

## A Devastating Find - or is it?

Newport Forest Thursday June 10 2010 3:00 - 8:15 pm

weather: prec. 7 mm; RH 54%; BP 101.8 kPa; NW 0-10 kmh; sn/cld; T 25° C

purpose: to look for new species

participants: Pat, Kee

We stopped by the Copse on our way down to the trailer. In the Copse, still nervous and uncertain, was a large female one-eared Raccoon named "Uno" (for obvious reasons). Recently, as part of an informal arrangement with Ken and Nancy Murray of West Lorne, we gave them a green light to release their latest charge. Ken and Nancy do "raccoon rehab" under a license from the Ministry of Natural Resources. They had one previous release on the property in 2006, a male raccoon named "Sonny," who immediately disappeared from the radar, never to be seen again. So far, this release is different. We specified the Copse as a release point in order to minimize friction with the resident population, as described in previous reports. We told the Murrays that future releases will have to be made under guidelines agreed upon by the Newport Stewards Committee.

The rehabilitation process is dicey: the new raccoon a) typically has no foraging skills, as it was not raised in a natural setting, b) has no familiarity with the area, having spent most of its life in a (large) cage, c) will be viewed as an unwanted interloper by resident animals and attacked at every opportunity. The arrival of Uno brings a new sub-theme into the unpredictable narrative of these reports.

It was a brilliant day, with a fresh breeze from the NW; birds and insects were out in abundance -- a good day for our purpose. I toured the Regeneration Zone, pleased at growths of a foot or more in many species: Silver Maple, Sugar Maple, White Ash, Black Walnut, Cottonwood, Yellow Birch, Red Oak, and White Oak.

A large beetle flew into the trailer which we later identified at home as an Asian Longhorned Beetle. Because this is a very dangerous species, we are asking Stan Caveney and Steve Marshall to confirm the find.

Pat visited the peculiar habitat of mixed scrub hawthorne forest under the power lines in search of new plants, while I walked the Thames River Trail for a look-see. Pat came back with a scroll full of plants to examine, while I did some trail-grooming as I went. On the River Bluffs, I spotted several Cedar Waxwings setting up their seasonal insect hunt over the water. I also collected two mushrooms that I couldn't immediately identify. Back at the trailer we compared notes while watching a new Red Squirrel at the maple feeder -- even as another Red Squirrel raided the other feeder. A black-phase Eastern Gray also showed up briefly. Meanwhile, the Chipmunks kept their seed-shuttle going, steadily filling their storage chamber deep under the Nook.

A persistent watch by Pat on a yellow warbler that was not a Yellow Warbler, so to speak, yielded a Blue-winged Warbler, a bird our more expert friends occasionally spot on the property. Meanwhile, I found a new (but rather common) lacewing on a leaf along the edge of the Gallery Forest. Then Pat found a new Skipper and asked what species that Prunus sapling by the Nook actually was, a question no one had thought to ask for a decade. The key was unusable, as we had no flowers or fruit. However, it was obviously a Prunus and, among other matching characters, it had very shiny leaves. Pincherry

After a trailer dinner of grilled cheese sandwiches, we could relax in the Nook and argue about what we had seen on the day. We left before the fireflies started up.

birds: (23)

American Crow (FCF); American Robin (RSF); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (Tr); Blue-winged Warbler (ER/HL); Brown-headed Cowbird (GF); Cedar Waxwing (RB); Common Flicker (GF); Common Grackle (GF/E); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Towhee (RSF); Field Sparrow (UM); Gray Catbird (GF/E); House Wren (GF/HL); Killdeer (TR); Northern Cardinal (GF); Northern Oriole (RB); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (GF); Song Sparrow (GF); Turkey Vulture (LM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Yellow Warbler (GF);

Bird note from Paul Handford: The Short-eared Owl, while having a nearly worldwide distribution, is not as cosmopolitan as the Barn Owl. Different family but same line of business.

new species:

Goldeneye Lacewing *Chrysopa oculata* LM/ER KD Je10/10  
Asian Longhorned Beetle *Anoplophora glabripennis* Tr/GF pd/KD Je10/10  
Peck's Skipper *Polites peckius* HL/N PD Je10/10  
Pincherry *Prunus pensylvanica* Nk pd/KD Je10/10

'Pink Thorn-bracket' *Phellinus conchatus* BCF kd/GT Mr26/10

**IMAGES:**

Asian Longhorned Beetle (aka Starry Sky Beetle) is not a good find. They threaten to decimate our maple forests. Perhaps those little red mites on its pronotum will take care of the problem. . .

Here's a brief video on the subject offered by a New England entomologist:  
<http://www.5min.com/Video/Learning-About-Asian-Longhorned-Beetle-97737582>

A little Red Oak in the pink of health shows great promise in the Regen Zone.

I have decided to bestow the "common name" 'Pink Thorn-bracket' on this specimen retrieved last march from the BCF swamp forest. The name not only describes the colour and common substrate for *Pellinus conchatus*, but honours our fungal consultant Greg Thorn, who has finally come free of regular duties enough to give us a firm ID of the species. He has added it to the UWO Herbarium collection.

**Response:**

That looks like our native variety of long-horned beetle, not the Asian variety. Check with an expert though, but the white spots aren't distinct enough especially along the 'horns' to be the Asian long-horned beetle I think. I suggest contacting Canadian Food Inspection Agency office of Invasive Species.

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/pestrava/anogla/asialonge.shtml>

Natalie

**IMAGES**

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*In spite of its resemblance to the Asian Longhorned Beetle, this is most likely a Black Pine Sawyer. Note the red mites crowding the pronotum.*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Mussel Beach is exposed for the first time since the ice went out in February. This is where we normally spot Spiny Softshell Turtles that come out from the river to bask in the sun. Now we can start our watch again. . .*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Mother raccoon with four (?) kits caught by trail cam at water tub:*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Mother raccoon with four (?) kits*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Mother raccoon with four (?) kits*

*caught by trail cam at water tub:*

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