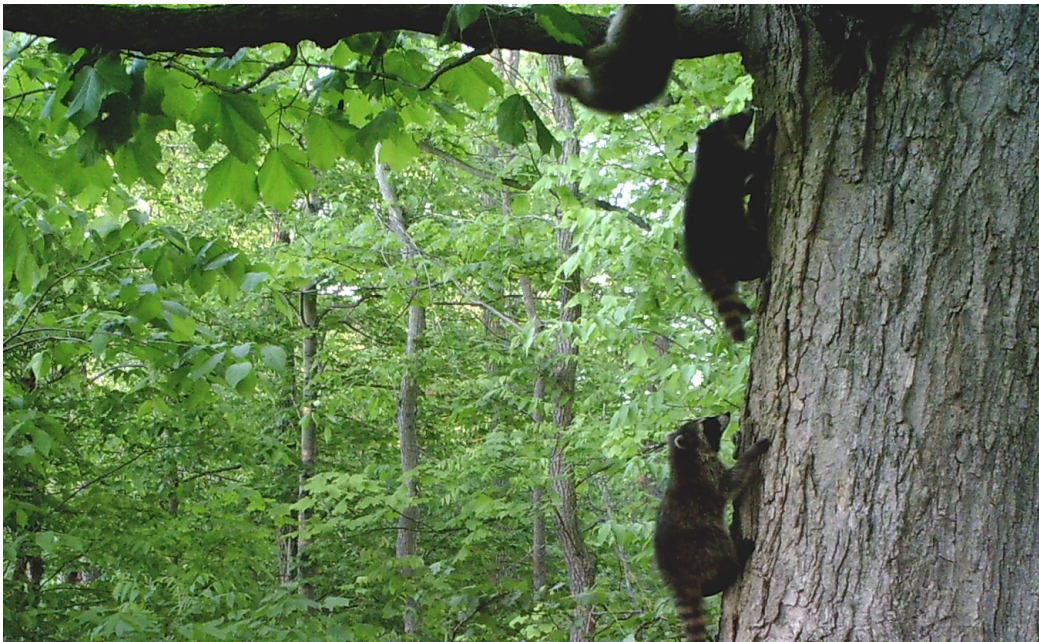


Date and time: Sunday June 7 2014 1:20 - 6:45 pm

Weather: Pr 6mm; RH 70%; BP 101.2 kPa; ovcst; NE 5-10 kmh, T 17°C

Activity: Surveying Aquatic Life: fish and invertebrates

Today we had planned to meet up with Darren for a fishing expedition and with Steve for the first trail grooming of the new season. As things transpired, Pat couldn't come, the fish weren't biting and Steve's weed eater ran out of gas.



8:24 pm on June 5 three little kits climb one big tree after an evening excursion. (image: Trail cam #2)

Darren brought his nephew Bradwin with him and both busied themselves in the Nook to prepare their tackle with small hooks and worms. Today's targets were the little guys, a small-fish catch-and-release survey. (Most of the larger area fish are already on the ATBI list.) Meanwhile, I donned rubber boots and loaded a jar and a small dip net in my field pack. Just then Steve rolled into camp, wasting no time to fire up his instrument of mass destruction. A light rain had been falling the while.

As the whine of the weed eater faded into the woods, the rest of us clambered down the bluffs trail to Fleming Creek, full of enthusiasm. Darren began casting into a deeper pool above the lower rapids, while Bradwin (who likes to be called "B")

fished below the rapids. Darren got nothing from the upper pool and B got his hook snagged on an over hanging branch. “We can just follow the creek and fish our way out to the mouth,” declared Darren. He had forgotten to bring his camera to record the catch, so I gave him mine, forgetting that this would render me *hors de combat* until their return.

I busied myself with the trail cams and other matters, then decided to go out to the River Landing to see if Darren and B had reached the mouth of the creek. While waiting, I heard a Common Yellowthroat and noted that the clay beach was now half emerged from the slowly subsiding river. Meanwhile, Darren had barely fished half the length of Fleming Creek, a highly sinuous stream.

