

Site Visit Report

Newport Forest Saturday/Sunday July 4/5 2009 2:50/5:30 pm

weather: prec. 14 mm; RH 57%; BP 99.3 kPa; sn/cld; calm; T 15) C
purpose: two-day stay & Annual Butterfly Count
participants: Pat, Kee (Plus Brenda & Ben Kulon, Mary Ann & Samantha Hodge)

It was what my father used to call a "Keewatin" Day (the Ojibway word for "North Wind"), with an occasional refreshing zephyr from the north. I noticed, as I opened the gate, that the Birdsfoot Trefoil was being visited by up to three honeybees, an encouraging sign.

We were escorted into camp by a wild Turkey tom making a mad dash ahead of us that ended with a short flight into the woods. After setting up camp, Pat went off to find the first fungus of the day (resembling miniature orange muffins) while I watched Two-stripe & Co. raid the bird feeder on their tree. I bestirred myself to check the RZ, only to discover that the Black Cherry's fungal infection has reached the terminal stage, will all it's leaves now brown and shriveling. Returning to the trailer, I spotted a/the Red Squirrel at the maple feeder. It shivered its tail several times and made a squeaking noise. At other times we saw an Eastern chipmunk and an Eastern Gray Squirrel (black phase) at the feeders.

After supper we visited the Copse to look for fungi, finding two Amanita in the sward on the way. (S) We thought they stood a chance of being *A. flavorubescens*, but will check the specimens at home. While I was up closing the gate, Pat was visited back at camp by two raccoons, presumably males, one very dark, the other very fat, with a sandy coat.

After dark I went out to sit in the Nook with a flashlight to see how 2S managed her kits. She foraged for spilled bird seed (& kibble) in the Nook with three of her kits. Where were the other two? One turned out to be working the remnants on the maple tray feeder overhead and I discovered the fifth kit working the Hickory feeder. Suddenly, 2S took off followed by three of the kits. Later she returned, calling the roll with a monotone whine that began with a semi-bark. The kits all dutifully sounded out their churrs, including No. 4, who had since joined the group. Later, the dark raccoon showed up again, without his fat friend.

During the early darkness, we could hear Gray Tree Frogs calling from Eva's Woods (EW) and Green Frogs calling from the creek below. Later, by midnight, the sky had cleared and the stars came out with their usual brilliance, the air temperature dropping to 11° C. The moon was full and lit up the fog forming over the LM. A Screech Owl began to call from the BCF. I thought I heard the "Yowp" of an Eastern Short-eared Owl from the Fleming Creek Forest (FCF) -- but just once. Not sure enough to count it. The firefly display throughout the evening and night was rather weak, with perhaps only 2-3c visible in any direction at a time.

After breakfast next morning, Pat went up to help Nina look for butterflies on the Hurdle Property (HP), while I tried to sleep in. Nina was very happy to find a Silver Checkerspot to add to the day's butterfly count. The butterfly people were all up at Skunk's for the morning census.

Later in the morning I devised my first draft of a "bee protocol" then immediately put it into practice by testing it in the RZ. (3 honeybees, 2 bumblebees, 2 med. Syrphids and 6 small ones, 1 small wasp -- not an impressive count) Meanwhile, Pat was in the UM, witnessing the staggering sight of over two dozen Bobolinks, 8 of them males, the rest females & young. (Were they just visiting? We've hardly seen any so far this year.) Back in camp, she spied a small hawk, two small for a "Sharpie," but possibly a Falcon or an American Kestrel whip through the Nook and out over HBF. Again, we're not certain enough to add it to the list.

When the Kulons arrived, we scouted the LM for a while, then walked ET to the river, finding some great butterflies along the way, including the first Gray Comma recorded for Newport Forest. (See the report) Thanks to the Kulons our lep list doubled its usual size. Later, Mary Ann Hodge showed up with her 5-year old daughter Samantha, who wanted to see the wrens that had moved into the bird house she had made and contributed to the site. Later, while Pat and Mary Ann entertained Samantha with her own junior-sized butterfly net, I found a really peculiar-looking beetle on a daisy growing beside the road not far from the trailer. (P) Later at home I determined that it was a Scarabeid beetle, that it ate pollen and must therefore be a flower beetle. Checking the flower beetles on several websites, I encountered the genus *Trichiotinus* for which some four or five species were listed, overall, our beetle evidently being *T. piger*.

phenology: Planthoppers, leafhoppers and Orthopteran nymphs now common

leps: (21)

Cabbage White (LM); Common Wood Nymph (LM); Eastern Comma (Nk); European Skipper (LM); Giant Swallowtail (ER/GF); Gray Comma (RL); Great Spangled Fritillary (LM); Little Wood Satyr (LM); Monarch (LM); Mourning Cloak (RL); Northern Broken Dash (MB); Northern Crescent (LM); Orange Sulphur (UM/Rd); Pearl Crescent (ET); Red Admiral (UM); Red-spotted Purple (LM); Silver Checkerspot (HP); Silver-spotted Skipper (ET); Tawny Emperor (MB); Tiger Swallowtail (Nk); Viceroy (LM)

birds: (33)

American Crow (UM); American Goldfinch (LM); American Robin (HBF); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (GF); Bobolink (UM); Brown-headed Cowbird (LM); Brown Thrasher (GF); Cedar Waxwing (MB); Common Flicker (GF); Common Grackle (GF); Common Yellowthroat (GF/HBF); Eastern Kingbird (LM/GF); Eastern Screech Owl (BCF); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Field Sparrow (LM); Gray Catbird (GF); Great Blue Heron (FC); House Sparrow (Rd); House Wren (UM); Indigo Bunting (HL); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Cardinal (BCF); Northern Oriole (GF/HBF); Orchard Oriole (GF/HBF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Tr); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (HP); Song Sparrow (GF); Turkey Vulture (HBF); White-breasted Nuthatch (BCF); Wild Turkey (ER); Wood Thrush (GF/W)

new species:

'Dixie Cup' *Cotylidia diaphana* FCT pd/GT Je28/09
'Pink Paint Fungus' *Hypoxyton rubiginosum* FCT pd/GT Je28/09
'Naked Slime' *Arcyria denudata* FCT pd/GT Je28/09
(photo appeared in June 25 report)

black click beetle *Aeolus* sp. LM nz/KD J118/05
Hairy Flower Beetle *Trichiotinus piger* GF/ER KD J105/09
Gray Comma *Polygonia progne* ET BK J105/09

note:

Greg Thorn has confirmed the fungus *Calocera cornea* -- identified tentatively by Pat

IMAGES:

(click on image to enlarge)



the old Delaware Sawmill on the Longwood Road-- enjoy it while you can . . .

(click on image to enlarge)



Two-stripe & Co. at bird feeder

(click on image to enlarge)



The Hairy Flower Beetle (drag to desktop for enlarged view -- my closeup turned out fuzzy)