

Newport Forest Saturday-Sunday May 15-16 2005 2:35 - 4:30 pm

Weather: prec. 5 mm; cld/sun; SW < 10 kmh; LM 16 C; FCF 16 C

Purpose: two-day stay

Participants: Pat, Kee

We stopped at the Hurdles to put a bucket of bait fish into their pond. Terry Keep, a (“mature”) biology student at Western, got a cook’s tour of the property. We stopped in the RSF so that I could examine the PP, 2AH and the WH. All are doing well since the recent rain. I then accompanied Terry back to his own property near Wardsville, where he owns approximately 40 acres, about half of it wooded. His woodlot is notable for its many large, healthy Black Cherry trees and abundant Witch Hazel (WH). As we passed a ravine gallery forest bordering a field behind his house, Terry pointed out the unusual number of trees that were not leafing out. He told me that a local farmer remarked that in some 30+ years he had never seen so many dead trees in that forest.

In the late afternoon I took some lumber down to the log bridge and completed another 4-foot section of decking. After supper, we visited Eva. After sunset, Pat saw the momma coon in the nook, as well as a Southern Flying Squirrel at the Hickory tray feeder. Much later, I went for a brief walk down to the creek, passing the old Black Maple snag where the den was. I stopped to shine my flashlight into one of the holes in the bark adjacent to the den. I could see the other (in)side of the tree, which is evidently hollow throughout much of its length. Shining the light downward, I was surprised by the appearance of several little heads, with well-furred ears and dark little eyes. Momma was evidently still out foraging (somewhere) and some of the kits stood up to see what this light was all about. I then walked to the river and back, gazing frequently up into the half-open canopy, wondering about the simplest way to census the trees in the BCF so as to know for sure what fall-downs were most recent.

The highlight of the next day was Pat’s discovery of a Brown Thrasher at the Hickory tray feeder. Earlier, around ten am, we saw two dogs (German Shepherds or GS crosses) in Harvey’s Beanfield. This was our first sighting of domestic dogs on the property and it gave us some concern.

I finally “finished” the bridge, at least enough to walk across and hop down onto the other bank of Fleming Creek. We made for the GM test plot, where I was somewhat dismayed to see second-year GM covering more than half of the plot area. I sketched the plot while Pat went searching for the mysterious “spring

peeper” pond. I then cut all of the GM inside the plot according to the method under test:

Weather: (2pm): cld/sun; N \leq 10 kmh; LM 11 C; FCF 11 C

By mid afternoon I had mulched about ten trees in the NC and found my energy flagging. We decided to leave, visiting the Hurdles on the way out. There, we spotted a Yellow Warbler and an Eastern Kingbird that was diving at insects (?) on the water’s surface. Edgar was fixing an EeZee-Go, similar to a golf cart and an ideal vehicle to extend Pat’s range of operations.

Birds: (29)

American Crow (EW); American Robin (LM); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (GF); Brown-headed Cowbird (Tr); Brown Thrasher (Tr); Canada Goose (TR); Chipping Sparrow (Tr); Common Flicker (BCS); Common Grackle (Tr); Common Yellowthroat (BCF); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Kingbird (HP); Eastern Towhee (GF); Field Sparrow (LM); Great Crested Flycatcher (GF); Mourning Dove (LM); Northern Cardinal (Tr); Northern Harrier (UM); Northern Oriole (Tr); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Red-tailed Hawk* (LM); Red-winged Blackbird (ER); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (GF); Song Sparrow (Tr); Tree Swallow (HP); Turkey Vulture (LM); White-breasted Nuthatch (ET); Yellow Warbler (BCF)

* two Red-tails - or a pair

New species:

Lily-of-the-Valley
Nicrophorus mite

Convallaria majalis
Poecilochirus carabi

LM KD My15/05
LM KD Sp11/04