

Walking the Line

Newport Forest Thursday March 25 2010 1:10 - 4:15 pm

weather: prec. 1 mm; RH 70 %; BP 101.3 kPa; N ≤ 20 kmh; ovcst; T 3° C
purpose: to mark west lot line for signage
participants: Jane Bowles. Kee

The Weather Channel lied once again: Instead of the sunny afternoon with a high around 11° C, we got a cold day with a north wind, a few periods of light rain and one five-minute wonder of wet snow.

Leaving one vehicle at the trailer, we drove to the property corner along the Fleming Line, leaving the other vehicle there. We stayed on the Janik side of the fence halfway to the Blind Creek Ravine, then crossed to the Newport side where the fencing began to break down. Well-strung for a few hundred metres, the fencing deteriorates to one or two strands or sections of good fence alternating with no fence or poor fence. We tried to attach a red marker ribbon every 80 metres or so, the “code” being that if the ribbon is tied to a post, the sign must go there. If tied to a fence wire, it means that the line crew must drive a new metal post at that location and bolt a sign to the post. Jane recorded the number of such places, so the crew would know how many posts to bring. She also recorded the sign locations on her gps unit.

As we went, our attentions were constantly diverted by the few plant species with individuals emerging everywhere underfoot. I had no idea how much False Mermaid there is growing on the hills and slopes of the “back” topography. At one point, she pulled out a dead plant that had stood through the winter, thinking it might be new. A closer examination brought her to wonder if it might be Venus’ Looking Glass. Up on the Hogsback, False Mermaid was again everywhere. I told her I knew where the Harbinger of Spring was found in 2008. “Let’s go there.” Luckily, I was able to locate it again, about 40 metres east of the old Chinkapin Oak. Jane took several pictures, as did I. I even took pictures of her taking pictures.

Coming off the HB, we could hear several Chorus Frogs calling from the VPs, but no other sp. We stopped at various points to examine things, including a fungus that I could not ID on the spot (S+P). Jane’s camera showed the pinkish pore surface so perfectly, that when you enlarged it, you could see the honeycomb structure very clearly. Pores were about 5-7 per mm. She said the smallish plant we had been noticing in the VPs was a Ranunculus of some kind, perhaps Cursed Crowsfoot.

We repaired to the trailer for sandwiches and drinks, where Jane leafed hastily through an old plant guide to examine the entry for Venus’ Looking Glass. She’ll get back to us on that one. [Late-breaking news: It isn’t VLG, after all.]

birds: no report

new species: no report

IMAGES:

(click on image to enlarge)



Jane points out False Mermaid

(click on image to enlarge)



Harbinger of Spring, a rare plant in Canada, grows in a few patches along the upper slopes of the HB. Note tiny leaves on trailing reddish stems. Note also mystic glow -- possibly the result

(click on image to enlarge)



fungus: Phellinus nigricans? Fomes fometopsis? We’ll let Greg Thorn, our consulting mycologist, decide. (The former ID would be a new species for the ATBI project, but it’s unusual to

of rarity. flower clusters about 1 cm in diameter

see either of the named spp to have so much fertile surface exposed in this manner. It could be the result of the tree's outward lean, one supposes.)