

Newport Forest

Thursday September 22 2011

2:50 - 6:20 pm

**Weather:** prec. 20 mm; RH 56%; BP 101.9 kPa; sun/cld; SW 0-10 kmh; T 26° C

Purpose: to search for new species

Participants: Kee

Shortly after arriving, taking the weather and filling the feeders, I noticed a strange sight on the trailer deck; a Six-spotted Tiger Beetle had an ant in its jaws. The ant was still wriggling and the beetle was taking its time eating the ant, if that's what it was doing.

I went down to the creek to inspect the lower rapids, when I was diverted by a rattling call from upstream. I turned just in time to see a Kingfisher take off from a tree overhanging the Upper Rapids. We spot these birds only rarely, perhaps twice a year. As for the Lower Rapids, I was disappointed to see that the long tresses of Cladophora had disappeared entirely. It was there that I spotted a Tussock Moth caterpillar (See IMAGES) on a sapling nearby.

It was a good day for butterflies, relatively speaking. I kept running into Common Buckeyes; they've been especially "common" recently. I went to the Copse, our fungal haven, only to find a single species sprouting. However, it was new.

I took a break in the Nook, spotting a dead bumblebee near my chair. I frequently find dead insects there, placing them on the table for later ID in case they're new. About ten minutes later I happened to be pondering the general theme of life and death in this place (no kidding), when my glance happened to fall on my dead bumblebee. One of its legs twitched. What! Then it began to thrash its legs, turned over, crawled a bit, and took off. Must have been having an afternoon nap.

The birds were a little more numerous today. One reason for the recent drop in sightings could be that food is now more plentiful, with so many nuts, seeds and fruits about, not to mention insects. It is a "fat" time.

Toward the end of my stay I went down to the rapids, too lazy to put on rubber boots, and waded out into the shallow rapids to retrieve some biofilm-coated rocks for the microbial sample. Of course, I got a soaker.

I left the property with a sigh. The weather had been warm and the next day would be cold and rainy, right on cue. Summer is over.

**Birds: (7)**

American Robin (GF/E); Belted Kingfisher (UR); Blue Jay (BCF); Cedar Waxwing (LM); Common Flicker (GF/E); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF/E); White-breasted Nuthatch (BCF);

**Leps: (6)**

Cabbage White (LM); Common Buckeye (ER/LM); Great Spangled Fritillary (LM); Eastern Comma (Tr); Little Wood Satyr (GF/LM); Sulphur sp. (LM)

**New species:**

Spotted Collybia                      *Collybia maculata*                      Cps KD Sp22/11

‘Mini-vorticella’                      *Vorticella [minima]*                      FC/LR KD Sp22/11

**Phenology:**

Goldenrod spp now 80% in seed; Aster spp. at peak bloom; milkweed pods fully developed

**Note on ATBI progress:**

The current total species count stands at **1741**, breaking down among kingdoms as follows:

Plantae	471
Animalia	877
Protista	165
Fungi & Lichens	212
Eubacteria	16

Will we ever reach 2000 or even beyond? It could be estimated that Newport Forest has at least 4000 species, not counting soil bacteria, viruses, etc. The great majority would be insects!

**IMAGES:**



Nikon 995

While this Hickory Tussock Moth awaits colder weather to enter the pupa stage, it watches a leaf-movie.



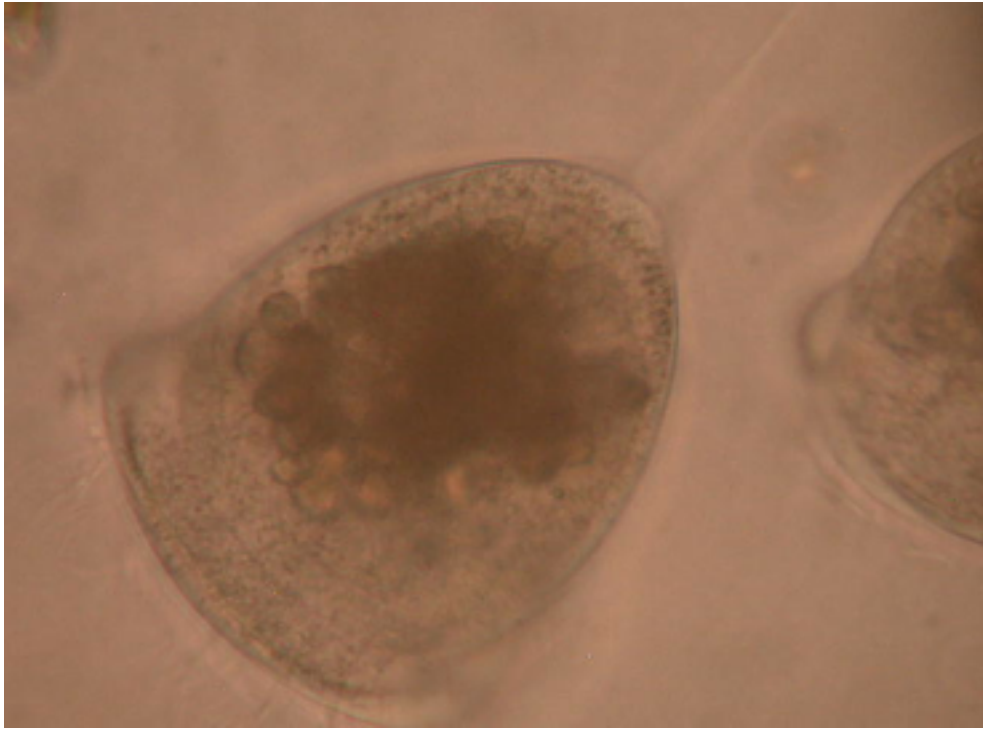
Source: Pbase

The finished product displays a typically “brocaded” pattern, like the design of a royal cloak. Visit Tom Murray’s galleries to be amazed at hundreds more: <http://www.pbase.com/tmurray74/moths>



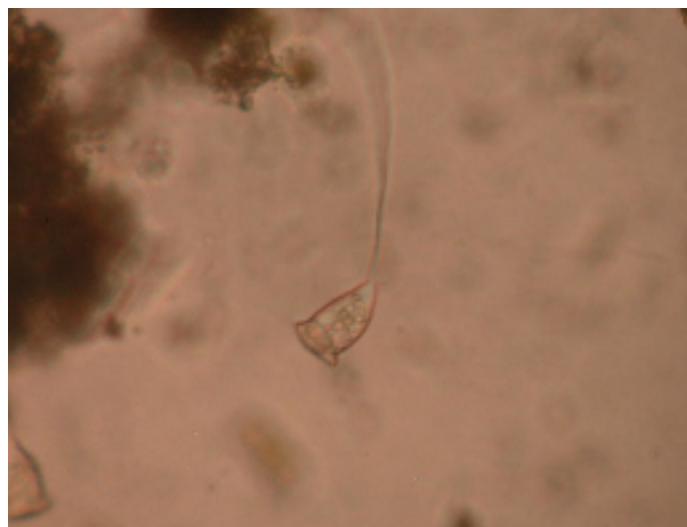
Nikon 995

These recently emerged Spotted Collybias have barely begun to “spot”. Growing in a small troop in the Copse, they probably sprouted after the recent 20 mm rainfall.



Nikon 995 @ 400 X

Vorticella spp. are ubiquitous in local waters. Each individual organism is attached to the substrate by means of a transparent stalk that can contract nearly instantaneously if the organism is disturbed. Above is *V. campanula*, at a guess (diam. approx 70 microns), below *V. minima* (diam. approx 25 microns)



Nikon 995 @ 200 X