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Newport Forest Bulletin
Monitoring Nature

Nv16/13

Date & Time: Saturday November 16 2013

Weather: Pr 16 mm; RH 69%; BP 102.3 kPa; ovcast; S 5-10 kmh, T 12° C

Activity: Cleaning camp & maintenance

Before getting down to the nitty gritty of cleaning the trailer and surround, we took a walk to the river. This is a good time of year to examine the banks of coarse sand of which point bars are built. The massive point bar on our side of the river also has heavy deposits of coarse sand like its upstream mate shown below.



We have just reviewed an old military topographical map dated 1910 that shows both point bars to be entirely missing! (The map portrays the river course accurately elsewhere.) Can it be that the Newport point bar is barely a century old? That would imply a progression or growth rate of about a metre a year. As some readers may recall, we have also been wondering if and when the river intercepted Fleming Creek. According to the map just reviewed, it was certainly before 1910. For dating the cutoff event, that's a start, anyway.

There wasn't much time for historical musings today. We cleaned out the trailer bedroom, wary for signs of Tim the Weasel -- but no scat lying about. We also planted the three little trees we purchased at the tree sale held on the UWO campus last September in tribute to Jane Bowles: A Hop Tree, Bitternut Hickory, and American Basswood.

While detaching a decrepit Flying Squirrel box from a snag, Pat spotted a bright orange mushroom lurking under the leaves nearby. I collected it, thinking I would ID it later, but found that I could barely place it in the genus *Russula* -- at a guess. So I sent imagery to our mycology consultant, Greg Thorn, and placed the specimen in a dryer in case he wanted to examine it later.

Among other sightings of the day were a flock of about a dozen recently arrived Juncos, a cluster of Round Bullet Galls (wasp: *Discholcopsis quercusmamma*), A striped Chipmunk, Eastern Gray Squirrel, and little else, given our focus on maintenance.

Stewards Erin Carroll and Bruce Parker made a recent visit to Newport Forest to attach signs to the boundary stakes that run through the middle of Fleming Creek Forest. Bruce's son Joel came along as an assistant. In the process, Erin found what may be a new species of goldenrod and Bruce photographed a beautiful *Cladonia* trumpet lichen on the creek bluffs. (See IMAGES below.)

Birds: (9)

American Crow (Rd); American Robin (BCF/LM); Black-capped Chickadee (LM); Blue Jay (GF); Common Flicker (GF/E); Dark-eyed Junco (LM/HBF); Downy Woodpecker (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (LM/HBF); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr) **Note:** our complement of winter birds.is nearing completion.

Phenology: American Robins still around, Dark-eyed Juncos back from the north

New Species:

Red Longlegged Fly [*Condylostylus patibulatus*] LM pdKD Je/13
fam. Dolichopodidae

Note: This individual will be checked by our Dolichopodid consultant at the Australian National Museum - Dan Bickel. But we're betting this is what it is! We found the image in Pat's camera recently.

Readers Write:

Jonathan Piel, former Editor of *Scientific American*, writes from his retreat in the Catskills on our seldom-seen Ruffed Grouse: “We are ruffed-grouse poor too. A combination of lack of cover and the presence of coyotes and other predators.”

IMAGES:



Bruce Parker

Lichen found by Bruce Parker, although not new to the ATBI list, is significant as being the only trumpet lichen found on the property to date. This Mealy Trumpet Lichen (*Cladonia chlorophaea*) is common across the continent and grows practically anywhere on just about anything



A new storm system crawls over the sunset toward us, the glow backlitting an old transmission tower. By pure coincidence, the original power corridor from Niagara falls to Windsor, Ontario, ran through the middle of Newport Forest, as here. The line was built in 1947. According to an official at Ontario Power Generation, it now operates as a “distribution” line and not for “transmission.”