

Newport Forest

August 6-8 2003

3:15 pm - 12:15 p;m

Weather: precip. 45 mm; sun/cloud; SWW < 15 km/h; LM 30 C; FCF 24 C

Purpose: 3-day stay

Participants: Pat, Kee

In the course of setting up the trailer, we noticed two mice, a House Mouse and a White-footed Mouse, dead in the sink (!) Pat took them out to the big log in the hope that she might find a Sexton Beetle carrying off a corpse or two, later. The two corpses were soon joined by that of another House Mouse, this one drowned in one of the seep-cans in the South Core.

An inspection of both new forest cores showed new wood now forming in most of the saplings, consolidating the summer's growth. The only trees not doing uniformly well in either core are the White Elms, some of which have not grown more than an inch or two since being planted.

We walked the Fleming Creek Trail and Pat found some Crown Coral. We checked the GM test plot and Pat gave me a short list of the principal (summer) plants growing there. About 20% are first year GM rosettes, the rest of the plot being occupied by Enchanter's Nightshade, Canada Anemone, White Avens, Blue wood Violet and a few White Ash saplings.

Back at the trailer, we both noticed the new Horse Fly, solid black and the largest of our local horse flies. Later, Pat found yet another species of unlogged horse fly, the American Horse Fly.

In the late afternoon, I went up to the tree station to do some weeding at the tree station, while Pat explored the "hill" nearby, where the old home site used to be. (She found only one Northern Catalpa (last fall's planting) still alive.) Weeding in that tough clay soil was very time-consuming. I had to dig under some of the tough clover plants, then pull the earth from their roots. I saw a Northern Leopard Frog in the station and, over the rest of our star, several more in the UM, generally. This seems to be where most of the leopards hang out these days. None in the LM, so far.

After supper, I walked up the meadow road along the gallery forest, where I spotted three trees in seed. The American Basswood seeds will be particularly valuable, but there were Black Maples producing firm seeds, as well as an old Ironwood producing fine-looking catkins. Back at the trailer, Pat and I examined

the damaged Hickory branches together, finding that in each case, a larva had eaten out a small, dirt-lined chamber before emerging as an adult. But what was the insect? A small, shiny black beetle flew out of one of Pat's samples. We had the buggers! I found another deep inside its chamber. We bagged about 25 samples and, when I got home, we gassed the whole bag, discovering in an email that Stan Caveney had already identified the culprit as the Hickory Bark Beetle (*Scolytus quadrispinosus*).

That night, our animal watch brought the usual gang up for kibble, three young raccoons (sans mother) and, later, some males, including the big fat one that we now call "Roscoe."

August 7 2003 12:01 am - 12:00 pm

Weather: precip. 0.5 mm; sun/cloud; calm; LM 33 C; FCF 26 C

In the morning, I walked the Fleming Creek Trail, collecting a few specimens of fungus, two of them already logged, but worth re-collecting in the case of look-alikes. We went up to the TS to do some more weeding. I found that it was easier to "weed" the larger patches between the young trees by simply using a shovel to shave the soil, discarding the sods into my pile. We then hopped into the van to go to Wardsville to pick up a few minor grocery items. We made a detour to check out a local nursery called "Uncommon Ground," but found the prices disappointingly high and the quality and variety of offerings unimpressive. I bought Pat a locally developed strain of Primrose (var. "Green Lace") On a wrong turn, taken earlier, we ended up on the farm of Ken Hessman, with whom I discussed the excellence of this year's corn crop, as well as previous floodings of their river-flats farm.

It began to rain very lightly upon our return, but I went up to the TS to do some more weeding anyway, while Pat slept. At a few points the sky would get very dark, but each time the large, black clouds passed by either to the north or to the south. (Little did I know that a funnel cloud was spotted at Bothwell just a few miles away, around that time.)

After supper we took the Thames River Trail through Blind Creek Forest and up into the Hogsback. We searched for Giant Swallowtail larvae ("orange dogs") on the Prickly Ash, but found none. The rain had left the vegetation rather wet. As we walked the trail, I used the brush-hook to cut invading vines and brambles away from the path, while Pat took the clippers to small woodies. As we went, we

became progressively more soaked and the mosquitoes, now out in full force, plagued us in numbers not seen since the late spring. (I still lack reference materials for mosquitoes generally, only having been able to determine that none collected so far happen to be *Culex pipiens*.)

When we got into the Riverside Forest, I showed Pat the giant Basswood and then our new find - a Blue Ash, both members of the “One-metre Club.”

We went on to the RSF monitoring plots, where Past helped me with vegetation typing in Plots #1 and #2. (We didn't want to go deeper into the Box-elder forest because of the heavy, waist-high wet vegetation. Here are the results:

Plot #1: 90% bare soil; 20% old GM; minor components: Moneywort; Enchanter's nightshade; Running Strawberry; Pale Touch-me-not

Plot #2: 250% bare soil; 30% GM; minor components: Pale Touch-me-not; Blue Wood violet; Canada Anemone; Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum* sp.)

We returned to the trailer, soaking and exhausted.

Friday morning, we had coffee out in the “nook” and, while I cleaned up some ID on an amazing new mushroom, Pat got items ready for me to carry to the van. We left around noon, dropping by both the Hurdles' and Eva Newports', to pay our respects.

Birds: (23)

American Crow (HBF); American Goldfinch (LM); American Robin (GF); Baltimore Oriole (BCF/LM); Blue Jay (incl. sev. young) (Tr); Common Yellowthroat (BCF); Eastern Screech Owl (EW); Eastern Kingbird (LM); Eastern Towhee (BCF/LM); Eastern Wood Peewee (BCF/LM); Grackle (LM); Great Blue Heron (LM); Great Crested Flycatcher (LM); Mourning Dove (EW); Northern Cardinal (Tr); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Tr); Scarlet Tanager (?) (BCF/LM); Song Sparrow (LM); Spotted Sandpiper (TR); Turkey Vulture (UM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wood Thrush (FCF)

Butterflies: (10)

Black Swallowtail (LM); Cabbage White (Tr); Clouded Sulphur (Tr); Giant Swallowtail (ET/LM); Great Spangled Fritillary (LM); Monarch (LM); Northern

Pearl Crescent (RL); Silver-spotted Skipper (RL); Tiger Swallowtail (LM); Wood Nymph (Tr)

Phenology:

first walnuts now dropping; first cicadas now singing; three trees in seed: Ironwood; Basswood; Black Maple (seed sound);

New species: (We have probably already logged at least two of the following spp., but I don't want to miss any.)

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| House Mouse | <i>Mus musculus</i> | Tr PD |
| Black Horse Fly | <i>Tabanaus atratus</i> | Tr KD |
| American Horse Fly | <i>T. Americanus</i> | Tr pd/KD |
| Hickory Bark Beetle | <i>Scolytus quadrispinosus</i>) | Tr pd/SC |
| Crown Coral | <i>Clavicornia pyxidata</i> | pd/KD FCT/300m |
| Chicken of the Woods | <i>Laetoporus sulphureus</i> | Tr pd/KD |
| Black-footed Marasmius | <i>Marsasmius nigripes</i> | BCF KD |
| Scarlet Cup | <i>Sarcoscypha coccinea</i> | TH KD |
| False Turkeytail | <i>Stereum ostreum</i> | HW KD |
| Golden Tooth Waxycap | <i>Hygrophorus chrysodon</i> | ET/LM pd/KD |