

Newport Forest

Sunday September 4 2011

6:00 - 6_55 pm

Weather: prec. 15 mm; RH 88%; BP 101.0 kPa; ovcast, calm; T 26° C

Purpose: Attend powwow and visit site

Participants: Kee

It was time for me to attend the annual pow wow at Moraviantown so, instead of driving to Newport Forest, I continued another 20 minutes down the Longwoods Road to the pow wow. As I drove, I thought back over the last few hundred years in this area. Our earliest records go back to the mid-17th Century when the Attawandaron Nation inhabited most of southern Ontario, extending into what is now western New York state. They were driven out by the fierce Mohawks and in the 18th Century were slowly replaced by the southern Ojibwa. (aka Chippewa)

Fearing for the safety of their Delaware charges from European expansion, the Moravian Fathers moved west from the Hudson & Delaware rivers area into the Ohio Valley, then west again into Southern Ontario which was safer, as Europeans (and newly-minted “Americans”) had settled the area rather sparsely. Following the War of 1812, the British Colonial administration set up reserves for the Ojibwa, Oneida and (some) Delawares south of London. Ontario. There are several other reserves in the general area, including Walpole Island, Stony Point, Caldwell, Grand River, etc.

According to the Jesuit Relations, this part of Ontario was extraordinarily rich in game, including some species that are no longer present such as Elk, Black Bear, Cougar, and so on.

Newport Forest was undoubtedly inhabited, at least occasionally. It was an ideal site for summer camps, when bands would leave their winter hunting areas and move to the nearest river to spend the summer fishing and gathering nuts, berries and other food. The creek was a natural water source and the Hogsback gave protection from cold northern winds. For all I know the area was inhabited year round at times.

At the powwow, I met up with Glen Jacobs and we roamed the booths together, buying furs, tee-shirts, and bells. We bought french fries from the Oneida Chip Wagon and met with natives from other reserves as far away as Indiana, Oklahoma, New Jersey and northern Ontario. There is a powwow circuit of sorts, wherein native dancers and singers travel from venue to venue through a coordinated series of events, picking up prize money from time to time and re-

cementing old friendships. One booth operator from Windsor told me of his brush with Homeland Security at the border during the anthrax scares. The HS lady was wearing blue latex gloves, so our friend deliberately coughed as he handed over the documents, sending the lady into a frenzy of protective measures, “Jeez. Lady. Where’s your sense of humour? Do you even have one?”

So I bought a “homeland security” tee shirt that showed an ancient photograph of Geronimo and his warriors. The caption read, “Fighting Terrorism Since 1492”. Point taken.

Leaving the powwow, I dropped in at Darren’s then later at Steve’s. A light rain had started, so I took my leave of Moraviantown to head back to Newport Forest and drop off a fresh bottle of propane at the trailer. It had rained there the previous evening and it rained off and on while I was there -- just less than an hour, the shortest site visit yet.

I was there long enough to put out seed & feed, change the trail cam cards, and to notice that our resident Parson Spider has moved his theatre of operations from the trailer ceiling to the inside of the door, where flies trap themselves behind the screen.

New species: (cleaning up from last week)

‘Black Spot Gall’	<i>Asteromyia carbonifera</i>	LM/Tr KD Au26/11
‘Oak Bunch Gall’	[<i>Cynips frondosa</i>]	LM KD Au26/11

Note: A common diagnostic element for the Grass-leaved Goldenrod is the presence of large black spots on the leaves. These are due to the gall midge listed above. No other species of goldenrod gets them. No other gall maker produces these black spots. I will need some help with the oak gall. Please see the last image below.

IMAGES:



Above: Young Lady in regalia prepares for the competition. I only know her as “No. 200”. What caught my attention, apart from her friendly demeanor, was the design on her forehead which struck me as not only innovative, but the revival of a once-universal practice of “war paint” or painted decoration in any case. It worked for me.

Below: A great variety of costumes appear at pow wows. Some of them are inspired by Plains Indian dress, some by Navajo, etc. I used to criticize this eclectic practice as lacking in authenticity, but I have since come to realize that the point of the costumes is to revive the living spirit behind the dance.

Note the special stand built for ELDERS. Delawares, like other first nations, respect their elders and do not shut them away in seniors homes.





Newport Mystery: I suspect this is the gall of a Cynipid wasp, as listed above, although the other suspect in the case is *Andricus foliaformis*, also a Cynipid. If any insect fans and/or entomologists out there are familiar with this particular rosette- or bunch-gall, I would appreciate hearing from them. In the meantime, here's the mystery: What are those white things? They are about the same shape, size and general appearance as a Tic Tac (breath mint). Assuming that no one left their tic tacs in the gall, I have no clue what they are. Eggs? Cocoons? Do they have some relationship to the gall-maker or are they merely accidental?