

A Flying Visit...

Newport Forest Tuesday December 8 2009 2:50 - 4:40 pm

weather: prec. 24 mm*, RH 84%; BP 97.7 kPa; calm; ovcst; T 0° C
purpose: to check property
participants: Kee

I changed the cam card, took the weather, and filled the bird feeders before taking the TRT for a tour of inspection. The river was running green with a modest fall bloom of algae. Further along in the RSF I heard the unmistakable shriek of a Pileated Woodpecker. ("whik-whik-whik . . .")

Across the river I could see (and hear) a farmer disking his field right along the edge of the river. A black squirrel climbed a tree near the tractor while, strangely enough, one ran across the forest floor ahead of me at the same time. I photographed a probable growth of lemon drops on a log in the RSF and later, a nice Thin-maze Polypore on the HB, both just for the photo-record.

Down in the Blind Creek Forest (BCF) I thought I would also take a photo record of a group of giant ""black" willows that came down during the deepest part of the drought from 2001 to 2005. Since we lost both the willows and the bitternuts in the BCF, the canopy is now more than 50% open, whereas in 2000 it was 90 % closed. This alone would account for the expansion of our Wingstem patch from a minor growth along Edgar's Trail to an area of more than a hectare in the BCF west of the trail; "what we lose on the swings, we gain on the roundabouts."

* corrected to 22 mm due to thermal expansion of ice

birds: (5)

Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Dark-eyed Junco (GF); Downy Woodpecker (GF); Pileated Woodpecker (RSF/W; White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

report on hay infusions:

The three infusions (TR, LM, BCF) have been rather slow to "take off." The first ciliate to appear was in the TR jar -- a Paramecium. I can't really account for the fact that I had not found this very common protozoan before now on site. Identifying paramecium spp is relatively easy: measure the animal, note the shape, and count the water-expelling vessicles. The next (new) critter to show up took hours just to get to family (finally resorted to the Taylor Key): Spathidiidae (No, I didn't miss-spell that.) It turns out that terrestrial Spathidiids are rather poorly known and the family is under heavy revision as it comes under closer scrutiny. The elongate "beaked" ciliates emerging from the BCF infusion could easily be new to science, but I'm not going to bother sending them off. (not my job) Another ciliate blooming in my TR jar is Colpoda sp. (already logged)

new species:

Tule Bluet *Enallagma carunculatum* NF SM J130/09

'Sharp-tailed Paramecium' *Paramecium caudatum* (gp) TR KD Nv29/09
terrestrial Spathidiid [*Spathidella*] sp. BC KD Nv29/09

Note: *P. caudatum* is actually a group of species (or subspecies).

IMAGES:

(click on image to enlarge)



fallen trunks extend well beyond foreground giants

(click on image to enlarge)



looks like a six-pointer (buck looking to right in background)

(click on image to enlarge)



Wild Turkey Tom flies in (or out) in front of admiring (?) female (background)

note: trail cam has not been switched back to standard time (still on EDT)