

Newport Forest

May 15 2002

1:45 - 5:30 pm

**Weather:** precip. 22 mm; winds SW lt/var.; sunny; LM 24(17); FCF 19

**Purpose:** to repair trailer and start GM control program

**Participants:** Kee, Nic, Brian

While Brian set up his tools to begin trailer repairs, Nic and I took our brush hooks and went down to the FC trail to the bench at metre 318. We spent nearly two hours cutting all the garlic mustard in a swath 90 m long and 6 m wide extending behind the bench and just beyond the heaviest concentrations of Garlic Mustard (GM). I calculated that it takes between five and ten seconds, on average, to clear one square metre of GM, which gives us a baseline for cutting dense concentrations. Lighter concentrations can be cleared in less than five seconds, down to one second.

When we got back to the trailer, we found Brian had already completed repairs to two of the corners and had done an excellent job! He had also inspected the underside of the trailer and found no holes which “varmint” might enter.

While on our break I inspected the trees in the “island” and those in the “triangle,” as well. The Cottonwoods are breaking bud, at last, and looking healthy. The “aspens” are half out. They are supposed to be Largetooth Aspens, but so far the leaves look almost entire. The White Ash are starting to unfurl, the Silver Maple and Box Elders are roaring ahead, with leaves almost fully out. The Redbud has tiny reddish leaves now opening, the White Elm leaves look recognizable and the Hackberrys are just now opening their tiny furls. The Black Maples are also doing fine. But the Tulip Trees appear to be in a bit of trouble, gamely trying to break bud, but looking dry. Same story with the Flowering Dogwoods, with just one looking like it will survive. The Sycamores also seem to be slow. Meanwhile a Black Walnut volunteer in the middle of the triangle looks quite healthy. The Honey locusts are just now breaking bud. So, overall, I could claim at least an 80 percent success rate at the moment.

While Brian began work on the last bad corner of the trailer, Nic and I took one of the Wood Duck boxes in the BCF and installed it unobtrusively on a tree by one of the sloughs. I don't know if this is the best place for the box, I just want to get the damn thing up and out of the way. We'll hang the second one by the larger slough deeper in the forest.

We went up to the HB to find Lotor sleeping on top of his room-mate in the

hollow in the old Black Maple. While we watched him, he jerked nervously in his sleep, reached around to scratch his armpit, then snuggled down once again.

We continued on to the RSF, stopping to discuss the transect layout and pausing later to attempt identifying a tree that may or may not have been a Black Maple. One thing that occasionally confounds tree ID is non-standard bark. This Black Maple (if that;s what it was) had bark almost like that of a White Ash! As we stood pondering the tree, a Hydro One helicopter flew the 115 kv line for the second time -- even as we watched. Are they getting ready for a cut? This year? Next year?

Nic showed me the yellow slime mold first spotted by Barbara Bain on the McIlwraith tour last weekend. (S)

We went out by the bluffs, noting that the ten metres of really disturbed ground is even worse, with extensive slumping since the latest rain.