

Time: 1:30 - 8:05 pm

Weather: PC 7 mm; RH 78%; BP 102.2 kPa; SW 0-5 kmh; T 32° C

Activity: maintenance with Steve & collecting arthropods with Pat & Kee

Here is the scene (more or less) that greets us on every arrival. We park the van, bring our field packs into the Nook (off to the left, past the garbage pail), and turn on the propane to the trailer, our “headquarters”. We waited in the Nook until



Steve arrived with his weedeater. He went off alone along the Blind creek Trail, the whine of the weedeater gradually fading as we set out in search of more insects and spiders. The weather was hot and sunny. The new suite of blooming flowers in the Lower Meadow guaranteed a flux of new arthropods which we set out eagerly to find. In the distance a Gray Tree Frog chuckled at our folly.

Starting right at the trailer, Pat called my attention to a small insect fluttering by

the garbage pail, a new micro moth settling on a leaf of Agrimony. Its distinctive white wing-bars later betrayed the 'Agrimony Leafroller', a new species right off the bat. Of course, for every new species we find we run into an increasing numbers of ones previously recorded. Here was a Nursery Web Spider (*Pisaurina mira*), with a wiggly chocolate stripe on its abdomen, and there was the Spotted Cucumber Beetle (*Diabrotica undecipunctata*), with its 12 bold black spots on a bright yellow background, both common in the area.

As we went we noticed that the number of honeybees had doubled since the last visit, responding to the many newly-flowering plants. I swept with the net and took pictures as Pat searched, occasionally calling me over to check on a potential new species. To summarize our findings, here's how it went:

- White-faced fly with patterned wings (no ID)
- two diff spp of plant hopper (one ID'd, one possibly *Neokolla*)
- tiny black snout beetle with a white patch posteriorly (no ID)
- tiny jumping spider (ID'd)
- green stink bug nymph (no attempt to ID)
- seed bug nymph (no attempt to ID)
- possible small Coreid bug (no ID)
- a Ghost Spider shows up (ID'd)

Steve returned to camp, having run out of gas after grooming the Blind Creek Trail. The two of us went down to the creek, where we poked around the rocks at the rapids. I photographed the pond skaters and whirligigs to check IDs made several years ago. We noted that the young Sycamore, as well as the two planted Tulip Trees were doing well, now up to a good ten feet in height.

Back at the trailer, Pat showed me a small troop of mushrooms with rubbery orange/brown caps covered all over with what I first took to be veil remnants. However, later at home when I removed the specimens from the field bag, I discovered that the "veil" was the mycelium of a white mold, taking the specimen out of ID reach. Some fungi attack others for a living! The mushrooms reminded me of the early form of *Omphalotus*, so we'll keep an eye out for more, as a Jack 'O Lantern Fungus, for example, would be new for the list. Pat also took me into the trailer to show me a rather large spider that had spun a beautiful funnel web beside the eating area. This turned out to be the common Agelenid, *Agelenopsis pennsylvanica*, already known at Newport Forest.

Steve's wife Karen came in to pick up her husband but stayed for a little socia-

lizing after our heavy afternoon. As we chatted, Eastern Chipmunks continued to raid the bird feeders while two Eastern Gray Squirrels (black phase) chased each other across the treetops of the Gallery Forest.

Birds: (9 -- very few visible or calling: weedeater effect?)

American Crow (FCF); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (GF); Canada Goose (TR); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Flicker (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (FCF); Turkey Vulture (UM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

New Species:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| ‘Black-barred Mangora’ | <i>Mangora gibberosa</i> | LM/HBF KD Au02/12 |
| ‘Yellow Ghost Spider’ | <i>Anyphaena</i> sp. | LM KD Au22/12 |
| Dimorphic Jumper | <i>Maevia inclemens</i> | LM/GF KD Au22/12 |
| ‘Naphrys Jumping Spider’ | <i>Naphrys pulex</i> | Tr KD Au12/12 |
| Narrow-winged Tree Cricket | <i>Oecanthus niveus</i> | LM/Tr KD Au16/12 |
| Green Plant Bug | <i>Lygocorus pabulinus</i> | LM/GF KD Au12/12 |
| ‘Blue-veined Leafhopper’ | <i>Coelidia olitoria</i> | LM/E KD Au22/12 |
| ‘Agrimony Leaf Roller’ | <i>Anacamsis agrimoniella</i> | Nk pd/KD Au22/12 |
| Rose Hip Fly | <i>Strauzia longipennis</i> | Nk KD Au06/12 |

