

A Winter Visit

Newport Forest Sunday December 13 2009 1:55 - 5:20 pm

weather: prec. 32 mm; PH 71%; BP 98.8; calm; sn/hz; T 2° C
purpose: to clear deadfall from trails
participants: Kee, Darrren

Before I even got to the property, I met with Bob and Sue Pallister who live in Bothwell and frequently take nature walks along the Fleming Line. We chatted about Newport Forest and they expressed interest in the stewardship opportunity. (contact info to Don & Stan under separate cover)

Darren arrived on schedule and we wasted little time in getting the chainsaw out of his jeep and off along the TRT. The river is up moderately, with flotillas of thin ice cakes drifting downstream. We cut about 10 problem trees along the trail: deadfall stepovers, leaners, widowmakers, and deadheads. It is now once again an easy walk and we encourage stewards to visit during the exciting winter season, with its splendid tracking opportunities. We saw a black squirrel in the RSF and (between chainsawings) heard a flock of Wild Turkeys arguing near the river. We also spotted the travels of a White-footed Mouse along a succession of liner-logs, with their thin coating of snow.

Back at the trailer, Darren explained how they deal with the heavy Phragmites infestation at Rondeau; it's called "rolling the phrag." They tow a very heavy roller over mature stands, flattening them to a kind of semi-permanent mulch.

birds: (7)

American Goldfinch (Tr); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Downy Woodpecker (GF); Mourning Dove (LM); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wild Turkey (RSF/TR)

new species:

'Giant Paramecium' Paramecium multimicronucleatum TR KD Nv29/09

'Slender Spirostomum' Spirostomum [loxodes] TR KD Nv29/09

'Long-bodied Colpid' Colpidium [campylum] TR KD Nv29/09

'Pear-shaped Tetra' Tetrahymena pyriforme TR KD Nv29/09

'Small-mouthed Vorticella" Vorticella microstoma TR KD Nv29/09

Note 1: The TR hay infusion has produced another species of paramecium, illustrating a kind of succession that is common in infusions. P. caudatum, however, still dominates, but one can see from the number of Giant Paramecium undergoing fission that they will soon catch up.

Note 2: I finally found out how to take pictures through the microscope by digital camera: you DON'T remove the eyepiece, but simply shoot directly ! I will seek improvements in clarity.

Note 3: You can always tell a good hay infusion: the air in its vicinity smells like human digestive gases (not a coincidence, of course).

IMAGES:

(click on image to enlarge)



Mixed group of Paramecia feeding on bacteria; P. multimicronucleatum (e.g. three individuals at upper right) is fatter and slightly longer, in general, than P. caudatum (lower right). Two of the former have developed "blisters," a pathology related to osmoregulatory function.
400 X

(click on image to enlarge)



Colpidium campylum is a common ciliate found in rivers, ditches, even soils. Note striations, food vacuoles at rear. Mouth (stomum) is a slit just below the "beak" of the organism. (ignore pointer)
400 X

(click on image to enlarge)



a doe sniffs the measuring post, while her friend looks on.

(click on image to enlarge)



two wild turkeys (tom in foreground) head for the Lower Meadow
NOTE cam times are in EDT