

Of Sedges, Erosion and Things to be Done

Newport Forest Sunday November 1 2009 1:30 - 5:30 pm

weather: prec. 10mm; RH 67%; BP 99.8kPa; calm; sn/cld; T 14° C
purpose: to collect sedges
participants: Pat, Kee

Thanks to the "Melbourne thermocline," the air temperature at Newport Forest was 3° C warmer than in London. Arriving at the property, we found the forested areas denuded of leaves, a winter landscape. Since much of the summer ground layer vegetation has died back, it was much easier to find mosses and sedges, even though most specimens of the latter have lost their fruiting bodies.

Before getting to the bottomland, there was maintenance to do. I drained the water tank for the winter, then went to check the east Ravine, while Kee took the bench from the water tank up to the road (for Nina's walks), tying it to a post. He also took a load of old wood (for Edgar's stove) up to the Hurdles' drive and continued the process of junk removal from the tree station. The hawthorn shrubs in the Upper Meadow are getting out of hand. If we want to keep the area as wet meadow, we must get some cutting done, preferably before the 2010 nesting season. Down at the trailer, we set up camp and Kee changed the SD card on the trail cam.

We walked down to the lower rapids of the creek to check the sedge I collected on our last visit. (*Carex retrorsa*). Here, I started a spry Green Frog and Kee took algae samples from a submerged log. I collected a few more sedges in the area, but most were well past the fruiting stage. The ones I collected were common sedges, but useful for practicing ID using my Illinois Sedge Manual. I also made notes on places to look for sedges next June.

Next we walked to the River Landing, where Kee found large blocks of clay/loam had rolled down the bluffs to the beach (2P). We have spent little time on the beach this year, owing to the generally high water levels. We suspect that much of it has eroded away. Coming back along Edgar's Trail, we took a side trip into Blind Creek, where I noted many *Carex grayii* growing in the old bed. The area needs volunteers to cut the multiflora rose bushes before they take over the native plant areas. Kee collected some Fall Oysters from an old log on the way out.

Other observations: Lots of robins were marshaling over the woods near the trailer. I spotted a rather torpid Monarch in Harvey's Bean Field (HBF) and a seemingly new moth flew into our van, but few insects were about otherwise. Apart from one squirrel calling, no other mammals were around, not even chipmunks. Back home checking the algae, Kee was happy to see two old diatom friends that he had found in other areas, but not previously at Newport Forest.

birds: (14)

American Crow (EW); American Goldfinch (LM); American Robin (FC); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (ER); Canada Goose (TR); Common Flicker (BCF/E); Dark-eyed Junco (GF); Downy Woodpecker (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Song Sparrow (Tr); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wild Turkey (BCF); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (FCF)

new species:

'Yellow-headed Slime' *Hemitrichia [calyculata]* GF kd/GT[KD] Je25/09
'Three-ridged Soldier' *Podabrus tricostata** NF SM J130/09
ovoid diatom** *Cocconeis pediculus* FC/LR KD Nv01/09
tube-dwelling diatom *Encyonema* sp. FC/LR KD Nv01/09

* to be confirmed

** epiphytic on *Cladophora*

phenology:

99% of trees have lost 99% of their leaves. Have the Turkey Vultures gone? Goldenrods and asters have all gone to seed.

jobs for subsequent visits: winterize the trailer; put away tools & chairs; cut hawthorns in UM and roses in BCF.

IMAGES:

[\(click on image to enlarge\)](#)

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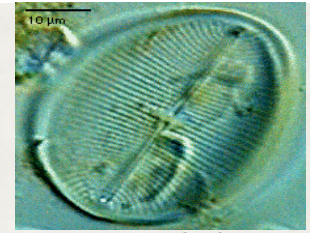
'Three-ridged Soldier Beetle'
(photo courtesy of Steve Marshall)



Encyonema spp. often live in jelly tubes, even in the creek's rapids (file image)
Note that clinging to a filamentous alga or living in a jelly tube are both good strategies for remaining in areas with a fast current.
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Mass-wasting from slope of River Bluffs (N end of Hogsback) Note overburden of clay loam on blue clay base.



Cocconeis pediculus: a diatom that sometimes attaches itself to *Claophora* (a common filamentous alga) in large numbers (file image)