

Newport Forest

October 21 2001

2:00 - 5:15 pm

Weather: prec. 0 mm, LM 17 C, FCF 15 C, heavy cloud, a negligible drizzle

Purpose: maintenance - trails and tree nursery

Participants: Kee, Nic

After entering the property, we went only as far as the site of the new nursery. We used Edgar's post-hole auger to drill four two-foot holes, setting the heavy 4x4 posts in them for fit: lots of room for cement. We also turned and cleaned another 20 sq ft of soil. It's a clay loam only about a foot down, where heavier clay takes over.

Taking a break along the creek bluffs, we noticed an obstruction in Fleming Creek far below. Nic volunteered to scramble down and take a look. It turned out to be a tree that had fallen over the creek, with an accumulation of branches, sticks and mud on it. Nic estimated that one could walk over the creek along the drift pile, but that pretty good balance would be needed.

Before heading down to the trailer, we measured the nursery's position to ensure that it conformed to the easement. It turned out to barely do so, as can be seen in the diagram below:

During the measuring operation, a small hawk, possibly a Harrier, flew right over our heads and out over the NCF. We drove down to the trailer and proceeded down the Fleming Creek, which had dropped over two feet since my last visit 3 days ago, now falling below the lower C-clamp on the midstream trestle.

In the NCF we put in about 50 more liner logs and paused to inspect some very large patches of GM in the Hawthorn Forest portion. Deep into the scrub forest, I noted the leading edge of the canopy-tree invasion, led everywhere I looked, by just two species: White Ash and Bitternut Hickory. Anyway, there in the scrub forest, you could see clearly how GM alternates its generations. Passing behind Harvey's barn, Nic spied a garbage dump, a cascade of cans and bottles lining the creek slope behind the barn. (offer to clean it up?) Further along, on the slope of TH, Nic spied quite a lot of raccoon fur within a small area, but no blood, skin or body parts. What had happened? Large predator or a tussle with a colleague?

Back at the trailer, we closed up and headed back up the meadow by fits and starts, stopping to mark with a pair of stakes all those wet spots where tires were most likely to get mired or to damage the grassy surface.

We stopped once again at the nursery to turn another row of soil, then went out and closed up, meeting briefly with Edgar and Nina. Edgar had welded the hoe back into useable condition and Nic and I took out two small trees for Nina as a back-favour.