

Date and time: Saturday-Sunday September 27-28 2014 1:35-2:30 pm

Weather: Pr 7 mm; RH 71%; BP 102.8 kPa; calm; clear; T 26°C

Activity: Two-day visit

The trees of Newport Forest tell a story of early cold and a bitter winter. Here in the Fleming Creek Forest a Sugar Maple turns scarlet, surrounded by trees, some of which may have died in last winter's severe low temperatures. We enjoyed the



“Waldsterben” at Newport Forest? Annual monitoring imagery is needed.

brilliant reds as we drove along the old farm track toward the Lower Meadow and the trailer that would be our overnight home. We set up camp quickly to leave as much time as possible for special projects like ATBI: so many arthropods, so little time. Walking through the Regen Zone, I scored the first point by sighting a Walkingstick insect. It didn't take Pat long to catch up by sighting a Praying Mantis by Harvey's Bean Field, as we call it. (See IMAGES below.) Sweeping with a net along the former farm track brought a Bald-faced Hornet (not new), a striped Lema beetle (new), and an attractive Stink Bug nymph (maybe new) into the camera.

As dead leaves pattered to the ground and a flock of American Goldfinches came

to feed on Wingstem seeds, we took a slow walk to the river, accompanied by the burble of a Gray Tree Frog nearby. Pat found a large congregation of Crane Flies parked on plants that now cloak Blind Creek. At the river we discovered that not only was Mussel Beach still covered by the subsiding flood, but the trail down was now blocked by a deposit of dead trees and river drift.

A final foray to Fleming Creek had no special purpose, but ended in frustration as I tried to photograph Water Striders that would dart away just as I pressed the button. Pat was amazed at the coating of fine clay on plants that lined the bank. A flood on the river inevitably backs up into the creek. The mouth is only about 100 m downstream. We climbed slowly back up the creek bluffs to the trailer for a late supper.

Shortly after sunset we drove to the Upper Meadow for a view of the new moon and Saturn. Our son had given us a Meade high-powered telephoto lens that can also be used for astronomy. I had once owned a 6" reflector and pointed out an ancient crater known as Mare Crisium. "You could fit all of Ireland inside it," I declared, just guessing. A later lookup gave Crisium 555 km and Ireland 472 km. The moon is part of the larger Newport Forest environment. An Eastern Screech Owl called several times from the nearby East Ravine Forest. We shivered. "It's going to be a cold night". Pat is an early person while I am a late one. Around midnight as I worked on some notes, I heard Wendy the Trailer Weasel scamper briefly behind the wall. The overnight low was 6.5° C!

Morning found us both somewhat enervated and not entirely up to a full day. We sat in the Nook to coffee-up as the air temperature slowly recovered and clouds slugged it out with the sun overhead. Maintenance time: Pat stripped the bed and checked the propane situation while I repaired the insect net that I had broken two weeks before by a too-vigorous sweep into a tree. I also changed the batteries on Trail Cam #2 — frustrated by a system failure that prevented one from setting a proper date for the time-stamp that appears on every image. In the end, I simply see it up by Camera #1 at The Hole. The sd cards turned out to have a single Raccoon on each, one at the Nook and one at The Hole.

A final foray up the track to the Powerline Meadow brought in a Black-horned Tree Cricket and a Brown Stink Bug. Neither of these was new, but a flashing fluttery flight led my eye to a nearby goldenrod. Another Praying Mantis. We left early, meeting Steve Logan out on the road to arrange for repairs to trail steps before the Fungus Workshop later in October.

Fungus Workshop: Registrations for the TTLT Annual Fall Fungus Workshop are nearly complete. Register now or join a waiting list by contacting Pat at <dewdney@sympatico.ca> The Workshop is scheduled for 1:00 pm on Sunday October 19 at Newport Forest. In case of bad weather the new date may be Oct 26.

Phenology: leaf-fall well under way; River Grapes and Bittersweet fruit now ripe

Birds: (13)

American Crow (EW); American Goldfinch (LM); Blue Jay (GF); Canada Goose (TR); Common Flicker (LM); Common Grackle (FCF); Eastern Screech Owl (ER); Field Sparrow (LM); Gray Catbird (BCF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (TR); Song Sparrow (LM); Turkey Vulture (UM); Wild Turkey (HBF)

New Species:

‘Hieroglyph Hopper’	<i>Neokolla hieroglypha</i>	GF pdKD Sp28/14
‘Blackbelly Rhopalid’	<i>Arhyssus nigristernum</i>	LM KD J117/14
Three-lined Lema	<i>Lema trivittata</i>	PLM KD Sp28/14
Gabara Moth	<i>Gabara obscura</i>	GF KD Sp28/14
Mason Bee	<i>Ancistrocerus adiabatus</i>	GF pdKD Sp20/14
Metallic Sweat Bee	<i>Augochlora [pura]</i>	FCB KD Sp20/14
‘Brown Field Ant’	<i>Formica [ulkei]</i>	LM KD Sp20/14
Yellow Slime	[<i>Hemitrichia</i>] sp.	FCB KD Sp20/14

Notes: The Hieroglyph Hopper is distinctively marked and subject to variations mainly in ground colour that ranges from grey to blue-grey. The Rhopalid Bug gave us trouble until we realized that it was not a Pentatomid. The Mason Bee was photographed digging in the dirt on the floor of the Nook while we wondered what it was up to. The Metallic Sweat Bee was also examined by Steve Palero at the U of Guelph. The ant is my first real attempt to work with this group.

Readers Write:

Steve Palero of Guelph ON calms my worries of having found a bee with just two ocelli above its eyes: “It looks like it has three ocelli . . . perhaps it is just an illusion of light that you aren't seeing the middle one . . . they are almost in a row because of the angle of the photograph. Most definitely a Halictid, and agree that it is most likely *Augochlora pura*, a fairly common species in our area.”

IMAGES:



This is a late-instar nymph of a Stink Bug, probably *Euschistus*. Rudimentary wing covers end in dark blue spots and the scutellum (triangular shield) has yet to develop into the adult form. For us the real interest here lies in the aesthetic. Who wouldn't like a shirt or dress with such a pattern? Hmmm. Well, how about a wall hanging? Whether some biologists will admit it or not, aesthetics sometimes drive the enterprise.



A Walkingstick (*Diaperomera femorata*) on the left and a Praying Mantis (*Mantis religiosus*) on the right both appeared in our first afternoon of searching the Lower Meadow. Both have been on the ATBI list almost from the beginning, being common on the property.

The Walkingstick is a herbivore, while the Mantis is carnivorous. Thus the front legs of the Walkingstick are held twig-like for protection while the front legs of the Mantis are held raptor-like for predation.