

Newport Forest

Thursday July 14 2011

1:15 - 6:40 pm

Weather: prec. 0mm; RH 54%; BP 102,1 kPa; cld/sn; calm, T 25° C

Purpose: planning tree survey, hunting for insects

Participants: Kee, Mora Gregg, Donald Craig

Donald, who has kindly agreed to assist with the tree survey of the Blind Creek Forest dropped by for a consultation on various tree census methods. Much of the discussion centered on how to deal with the cohorts of younger trees, from seedlings to saplings. As for the problem of marking trees that have already been counted, Donald suggested a paint-ball gun, with its water-soluble dye. Another method involves a three-person team, one of whom has the job of recording.

After Donald left, Mora and I (literally) beat the bushes for insects, watching what landed on a white sheet spread below bush or bough. I was hampered by lack of a killing jar and had to photograph any interesting specimens. Quite a few snails (mostly the European Striped Snail) showed up, along with (European) earwigs; there is one native Earwig in eastern North America, the Spine-tailed Earwig. Other insects included tiny green beetles that would fly off as soon as I tried to photograph them. At the creek we found a nymphal stage of the Leaf-footed Bug *Acanthocephalus* sp., as well as what appeared to be a small firefly.

At the river we found Mussel Beach finally fully exposed, with a few “lagoons” of remnant river water. Overhead a small flock of Cedar Waxwings hunted insects, while Killdeers roamed the shore. I showed Mora all the representative rock types on the beach as an introduction to the historical geology of the area.

Note: The property is now sufficiently dry that we may soon start watering.

Birds: (16)

American Crow (BCF); American Robin (BCF); Bald Eagle (TR); Blue Jay (GF); Canada Goose (TR); Cedar Waxwing (TR); Common Grackle (GF); Common Yellowthroat (LM); Gray Catbird (BCF); Killdeer (TR); Mourning Dove (FCF); Northern Cardinal (ER); Northern Oriole (GF); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Nk); White-breasted nuthatch (GF); Wood Thrush (EW)

Phenology: Green Dragon fruiting, some Ashes fruiting

IMAGES:



Young Red Ash in Regeneration Zone has produced a wealth of new seeds.



Young Tulip Tree by creek has gigantic leaves a good 40 cm wide, counting the lateral lobes (here folded down). The enormous leaves result from a well developed root system. Every other year, this tree has been crushed flat by large, heavy ice cakes and every year it re-sprouts with an even greater show of new growth. This year so far it has grown well over a metre !



Mussel Beach is fully exposed for the first time this year. Mora enjoyed the “geology tour” that began with Devonian* fossils and shales and ended with glacial dropstones of granite & gneiss. She is seen here surveying the river with two beach “lagoons” in the foreground.

*about 390 million years ago, the equator ran right through the middle of North America, then tilted on its side, so to speak, and harbouring a vast inland sea. What is now Newport Forest was then a tropical sea bottom receiving sediments from the vast Acadian mountains, then rivaling the Himalayas of today. (All that remains are the Appalachians). Later, as the sea retreated, steamy tropical forests grew here, as evidenced by iron sulphate nodules that form in tropical soils. Natives call these nodules “thunderstones”.