

Newport Forest

June 17 2001

4:30 - 8:30 pm

**Weather:** sunny, warm 28C, breeze from NW, gusting

**Purpose:** to scan for new species

**Participants:** Pat, Kee

After opening the trailer, we descended to Fleming Creek where I checked the bridge elements and Pat found a possible new sedge (S) and an *Avens*-like plant (S), which turned out to be White Avens *Geum canadense*. Back up in the Lower Meadow, I netted a small Copper, but we didn't know which species and did not have the time (these days) to get seriously back into insects, so we let it go.

As we entered ET, we checked the Wild Plum and the Crab Apple. Both are hanging on, if not exactly flourishing. Further along ET, we came upon a fluttering moth (S) with a large eyespot on the hind wing. We took it because it looked like an easy ID, plus it was on its last legs (or, should we say, wings). It turned out to be an Io Moth, *Automeris io*. Some very tall plants with the potential to be even (much) taller caught our eye next. Pat thought they might be *Angelica* sp. (P). The multiflora roses had grown stalks right out into the middle of ET and were all blooming (P).

We entered the BC trail and a mere 50 metres along, Pat looked up, as she habitually does, and spotted three baby raccoons sitting in the crotch of a White Ash right beside the trail. We watched them for a while, amused by their serious expressions, then continued along, under the urgings of the mosquitoes, which continue to be plentiful after the recent rains. Pat spotted a small fungus (S) growing on wood by the trail. I thought it might be a Fairy Fan, only to discover later that it was a very young stalked polypore, possibly a Bone Polypore. We had not gone far past the bench, deep in the forest, when I came upon a large bush of Prickly Gooseberry, a species we already knew to be present.

At this point, we decided to wander off the trail down into the dried out BC swamp, its bottom now no more than "squidgy." Pat pointed out a nice grey mushroom, *Mycena polygramma*, on wood (S), but when I went to cut it out, I discovered that I'd left my knife back on the trail. While I went to find the knife, Pat lost her binoculars! On the way back, I spied another mushroom (S), discovering it to be a Rooted Oudemansiella, *Oudemansiella radicata* something I hadn't seen since A'Nowaghi. Pat soldiered on without her binos, finding another mushroom growing in large troops along the side of a large log. (S) These turned out to be another new species for us, one with no common name, inviting me to

call it the “Owlet Mushroom” because it looks like an owl’s eyes, small, with a dark “pupil.” *Clitocybula ocula*. We found some small Ganoderma, which I at first thought might be my long-awaited Veiled Polypore. Here also, Pat found another new sedge (S), as well as a new plant with short-stalked and toothed leaves, the American Brookline *Veronica Americana*.

We slowly ascended to the Hogsback, where Wood Anemones (P) grew in abundance. Pat found that there was not one, but two species of “starlike sedges” (SS) here, as well as a Flea Bane (S). We stood and watched the nesting cavity where we had seen a mother Great Crested Flycatcher barely two weeks ago. Nothing. Had it/they left? It is increasingly disturbing to come upon previously active nesting sites prematurely abandoned. Perhaps we are the biggest disturbance of all.

Somewhat discouraged, we made our way back down the BC trail to ET and out into the LM, where our spirits were somewhat buoyed by seeing a Summer Azure along the border of Harvey’s Bean Field. Here also, an European Skipper wandered erratically past. We repaired to the trailer, where we had supper, interrupted only by the appearance of a Monarch butterfly visiting Milkweed plants outside our door, our first of the season.

After supper, we relaxed a bit, then headed out for our second foray, this time to the river. As we approached the RL, I crept noiselessly up on the shore, this time rewarded by the sight of a Spiny Softshell *which didn’t see me right off the bat* ! By the time Pat got over, it was disappearing into the water, but at least she got a glimpse of it. We wandered the Blue Clay Promenade, where I found the light just right to see the contact between the blue clay and the overlying (and slumping) Hogsback loam (P). We sat for quite a while, watching the Cedar Waxwings and Tree Swallows catching insects over the river. With a little practice, we found it possible to train out eyes on individual insects in each birds flight path, then watch how they disappeared, one after another. On the way back, we stopped along the bluff to check a potentially new Dogbane, with a small white, bell-shaped flower (P). We checked the Oriole nest in the big elm by the river, watching it for about a minute. nothing flew in or out and the nest seemed to be in bad repair, as though disintegrating.

### **New species:**

Io Moth

*Automeris io*

ET

American Brookline	<i>Veronica Americana</i>	BCF/SW
White Avens	<i>Geum canadense</i>	FC/
Rooted Oudemansiella	<i>Oudemansiella radicata</i>	BCF/trail
“Owlet Mushroom”	<i>Clitocybula ocula</i>	BCF/SW
“Lead-capped Mycena”	<i>Mycena polygramma</i>	BCF/SW

**Other species:**

**Insects:**

European Skipper (LM); Summer Azure (LM); Monarch (LM).

**Birds:**

Baltimore Oriole (HB/E); Cardinal (BCF); Veery (BCF); Rufus-sided Towhee (BCF); Spotted Sandpiper (RL); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (BCF); Catbird (BCF); Cedar Waxwing (R); Tree Swallow (R).

**Animals:**

Raccoon (BCF); spiny Softshell Turtle (RL).