

# 906

Newport Forest  
*Monitoring Nature*

Sp28/13

**Date and time:** Saturday September 28 2013 2:00 - 6:30 pm

**Weather:** Pr 0 mm; RH 68%; BP 102.5 kPa; calm; clear; 28° C

**Activity:** Meeting of Stewards Committee

The Newport Forest Stewards, photographed well after the meeting, stand by the Jane Bowles memorial Sassafras tree (now turning) The tree was found by Jane Bowles in 2002. Members (left to right) are Nina Hurdle, Erin Carroll, Donald Craig, Bruce Parker, Marg Hulls, Kee Dewdney. Picture taken by Pat Dewdney. Absent: Darren Jacobs. The Committee reviewed the past 12 months, set a tentative budget for the next 12, and discussed a link with Western University.



Following the meeting, Stewards relaxed in the Nook with cookies and refreshments. Before the meeting, Pat and I went searching the Lower Meadow for more insects. Pat hit a home run by finding a Chinese Mantis, not native but fascinating nevertheless! Then Erin found another. (See IMAGES below.)

We saw several Monarchs on site today. Steward Bruce Parker is a local expert on Monarchs. He explained that these were the third generation of Monarchs for 2013 and would be the ones that migrate to Mexico.

Following the meeting, Donald Craig, an expert forester and all-round naturalist, found some Blue Ash growing just downslope toward the creek, then found an interesting vine. Was it a Greenbrier? Marg and Erin checked the plant in Newcombe's Guide, deciding it was actually a Carrion Flower. Later, Donald took me for a walk into the Blind Creek Forest for a lesson on the Rock Elm. We found a medium-sized individual which had bark rather like that of a White Elm, but lots of knobby dead lower branches that would not break, but merely flexed.

We talked a bit about deer on the way back. Do Coyotes ever predate deer? Indeed they do, according to Donald, and in packs. This surprised me. Back in camp we discussed the coming fungus walk. Marg Hulls, a big fan of the walk, was especially looking forward to it. This is the best team of Stewards that the TTLT has ever assembled for Newport Forest! Pat and I stayed on almost to sunset.

**Phenology:** Several Monarch Butterflies seen on site; leaf fall reaches 50-90% coverage of ground under canopy; leaves falling steadily

### **New Species:**

Chinese Mantis	<i>Tenodera sinensis</i>	LM pdKD Sp28/1
'Copperback Syrphid'	<i>Epistrophe [grossulariae]</i>	LM KD Sp28/13
'Five-banded Mason Wasp'	<i>Eudynerus[foraminatus]</i>	LM KD Sp28/13

### **Species Notes:**

I use the square bracket notation to indicate two things, as usual: a) the ID is uncertain at the species level, b) the species so named is more like the species at hand than the available alternatives. For example, the Syrphid species of *Epistrophe* all look rather similar, so I simply chose the one that appeared most similar and left the species name in square brackets.

### **IMAGES:**



A female Chinese Mantis, well disguised by surrounding stems, deposits a white egg mass on one of them.



An enormous amount of cross-mimicry goes on among several families of flies (in particular Syrphid flies), bees, and wasps. The genus *Epistrophe* has several species in the area most of which are close mimics of each other! Is this a sign of too many “splitters” at work? I decided to call this species the “Copperback Syrphid” which, at least, distinguishes it from other genera.