

A Bug-eyed Bug

Newport Forest Thursday September 9 2010 2:00 - 6:30 pm

Weather: Prec. 3 mm; RH 70%; BP 101.7 kPa, NW 5-20 kmh; sn/cld; T 22° C

Purpose: maintenance

Participants: Kee, Brian

Almost as soon as we arrived, I sent Brian up the track to the upper meadow to start carting the new load of B-gravel over to the "mudhole." Although dry most of the year, there's a major seep running under the road there that turns the track into a deep, muddy soup every winter. When I get home from such a visit, neighbourhood children come over to admire the splatters of mud streaking the van. "Gosh! Where you goin' THAT fast?"

While Brian carted and shoveled gravel, I did the bee protocol under much the same conditions as I did last visit -- with much the same results. This time, however, the number of flies (Mostly muscids) was sharply up.

Toward the end of the visit, Brian had finished with the gravel and we walked the Thames River Trail to make sure it was clean and passable. Important visitor coming this Sunday. I collected a (possibly) new bracket fungus and patches of mildew attacking the leaves of stinging nettles.

Again with the birds. Where are they? I saw but one grasshopper and Brian found a (green) Praying Mantis on the track, still moving, but covered with ants that had nibbled most of their way through the mantis' neck. The head, consequently, gazed at its digital world from a rather odd dangle.

We saw one Chipmunk at the hickory feeder and a baby Red Squirrel at the other, The Red Squirrels have definitely expanded their territory from Janik's (mostly pines) over to Newport. (all deciduous)

New species:

Unique-headed Bug *Systelloderes biceps* RL nz/KD J131/05

Notes: I'm "hitting the bottles" again: there remain a few thousand little insect corpses to examine from the two malaise traps operated by Nina Zitani on site during the warm months of 2005. Thankfully, Steve Marshall took all our flies, consisting of several full jars. We have 157 IDs (1/3 from Marshall & Co.) from the malaise samples so far, 149 insects, 7 spiders, and 1 pseudoscorpion. The Unique-headed Bug (so-called) is a bizarre-looking insect, as you will see in the drawing below.

Phenology: Clover *Nomophila* moths still plentiful, Monarchs still around.

Bee Protocol: mixed sun/cld, windy -- like last time

HB BB OB SF LF SW LW

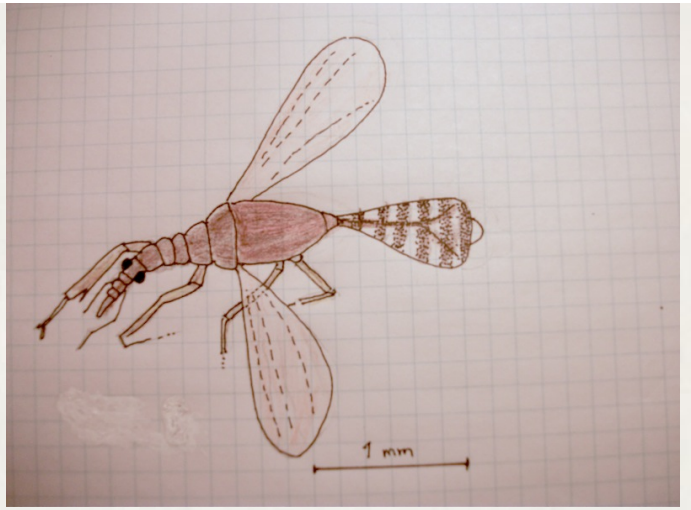
82 43 1 11 15 0 0

(75 31 1 5 5 1 1) << prev. visit

IMAGES:



Since we're having a slow day, the only other image I thought of comes from our local history thread. Here is the old Delaware sawmill, located just a mile east of Delaware on the Longwood Road. Yup, it's still in operation. I don't have a date for the sawmill, but it may date back to the 1850s -- with some structural changes.



The Unique-headed Bug shown here (floating in ethanol) in my working drawing closely resembles the earwigfly, but is not in Mecoptera. I have no idea what it's doing in Hemiptera. Note the weird terminal appendage and the extreme rearward placement of legs 2 & 3. Four specimens are available for study.