

Newport Forest

October 12 1:45 pm /12 - 3:15 pm /13

Weather: prec. 0 mm; clear; NW < 10, LM 22; FCF 20 C

Purpose: Two-day stay

Participants: Pat, Kee

After unloading the van, we took a short walk along the FCT to examine the garlic mustard monitoring plot. The number of rosettes inside the plot seems to be about half, on average, the number outside it. The patchy nature of their distribution makes the effect hard to quantify, however. While Pat wandered the area looking for new plants, I noted that Bitternuts outnumbered Walnuts in this section of the FCF by about 5 to 1, whereas the ratio is closer to 1 to 1 at the bridge end of the tract. Pat had picked up a possible new species of Aster near the GM plot.

Back across the bridge, Pat found a birds nest fungus growing on a twig near the creek downstream from the bridge. Once again we heard that strange “pok - pok - pok” sound, a bird that I had asked Dave Wake about just two days previously. It almost sounds like dripping water.

Before supper, I went over to Eva’s to drop off a few items. After supper, we went down to the river where we held a brief vigil before I went off on the TRT and Pat walked back along ET, leaving DBs in preparation for the animal watch that night. I always enjoy a sunset walk in the big woods. As I came out along the BCT, I left a trail of DBs as Pat had done.

Well after sunset, we left the trailer and walked along ET toward the bench, leaving a trail of DBs as we went. This meant that by the time we were seated, there were three trails of DBs leading to the bench, a surefire lure for the elusive Striped Skunk - still not on our records. Unfortunately, no skunk or any other mammal showed up as we sat on the bench for half an hour. The moon rose to the east and we went back to the trailer empty-handed. During the night, two juvenile Raccoons showed up for DBs and peanuts. They were joined later by their mother. While Pat slept, I went for a short walk down to the bridge, noting how the brilliant (but waning) moon of Sha’ban filled the forest with a faerie light.

The next morning brought another sunny day. Normally the temperature in FCF is 2 to 5 degrees lower than the LM but in the early morning the creek bluffs catch the morning light, while the meadow is barely lit and the situation is reversed. During breakfast we heard gunshots, so I went out in the van to investigate. At the

corner of Furnival and Fleming Line I ran into Harvey in his white pickup truck. He had been out to investigate the reports, as well. (Someone having target practice across the road from Eva's apparently)

I went into the BCF to see if I could locate the Black Gum I had planted along BC last spring. I startled a young buck that crashed out of the brush, up to the LM edge, then stopped to look back at me before walking west along the game trail there. I found the Black Gum after a brief search. It had apparently gotten as far as having leaves, now black and curled, but the buds were poorly developed or absent, so I am not hopeful of a "take." Near the young tree I found more specimens of the orange mushroom that had given me so much trouble to ID on a previous visit with Nic. Back at the trailer, I finally nailed it (See below). Directions to BG: From BCT186 follow open swath for 30 m, then proceed due south.

As we had lunch in the nook, we solved another mystery. A chipmunk sitting on the big log nearby began to make a curious sound: "pok - pok - pok," its cheeks inflating each time.

After lunch, Pat walked along the East Ravine, while I drove to the TS, where I planted about 50 AB, 50 BE, and a dozen SB, all in pots.

Birds: (18)

American Crow (EW); American Robin (5 ET); Black-capped Chickadee (FC); Belted Kingfisher (LM); Blue Jay (LM); Canada Goose (sev. TR); Cedar Waxwing (LM); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Screech Owl (2 BCF); Goldfinch (LM); Great Blue Heron (TR); Great Horned Owl (EW); Hairy Woodpecker (2 Tr); Red-bellied Woodpecker (2 FCF); Red-tailed Hawk (BCF); Song Sparrow (HBF/LM); Turkey Vulture (BCF); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

New species:

White-egg Bird's Nest	<i>Crucibulum laeve</i>	FCF/FC/N/Br
"Orange Crumb-cap"	<i>Pholiota malicola</i>	BCF/BC/blackgum