

Newport Forest

April 15 2004

2:05 - 7:30 pm

Weather: prec. 6 mm; calm, clear; LM 16 C; FCF 15 C

Purpose: planting trees

Participants: Pat, Kee

Arriving at the trailer, I checked the north & south cores in the LM. About 75% of trees are budding or breaking bud. About 85% are still alive. The species doing best are the elms, ashes (white & green) and the tulip trees. I removed the remainder of the bud protectors and refilled the deer feeder with molasses corn to keep them away from the trees.

As I worked about the LM, Pat went for a walk into the BCF. On turning into the woods along Edgar's Trail, she noticed one of the bird boxes and decided to clean it out. Lifting away the side, she discovered that it was full of old moss and other nest material, so she began to pull some of it away, only to find herself face to face with a mouselike creature that was too big to be a mouse. It was a Southern flying Squirrel! (possibly with young) so she hastily put the nesting material right back and closed up the box.

I planted a WP in the SC of the LM and then we went to the FCF to plant some beeches. Fleming Creek is running nice and clear (about the only time of year it does) We waded across the creek together, Pat discovering the unhappy sight of a dead raccoon lying bloated and dark brown on the upper bank, about half its fur missing. Pat also found a small mussel in the creek. (S) We went to the north core of the FCF, where we have about a dozen saplings of various kinds planted. About 75% of these are still alive and I expect more than half of them to leaf out. I found one CW uprooted by the recent flood, so replanted it without great hopes for its survival.

Continuing on to the south core of the FCF, we noticed that the Black Caps were now leafing out, averaging about 1 cm in length of leaf. The Garlic Mustard plot is already showing an effect of last year's cutting experiment, with no first year rosettes in about 70 % of the plot. Surrounding areas were much thicker with rosettes. Behind the GM plot is the south core of the FCF. Here only about 6-7 trees are planted, including BM and SB. Many of these were nipped and I expect barely half to survive. We planted five ABs in sets of two, surrounding each planting by a new invention - a bamboo tipi to protect the young trees from rabbits and deer (but not mice, which have other food now, anyway).

We had supper in the trailer, then packed the van and headed to the UM, where Pat helped me (with much pain to herself) placing erosion monitors right down the slope of the bluffs, almost to the creek. Five stakes were tagged with fluorescent orange and placed according to the following scheme: #1 15 m east of TS at top of bluffs, near edge; #2 10 m downslope from #1; #3 10 m downslope from #2; #4 10 m downslope from #3; #5 5 m downslope from #4 and about 5 m above the creek level.

There was no time left to plant the RBs or HTs, so we watered them and left them at the station.

Birds: (13)

American Crow (FCF); American Robin (FCF); Blue Jay (Tr); Black-capped Chickadee (EW); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Grackle (FCF); Mourning Dove (FCF); Northern Cardinal (RL); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Red-tailed Hawk (BCF); Red-winged Blackbird (FCB); Turkey Vulture (UM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

Phenology: Black caps leafing out.