

Newport Forest

November 3 2002

1:55 - 5:40 pm

Weather: prec 0 mm; overcast/SB; SW < 10 kmh; LM 8 C; FCF 7 C

Purpose: tree survey & birdwatching

Participants: Pat, Kee, Nic

As Nic filled the feeder by the trailer, Pat discovered two White-footed Mice in the seed bucket. They looked up at us with guilty little beady eyes from the pile of seed husks. Pat let them go by the trailer and they scampered off under the woodpile.

While Kee went down to the bridge for a quick, pre-nap stroll, Pat and Nic drove up to the tree station to bleed the drought-buster. They followed the swale from the tank down to the East Ravine. Nic found a complete rabbit skeleton (Cottontail) and Pat spotted some deer feces. She also found Bittersweet climbing among some of the hawthorns there. Across the bridge over FC, right in the middle of the FCT east about 3 m from the junction, Kee found what looked like the predatory dig of a Red Fox after some burrowing animal. (2P)

During a break for hot cider and sandwiches, Pat showed us the nest of a mud-dauber wasp, complete with a larva (dying) and three pupas in their respective cement chambers. Pat plans to keep the pupae over the winter to see if they hatch. Pat then went to the head of ET to hide among the weeds and bushes in order to gather more observations of some mystery sparrows that have been defying ID for weeks. Later, while prowling around the bushes, Pat found what turned out to be a new mushroom. Meanwhile, Kee and Nic went to the RSf, noting en route that several young Chinkapins have taken up residence along the top of the river bluffs. Kee and Nic also started up a woodcock just inside the RSF. They completed Plot #2 in just one hour (!) Up on the HB Lotor was not "at home."

Pat's quest for the mystery sparrows turned out to be wildly successful, with a new species, the Fox sparrow, being observed.

Birds: (10)

American Crow (UM); American Goldfinch (ER); American Woodcock (RSF/TR); Black-capped Chickadee (tr); Blue Jay (ER); Downy Woodpecker (tr); Fox Sparrow (LM/ET); Mourning Dove (ER); Northern Cardinal (ER); Red-bellied Woodpecker (tr); White-breasted Nuthatch (tr) **Note:** No Turkey Vultures or Great Blue Herons have been seen for over a week now.

New Species:

Fox Sparrow

Bristly Black Currant

Shaggy Parasol

Passerella iliaca

Ribes lacustre

Lepiota rhacodes

PD LM/HF

kd RSF/HBF (TBC)

pd/NM BCF/E/ET