

Newport Forest

My29 2004

2:45 (29) - 5:30 pm (30)

Weather: prec. 1 mm; calm; sun/cld; LM 18 C; FCF 15 C

Purpose: overnight stay

Participants: Pat, Kee

Fleming Creek is now about 1 m below the bridge and continuing to drop. The midstream trestle has been damaged and will need repairs. The far ramp has floated away again because we forgot to tie it up. The two TTs that we planted a year ago were totally immersed in the dirty flood waters, blocking all the light and drowning the leaves and turning them black). I cleaned the emergent leaves at the tips. A large dead elm has finally fallen over on the slope of the FC bluffs right near the bridge.

For the first time we found clear signs of deer around the “deer feeder” (which I suspect fed mostly Meadow Voles during the winter). While Pat took her nap, I made a census of all the trees in the LM cores that are still alive, as well as whatever dead ones I could still find (from plantings in ‘01 & ‘02). (See LM census/04) I was disturbed to see that all the Bitter-nuts along the gallery forest, from the bluffs right down to Harvey’s Bean Field, are dead or dying. Is it the drought of the last few years finally having its effect? The implications are particularly disturbing for the flying squirrel population, which depends on the hickories for food.

Eva and the great grand children, Jordan and Karissa, arrived while I meditated in the nook. I took them for a walk to the river. (where Eva suggested that we make a big bonfire of all the river drift) By the time Eva went it was getting late. We had supper, then spent some time by the river, just watching and noting the odd bird. Later, on my way up to close the gate around sunset, I saw a new bat species, larger than the Little Brown, possibly a Big Brown.

after dusk, two coons came for DBs. One of them (we’ll continue with the name “Roscoe,” was quite fat. It must have been the major beneficiary of our frequent DB leavings over the winter months.

On the next day by 2 pm, we had the following weather:
SW < 20 kmh; sun/cld; LM 21 C; FCF 18 C

Pat walked up the hydro right of way to find new plants, while I walked down to the river, then onto the TRT. I took a picture of the river drift (P). There’s a nice

patch of Wild blue Phlox growing right by the entrance to the trail (P). All the way through the RSF I pulled GM as I went. By the time I got to the HB, Pat was already there, surprising me. We went to check the old Black Maple, delighted to see Mrs. Coon with five young ones resting up in the “cockpit.” The young all gazed curiously down at us.

The Bitternuts up on the HB are also dead or dying. We have been noticing, during the last few visits that the Multiflora Rose bushes are also dying back very extensively. What the --- is going on?

Pat thought she had found some Wild Coffee in the BCF, but it turned out to be Orange-fruited Horse Gentian. We found a new mushroom, actually a smallish polypore on the HB (S), then later, down in the BCF another possible new mushroom on wood (S). Back at the trailer Pat found what looked like a new earth tongue fungus. (S) She also found what might be a new beetle, but we must be content with this description: dull grey/black; elongate 1.5 cm ; knobby pronotum; long black antennae with distal third yellow. She also found a new emerald-coloured beetle about 8 mm long (good luck ID-ing that one).

Near the trailer in the long grass, I found a new beetle, very brightly coloured in red and black. It resembled a Lady Beetle, but was two large by half, beside having antennae that were too long. I observed it in the bottle long enough to make the accompanying drawing:

Birds: (25)

American Crow (HBF); American Robin (LM); Baltimore Oriole (LM); Blue Jay (Tr); Canada Goose (LM 100+); Catbird (FCF); Common Grackle (UM); Common Yellowthroat (BCF); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Kingbird (LM/BCF); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Eastern Wood Peewee (HBF/LM); Field Sparrow (LM); Great Blue Heron (TR/FC); Great Crested Flycatcher (BCF); Mourning Dove (TR); Northern Cardinal (Tr); Purple Martin (LM); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (BCF); Song Sparrow (LM); Tree Swallow (UM); Turkey Vulture (UM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wood Thrush (FCF) (new species filed separately)