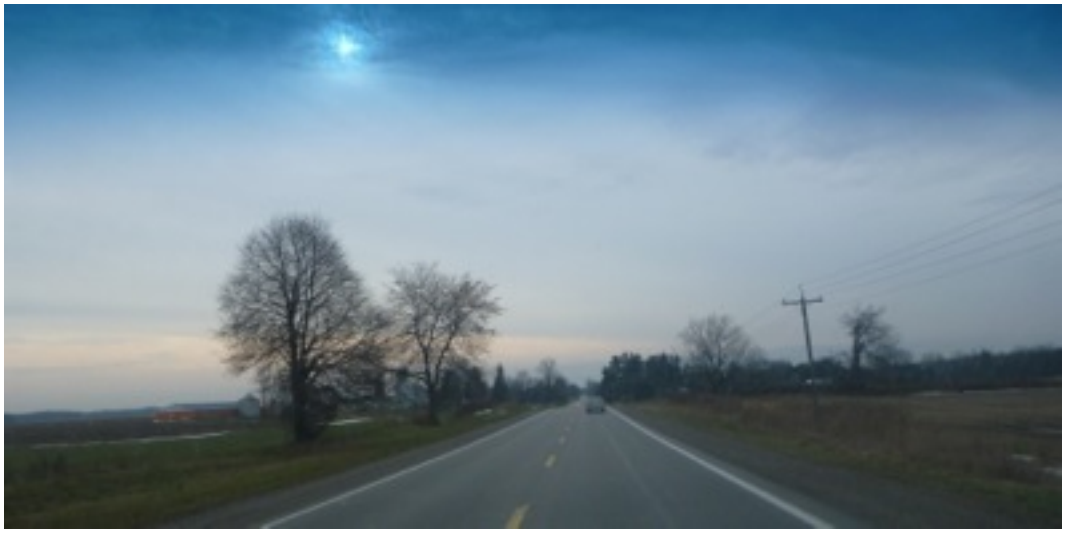
Date and time: Sunday November 23 2014 2:20 - 4:15 pm
Weather: Pr 16 mm; RH 88%; BP 101.5 kPa; calm; overcast; T 10º C
Activity: Maintenance and checks on river & creek.

Driving Highway #2 (The Longwoods Road) down to Wardsville, we were cheered when the sun began to peer through a gloomy overcast putting both of us in a good



That's not clear sky, but blue tinting in the Freestar windscreen.

mood. Brian Cornish is a neighbour with rural roots and a raucous sense of humour. He has the strength of an ox and a heart of gold. He kept scanning the edge of passing woods until he saw something in the distance. "Hey! I just seen two deer!" Brian likes to hunt with his Oneida buddies.

Newport Forest was snow-free, but very wet from recent rains. The ground was frozen, however, so I chanced the drive in through the Upper Meadow, then down to the bottomland where the trailer is parked. I forgot that frozen ground can still be slippery. I wondered if we would ever get out again.

On the way to the river, I found what appeared to be a Late Fall Oyster (mush-room) sprouting from a log by the trail. Further on, Brian spotted small deposits of whitish tubular scat over a wide area. Wild Turkeys! But why the concentration? Little eco-mysteries pop up with every visit. Either a flock of Wild Turkeys goes in

for group defecation or several birds had been foraging in that area for a considerable period. The river was up, as expected, but not over its banks by any means. A wide jam of thin three-day ice blanketed the upstream bend but the downriver was clear. We made our way back, as this was to be a short visit. The sun broke out weakly once more as we made our way through the Blind Creek Forest, bathing the trees and bushes in pale yellow. Trail Cam #1 at the Hole had completely dead batteries, so I replaced it by Cam #2.

