

**Date and time:** Thursday July 31 2014 2:20-6:05 pm

**Weather:** Pr 29 mm; RH 60%; BP 101.8 kPa; sun/haze; S 5-20 kmh; T 26° C

**Activity:** Adding to the all taxa biological inventory (ATBI)

Rain was predicted to start in the early evening today, so my assistant Oussama Abid and I had to make the most of our limited time on site. We swept the Lower Meadow with the net, finding the occasional new (small) species, but looked forward to a new technique for collecting from leaf litter. Recipe: rake up half a cubic metre of leaf litter, place in a standard garbage bag, shake the bag vigorously, remove the top layer of leaves, shake again, and continue in this manner until only arthropods and small debris remain at the bottom of the bag. Place the residue in a white plastic tray with smooth sides and take detailed images at leisure.



Oussama removes arthropods gingerly from source bag to place in tray.

Oussama was reluctant to handle some of the arthropods in the bag. “Get that little Brown Spider hiding under the leaf.” “Do I have to pick it up?” “Of course!” “What if it bites?” “It won’t bite.” However, he bent to the task with enthusiasm and soon the tray was crawling with specimens.

The bag-shaking technique, which I am only the thousandth person to “invent”, worked like a charm and brought us several arthropod species from the following groups: two sow bugs, one centipede, three millipedes, a harvestman, a crab spider and a wolf spider. Several species had multiple individuals in the sample.

**New Species:**

	[many legs]	
Red Soil Centipede	<i>Strigamia bidens</i>	FCB oaKD J131/14
Greenhouse Millipede	<i>Oxydus [gracilis]</i>	FCB oaKD J131/14
‘Black-backed Diplopod’	<i>Nearctodesmus</i> sp.	FCB oaKD J131/14
	[eight legs]	
‘Long-legged Theridiid’	<i>Phylloneta</i> sp.	LM KD J124/14
Running Crab Spider	<i>Tibellus oblongus</i>	LM/HBF KD J117/14
‘Red/green Mini Crab’	<i>Mesumenops</i> sp.	LM KD J117/14
‘Black and Grey Longlegs’	<i>Odiellus [pictus]</i>	FCB oaKD J131/14
	[six legs]	
‘Checkered Rove Beetle’	<i>Ontholestes cingulatus</i>	Nk kdSM J124/14
‘Three-spotted Leaf Beetle’	<i>Trihabda borealis</i>	LM oaKD J131/14
‘Spotted Broad-nosed Weevil’	<i>Sciaphilus [asperatus]</i>	BCF KD J131/14
Ant Mimic Beetle	<i>[Anthicus]</i> sp.	BCF KD J131/14

**Notes:** 1. Four of the species above were collected during previous visits, but identification was completed only recently — with thanks to Steve Marshall for directions to the rove beetle. 2. A half-dozen species recorded today remain to be identified. 4. To see what any of the arthropods listed above look like, simply go to Google Images, drop the scientific name into the browser window and behold a plethora of images!

**Groundhog:** Oussama discovered the probable burrow of the Groundhog that has been visiting the Nook recently. It’s located about 10 m down the creek bluffs.

**Newport Forest ATBI Passes 2000 Mark:** The current total species count stands at 2002. By kingdom they break down as follows:

Plantae: 483 Animalia: 1061 Protista: 199 Fungi/Lichens: 237 Eubacteria: 22

Perhaps now we can focus more effort on other conservation matters in accordance with the overall Thames Talbot Land Trust policy, for example site cleanup.

**IMAGES:**



The Red Soil Centipede *Strigamia* runs into the Platydesmid millipede *Oxydus* in one corner of the inspection tray. Centipedes have one pair of legs per segment, while millipedes (Diplopods) have two pairs of legs. The legs of the millipede are pale yellow and difficult to see here.





We also found the Crab Spider *Xysticus Ferox* (recorded in 2013) in the leaf litter. It apparently spends (some of) its time hunting for prey along the Fleming Creek Bluffs. We named this species the 'Leopard Crab'.