means nothing. The east box had a bird sitting inside it, looking out, brooding some eggs, thought Pat. Presumably, both boxes are now occupied -- a success!

At the trailer, we immediately got to work. We brought more items into the trailer and unloaded the latest (bridge) cradle. Pat did some basic cleaning and organizing in the trailer, meanwhile. Nic and I followed Harvey Newport's recipe for putting the trailer up on blocks and it turned out to be surprisingly easy. We used concrete blocks sandwiched between wooden boards. It should now be stable in high winds and not shake (itself to pieces).

Before setting off to the creek, we noticed what appeared to be a large jumping spider on the door of the trailer. I copied the pattern on the abdomen in case it was diagnostic. It was, given the length, coloration, abdominal markings and distribution of look-alikes: *Phidippus audax*, common from southern Canada, east to California. It is the largest of our jumping spiders, this one being a female, with a body almost 1.5 cm in length. (This is our second new species from the trailer door. We would do well to watch that door in the future.)

While Pat went down to the river landing, there to observe (or be "mobbed by") birds, Nic and I went down to the creek to measure depths for the bridge trestles. We used his laser pen aligned with the first cradle, then took measurements off a long bamboo pole which I marked with a pen where the laser lit it up. The resulting measurements are not of interest here. However, we discovered that the pipes were barely long enough to reach the far trestle, so we had to plan to bring it a little closer to the edge of the creek.

Having finished the measurements, Nic and I joined Pat at the Landing. She had already seen two Eastern Kingbirds, 4 Wood Ducks with some young sliding down a clay bank across the river, two Baltimore Orioles and a Spotted Sandpiper. A Catbird called incessantly, perhaps bothered that we were so close to

its nest. The Yellow Warbler nest proved to be empty, a great pity, we thought.

Both at the landing and while wandering the lower banks and gravel bars, Pat found a number of new plants, including *Iris pseudocorus*, some new sedges, a new rush and a plant with small yellow flowers. She also found the largest thunderstone yet, very knobby and gnarly. (Later at home i washed it off and discovered that it looked like nothing so much as fossilized scat -- a copralite?) We wandered as far as the point bar where Pat found what may be a new species of milkweed for us. We made a note to return when it was in flower, as flower buds were only just forming.

We returned to the trailer, noting a new kind of blue-eyed grass along Edgar's Trail near the Lower Meadow. Pat went into the trailer to lie down, while Nic and I pegged in two loose steps on the creek trail a little more firmly. In the trailer, while lying down, Pat saw a large jumping spider on the screen stalk a fly, seizing it and scurrying off to a corner.

**New species** (pending ID opf remaining specimens)

Jumping spider	<i>Phidippus audax</i>	LM
Yellow Flag	<i>Iris pseudocorus</i>	RL