

Date and time: Wednesday June 17 2015 1:45 - 6:30 pm

Weather: Pr 11 mm; RH 64%; BP 102.2; overcast; calm; T 24°C

Activity: Trail maintenance and an arthro-blitz.

Today was Trail Maintenance Day. Steve Logan, assisted by friend Herb Snake, came to groom the 2 km Newport Forest Trail system. They brought a power mower with them to provide a nice walkway to The Hole, shown below. This is the entrance to Blind Creek Forest, where the trail narrows to less than one metre.



Both Steve and Herb hail from the Moraviantown Reserve, 10 km southwest of Newport Forest. Big things are planned there for the weekend. (See below.)

With me on today's visit was Assistant Junus Amer, brother of the young lady who took macro photos for us two visits ago. While the whine of Steve's weedeater faded in the distance, Junus used our own, battery-powered weedeater to cut the trail down to Fleming Creek. This path is part of the two-km trail system.

Later Junus and I engaged in an intensive survey of the old watering trail that leads through the heart of the Regeneration Zone in the Lower Meadow. Planted trees dot this Zone randomly, but the trees adjacent to the Gallery Forest to the west and to the Blind Creek Forest to the east, are much taller for some reason. Junus would sweep with the insect net along the trail for a few metres, then we would open it gingerly to take careful images of anything crawling that hadn't flown away yet. Sweep and click, sweep and click. On it went for over an hour. I had a feeling that the harvest of new species would be good, in spite of spotting many old friends as we went along. (See below.)

Later, while waiting for Steve and Herb to return, I poked around the trailer for insects that would sometimes sun themselves on its warmer walls. I was surprised to find a wad of green putty stuck to the large window shutter at one end. What!? It wasn't putty at all, but a young tree frog, all green except for a white belly. Like me, it was also looking for insects on the trailer.

When the trail crew finally got back, we all had a (very) late lunch in the Nook. We discussed the "Trail Jam" to be held this coming Sunday at Moraviantown. (See below.) Steve regaled us with stories about his dog, Little Bear, a great shaggy beast of unknown ancestry. When Steve gathers firewood in his bush, Little Bear loves to go along, hunting for snakes. When he finds one, he shakes it until every vertebra is dislocated, a practice that Little Bear enjoys far more than the snake.

Later at home, I inspected the images taken by the two trail cams. There were a few Raccoons triggering the devices, but a Coyote apparently passed Cam #1 at 12:10 am on the morning of the 16th.

Old Friends: Nursery Web Spider (*Pisaurina mira*); Peppered Jumping Spider (*Pelegrina galathea*); 'Yellow-backed Theridion' (*Theridion albidum*); Twice-stabbed Stinkbug (*Cosmopepla bimaculata*); Leaf-footed Bug (*Acanthocephalus terminalis*); Brown Stink Bug (*Euschistus servus*); European Earwig (*Forficula auricularia*); 'Two-striped Spittlebug' (*Lepryona quadrangularis*); Meadow Plant Bug (*Leptopterna dolabrata*); Black Damsel (*Nabis subcoleoptratus*); Little Wood Satyr (*Megisto cymela*); Eight-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Ciccindela* sp);

New Species:

'Brown Photinus Firefly'	<i>Photinus [consanguineus]</i>	LM jaKD Je1715
'Mottled Snout Beetle'	[<i>Mesagroicus</i>] sp.	RL aaKD Je09/15
Cryptinine Wasp	<i>Endasys</i> sp.	LM jaKD Je1715
'Banded Jumping Spider'	<i>Pelegrina flavipes</i>	LM jaKD Je1715
Virginia Creeper Treehopper	<i>Telemona ampelopsidis</i>	LM jaKD Je1715
'Black-darted Red Bug'	<i>Metriorrhynchomiris dislocatus</i>	LM jaKD Je1715
Pachygronthid Bug	<i>Phlegyas abbreviatus</i>	LM jaKD Je1715
Antlike Checkered Beetle	<i>Enclosure rosmarus</i>	LM jaKD Je1716

Species Notes:

The Checkered Beetle took a long time to identify because it wasn't a species of Antlike Leaf Beetle or Antlike Flower Beetle as I had originally thought. I finally gave up and simply searched Google Images for "antlike beetle", finding our guy about 100 images down the scroll. Then it was off to Bug Guide to check out the

family Cleridae of Checkered Beetles. Speaking of new families, a pair of copulating bugs turned out to belong to Pachygronthidae. These bugs seem to spend an inordinate amount of time in this position, according to available imagery.

