Newport Forest   September 16 2004   2:00 - 7:15 pm

Weather: prec. 0 mm; sun/cloud; SW < 15; LM 2(C; FCF 26 C
Purpose: watering trees
Participants: Kee

After watering the trees at the gate and in the TS, I took on a full load of water. Just for the record, here's how many jugs & tanks it took:

gate trees:	4.5 jugs	27 litres
TS trees:	6.5 jugs	39 litres
full load:*	9 jugs, two cooler tanks, blue tank	84 litres

I watered the trees along the GF and in the south core, then returned for another load, which I applied to the north core, finding that I had about two jugs' worth left over. Assuming that I gave each tree 2 litres of water (that's how much the drip cans hold), I must have watered at least 166/2 = 83 trees. In fact, I watered more like a hundred trees because about 12 of the "trees" are very small saplings in the disc nurseries and these got barely a litre each.

Before I even started watering, I put up bird feed and looked around for the little black cat. Not there. Perhaps it had had a mishap and would not be around again. After the first watering, I was taking a break in the nook when Harvey came down with his partner Harold Miler to cut corn. We chatted while the two cut about 50 stalks and loaded them into the back of Harvey's truck.

In spite of the heavy watering schedule, I stayed alert for new species. I got a good look at a Polistes wasp at the drought buster and noticed the two red spots on the side of its abdomen. I like it when I don't have to kill an insect. (See "New Species.") Also at the TS, a brown leopard frog sat just under the tap of the drought buster, refusing to budge during the entire filling process. It seemed to be enjoying the damp situation there. I find it rather remarkable how the American

*Note 1: the blue tank takes 3 jugs or 18 litres, each cooler tank takes 2.5 jugs or 15 litres and each jug, of course, takes 6 litres. The "drought buster" holds 2000 imperial gallons or 7039 litres.

Note 2: About 6 trees in the north core are definitely dead, mostly larger trees that never developed adequate root systems. In the south core, two or three are dead. The drought is deepening once again.

Toad and the Northern Leopard both seem to have the ability to change colour, not quickly, perhaps, but rapidly enough to change hunting environments and remain well camouflaged. In this case, the leopard frog (normally with dark green spots on a light green background) had developed dark brown spots on a light brown background.

At the trailer door I noticed a large black and brown field cricket, an insect I had never bothered to log until today. After finishing watering, I took a little lunch, during which the black cat showed up again. I gave it half a can of Friskies beef dinner but as soon as it finished, it began to meow for more.

I took the TRT to check the RSF, etc. I enjoyed a brief rest at the bench on the bluffs, then continued on my way, noting that the trail was in pretty good shape, nicely compacted. About half way into the RSF,
 I noticed two sets of curious scratch marks in the
 hard earth right in the middle of the path. It
looked like some large, clawed animal had made
two scratches in quick succession (perhaps smel-
ling the earth), then another set a few steps on.
The scratches were too wide for a bobcat, about
seven inches across. But no litter had been heaped,
only those two sets of enigmatic scratches.

On the HB I explored a bit, finding some interesting lichens growing on a log (S), as well as something that looked like a turkeytail fungus, but seeming too small. That's what it turned out to be however.

On the way out, I stopped to stare at the FCF tree tops and was rewarded by the sight of a Great Blue Heron angling in between the trees that lined the creek, doing a steep dive and alighting at Junior's beach.

New species:

Paper Wasp	*Polistes fuscatus*	TS KD
Common Powderhorn	*Cladonia coniocraea*	HB KD
Black Field Cricket	*Gryllus pennsylvanicus*	Tr KD