

**Newport Forest** Thursday September 11 2008 2:40 - 7:00 pm

**Weather:** prec. 13 mm; RH 60%; BP 100.02 kPa; sn/cld; calm; T 27° C

**Purpose:** to explore the Sand Bar

**Participants:** Kee

Once camp was set up I walked at random through the RZ to get a rough idea of the kinds of insects visiting the flowers of goldenrod and other plants. Standing in the middle of it and shutting my eyes, I could hear nothing but a concerted hum and buzz of flies and bees -- everywhere. The goldenrod, meanwhile are just starting to go into decline. I counted every pollinating insect I saw immediately adjacent to me, logging it into one of four broad categories: flies, bees, wasps, bumblebees. Given that the RZ has an area of roughly one hectare, I found that there were approximately 22,500 insects visiting flowers of which about 8,100 were honeybees, 900 were wasps, about the same number of bumblebees and over 12,000 flies, the vast majority being Syrphids -- a good ten spp.

So much for math. It would have been a great day for new insects, except I forgot to bring any reference books. I was forced to make notes and drawings of two insects that I found near the trailer, a Sphecid wasp hovering about a dead mouse on the trailer deck and a beautiful bronze Buprestid beetle wandering in foliage near the old Basswood. Both happened to be distinctive (luckily) and common, so my descriptions were sufficient to complete the ID at home. I also photographed the large Giant Swallowtail larva on the Hop Tree near the trailer. It took four shots before I got the macro thing to work. At the Nook Mr Chipmunk was literally stuffing his face with birdseed.

After a break I took brush-hook, hoe and backpack into the woods, following the TRT into the RSF, until I came to the point of departure to the Sandbar (SB). Along the way I had checked some old plantings near the bluebell patch. I found an American Beech and a Spicebush, both in reasonable shape. Both had obviously grown, but not a great deal.

I hacked and hoed a 60 m trail from the main trail to a point just adjacent to the SB. The purpose of the trail was to provide long-term access to a place that was proving worthy of study, given its unusual soil and exposure conditions. The trail will also prevent a lot of trampling, the certain outcome of wandering the area in confusion. I then put down my tools and wandered into the same jungle of foliage I had visited last time. Looking around for any plant that might conceivably be new, I picked three, two of them vines and one a nettle.

Walking the rest of the TRT, I picked up two white-flowered plants on the HB and a fifth specimen in the BCF, a tall and spindly plant with tiny flowers, well-dispersed.

I decided not to change the camera cards until Cam #1 was back on site -- next visit. A thundering rush above my head announced the arrival of about a thousand grackles at the GF. Coming out I noticed the road dept. power shovel parked in the Upper Meadow and massive scars inside the West Ravine, where the crew had seen fit to build a sort of road down to the culvert

Note: At home Pat was able to identify all five plant specimens, except one. Ironically, that was the only new species. It has a densely (short-) bristled stem, leaves divided into 3 or five lobes (depending on what you call a "lobe,") toothed, opposite and a flower (petals missing) reminiscent of a raspberry. It seems to have a climbing or recumbent habit, being draped all over the nettles and wingstems, depending on its bristles (rather than tendrils) to keep it in place. (Pat has a more complete list of characters.)

**Birds:** (8) [our numbers are low because several birds that we normally pick up by ear have stopped calling. Ear-birding has its limitations.]

Blue Jay (GF); Canada Goose (EW); Common Grackle (GF); Gray Catbird (RL); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Turkey Vulture (BCF); White-breasted Nuthatch (GF)

**New species:**

Flat-headed Hardwood Borer	<i>Dicerca divaricata</i>	GF/Tr	KD	Sp11/08
'Caterpillar Wasp'	<i>Ammophila procera</i>	Tr	KD	Sp11/08
Wooly leaf Gall Wasp	<i>Callirhytis</i> sp.	GF/LM	KD	Sp11/08

**Phenology:** one mosquito every 5-10 minutes or so