Note on species abundances:

Apart from a host of unidentified species, some unidentifiable by us, today's finds were divided (above) into 12 "old friends" and 8 new species. If these numbers are currently typical, then it might seem that the ratio of new finds to the total is about 40%. Does this mean that we are 60% done with the meadow arthropods? Not at all. My particular academic specialty is population biology, with an emphasis on patterns of biodiversity.

Species here, species there;
few are common, many rare.

Given the fact that species abundances tend to follow a hyperbolic curve, the new species that show up will tend to belong to ever smaller populations. Depending on how many such populations there are, we may only be 20% done — or less!

Trail Jam at Moraviantown: Darren Jacobs has organized a celebration of his recently completed trail project at Moraviantown. The trail follows the bank of the Thames for nearly a mile, with many rare species of trees and plants along it. Several walks are scheduled on the day — Sunday June 21 — starting at 8 am. Other features of the "jam" include a jazz band, children's drumming, an open mike for amateur performers, and other attractions. Native food will be served, including fried bread and venison, fresh pickerel from Lake Huron, and so on.

How to get there: Take Highway #2 south (or the 401, turning off near Rodney) until you come to Littlejohn Road, taking it south (left), turn right at River Line, then right again at the next intersection and head for the river.

Readers Write:

Daniel Botkin (Biologist extraordinaire and publisher): "Good photos! Keep doing these. I do a lot with photography as you can see in the newsletter so I appreciate these kinds of advancements. The new digital cameras are incredible."

Dave Martin (local bird expert): "Although the focus was off on your photo, I thought the ducklings might be Wood Ducks. I sent it to Hugh Casbourn for his

opinion and he agreed. The raft that they are floating on would not be a former nest, as Wood Ducks nest in a cavity in a tree.”

Hamid Mumin (Geologist at Brandon U.): “Not sure if you are aware or not, but a bone-chilling scream(s) in the night like someone being molested is the vixen (female fox) looking for a mate. Little yips is calling out to her pups.”

Catching up: Readers who wonder what past issue of the *Bulletin* were like are welcome to visit the archive at <<http://www.csd.uwo.ca/~akd/newport-forest/>> Scroll to the very bottom to find nearly 1000 site visits archived.

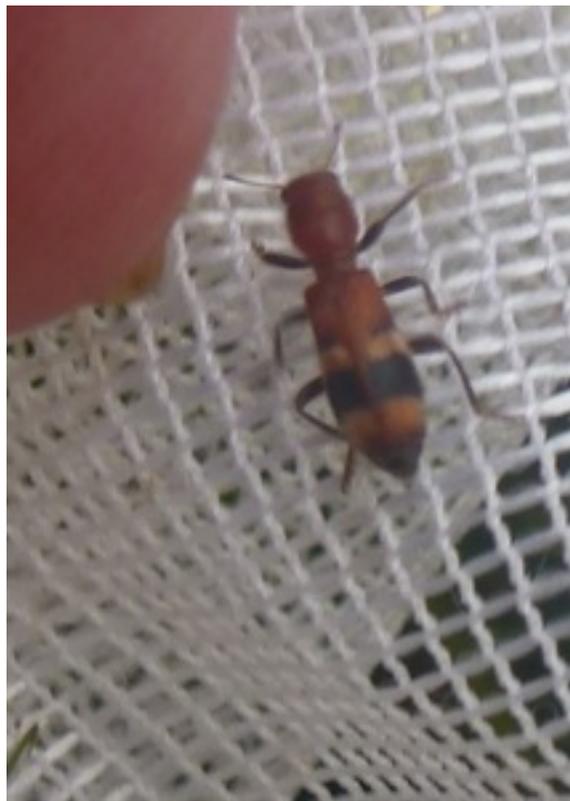
IMAGES:



This young Gray Tree Frog (*Hyla versicolor*) wears its green suit while waiting for insects to show up as it clings to the trailer’s window shutter. These frogs have a remarkable ability to change colour and pattern on their skins, camouflaging themselves for almost any conceivable environment. The only close relative of the Gray Tree Frog in our area is Cope’s Gray Tree Frog, very rare here, but quite common further south.



The fireflies *Photinus* spp. are not flies, but beetles. The light organ is located in the bottom of the abdomen, seen protruding here.



Checkered Beetles include many antlike species. Our genus *Enoclerus* has 29 species, all of them more or less antlike.