

Newport Forest Wednesday February 28 2007 2:10 - 5:30 pm

weather: prec. 15 mm; RH 54%; ovcast; calm; LM 5 C; GF 4 C

purpose: food drops & birding

participants: Pat & kee

We met Kevin Alderton by the slip gate at the West Meadow. We walked the field together to discuss cutting the grass. Kevin, being a little concerned about holing one of his tractors tires again, suggested a burn. We burned several open hummocks as a test. Even surrounded by snow they burned very well indeed.

There was a distinct note of spring in the air. The snow has turned soft & tacky, the creek and river have developed an open lead or two, and water has started to collect in pits and around hummocks. Average snow depth in LM was 12 cm. There were several skunk trails around the camp, as well as one raccoon trail.

Pat devoted the afternoon to birding and the record below marks her success.

I walked the TRT making food drops as I went. I put down about 2/3 the amount of last trip and will cut the amount again next trip - perhaps the last food drop. I noted tracks as I went, but did not attempt to follow any.

Wild Turkey tracks were everywhere. Climbing the HB, I noticed that several beeches were dying, their bark penetrated here and there by borers. A few old trees and a few young ones have been attacked, with a few already long dead. (Strangely, I never noticed this before today.) I left the trail in the BCF to cut across to the vernal ponds. Number 6 (?) was partly open and very full. I collected some algae and bottom litter, getting two very cold soakers in the process when the ice broke through.

During the three-week deep freeze, I can't recall a single raccoon track, with skunks dominating. Now there were an equal number of both kinds, with raccoons more prevalent in the woods, skunks in open country, but not exclusively. It may be that Raccoons are not the cold-weather foragers that skunks are.

phenology: winter stoneflies out; Chickadees singing spring song; river & creek opening

mammals: (6)

Coyote (RB); Eastern Cottontail (ET); Eastern Grey Squirrel (Tr); Raccoon (RSF); Striped Skunk (Tr); Virginia Deer (RSF)

birds: (16) !

American Crow (EW); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (Tr); Brown Creeper (Tr); Canada Goose (TR); Dark-eyed Junco (Tr); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Tree Sparrow (Tr); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Cardinal (Tr); Northern Harrier (HBF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Song Sparrow (Tr); Tufted Titmouse (Tr); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wild Turkey (ET)

new species: (Malaise) all from LM nz/KD J118/05

'Two-spotted Treehopper'	<i>Enchenopa binotata</i>
European Alder Spittlebug	<i>Aphrophora alni</i>
Alder Spittlebug	<i>Clastoptera obtusa</i>
Diamond-back Spittlebug	<i>Lebryonia quadrangularis</i>
Four-spotted Clover Hopper	<i>Agallia quadripunctata</i>
Silver Leafhopper	<i>Athysanus argentarius</i>
Grape Leafhopper	<i>Eurythronera tricincta</i>
Saddled Leafhopper	<i>Coladonus clitellarius</i>
'Two-lined Leafhopper'	<i>Idiodonus [kennecottii]</i>
'Pinstripe Leafhopper'	<i>Limotettix nigrax</i>
'Reticulate Leafhopper'	<i>Paraphlepsius</i> sp
'Ghost Hopper'	<i>Scaphodeus</i> sp.
'Strawhopper'	[<i>Empoasca</i>] sp.
'Yellow-throated Hopper'	Fam. Cicadellidae Sp. A
'Silver Minihopper'	Fam. Cicadellidae Sp. B
'Black Cixiid'	Fam. Cixiidae Sp. A

Note: Species A/B descriptions in biosurvey records.