

**Newport Forest** Monday July 10 2006

2:25 - 8:50 pm

**Weather:** prec. 14mm; RH n/a; sn/cld; NNE 0-5kmh; LM 26C; FCF 23C

**Purpose:** walk trails, rehab sisters, birdwatch

**Participants:** Pat & Kee

We let the girls loose, set up camp, filled the feeder trays and took the weather. In the interim, Louise acquired her first tick, which went straight into alcohol for our tick survey. (So far, two distinct kinds)

We took the girls down to the FC rapids, where Pat's continuing emphasis on finding one's own food paid big dividends. Thelma caught a crayfish under a log beside the shore. Meanwhile, standing out in the rapids, I found a beaver-log chewed at both ends. We dread the arrival of beavers on the property. They certainly exist upstream.

When the girls became exhausted, we left them to sleep in the trailer, while we walked to the river along "mosquito alley" (ER). There was a single small Softshell basking on the clay beach. We took the TRT to the bluffs, where we sat for a spell on the bench. I took a video of a Dogbane Beetle (Chrysomelidae) on one of the nearby dogbane plants. (V)

About this time, A red-tailed Hawk began to scream in an irritated fashion from the bluffs behind us. (We thought to search for a stick nest at the E end of the HB some day.) It finally took off, circling high above the river and occasionally calling. That was my hint to leave on the TRT, Pat to work her way slowly back to the camp.

I have never seen the vegetation so thick and rich before! The recent rains have put all herbs into overdrive and the RSF portion of the trail has become nearly completely grown over. I hacked my way along with the brush hook, feeling like a plant arch-murderer. Here too the mosquitoes were very thick. I find that I can go for several minutes at a time without being pestered. (Secret: stop thinking about them.)

Up on the HB, I discovered that the Prickly Ash was producing a fine seed crop, ready for harvesting in a few weeks, no doubt. For this visit's specimen in my personal plant familiarization program, I selected a humble-looking scroph with a spike of delicate blue flowers at the top, little suspecting that it would be a new record for us - a Hairy Shullcap. In the darkest, dankest part of the BCF, I spotted what I thought was a very dark Giant Swallowtail. (They do wander into the woods, from time to time.) But it turned out to be a the silkworm moth - Polyphemus, a new record for us. Meanwhile, Pat was back at

the trailer, busily identifying another new moth, this one a Sphinx. (See New sp.)

Pat saw and heard many fledged young, including three young Veerys accompanied by their mother, all sitting in a row on a branch.

We had supper in the trailer and waited for the local raccoons to show up. None did! Meanwhile, just before our planned departure time, the girls decided to take off into the woods. After waiting nearly half an hour, I went down the trail toward the bridge, finding the sisters doing some recreational climbing on a young maple just above the rapids. I gave the “follow me” signal and they hopped along the trail after me, all the way to their cage. They slept all the way home.

**Birds:** (20)

American Goldfinch (LM); American Robin (FC); Belted Kingfisher (FC); Black-capped Chickadee (BCF); Blue Jay (GF); Common Yellowthroat (BCF); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Eastern Wood Peewee (BC); Field Sparrow (UM); Gray Catbird (FC); Mourning Dove (LM); Northern Cardinal (LM); Northern Oriole (EW); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Red-tailed Hawk (TR); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (BCF); Song Sparrow (HBF); Turkey Vulture (BCF); Veery (HBF/EW); Wood Thrush (FCF);

**New species:**

Polyphemus Moth	<i>Antheraea Polyphemus</i>	KD RSF
Nessa Sphinx Moth	<i>Amphion nessa</i>	PD Tr
Hairy Skullcap [to be confirmed]	<i>Scutellaria elliptica</i>	KD HB

**Phenology:**

fledged young birds at their most numerous