

**Date & Time:** Wednesday May 15 2013 2:25 - 6:50 pm

**Weather:** Pr 6 mm; RH 44%; BP 100.4 kPa; clear; W 5 - 40 kmh; T 29° C

**Activity:** Searching leaf litter and sweeping the grass

I surprised a Wild Turkey along the track, chasing it into camp, where it bolted for the Gallery Forest. My first order of business was to check the Regeneration Zone, a one-hectare block of planted trees intended to link the Gallery Forest with



the Blind Creek Forest. The image above leaves the impression of a few scattered trees, but there are well over 100 of them, many only a metre high. About 10% are *Populus* spp., as in the left foreground. “Late leafers”, these trees make good pioneers, setting the stage for a typical forest succession process. Longer term trees such as maples and ashes are also present -- and Tulip Trees, the only species

we've planted to enjoy a 100% survival rate! All trees looked healthy. We stopped the planting operation about four years ago.

While coffeeing-up in the Nook, I was visited by a beautiful Baltimore Oriole. It was singing a rather short song. I kept hoping for some Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, but didn't see any this visit.

But on with the species search! I gathered a net full of leaf litter from the slope of the Fleming Creek Bluffs nearby, then took it into the Nook, where I sat down to sort through twigs and leaves, wet and dry. Arduous, picky work! I kept running onto what appeared to be tiny land snails, but a closer examination with a hand lens showed them to be seed-coats or hulls. Apart from a few tiny worms that I didn't dream of identifying, I left the leaf litter to sweep the grass along the edge of the path to Blind Creek Forest. An occasional find in these sweeps was a small orb weaver that I later ID'd as *Tetragnatha straminea*, first collected several years ago. Then a few tiny spiders and an orange-and-black beetle that turned out to be new. (See New Species.)

On the way in to the Vernal ponds to get a bottom sample, I passed a Six-spotted Tiger Beetle, always rather common at this time of year. A Gray Tree Frog called a few times as I followed the shore, then came the distinct "twang" of a Green Frog as I waded out for a sample in Vernal Pond 'A'. Water samples, whether from creek or pond, almost always turn out to be rich in species. Although many are now logged, many more remain. In any case, there is always something new. (See New Species below)

Just before departing, I noticed a tick on my arm. "Go find a Raccoon!"

### **Birds: (18)**

American Crow (EW); American Robin (BCF); Baltimore Oriole (Nk); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (LM); Brown-headed Cowbird (Tr); Canada Goose (TR); Eastern Towhee (GF); Field Sparrow (LM); Great Crested Flycatcher (GF); Mourning Dove (Nk); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Song Sparrow (HBF); Tree Swallow (Rd); Turkey Vulture (FCF); White-breasted Nuthatch (GF); Wild Turkey (LM)

### **New Species:**

Two-lined Leatherwing                      *Atalantycha bilineata*                      LM/HBF KD My15/13

Wolf Spider	<i>Gladicosa</i> sp <sup>1</sup>	GF KD Ap21/13
“Asterionella Spokes”	<i>Asterionella</i> sp. <sup>2</sup>	VPB KD My15/13
“Sand Donut”	<i>Cyclopyxis</i> sp. <sup>3</sup>	VPB KD My15/13
Ostracod	<i>Cyprinotus</i> sp. <sup>4</sup>	VPB KD My15/13

**Notes:** 1. Cephalothorax pattern typical, abdomen grey, but dorsal spots indistinct.  
 2. An elongated diatom that forms colonies like the spokes of a wheel  
 3. An amoeboid form that builds a donut-shaped house made of micro-grit  
 4. Had seen Ostracods on site before, but can now ID them to genus (sometimes) thanks to *Freshwater Ostracoda of Ontario* - Nuttall & Fernando, U Waterloo Biology Series, 1971.

### **Phenology:**

Wild Geranium and Swamp Buttercup in bloom; Trout Lilies were over by My05, Walnuts just breaking bud.

### **Readers Write:**

Thanks go to Mike Oldham of the MNR who wrote in to point out an error (previous issue) that I can hardly believe I made. I barely glanced at the frog that I photographed, noticing only the mask, and subsequently labeling as a Wood Frog. Mike writes: “Wood Frogs have a uniform dorsal colour and generally no dorsal patterning in contrast to the spots or stripes of a Chorus Frog; both have the dark facial mask”. Of course, it was a Western Chorus Frog. A public flogging is scheduled for this weekend.

### **ATBI Sites: Big Thicket National Preserve**

This issue we feature the Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas, described at the following website: <http://www.thicketofdiversity.org/> The main page is not visually very rich but the sidebar has many interesting items, including photographs, lists of participating scientists, Citizen Science, and past copies of the *Big Thicket Reporter* -- somewhat parallel to the *Newport Forest Bulletin*

The total ATBI count at Big Thicket now stands at 2,714. Not that we’re counting but we expect to reach the 2000 figure in a month or two.

### **IMAGES:**



Bottom of this vernal pond teems with micro-life, including many algal forms, from Diatoms to Euglenoids, but few ciliates. In fact so far I have seen just one, a predacious bacterivore called *Coleps*. Microfauna (Crustacea) included Gastrotrichs and Ostracods. I will continue to work on the pond sample for several more days.





The two “lines” on this Two-lined Leatherwing can barely be seen on the sides of its pronotum. The antennae, normally curvilinear, were perhaps damaged by the sweeping process. I am slowly learning to get ever closer to my subjects.