

Time: 3:00 - 9:15 pm

Weather: PD 35 mm; RH 69%; BP 101.5 kPa; cloud/sun; calm; T 25° C

Activity: Kee continues the hunt for arthropods

I had expected a sunnier day, but when I arrived at the Newport Forest gate, I found a heavy overcast, with only occasional breaks of sun. In the image below, you can see the (former) farm track running through the Upper Meadow and past The Droughtbuster, a 2000 gal. water tank for watering newly planted trees. From



there the track ascends a small rise, then plunges like a roller-coaster down to the Lower Meadow, where the trailer is parked.

I was very pleased to find 35 mm in the rain gauge when I arrived. With occasional showers like this, the property will be spared the worst effects of drought. I had already decided to divide the arthropod hunt into three phases: 1. Taking

images of insects and spiders on flowers, 2. sweeping with the net, as in our previous visit, 3. exploring new habitat, namely under bark of dead trees. I was somewhat disappointed to see that, except for Early Goldenrod, which came into bloom a few weeks ago, the remaining *Solidago* spp. had barely begun to bloom.

Phase 1 of the operation brought some initial frustration as promising subjects flew off or crawled away just as I was about to open the shutter. I got a nice image of the Spotted Cucumber Beetle (not new) and then one of a wasp that *was* new, a species of *Myzinum*, with its elongated abdomen and expected markings. In the Nook, I spotted a relatively placid tree cricket with a distinctive red neck. It clung motionless to the butt of a giant old log there. (See IMAGES below.)

I took a walk to the river, noting as I went that many of the Sweet Joe Pye Weed plants sported large white blotches where leaf miners had been at work. The culprit may well be the Blotch Leaf Miner (*Amauromyza maculosa*) a fly, but I don't have enough information about other possible suspects. On Mussel Beach, I tried to close in for a shot of a Shore Beetle, but it quickly flew off.

I was surprised to come upon a "skidway" where Mr. Beaver has been bringing branches of the poplar it felled two few weeks ago down to the river. I shudder every time we spot beaver signs. How long before they discover the three species of *Populus* planted in the Regeneration Zone? They are among the largest trees there and undoubtedly tasty.

Back in camp, I began Phase 2, sweeping with the net. This method seems to yield the greatest number of arthropods per minute. Among the first of the finds was the Northern Crab Spider. At the time I knew only that it was a Crab Spider. Later at home, it came out definitely as the Northern, with a pretty red "folium" on its abdomen. The Alfalfa Plant Bug was too small to see properly, until I enlarged the image at home. The same thing was true of another little black bug that turned out to be a Negro Bug (so called), a uniform shiny black with a whitish margin around the abdomen.

Phase 3 began with a visit to Edgar's Elbow, on the trail to the river, where a dead willow leans over the trail, festoons of bark separating from the trunk. I loaded the net with strips and pieces of bark and took the lot back to the trailer to sort through the "take": two Carabid beetles were there. One with yellow legs left the bag and skittered across the trailer deck, disappearing before I could catch it. The other, with black legs, held still for some finely detailed photos. There was a Nursery Web Spider (*Pisaurina mira*) which was not new, then a new, rather

small Jumping Spider to join our steadily growing collection of “Jumpers”. The final take was a surprise. We should have collected the very common Twice-stabbed Stink Bug long before now, but there it was.

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo was calling from the Fleming Creek Forest as I walked down to the creek. There had been so few birds about today that I decided not to bother with a day-list at all. I changed the sd card in the trail cam at the rapids, little suspecting the wonderful deer images it contained. On the way back I collected a polypore with a root that turned out to be (surprise) the Rooted Polypore (*Polyporus radicans*), also not new.

I stayed on site until just after sunset, wondering which Raccoons would show up for a scattering of kibble. First were two “late” kits that I had never seen before, with masks like blindfolds. Then two other subadults, but no adults at all!

Soon the goldenrods and asters in our meadow areas will be alive with new flowers, the air will hum with Honeybees, Bumblebees, Wasps and Flower Flies. Their predators will be present in large numbers, as well. Fasten your Tilley hats!

New Species: (ID materials available)

Two-spotted Tree Cricket	<i>Neoxabea bipunctata</i>	Nk KD Au12/12
Twice-stabbed Stink Bug	<i>Cosmopepla linterniana</i>	ET? KD Au12/12
Alfalfa Plant Bug	<i>Adelphocoris lineolatus</i>	LM/ER KD Au12/12
Little Negro Bug	<i>Corimelaena [pulicaria]</i>	ET KD Au12/12
‘Long-necked Carabid’	<i>Agonum [extensicolle]</i>	ET KD Au12/12
Myzinum Wasp	<i>Myzinum</i> sp.	LM/ER KD Au12/12
Northern Crab Spider	<i>Mecaphesa asperata</i>	LM KD Au12/12
Habronattus Jumping Spider	<i>Habronattus</i> sp.	ET KD Au12/12

Trail Cam Report: (Cams #1 and #2 still taking very few images)

Cam #3: Virginia Deer: fawn 8:22 pm wednesday; four bucks 2:05 friday (See below:)

Phenology:

Main Goldenrod bloom just starting; antlers of male deer well developed.

IMAGES:



The Two-spotted Tree Cricket (see New Species) actually has two-and-a-half spots, but who's counting? According to Steve Marshall, Newport Forest is barely within the northern limit for this species. Note the strange honeycomb pattern on the dorsum (back). If this insect had turned out to have no common name, I was all set with the 'Red-necked Tree Cricket'.

Normally our images of arthropods are not of posting quality, but this one seems up to scratch. We're getting better!



WILDVIEW

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Trail Cam #3 catches four male Whitetail Deer wading upstream along the Lower Rapids of Fleming Creek last friday at 2:05 pm. Second deer in line seems to have the biggest rack of antlers. (Camera operates in burst mode with three images a few seconds apart.)