Back in camp we had a quick lunch in the Nook, entertained by an overflight of 66 Canada Geese in a single, grand wedge. We then went down the bluffs to visit Fleming Creek. It was also within its banks, but roaring along at a good speed. Oh, for a canoe and dear Pat! It would be a wild five-minute ride full of twists and turns out to the mouth at the river. Brian scanned the bank for deer tracks. "I don't see no tracks!" I told him they're pretty hard to spot in thick grass.

Time to leave. Brian would have to walk to the Upper Meadow, as the van had to be as light as possible to accelerate out of the bottomland. My new all-terrain tires just made it to the top of the hill where I could wait for Brian. At the gate we found old Edgar puttering in his garage. Brian helped him fix his tractor hitch and Edgar gave him a bicycle that needed fixing. Brian is also a junk dealer. Human ecology.

Phenology: First snowfall November 16, gone by November 22.

New Species:

'Furball Gall wasp'	*Callirhytis furva*	Loc KD Jl29/13
Round Bullet Gall Wasp	*Disholcaspis* [*quercusglobulus*]	RZ KD Jl29/13

Note: These are the first two IDs from my collection of gall images. There may not be many more to come, as some galls are difficult to distinguish from images.

Readers Write:

We have set a new record for reader response to the *Newport Forest Bulletin*, thanks to the article on climate change that accompanied *Bulletin* # 965.

Daniel Botkin, Adjunct Professor of Biology, University of Miami: "Thanks for including this discussion of one of the factors that affect climate change. I've done research since 1968 on the possibility of a human-induced global warming and its possible ecological effects. I was an expert reviewer of both the 2014 IPCC report and the 2014 White House Climate Change Assessment, and as a result was asked

to testify to both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate about climate change, which I did this year. That global warming has become a political and ideological issue rather than a scientific one in our society has deeply concerned me, so I appreciate your willingness to include the article about solar activity and climate."

Stan Caveney, Department of Biology ret., University of Western Ontario: "I have read several recent accounts on the proposed role of sun spot activity on the earth's temperature (mainly journalism in the *National Post*), but your article explaining how cosmic irradiation influences our planet's surface temperature was top-notch popular writing. I have long been a closet dissenter of the herd mentality on 'global warming/climate change/extreme weather' and find people like [UWO advocate] Gordon McBean (and let's not talk about the hypocrite-opportunist Al Gore) just too smug for words. Well done."

Chris Essex, Applied Mathematics, University of Western Ontario: [taking issue with my mention of methane as "powerful"] "Re Methane a much "more powerful" greenhouse gas. Greenhouse-ness doesn't have a "power." Moreover its effect is peanuts in a full blooded radiative transfer calculation. I know. I have done it, unlike most of those who talk about such things. IR methane absorption bands are just in the wrong place in the spectrum to matter a whit. They are buried behind very active water absorption, and off peak too. The people who have said otherwise have turned themselves into pretzels to convince the world not to eat meat etc and to make all such IR active gases seem more threatening. Water is the most important IR gas by far. Everything else is nearly irrelevant. The fact the 15 micron band of CO_2 is in an absorption window is the only reason that CO_2 has any chance at all to make the slightest impression. And its only hope is to make this slight impression count by increasing the amount of water."

Abdelhaq Hamza, Physicist, University of New Brunswick: "All [climate] models have parameters that can be adjusted to give the desired outcome including the Standard Model [of Physics] which has 18+6+1 parameters that need to be put in to lead to the desired outputs which can then be compared with the empirical data . . . Climate models have an incredible number of free parameters that need to be put, and most people, including scientists, have no clue about the fine-tuning required to produce some decent results. The other problem that is often neglected with the large scale computations is resolution. What you put in is what you get out. These numerical models require more input parameters than the SUSY (supersymmetric models) models, which require 120 parameters in some cases."

Keith Langdon, Biologist, Great Smoky Mountains National Park: “I enjoyed your take on climate change. I have never fully embraced the CO_2 models, and esp. not the political correctness that increasingly comes with them. I have been following the cloud formation process with interest. However, I DO think we need to reduce CO_2 emissions just acting out of the caution that the natural world is a very complex place, and we should strive to control all our impacts, even if there is not a smoking gun yet. But bravo for your piece. As General Patton said, ’If everybody is thinking the same thing, then someone isn't thinking.’ Or something like that.”

