

Newport Forest

July 17/18 2002

1:40 pm -- 6:50 pm

Weather: sunny/hazy; SW 8 kmh; LM 33 C; FCF 31 C

Purpose: Overnight stay

Participants: Pat, Kee

As we drove along the Beattie Line, we spotted a jeep which i should have recognized. It contained Darren, Mitch Jacobs and his daughter Kelly. The jeep pulled up behind us at the farm gate and we all repaired to the shade of the old Black Maple, where we had some pop and watched Junior fooling around in the foliage nearby.

I took the three on a tour of the FCT as far as the bench and then we came back to the trailer and went around the HB circuit. At about the halfway point of that walk, Pat called on the WT to say that the water truck had arrived. We double-timed out of the woods and I drove up to the Um just in time to see the driver finish the fill. I gave him a cheque for \$50, which i thought was fairly cheap for 1000 gallons. The tank has a capacity of 200 gallons, but i thought for the initial fill we would go with less, what with the strong smell of petroleum residues from the tank.

The first jugs we filled had the same strong smell so I suppose it may take another filling or two before the water runs pure. I watered the trees in the island, then drove into Wardsville for supplies. On my return Pat and I had supper in the trailer, although it was very hot. Sitting out by the old log later, Pat found a very interesting fungus which I could not identify until I got the specimen home the next day. (See below.)

We birdwatched frequently throughout our stay but rather than list each episode, I have made a list at the end of this report.

After supper we went for a sunset walk down to the river landing, finding that the gravel bars were fully exposed, with lots of old clam shells littering the clay and gavel. The river water was a milky brown, a rather unhealthy colour which i tried to ignore. Meanwhile about 20 Cedar Waxwings flew back and forth over the river, catching insects. Pat found an old rusty bridge pin lying in the gravel and I brought it back to the trailer for whatever future interest it might have.

We had brought Junior, of course, and that made everything rather complicated. After sunset, I put out DBs and at least two raccoons showed up within about ten

minutes to dine on them. We could see by the reflected eyeshine that one of the raccoons had only one eye or had diminished reflectivity in any case. We decided to call him "One Eye." Junior, it turned out, also liked Dbs and he ate them off the grass not 20 feet from the nearest raccoon. Was he eating them because his senior colleagues were?

After the DBs were gone, I took Junior for a wee night walk down to the bridge. I frequently lost him in the dark, but he would always come whiffing out of the foliage nearby, always seeming to know exactly where I was. I have been impressed by his ability to home in on faint sounds more than once!

I went to bed, being awakened about 2 am by Junior whining at the trailer door. Against my better judgment i let him in. He went straight up to the table and nearly knocked over the oil lamp. So out he went again. I was awakened about 3 am by the sounds of two raccoons screaming at each other down by the creek, so I went down, just to make sure that Junior was not being harmed. I picked up One eye in the beam of my flashlight about half way up an elm down near the bank.

Junior showed up again at the trailer door shortly after this and smelling strongly of Skunk. Once more he became obstreperous in the trailer, so I put him outside, locked in the "pet taxi." Every half hour or so, he would be visited by one of the raccoons who would scream at him, just enough to wake me up again.

I woke up to the smell of fresh coffee made by Pat. Junior was all sweetness and light, of course.

I drove up to the water tank, filled the tanks and jugs, then proceeded to water the trees in the triangle. It took another trip to the tank before they were all done. Then I took a walk along the BCF edge to examine some trees I had been spotting for the last two years. They are dead. What kind of trees were they and why were they dying? The trees turned out to be mostly White Elms. Along a line running from NE to SW, they were:

White Elm (double)	10 cm dbh, 18 cm dbh	dead
Hawthorn	18 cm dbh	almost dead
White Elm	20 cm dbh	dead
Domestic Apple (esc.)	60 cm dbh	dead but resprouting
White Elm (double)	14 cm dbh, 18 cm dbh	dead
White Elm	12 cm dbh	dead
White Elm	10 cm dbh	dead

White Elm	20 cm dbh	dead
White Elm	20 cm dbh	dead

To my amazement, I found a small stand of Prickly Ash right along the forest edge about 150 m from Edgar's Trail.

The rest of the day, we spent relaxing and watching Junior, which is actually a contradiction in terms.

Birds: (19)

American Robin (FCF); Baltimore Oriole (LM); Barn Swallow (RL); Blue Jay (TR); Cedar Waxwing (RL); Common Yellowthroat (TR); Eastern Bluebird (UM); Eastern Kingbird (UM/FL); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Common Grackle (RL); Great Blue Heron (LM); House Wren (RL); Mourning Dove (FCF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (FCF); Red-winged Blackbird (LM); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (TR); Song Sparrow (LM); Tree Swallow (RL); White-breasted Nuthatch (FCF)

New species:

Adder's Tongue	<i>Cordyceps ophioglossoides</i>	FCT/LM
False Truffle	<i>Elaphomyces granulatus</i>	FCT/LM