I walked across the off-property meadow that we call Harvey’s Bean Field (HBF), noting a doily spider on one of last year’s plants. Damn! No camera. Penetrating the dense brush above Fleming Creek where it passes through Eva’s Woods, I found myself at the top of a precipice. No way I was going down. I called out for Darren, but no answer. So I returned to camp in time to meet Steve, who explained that he hadn’t brought enough gas for the whole 1.8 km circuit, but would finish grooming on the very next visit.

Darren was late. Did Steve think he could find him? He thought so. “Here. Take this walkie-talkie.” Later Steve called, but the walkie talkie batteries conked out just then, leaving me no wiser. It was that kind of day. But then the clouds broke up and the sun suddenly emerged to brighten our outlook. In the end we all sat in the Nook with a donated apple pie. Once the others had left I had about an hour to dig up something new. I took my camera to HBF to give the doily spider a hard time.

Birds: (11)

American Crow (EW); American Robin (ET); Bald Eagle (TR/FC); Belted Kingfisher (Tr/FC); Common Flicker (GF); Common Yellowthroat (RL); Eastern Kingbird (UM); Northern Cardinal (EW); Northern Rough-winged Swallow (TR); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Song Sparrow (HBF)

Note on Casual birding: Except for rest periods in the Nook, where a feeding tray has been set up to lure in whatever seedeaters might be around, we rarely go “after” birds, but simply note what we see or hear as we go about our various tasks. When I go alone, anywhere from 10 to 12 or 13 birds show up on the day list — and always a different mix. For example no Mourning Doves called nearby today,

but Darren heard a Belted Kingfisher close to the river, as if to make up for it. When I go with Pat, we tend to get more like 20 birds or so.

New Species:

Bowl-and-Doily Spider *Frontinella communis* HBF KD Je08/14
(See IMAGES for a picture of this attractive spider)

Sad News: Eva Newport, matriarch of the family that originally owned Newport Forest, passed away at the age of 90 at the Newbury hospital at 7:00 pm Monday, June 9. Eva was a good friend to us and fond of the property. We will all miss her.

TTLT Event: Remembering Jane Bowles

Friends of Jane Bowles are invited to Newport Forest at 2:00 pm Saturday, June 21 to celebrate her contributions to the development of this conservation area. A Sassafras tree will be dedicated to her memory. For directions, email Pat Dewdney at dewdney@sympatico.ca or phone 519-679-0203.

Readers Write: The mere possibility of an Eastern Cougar on site a week ago triggered the following reports. The first comes from Ken Magee who sent in this report from a fellow conference-goer in the Niagara region of southern Ontario. The second report is the summary of a telephone account from Darren Jacobs.

(via) Ken Magee: “It was on Victoria Day (19 May) at about 9:30 pm [at] Niagara Falls, opposite Marineland. We had just turned onto a small road leading down to Dufferin Islands when this very large cat (probably a cougar) appeared and crossed the road just in front of us. It appeared to have very strong rear leg muscles and moved quite quickly. I have a dog weighing around 50 lbs, and I would estimate this animal to be about half as large again – say around 70 – 80 lbs. The colour appeared to be a light rusty-orange.”

(via) Darren Jacobs: on June 1 of this year Moraviantown resident Warren Noah visited the family woodlot near his trailer on the rez. The lot had recently been cleared of trees. Noah was surprised to see a large spotted cat with a long tail up one of the trees on the edge of the lot. Noah surmises it was the cub of a mother cougar that he spied on the ground some 50 metres away. (Cougar cubs apparently have spots.)

IMAGES:



This distinctively marked Bowl-and-doily Spider (*Frontinella communis*) keeps a weather eye for more prey. Shrivelled corpses of mosquitoes and other flies litter the basement of her doily nest. There was little room for the “bowl” component owing to the structure of the (2013) Evening Primrose plant. We found this species in 2006 (see our image of bowl and doily web below), but recorded it as (*F. pyramidal*), a junior synonym. We must now update the record with the revised species name.

This is a female, with a body length of about 4 mm. The markings of this species show interesting variations. Having viewed over a dozen images of this spider on the web (so to speak), it would seem that the row of white stripes can fuse into a white band with a fringe of daggers or the stripes can be more faintly marked, with one or two initial ones absent.

