

Newport Forest

October 31 2003

2:15 - 2:35 pm (Nv01)

Weather: prec. 8 mm; overcast/sun breaks; SSW < 15; LM 21 C; FCF 21 C

Purpose: overnight stay

Participants: Pat, Kee

At the TS, I checked out the remaining plantable trees and decided to take three CTs and one CW out to-morrow morning for planting. At the trailer we offloaded the van and then took a walk down to the river while there was still some daylight left. While Pat birdwatched, I walked the TRT, baiting some seven different locations with DBs, the plan being to walk the same route at night to do a mammal survey. In the BCF I found another example of the "white lettuce" fungus, so I picked it up in case I missed something the last time I tried to ID it. (S) I also found a beautiful example of milk tooth (*Irpex lacteus*) on a branch by the trail. It is very noisy walking in the woods these days, with every step creating a rustle that can be heard, it would seem, for miles. There seemed to be a toad chorus over in the BC lagoons, thanks perhaps to the unseasonably warm weather and wet conditions.

On the way out, we checked the SiMs in the (new) BC Core. They are losing their leaves gracefully and forming winter buds. As for the N and S cores in the LM, about half the young trees have buds, the remainder looking somewhat blasted, with buds that are either vestigial or absent. I realized that the better buds would make good forage for deer, so I scratched my head and tried to think of a winter bud-protector. Ping-pong balls with a hole in them? Polyethylene bags? What?

After supper it got dark very quickly, so we assumed that the forest mammals would soon be out foraging and we may as well go for our walk. A half-moon was out between clouds from time to time, the woods being otherwise gloomy. At each baiting area, we discovered the same story. Either the leaves on the trail were making too much noise or the animals were not out. Back in the trailer, we waited in vain for raccoons to come to the camp (as they have never failed to in the past). Nothing. Pat did see a Southern Flying Squirrel at the bird feeder, however.

In the morning we discovered that some animals must have come during the night, as all the DBs were gone. I went up to the TS to pick up the four trees, planting a CT N of ER, about 80 m W of Tr, a CT over in the FC core, and a CT and CW in the BC core. While planting in the latter locale, I noticed the depression I had selected was part of an old (ancient) stream bed. It would be an easy matter to

map it if I could get Stan Caveney to bring his GPS to get some positions along the stream bed.

I mentioned the old creek bed to Nina while picking up some bread at the Hurdles. This triggered a story she told me about a mill and trading post that used to operate on Harvey's property right next to the FCF. Once the trader cheated some Indians out of some furs. They came back, said Nina, skinned the man alive and nailed the skin to a huge basswood tree. Her father showed her all that was left of the stump when she was a little girl.

Nina also mentioned that a road used to run through Harvey's and our place (crossing the creek three times, instead of once, as the present road does). That might explain the "road allowance" on township maps of the properties. It might even explain the depression where I was planting!

Birds: (15)

American Crow (FC/bluffs); American Goldfinch (LM); Belted Kingfisher (RL/FC); Black-capped Chickadee (ET); Blue Jay (Tr); Canada Goose (TR); Dark-eyed Junco (Tr); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Hairy Woodpecker (Tr); Killdeer (HBF); Northern Cardinal (RL); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (ET); Song Sparrow (HBF/Tr); White-throated Sparrow (FCF);

Phenology: 90% of forest trees have no leaves, 5% have about 10% left, and 5% are still fully leaved, albeit fully or nearly turned. We saw a lone Turkey Vulture near Hwy 2 coming down, but have not seen a TV for several weeks at Newport Forest.