

Newport Forest

Thursday May 1 2008

1:45 - 5:30 pm

weather: prc 0 mm; RH 52 %; BP 98.67 kPa; hz/sn; SSE 0-15 kmh; LM 18C

purpose: mulching trees

participants: Kee & Will

I dropped the Grassland Management pamphlet off at Nina's. Will spotted an old raccoon down by Nina's pond. It appeared sickly and had an injured or broken left rear leg. It seemed lethargic and it's eyes had that "I'm a goner" look. Nina had no sympathy for it, but I fed it some kibble, which it eagerly ate. "It was just out of gas," I joked.

The ground was firm and dry for driving down to the trailer. While Will transported several wheelbarrow loads of mulch (riverdrift) from the RI to the RZ, I walked the TRT, noting as I passed one of the newly planted maples along ET that something had dug away at the base of the sapling -- possibly smelling food from our fingers. Blue Wood Violets were sprouting all along the trail. At the river, I noted that the beach has half-emerged from the water. The river itself is now running clear, with a greenish tinge and sechhi depth about two feet.

Along the bluffs portion of the trail I noted the Amelanchiers were in full bloom. One has a Japanese Honeysuckle (?) in the process of strangling it. I climbed up to the large pine tree at the top of the bluffs (pointed out by Steve last week) and confirmed that it was a Scotch Pine. Descending back to the trail, I went down to the RSF, noting a troop of new Dryads Saddles sprouting from the base of a dead elm.

In the RSF the white Trout Lilies are in full bloom. The patch of Starry Solomon's Seal appears to be spreading beside the (larger) patch of Virginia Bluebells. The bluebells themselves are only half bloomed, slowed by the cool weather. A few appear to have slight frost damage. With a bit of warmth and rain, many will be out by Sunday's walk.

I proceeded along the TRT, taking the spur trail out to the Sandbar. The two American Hazels and the Pawpaw are doing well, somewhat bent by the recent floodwaters. Both species are partially leafed out. I walked the rest of the trail, over the HB and down into the BCF, where the VPs continue to sink. The frog chorus was almost entirely absent. The surface of the ponds are still covered by cottony masses of *Mougeotia* (the dominant alga) with their attendant micro-communities.

Back at the LM, Will and I busied ourselves mulching the most recently planted trees, working our way back through time until we had mulched all the trees that appeared to be budding or leafing. I found some frost damage among a few of the smaller oaks. In the remaining time, we watered in all of the trees planted last fall and this spring.

birds: (few about today)

American Robin (TR); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (LM); Common Flicker (GF); Eastern Towhee (BCF()); Northern Cardinal; (RL) Red-winged Blackbird (TR); Song Sparrow (HBF); Tree Swallow (Rd); Turkey Vulture (UM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

new species:

'Tabellate diatom'	<i>Tabellaria</i> sp.	VP2 KD Ap27/08
Melosira	<i>Melosira granulata</i>	VP2 KD Ap27/08
'Cotton Green'	<i>Mougeotia [robusta]</i>	VP2 KD Ap27/08
Entransia	<i>Entransia</i> sp.	VP2 KD Ap27/08
Aeolosomatid worm	[<i>Aeolosoma</i>] sp.	VP2 KD Ap27/08