

Sunday Visit to Newport Forest

Newport Forest Sunday June 28 3009 2:15 - 8:30 pm

weather: prec. 4 mm; RH 59%; BP 97.8 kPa; ovcst; SW 5-25 kmh; T 30° C
purpose: searching for new fungi and old butterflies
participants: Pat, Kee

While Pat explored the area along the Fleming Creek Trail (FCT) for fungi & slimes, I stayed close to camp, watching Two-stripe eating bird seed from the (recently reinforced) maple feeder. I finally bestirred myself to go out and catch some butterflies by way of preparation for next week's butterfly count. As I worked the ER/HBF area, I flushed an adult Eastern Cottontail who took off for the Hole. I had caught five leps when Pat showed up with some new fungi in hand including one or two potential slimes, as well as a peculiar white, funnel-shaped mushroom with dry, papery fluted walls. We could find it in none of our fungal references.

Together we watched Two-stripe (now on the ground) and decided that the black patches behind her ears were also distinctive. At this point the kits emerged from the box one at a time and began to play on the branches of the old maple, chasing each other along them and performing a number of death-defying acrobatic stunts.

We walked to the RL to catch/observe more butterflies. Along the way, I spotted a beautiful, pale yellow "butterfly" which I chased into the woods with a net and finally caught. It turned out to be a day-flying moth -- a geometrid, at a guess. (P) Later I could identify it as a new species; the Crocus Geometer is rather less common than it's lookalike, the False Crocus Geometer, but is actually easy to distinguish. At the RL, there was little action, apart from a persistent Great Spangled Fritillary that was puddling along the base of the bluffs. Pat thinks we should cut the long grass here next weekend before the butterfly people show up. Mussel Beach (MB) is finally starting to emerge from the river; we could walk the whole beach in spite of a few narrow passages. Pat spotted a Yellow Warbler here.

Back in camp we birded passively in the Nook, while I cut some more mulch cloths. I gathered a sample of the mystery shrub for Jane, as well as a branch from the diseased Black Cherry. Later I determined four candidates for the infection on the basis of the symptoms (reddish brown blotches on the leaves, followed by shot-holes), tentatively rejecting one on the basis of hole size and number. But frankly, I'm just not set up for it.

Perhaps because of the high winds (later gusting to 50-60 kmh) there were fewer birds than usual about.

birds: (18)

American Crow (HL); Blue Jay (GF); Brown-headed Cowbird (LM); Common Yellowthroat (GF); Eastern Kingbird (Nk); Eastern Towhee (FCF); Field Sparrow (LM); Gray Catbird (GF); House Wren (Hl); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (OGF); Red-tailed Hawk (GF); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Tr); Song Sparrow (GF); Tree Swallow (Rd); Turkey Vulture (LM); Wood Thrush (FCF); Yellow Warbler (RL)

mammals: (6)

Eastern Chipmunk (Tr); Eastern Cottontail (ER/HBF); Meadow Jumping Mouse (RZ/BCF); Raccoon (GF); Red Squirrel (Tr)

leps: (10)

Cabbage White (Nk); Clouded Sulphur (LM); Common Wood Nymph (LM); Crocus Geometer (ET/BC); Great Spangled Fritillary (LM); Inornate Ringlet (LM/ER); Little Wood Satyr (LM/ER); Monarch (UM); Viceroy (LM); Virginia Ctenucha (LM/ER)

phenology: Michigan Lilies in full bloom

new species:

Crocus Geometer Xanthoatype sospeta ET/VP KD Je29/09
'Jelly Horns' Calocera [cornea] FCT PD Je29/09

IMAGES:

(click on image to enlarge)



Michigan Lilies in bloom

(click on image to enlarge)



The Crocus Geometer (from the web)