

Newport Forest Friday November 17 2006

1:45 - 5:50 pm

Weather: prec. 30mm; RH 93%; calm; ovcast; LM 3C; GF 3C

Purpose: birding and tracking

Participants: Pat and Kee

Following yet more rains, the property has become very soggy and access by vehicle increasingly risky. Fleming Creek has risen to just below the pipe bridge. The rainfall to date may be compared to previous years:

yr to date	prec.
2006	1253 mm
2005	589 mm
2004	496 mm
2003	749 mm

Coming in, Pat stopped at the Hurdles, to be alerted by Nina to a new bird on their property (which we include as "HP.") They both watched a Northern Shrike in a tree nearby. (See New Species.)

A Red-tailed Hawk soared across the UM, making its characteristic scream and, shortly after, a Great Blue Heron flew across, as well. I scrambled down the creek bluffs to mark the bottom of the raccoon trail (described in previous reports) at the creek with orange flags. I noted fresh tracks of a young raccoon making its way up the bluff along the trail.

After replacing the bird feeder in The Hole (entry into BCF along ET), Pat walked to the bend in ET where it crosses the BC bed. Here she saw a male Pileated Woodpecker working away at a dead tree near the bend.

Meanwhile, I crossed FC at the log bridge to pick up the raccoon trail on the floodplain side of the creek. Although there were several faint trails leading away from the crossing point, they petered out. One lead to an old snag near the shore with a large hole at the top. Tapping on the trunk produced no result, but I left a pile of DBs anyway. I followed one of the trails that led into the thorn forest, noting lots of deer tracks. Evidently, the point at the creek is a point of convergence for several trails.

Inside the forest I found a yarding area, where the ground was churned with hoof

marks and the vegetation flattened by temporary beds. It may be surmised that the deer have moved inland to avoid hunters along the river. Before returning to the FCT, I also found several Giant Puffballs in a mature state. Kicking one sent a great puff of brown smoke heavenward. Was I being nasty to kick a puffball? No. I was helping it attain its goal!

I returned by the pipe bridge, which had a great black log jammed under it. When the creek drops again, the log will slip under and downstream.

There seemed to be birds everywhere we looked today. Pat saw several Tufted Titmice feeding together, as well as an American Tree Swallow, which she at first thought might be a (western) Lark Sparrow.

We departed right after supper to visit Eva and to discuss the little parcel of land we call HBF. We explained the advantages of a sale and left some reading material on the TTLT for her.

Birds: (16)

American Crow (WR); American Robin (LM); American Tree Sparrow (Tr); Black-capped Chickadee (BCF); Blue Jay (BCF); Canada Goose (TR); Dark-eyed Junco (Tr); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Great Blue Heron (UM); Northern Cardinal (Tr); Northern Shrike (HP); Pileated Woodpecker (ET/BC); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Red-tailed Hawk (UM); Tufted Titmouse (Tr); White-breasted Nuthatch (GF)

New species:

Northern Shrike *Lanius excubitor* HP nh/PD Nv17/06

Malaise Samples

“Black Nyssonid Wasp” Tr. Nyssonini RL nz/KD J118/05
“Black Leaf-cutter” *Megachile* sp. B RL nz/KD J118/05