

Date and Time: Sunday August 31 2:00 - 7:30 pm

Weather: Pr 0mm; PH 89%; BP 101.0 kPa; calm; overcast, T 24° C

Activity: hunting for snails and walking some trails

Pat and I met our visiting party from the University of Western Ontario at the gate. Here, Annegret Nicolai (Germany, expert on land snails) examines some land snail shells while Hiroku Udaka (Japan, expert on slugs) and Fengliang Jin (China, expert on insect immunology) look on. Jin's Daughter, "Snow" came along to learn about snails and slugs. Annegret took an interest in the many empty



shells that accumulated with river drift on Mussel Beach, since that gave her an idea of what species inhabited the Thames watershed. But she was mainly after living specimens and shells with an on-site origin. While there, I discovered the carapace of a small (6 cm) turtle with blackened, rotting flesh inside. Examining the images later, I realized it was a (juvenile) Map Turtle, our second of the year!

This was to be a brief visit for me because I had a commitment to visit Moraviantown. I just had time to photograph a new-looking Meadow Katydid by the trailer. While our visitors continued along our main trail, I drove down to walk another trail, checking on Darren's progress on a new nature walk and not getting back until 6 pm. In the meantime, Pat stuck by the trailer, watching for birds, checking plants, and offering refreshments to our guests.

At Moraviantown I met up with Darren Jacobs and together we walked the new 1.3 km nature trail, already roughed out by a bobcat (miniature bulldozer) and fairly easy to walk. Darren showed me several magnificent trees: giant Hackberries with buttress roots, equally large Eastern Cottonwoods, Sycamores, Black Walnuts and Butternuts. Thanks to tutors like the late-lamented Jane Bowles, Darren is getting good with plants. We passed two immense piles of crushed stone that would make the surface of the new trail. "We'll use wheelbarrows to distribute it along the trail." As we followed the bare, roughened surface of the emerging trail, occasional fishing shelters came into view behind the heavy foliage. (During the spring Pickerel run these will all be occupied by fishers, day and night.) By including several rest stops and exploiting some splendid vistas, Darren hopes to make the trail easy, enjoyable, and even educational, to walk.

I got back to Newport Forest around 6 pm, disappointed that I had missed our visitors. Pat said they had gone down to Moraviantown, as none of them had ever seen a powwow. "They found only a few live species." As in recent weeks, there had been few birds in evidence although, once again, Mourning Doves had been calling all day. We closed up and left before sunset.

New Species: (7)

Black-legged Meadow Katydid	<i>Orchelimum nigripes</i>	LM/Tr kd/SP Sp01/13
Gray Field Slug	<i>Deroceras reticulatum</i>	RSF HU Sp01/13
The Hairy Snail	<i>Trochulus hispidus</i>	Loc AN Sp01/13
Black Gloss Snail	<i>Zonitoides nitidus</i> *	Loc AN Sp001/13
Whitelip Snail	<i>Neohelix albolabris</i> *	Loc AN Sp01/13
Upland Pillsnail	<i>Euchemotrema fraternum</i> *	Loc AN Sp01/13
Gray-footed Lancetooth	<i>Haplotrema concavum</i> *	Loc AN Sp01/13

* native snail species, Loc = location to come

Notes:

1. Steve Palero (Guelph University) confirmed genus *Orchelimum* for the Katydid

found today, but suggested *O. nigripes* in place of our *O. [vulgare]*.

2. Dan Bickel (Australian National Museum) agrees with the ID of the beefly in the previous Bulletin as “probably correct”, but is checking with a colleague.

3. Annegret also found the following species that were already listed, amounting to a quasi-confirmation:

<i>Novisuccinea ovalis</i>	Ap21/13
<i>Zonitoides arboreus</i>	Oc25/12
<i>Cepaea nemoralis</i>	Ja01/00
<i>Anguispira alternata</i>	Ja01/00
<i>Mesodon thyroidus</i>	date missing
<i>Triodopsis vulgata</i>	Ap21/13

She also found six land snail spp in a drift pile, *Cochlicopa lubrica* being the only new one, but unacceptable for the list as origin on the property is unlikely.

6. Poor Hiroku kept running into the same species of slug everywhere she looked!

IMAGES:



This image of an Amber Snail, *Novisuccinea ovalis*, was taken two years ago in the Blind Creek Forest. (a living specimen) The Amber Snail is our favorite native land snail, still common on site.



Darren has been careful to exploit some beautiful vistas of the river by taking the new Moraviantown Nature Trail close to them, offering walkers some breath-taking views, like this one, looking upstream. Newport Forest is a 15-minute ride by motorboat further upriver.