

Newport Forest

Sunday July 10 2011

1:55 - 7:05 pm

Weather: prec. 0mm; Rh 58%; BP 101.6 kPa; cld/sn; calm; T 32° C

Purpose: trail maintenance

Participants: Kee, Steve

Before setting out for the Thames River Trail, Steve & I “hydrated” (as they call it these days) before setting out. We saw Chipmunks, a young Red Squirrel and even an Eastern Gray Squirrel raid the bird feeders. Because of the high heat & humidex, few birds were out today.

At the river we looked down at Mussel Beach from the bluffs, watching three Killdeers probe the shoreline for little invertebrate goodies while further downstream at least two Spiny Softshell Turtles slid into the water, only to emerge at the surface, noses pointing skyward -- ever watchful eyes just above the waterline.

The work was hot and tiring. I scraped trail while Steve ran the weed eater. We took frequent water breaks and discussed everything from the Emerald Ash Borer to 1950s music, like Chuck Berry, Johnny Cash, & Co. Johnny Cash's manager, Sol Holiff, lived in London up to his suicide in 1973. etc. etc. Although Steve did pretty much the whole trail, I had to be content with scraping ten-metre or 20-metre stretches, then racing to catch up. It took longer, but I still prefer the crew of three, one with a brush hook and two with hoes.

I had to drive Steve back to the Rez because his wife Karen had the truck today.

Birds: (13)

American Robin (ERav); Blue Jay (Tr); Common Grackle (BCF)/E); Common Yellowthroat (LM); Gray Catbird (BCF/E); Great Crested Flycatcher (EW); Killdeer (TR); Mourning Dove (FCF); Northern Oriole (BCF/LM); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Nk); Song Sparrow (TR); White-breasted Nuthatch (GF); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (HB)

Phenology:

Monarda half into bloom

IMAGES:



Early Summer flowers presently dominate the Lower Meadow: Light purple Monarda (aka Bee Balm) surround a patch of Black-eyed Susan daisies. Scattered here and there are small, yellow Bird's Foot Trefoil and occasional white Daisy Fleabane.



Monarda is a great attractant for bees, wasps, and butterflies, as with this Meadow Fritillary, drinking nectar from the florets of Monarda.



I'm guessing it's a buck, come for a lick of salt in front of Trail Cam #1
Brown ants must have somehow screwed up the date setting. I took a
long time getting it right. Time to replace the camera.