Notes on Species:

A review of the “Philodromus” imagery of two weeks ago revealed a serious error. Blind-sided by the high variability of *Philodromus*, I did not extend the check far enough to catch up with the genus *Mangora*. These spiders are orb-weavers that spin their webs in open fields. The other serious error was again caused by species variability. I was quite sure we had *Habronattus* on Au12, but extending the search as a follow-up exercise brought the error to light. Not *Habronattus*, but *Maevia*. Finally, indicating my best guess of [*Meconema*] for our small tree cricket on Au16, the actual species finally fell into place: *Oecanthus niveus*. With the rush of new species, we tend to get ahead of ourselves! In any case, our second *Mangora* species with its rather conservative markings and morphology, is a welcome addition to the list.

Phenology: Goldenrod 30% in bloom

Readers Write:

Range of Two-spotted Katydid expands: (Steve Marshall is a noted entomologist who keeps track of many arthropods, here referring to our find of the Two-spotted Katydid at Newport Forest.) “I just shot the same species in Windsor a week ago but yours is probably the northernmost record of the species.”

Ambush bugs mating or just cuddling? (Hugh Casbourn, along with his wife Betsy Baldwin, edits *The Cardinal*, official publication of Nature London, here describing a strange scene in his back yard) “We found two Ambush bugs in the same patch of mint, as you can see from the happy couple caught in *flagrante delicto*, I think that the species of Jagged Ambush Bug is *Phymata pennsylvanica*. Marshall indicates that this is the more common species in our area. Evidently, they can often be seen one atop the other but the actual mating position is the male to the side. Perhaps the male stays with the female to protect his genetic legacy.” (See the stunning image below.)

To indicate how well we’re doing in the Bug Dept, we include here a list of the leafhoppers found so far on the property -- including to-day’s find.

Cicadellidae

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Four-spotted Clover Hopper | <i>Agallia quadripunctata</i> | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| Silver Leafhopper | <i>Athysanus argentarius</i> | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Blue-veined Leafhopper’ | <i>Coelidia olitoria</i> | LM KD Au22/12 |
| Saddled Leafhopper | <i>Coladonus clitellarius</i> | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| Grape Leafhopper | <i>Eurythronera tricincta</i> | LM nz/KD J118/06 |
| Red-banded Leafhopper | <i>Graphocephala coccinea</i> | Tr PD Au30/04 |
| ‘Two-lined Leafhopper’ | <i>Idiodonus [kennecottii]</i> | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Pinstripe Leafhopper’ | <i>Limotettix nigrax</i> | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Reticulate Leafhopper’ | <i>Paraphlepsius</i> sp. | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Ghost Hopper’ | <i>Scaphodeus</i> sp. | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Strawhopper’ | [<i>Empoasca</i>] sp. | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Yellow-throated Hopper’ | Fam. Cicadellidae Sp. A | LM nz/KD J118/05 |
| ‘Silver Minihopper’ | Fam. Cicadellidae Sp. B | LM nz/KD J118/07 |

Most of these species came from the malaise trap set up by entomologist Nina Zitani in the Lower Meadow in 2005. I spent that winter examining these, as well as hundreds of moths and other insects. How many leafhoppers to go? 20? 50?

IMAGES:



After examining several dozen different specimen images for this species, all with identical morphology to the one shown here, I have decided that the name ‘Blue-veined Leafhopper’ describes most of them. It is one of the most stable colour characters in a species which is all over the map, colourwise. Some specimens have an overall blueish cast, others greenish and a few others, reddish. Highly variable colour patterns are very common among many insect species.

Entomologist Stan Caveney recently remarked to us on colour variations for leafhoppers in general. Their colours are structural, not pigment-based, but due to light interference between membranes laid down during development -- like the colours reflected from gasoline on water.



Two Ambush Bugs (*Phymata pennsylvanica*) meet (or mate?) on the same mint leaf in Hugh's garden at home. Note the heavy forearms (femurs of Leg I) for holding struggling prey.