

Newport Forest

Saturday August 16 2008

2:55 - 8:30 pm

Weather: prec. 7 mm; RH 59%; BP 99.51 kPa; calm; sn/cld; T 28° C

Purpose: looking for new plant species

Participants: Pat & Kee

As soon as I entered the Nook to put out the lunch things, I saw the feathers and down of a predated Nuthatch. Broadwing Hawk? Sharp-shinned Hawk?

We went down to the creek to see if we could see the young Phoebes at the Upper Rapids, but saw none. Later, Pat watched an unidentified sparrow bathing in the creek. It would no sooner perch to begin the drying out process, when it would be seized with another fit of bathing. We could not ID the sparrow (without our books), but a number of possibilities suggested themselves. Pat found a new species of Aster near the Lower Rapids, however, while I busily took pictures of various plants and insects to get used to my new digital camera.

We changed the cards on the two game cameras and later I inspected all the cover boards. (no salamanders, but lots of arthropods) We climbed the HB looking for other specimens of Green Dragon, Pat discovering a small cave under a cliff where the erosion was particularly heavy. There were very few Jack-in-the-pulpits in that particular area, anyway. (ergo not good Green dragon habitat). We did spot a Giant swallowtail fluttering above the Prickly Ash bushes and noted several very heavy concentrations of Blue Ash saplings. (The species is thriving on the property.) I found the largest specimen of Rooted Oudemansiella (a rooted polypore that looks like a giant bolete) with a 20-cm cap diameter.

Back on the trail in the BCF, Pat made her second find of the day, an American Germander. (She has pressed this specimen for Jane to confirm later.) Back at camp we smelled something dead. The garbage can had a dead White-footed Mouse in it, with an entourage of Nicrophorus beetles. When we dumped the ensemble out on bare soil in the Nook, several of the beetles fled, but a few went under the mouse carcass. Presently, it began to slide oddly away into the grass, the prize carried away by the beetles underneath.

We noticed fewer birds than ever for a one-day stay. The Grosbeaks are showing up now only rarely. The adults may already be leaving for Peru.

Birds: (16)

American Crow (BCF); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (GF); Brown-headed Cowbird (LM); Common Grackle (GF); Common Yellowthroat (BCF/LM); Eastern Towhee (EW); Field Sparrow (LM); Gray Catbird (BCF/LM); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Cardinal (FCF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Song Sparrow (LM); Turkey Vulture (WM); White-breasted Nuthatch (EW); Eastern Wood Peewee (FC)

new species:

Wild Quinine	<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>	FCF PD Au116/08
American Germander*	<i>Teucrium canadense*</i>	BCF PD Au16/08

* Go figure . . .