

# Alone at Newport Forest

Newport Forest Thursday July 16 2009 2:05 - 7:20 pm

weather: prec. 0 mm; RH 51%; BP 29.26; sn/cld; SW 10-40 kmh; T 30° C  
purpose: to check TRT  
participants: Kee

Coming in, I noticed that the gate was locked in an unusual way. It struck me that anyone from TTLT or the Stewards Committee who goes onto the property should inform Don Gordon, either before or after.

In the Nook I discovered that the feeder tray I had so recently repaired had come down -- presumably from the weight of too many raccoons. A visit to the creek revealed Saggittaria and Arum growing larger leaves than I had ever before seen; nutrients from this year's extensive flooding? (P) The old bridge log, having battered and banged its way down 200 m of creek is currently lodged from bank-to bank just below the lower rapids, if someone has the energy to roll it about 20° so the treads are once again horizontal.

It was a rather windy day, with a strong, gusting wind from the SW. This may have inhibited the birds and flying insects somewhat, as both counts seemed rather low. (See the "birds," below & the Bee Protocol.) I walked the TRT, stopping at Mussel Beach (MB) to watch the wildlife; a Killdeer and a Spotted Sandpiper (with three fledglings) poked along the shore. Was that a young, Double-crested Cormorant at the far rapids? I couldn't be sure. MB is now 90% emerged from the river. I paused on the river bluffs bench to enjoy the view, but was distracted by the appearance of a white-headed fly on a nearby Spreading Dogbane leaf. How odd! (P)

Continuing into the Riverside Forest (RSF) I groomed about 300 m of trail with the brush hook, then gave up to visit the Sand Bar (SB). What a mess! I couldn't find a single landmark and the veg was already high enough to obscure everything. I will come back another day to check the Pawpaws and other trees planted there. BTW: the mosquitoes have not been bad in recent weeks. The newly groomed BCT (Blind Creek Trail) is now a joy to walk. A good trail should be like a velvet carpet (personal ethic). On the way out I changed the card on Cam #1, our sole remaining working trail cam.

I conducted the bee protocol for the second time, noting a nice Silvery Checkerspot, along the way, as well as a new species of Blister Beetle.

The ground has become very dry and almost hard enough to blunt a shovel. (July total precip so far: 7 mm) I will order the water truck on monday to fill the Drought Buster. We'll have to start watering the younger trees soon. I stayed long enough to watch Two-stripe and her five kits forage for kibble, later stealing the kibble-bag from the Nook while I was in the trailer making supper. Other mammals seen on the property included a chipmunk at the Hickory feeder and a cottontail on Edgar's Road as the sun went down.

bee protocol (summary): Hymenoptera 6; Diptera 4 (2 honeybees)

birds: (15)

American Robin (BCF/ET); Blue Jay (Tr); Bobolink (UM); Common Grackle (GF); Common Yellowthroat (BCF/LM); Eastern Kingbird (UM); Killdeer (TR); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Cardinal (BCF); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Tr); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (Tr); Song Sparrow (LM); Spotted Sandpiper (TR); Turkey Vulture (BCF); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr);

new species:

'White-headed Fly' *Epalpus* sp.\* RB KD J115/09

'Red-collared Oil Beetle' *Nemognatha nemorensis* RZ KD J115/09

\*Family Tachinidae

phenology: Monarda in full bloom, "sunflowers" in bloom

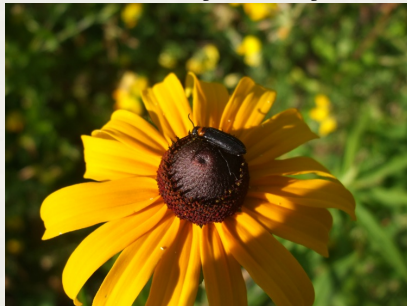
## IMAGES:

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Longwood Road Highlights: The Battle Hill memorial cairn*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*The Red-collared Oil Beetle on Black-eyed Susan. (move to desktop for closeup view)*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Mussel Beach almost emerged*