

Newport Forest Bulletin Annual Report to Readers

March 5 2014

This is our second detailed summary of activities at Newport Forest over the (previous) calendar year. By special arrangement with the TTLT we act as local managers in our capacity as co-chairs of the Newport Forest Stewards Group (see below) which reports to the TTLT Property Management Committee. In this unique context Newport Forest is the most actively managed property of the many TTLT holdings, hosting monitoring activities, work days, and special studies initiated and maintained by the Dewdneys since the year 2000. We feel that the information thus acquired enhances the conservation value of the property and we hope that it may contribute to similar developments, over time, in other TTLT holdings.



Best cover image of 2014: three little Raccoon kits return to nursery box after an early evening excursion on June 5 2014

The report is divided into five main sections: Site Statistics, Events, Monitoring, Special Studies and Other Matters. We apologize for any inaccuracies.

Kee and Pat Dewdney

Site Visit Statistics

Over 2014 we made 47 site visits, 2 of them for overnight stays for a total of 49 days on site, the smallest records since 2000. The bar chart below illustrates the visitation pattern, with each site visit on a given month indicated by an asterisk.

Jan	***
Feb	**
Mar	**
Apr	****
May	*****
Jun	*****
Jul	*****
Aug	*****
Sep	*****
Oct	*****
Nov	**
Dec	**

Precipitation: On-site precipitation for the year totalled 768 mm, somewhat short of the regional averages shown below. Precipitation includes both rainfall and the water equivalent in snowfall. The table below displays on-site precipitation since 2003. Clearly, annual precipitation is highly variable.

year	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
prec.	756	617	667	1020	674	1220	926	926	744	1243	704

regional averages Ridgetown 959 mm Chatham 808 mm

Site Events

Maintenance operations

Apr 13	TTLT Annual workday; 30 volunteers attend.
Jun 7	Steve Logan grooms half the trails with weed eater
Jun 12	Logan finishes trail grooming
Aug 21	Steve Logan grooms trails for fall season
Dec 9	Steve Logan and friend Neil clear trails

Visitors & special events:

May 19 Marg Hulls leads walk of West Elgin Nature Club members.
 Jun 2 Visit from West Elgin High School class and TTLT members
 Jun 7 Darren Jacobs assists in search for new fish spp.
 Jun 26 Dave Martin and Linda Wladarski bird survey: 47 species
 Jun 26 Dedication ceremony for Bowles memorial tree: 21 people attend
 Jul 31 ATBI count passes the 2000 mark
 Aug 2 visit from Entomologist Dan Bickel
 Aug 10 Erin Carroll assists in search for new aquatic arthropods
 Sep 6 Bee protocol reveals three-year decline

Annual Events:

Apr 5 TTLT Stewards Committee meeting: 6 Stewards attend
 May 10 TTLT Annual Wildflower Walk: 18 people attend.
 Jul 6 Annual Butterfly count brings 3 counters to site
 Oct 19 Fall Fungus Workshop led by Greg Thorn: 29 people attend

Floods:

Because the Thames River and Fleming Creek are at almost the same level, floods in the river are automatically floods in the creek. Crest heights are approximate.

<u>date</u>	<u>crest</u>	<u>comments</u>
Jan 12	1m	creek over bank, clay beach submerged at river
Apr 5	2m	river and creek
Apr 10	3m	river and creek
Nov 23	1m	river

All Taxa Biological Inventory (ATBI)

New species: Plantae 4, Animalia 144, Fungi 23, Protists 6, Eubacteria 2
 Total 132
 Current counts: Plantae 484, Animalia 1,112, Fungi 272, Protists 205, Eub. 23
 Total 2,096

Notable new species found in 2014 (unattributed finds are by the Dewdneys)

Black Oak and Butternut (Donald Craig)	Mar 27
American Yellowwood	Oct 2

Fantail Darter	Mar 29
Water Boatman (<i>Corisella</i> sp - rare)	Jun 12
Alder Flycatcher (Dave Martin & Linda Wladarski)	Jun 26
Velvet-stalked Fairy Fan	Jun 24
Slender Meadow Katydid	Aug 21
Plain Pocketbook Mussel	Aug 24
Rainbow Shell	Sep 28
Dog Stinkhorn, Cannon Fungus (Greg Thorn)	Oct 19

Notable (non-new) species observed in 2013

Virginia Possum	Jan 12 (tracks only)
Groundhog	at gate Apr 10, visits Nook for portrait Jun 26
Tundra Swan	in river on Apr 10, overhead Apr 20
False Mermaid	(plant) May 10
Long-nose Gar	fry found in creek Jun 19
Bobolinks	seen by Dave Martin & Linda Wladarski June 26
Io Moth	larva spotted Aug 2
Pelecimid Wasp	Aug 24 and Sep 1
Ruffed Grouse (prob.)	two flushes in Blind Creek Forest: Aug 28 and Sep 11
Threehorned Wartyback	on Mussel Beach Aug 28
Praying Mantis	two seen on Sep 27
Walkingstick	mating pair Oct 2
Long-tailed Weasel	in trailer periodically throughout year

Phenology of selected natural events:

2013	2014	
Apr 07-18	Apr 10-20	Chorus Frogs in Vernal Ponds
Mar 30	Apr 20	first snake sightings (Garter & Little Brown)
Apr 21	Apr 24	Harbinger of Spring, Spring Beauty in bloom
Apr 27	Apr 24	Trout Lilies in bloom
Apr 30	May 10	American Toad chorus (one date)
May 02	Apr 10	Gray Tree Frogs calling
May 10	May 25	Mother Raccoon in nursery box
Jun 23	Sep 11	giant willow falls in Blind Creek Forest

Note: the above dates are all later by a day or so than actual dates.

Special Studies:

Mussel Survey at river: We collected the valves, paired where possible, of some 157 individual mussels from the clay beach (aka Mussel Beach) by the river. These fell into 15 species, the Plain Pocketbook and Rainbow Mussel being new species.

Other matters

Newport Forest Stewards: We thank the Newport Forest Stewards Committee for their generous contributions of time and effort over 2014: Erin Carroll, Donald Craig, Marg Hulls, Nina Hurdle, Darren Jacobs, and Bruce Parker, Pat and Kee Dewdney, Committee Co-chairs

Keep your eye on *The Bulletin*: Like these young Raccoons watching from the Black Maple on Nov 8, keep your eye on *The Newport Forest Bulletin* for future developments at Newport Forest.

