

Solitude in the woods -- nothing like it!

Newport Forest Wednesday June 30 2010 2:45 - 6:50 pm

weather: prec. 8 mm; RH 55%; BP 102.5 kPa; N 0-15 kmh; sn/cld; T 22° C

purpose: to check property

participants: Kee

After setting up camp, I was somewhat alarmed to see some seven Chipmunks at various spots around the trailer and Nook. This population also seems to be expanding. (See the report of June 24/10.)

I walked the Thames River Trail, approaching the River Landing with extreme caution in the hope of catching some Spiny Softshell turtles napping. None present. It was pleasant once again to walk through the Riverside Forest, this time noting how many birds made it their home. The “weeb” calls of the Great Crested Flycatcher mingled with the Eastern Towhee’s “Drink-your-tea” song, the clucking of the American Robin, and so on.

Back in camp I found a Red squirrel at one feeder and an Eastern Gray at the other. I (nearly) completed grooming the trail down to the creek, finding it now running at normal levels, meaning that it can be forded with hiking boots at the lower rapids. I had intended to go after some insects by beating the bushes along the edges of the Gallery Forest, but only had time to look under a few oak and maple leaves, I was surprised to find a mayfly under one of them. It was all red with a golden head and very long, white bristles on the end of the abdomen.

I stayed longer than usual, having supper in the Nook and being visited near the end of my stay by two of Wanda’s kits, with no sign of the other two. Wanda herself showed up about ten minutes later. An Eastern Cottontail rabbit raced ahead of my van on the way out to the gate, probably on a dare.

Birds: (16)

American Robin (RSF); Blue Jay (LM); Common Flicker (GF); Common Grackle (GF); Eastern Towhee (RSF); Field Sparrow (HBF); Gray Catbird (BCF); Great Crested Flycatcher (RSF); Mourning Dove (TR); Northern Cardinal (BCF); Northern Oriole (RL); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (BCF); Song Sparrow (GF); Turkey Vulture (TR); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

New species:

‘Red Spiny Crawler’ Eurylophella sp. GF KD Je30/10

Note This genus belongs to the Spiny Crawler family (Ephemerellidae) of Mayflies (Ephemeroptera). I have no web, print, or other resource that permits determination of the particular species observed today. (This is a frequent reason why we sometimes get no farther than genus.)

Drought watch: precipitation shortfall = 158 mm or 35% behind

IMAGES

(click on image to enlarge)

(click on image to enlarge)



For anyone not yet sick of our raccoon pictures, here are two of Wanda's kits in the Nook:



I often see this species of beetle parked on leaf or log just waiting for a whiff of death to go flying off to the source: The American Carrion Beetle (Necrophila americana)