

Newport Forest Thursday November 6 2008

3:00 - 5:20 pm

Weather: prec. 10 mm; RH n/r; BP 29.41; calm; clear; T 21° C

Purpose: planting trees

Participants: Kee, Abid

We gathered all the potted and bagged trees from the TS and carried them down, a few at a time, to the creek bluffs. I planted them without gards and Abid watered them carefully. That was it.

We then proceeded down to the trailer and on to the RL to retrieve the canoe for the winter. We put it up on its stand and covered it with the plastic tarp.

Birds: (5)

American Crow (BCF); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (LM); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

Newport Forest Friday November 14 2008

2:45 - 4:20 pm

Weather: prec. 34 mm; RH 88%; BP 28.98"; calm; lt rn; T 11° C

Purpose: quick visit

Participants: Kee

I rejoiced at the water in the rain gauge when I got to the trailer. It reminded me that a precipitation summary should be entered with this report. I filled the tray and meadow feeders, then retrieved the nursery box from behind the trailer and into the back of the van. A light but steady rain had begun to fall. The scene was gloomy, but the air had an invigorating softness & humidity.

I set out along the TRT, stopping to photograph the river, then proceeding into the RSF. I had just left the bluebell area when I heard a brief, but rather loud shriek coming from up on the east end of the HB. It was not a bird, having more the volume of a larger mammal. All I could think of was some kind of deer vocalization. It is rutting season, after all.

In the middle of the Box Elder forest I turned off the main trail and took the trail for the Sand Bar (SB). There, with the herb veg all stripped and/or fallen, one could once again see the ground. I planted 10 pawpaw seeds at random locations throughout the SB and noting once again how very sandy the soil is there. Then I

looked for the pawpaws I had planted 3 years ago. Voila! What the veg had obscured all summer now stood out like a ship's mast. The pawpaw I inspected had grown several inches and there was quite a little pile of large (pawpaw) leaves around the bases of the tree. It had evidently done well. This was not surprising because the Sand Bar is ideal pawpaw habitat.

My attention was distracted by the discovery of a large den site beside the trail. Although there was no surrounding mound, a hole of 8" diameter descended abruptly into darkness. At the rim was a single partial print of what appeared to be a "thumb" (analogue) of an animal's paw, complete with nail-hole. Two slighter prints, each with a nail, flanked the thumb -- part of the same paw. (Don't go there, please.)

The moisture in the ground and the humidity in the air had brought out many fungi. Although I was anxious about getting off the property before it got too wet to drive, I stopped to inspect some old friends and take a picture. (P) In the BCF I was disappointed to see several of the remaining Bitternuts had crashed down over the trail, as well as one old elm. On the way out I changed all the trail cam cards and supplied #1 and #2 with fresh batteries.

To get out, I positioned the van at the very end of the farm track, facing in the exit direction. I got the van rolling over the squidgy ground, slowly gaining speed, gingerly applying the accelerator, gaining more speed. Then the roller coaster, gunning the engine on the descents, placing a tire on the marginal grass on the ascents. I was almost airborne at the top of the final hill, then I slowed as I neared the TS, knowing that a loss of control at this speed could end with a few bounces down the creek bluffs.

When I got home and looked at the trail cam images, I was pleased to see several deer (or several shots of one deer), but one scene has us greatly puzzled. (See below) What is that rope-like thing doing in the woods and what or who is towing it? Pat did some close-ups on the jpg to show that it was two or three wire-like components like twisted like old fashioned lamp cord. Or could it be the small intestine of a prey, with a coyote towing. Or was it a deer trailing a world-champion tapeworm in the act of leaving it's host?

Following is an excerpt from our precipitation records for the last 5 years. The total precipitation for 2001, 2002 and 2003 are almost carbon copies of the 600s we see for 2004, -5, and -7. Only the years 2000, 2006 and 2008 have performed to their historical norms. (or a little better) Total precipitation will have more

direct impact on the future of Newport Forest than any other single climatological change, including temperature.

Precipitation Record 2008

Month	amount (mm)	08	07	06	05	04	03
January	57	57	112	75	63	19	
February	131	188	139	162	119	19	
March	162	350	189	233	140	58	
April	45	395	243	292	241	88	
May	61	456	284	377	301	138	
June	88	544	305	453	345	200	295
July	52	600	379	557	397	310	
August	89	689	435	636	421	371	
September	105	794	480	740	477	377	
October	50	844	518	870	525	440	
November	51 (14)	895	534	917	589	504	
December			674	1020	667	617	

Total precipitation

'07 674 mm
 '06 1020 mm
 '05 667 mm
 '04: 617 mm
 '03: 730 mm

Regional averages:
 Ridgetown 969 mm
 Chatham 808 mm