

Newport Forest

August 20 2002

6:15 - 8:30 pm

Weather: sunny w. scat. cloud; calm; LM 22 C; FCF 20 C

Purpose: to water trees

Participants: Kee

I watered the trees at the station but, because tank pressure is now reduced, the flow was rather slow. Thus I had to wait for a minute or two to do each tree. I used the extra time to break up the clay crust in the upper layers, mainly in the unused bed. Digging in the soil by one of the FDs (in the full bed), I started up what I thought was an earthworm. But it turned out to be a very small brown snake with a very white ring around its neck. "Aha," I thought. "A Ringnecked Snake!"

Unfortunately, when I got home to look up the pattern, I discovered that it was actually a juvenile Brown Snake. Although the adults do not have anything like a ring around their neck, the juveniles do. This specimen was about half adult length and must have hatched this year. It was using the soil cracks as a refuge and probably found good hunting (snails, slugs, worms, ,etc.) because of the relatively plentiful water in the site.

As I filled the tanks and jugs, Edgar came over to chat. I gave him the two saw-horses to take back, as we were done with them. I went to the lower meadow and watered the trees in the island. I had two jugs left over, so I watered four trees in the triangle, before returning to the TS. I refilled everything (plus a pail), returned to the triangle and finished watering, with nary a drop left over. I hope to water again on Thursday. I must also order another 1000 gallons of water from Carruthers.