

Newport Forest

Saturday March 6 2006

2:15 - 56:10 pm

weather: prec. 11 mm; RH 70%; clear; calm; LM 4 C; FCF 1C

purpose: trail maintenance

participants: Kee, Will, Erin; Terry Keep

Terry Keep, who owns some property on the N side of the Longwood just SW of Wardsville, is also a member of the Thames Talbot Land Trust Board. He came to interview me about Newport forest for a news story the TTLT is working on. I brought Erin Carroll and Will Cable with me for trail work.

Coming in, I spotted some coyote tracks on the road, stopped the van and got out to inspect them: Four adults heading south toward the Fleming Line. We filled both tray feeders and both suet feeders.

We then set out on the TRT with a twofold purpose. I had promised Terry a walk before the interview and I had to make sure that Will and Erin knew what they were supposed to be doing. We brought a hatchet, a bowsaw, mallet, and clippers for the two. Passing the RL, I noted that the river was still about 10 cm above the beach. I got Erin & Will started on the large BH log in the RSF. After we left, they removed another four inches from the cut area of the log. I checked with the two periodically and, by the time Terry had completed the interview, taken his pictures, etc., Will and Erin had cleared all but three of the 11 remaining logs from the trail. (These had diameters of 10 cm to 30 cm.) In the end, they had cleared everything but the big BH log, which will take about 7-8 more visits before we are through the log.

I saw the following tracks during our walk: Raccoons (ER, RSF); Eastern Grey Squirrel (ER, TRTbluffs); Coyote (TRTbluffs, RSF); Eastern Cottontail (RL); Wild Turkey (TRTbluffs, RSF, HB); Virginia Deer (RSF) In addition, I spotted a lot of mouse tracks, probably the White-footed Mouse, on the river bluffs and also in the RSF.

After the interview with, Terry he left and I shot a few minutes of video of the creek, while Erin and Will ate their lunch in the trailer. My new \$20 worked well and I got my first usable footage.

Note: Although I did not record any birds on this occasion, Nina Hurdle called us the next day to say that she had seen a Common Grackle and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in their yard (HP).