Linda Nicks, hydrogeologist, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority: “I studied glacial geology and my first masters is in [that field] and it is my passion. Sun spot activity is well known for causing major glaciations. The little ice age is likely the weakest part of the argument. It was not systematic across the northern hemisphere. The timing of the little ice age in North America is different from Europe. In the Great Lakes region, dryness was prevalent around 10k years ago and nearly dried out the Great Lakes. Sun spot activity is a driver. I don't think anyone disputes that, but there are few simple explanations. I myself fancy [the book] *Plows, Plagues, and Petroleum: How Humans Took Control of Climate* by William F. Ruddiman. There are no downsides to getting off the carbon addiction. We've been affecting climate for 10000 years and not just the last 200 years. Ruddiman is a very comprehensive analysis and he has more published information than this book. It's an interesting read at a minimum.”

Allen Woodliffe, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources ret.: “Thanks . . . for sending this along. So true — the way the world works is far more complicated than anyone can imagine. Even the most learned minds only learn in small steps, compared to what there is to know and the more we learn, the more we (should) realize we don't know! Yet it just goes to show that the arrogance of mankind cannot accept that certain beliefs can be wrong. Whatever happened to humility? Those who are most adamant about their beliefs are the ones who are most vocal and defensive when those beliefs come into question, and as you stated, it results in academic bullying. The various media, its survival dependent on sensation and fear-mongering, facilitates this and 'we the sheeple' continue our trust in the hands that feed us such information.”

Additional responses:

Mohamed Amery: ”Thank you for a most interesting and enlightening picture you have presented about Global Warming/Climate change. Much of what you described in your essay calls for serious thought and consideration, especially by

those who are scientifically-minded (that is not me!). I have to admit though that because there has been a number of instances where there has been a trend of a sustained warm weather only to be followed by a relatively sustained colder period one cannot be totally convinced that we are on our way to witnessing a much warmer global climate anytime soon."

Henry Crapo: "And thanks for your great article on cosmic rays, sunspots, cloud cover, and earth temperatures."

Christopher Dewdney: "The thing that really irks me is the continuing insistence that the arctic ice cover is retreating, whereas in the last winter and most certainly in this one, it has been advancing. Where are those numbers? Why are we watching documentaries on TVO showing summer conditions and swimming polar bears? Just a little pet peeve of mine."

Kee Dewdney: "Two readers mentioned reducing our use of hydrocarbon fuels, whatever the status of 'climate change.' We agree. In fact we could all probably get along with reduced consumption of a great many things, from food to fuel, not to mention our increasing dependance on electricity and electronic devices. Try to imagine the death rate from a one-month total power outage."

Botkin Launches a Premium Newsletter:

Well-known biologist and science writer, Daniel Botkin has started a Newsletter that our readers might take an interest in: Dan writes that the new publication is "an attempt to get open, objective, solid scientific information out to a wide audience in this social media age. Several of the issues have dealt directly with climate change causes and its possible effects." Readers who visit Botkin's website at <http://www.danbotkin.com> will find some fascinating articles there, as well as an opportunity to subscribe to the newsletter in either its mail or email versions.

IMAGES:

A Late Fall Oyster (*Panellus serotinus*) or I miss my guess. It has a very interesting cousin, Luminescent Panellus (P. *stipticus*) that glows in the dark. We found some growing (and *glowing*) on an old log in the Gallery Forest during an overnight stay on September 6 2006.

Fleming Creek is full of runoff and presents a smooth, fast-moving surface as it rolls past Brian. On the far shore is the Fleming Creek Forest, a place we hardly visit any more, ever since we removed the pipe bridge several years ago.