

Newport Forest

Sunday May 29 2005

1:45 - 8:45 pm

Weather: prec. 13 mm*; cloud/sun; calm; LM 21 C; FCF 18 C

Purpose: To introduce Newport Forest to Greg & Nina Zitani

Participants: Pat, Kee, Greg Thorn, Nina Zitani

*6 mm of this fell after we arrived

We hosted the Thorn/Zitani family at Newport Forest this afternoon. Greg is a mycologist in the UWO Biology Dept. and Nina is an entomologist. Their four-year old son, Carlo, is a budding cryptobiologist. He informed us that we had several “dragon nests” on the property.

I took the Thorns for a walk down to the creek, then along the new bluff trail to the log bridge. Along the way, Greg collected an aging specimen of *Collybia velutipes* which had numerous small beetles in it. On our return, Greg visited the cornfield (HBF) to examine what was growing on the old ears. He discovered little green pinheads in the empty kernel sockets and said it was a species of *Trichoderma*.

Pat and Nina searched the river beech for beetles and other insects, while Greg & I (plus Carlo) took the TRT for a quick fungus walk. On ET, Greg had spotted a polypore crust (“resupinate” was his term) which he said was *Tubaria furfuracea*. We crossed the HB, finding Lotor in his cockpit, startling a Ruffed Grouse, then descending into the BCF, where the mosquitoes were so bad, we could manage few stops for fungi and mostly kept up a brisk walk - even little Carlo.

Meanwhile, out at the river, Pat and Nina saw a Muskrat while collecting specimens. Nina brought in three insects which she proposed to pin and identify for us. A large ground beetle with burnished elytra caught my eye. I thought maybe *Callasoma*.

After the Thorns left, we relaxed in the nook only to be interrupted by the arrival of Al Van Bommel, a local farmer who has taken an interest in the property. Al enlightened me about the log bridge as he helped me deck the last three feet. “That looks like one of the timbers from the bridge that used to be behind Harvey’s place.” In fact, it turned out there was no other possible source for the large log. When we got back to the trailer, I mentioned the two dogs that appeared on the morning of our last stay-over. They turned out to be Al’s dogs.

After Al left we received ten minutes of heavy rain. Wonderful! The young trees

are all thriving, looking quite healthy and now adding the first inches of growth. I am amazed that the Black Cherries have taken so well, not only tall standards, but a bare-root planting! Pat visited HBF because she thought there might be an Indigo Bunting or two in that particular locale, along the edge of the wood. She was right! I saw it too. By listening carefully, we picked up a bird or two more, then headed out.

Birds: (31)

American Crow (EW); American Robin (GF); Barn Swallow (TR); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (Tr); Brown-headed Cowbird (Tr); Catbird (GF); Canada Goose (TR); Common Grackle (LM); Common Yellowthroat (BCF); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Bluebird (UM); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Field Sparrow (UM); Great Blue Heron (EW); Grasshopper Sparrow* (UM); Great Crested Flycatcher (FCF); Hairy Woodpecker (Tr); Indigo Bunting (HBF); Mourning Dove (Tr); Northern Cardinal (Tr); Northern Oriole (RB); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Tr); Ruffed Grouse (HB); Song Sparrow (Tr); Tree Swallow (UM); Turkey Vulture (HBF); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wood Thrush (BCF); Yellow Warbler (HBF);

* this must be confirmed

New species:

Red Velvet Mite	<i>Trombidium</i> sp.	Tr NT My29/05
“Nostoc Lettuce”	<i>Nostoc [Linckia]</i>	HP GT My29/05
“Corn Cobbles”	<i>Trichoderma</i> sp.	HBF GT My29/05
(other species to come from Nina Thorn)		
‘Cottonfoot’	<i>Tubaria furfuracea</i>	ET GT My29/05
Pygmy Mole Cricket	[<i>Ellipes minutus</i>]	RB NZ My29/05

New contacts: Beth MacDougall-Shackleton (UWO Biology - studies Field Sparrows)

Phenology: mosquitoes plentiful for the first time