

Newport Forest

May 2 2002

1:45 - 8:15 pm

Weather: precip. 0 mm; overcast; winds NW/lt; LM 12 C (8 C); FCF nr

Purpose: to clear the way for re-erection of the bridge

Participants: Pat, Kee, Nic

This was a physically trying day, with Edgar helping us cut up the big ash that was lying athwart the peg trestle on the near bank. First, we cut off the stump, but it did not fall into the creek as planned. Instead, its roots clung to the pipes. Several times we tried using Edgar's tractor to pull it away from the pipes, but the rather thin (sisal) rope I had purchased (for somewhat lighter work than this) kept snapping. Finally, Nic solved the problem by discovering that the stump could be pirouetted with a shove of the foot. It fell neatly into the creek, lodging right below the bridge. We'll have to pull it away later, as it deflects the current into the near bank, undercutting the bridge support.

Michelle Carnery, who was also visiting that afternoon, went birding with Pat but I was too busy with the bridge to record their findings (See Pat's data).

We cut the rest of the ash log into sections and even tried hauling one section up the hill: firewood for Edgar. I just about passed out with the exertion of guiding the log up the hill as Edgar's tractor pulled the other end of the rope. I kept having to hold the upper end of the log off the forest floor so it wouldn't lodge against fallen wood. Exhausting!

Nic and I then followed the N bank downstream for about 200 m where we found the S trestle lodged in some brush in midstream. We had to work our way out over the creek, treading carefully on the floating branches, logs and drift, to get a hand on the trestle and haul it ashore. We then improvised a rope sling and carried it back to the bridge site.