

**Date and time:** Tuesday July 21 2015 2:30 - 6:45 pm

**Weather:** Pr 3 mm; RH 57%; BP 100.9 kPa; clear; N 10-20 kmh; T 25°C

**Activity:** Collecting arthropods that turn out not to be new.

We parked at the property gate to examine the patch of Milkweed plants that are now being crowded out by Teasels. No Monarch butterflies were visible and the Milkweed blooms are starting to wilt and brown. The image below shows how the



Teasels (background) have been crowding the Milkweed (foreground).

We spent the first hour or so sweeping for insects, as usual, seeming to find nothing but species that have already been logged in the ongoing ATBI project. Here was the Fruit Fly *Eutreta* (which at first we thought was a Signal Fly), the Banded Longhorn, *Typocerus velutinus*, the Brown Longhorn, *Brachyleptura champlaini*, the Mirid bug, *Lopidea media*, the nursery web spider *Pisurina mira*, and even the beautiful Hummingbird Moth, *Hemaris thysbe*, which Pat spotted as it visited some Monarda blooms near the trailer. Another interesting sight, although not new, was the Calligraph Beetle, *Chrysomela knabi*, which I thought was a lady beetle, brushing it off my sleeve after a cursory photograph. And on we went, with three more familiar species and (as it turned out later) only two new ones. Have we hit some sort of species wall?

We walked to the river, hoping to see Mussel Beach exposed, but it was still submerged. The beach is a great place to find new beetles, spiders, and other arthropods scuttling over the dry clay. On a drift pile at the Landing, Pat discovered a rather small bug, all covered with spines. This was only our second sighting of the Spiny Assassin Bug, *Sinea* sp. Besides arthropods, we continued our review of vascular plants at Newport Forest. Over the last year we have collected or examined over a dozen plants and not one of them has turned out to be new! Jane Bowles, the expert botanist, now sadly deceased, had done a very thorough job on the flora, often accompanied by Pat — whom she mentored for several years. At the River Landing, Pat picked some Water Hemlock to take back and check, just to be sure.

During this visit, butterflies had been very common, with Fritillaries, Eastern Commas, Little Wood Nymphs and others frequently crossing our trail. Pat remarked at one point, “We haven’t seen any Giant Swallowtails this year!”

I took the trail down to Fleming Creek and made my way to the rapids. Was it my imagination or have the rapids themselves been slowly migrating downstream over the years? That strikes me as perfectly possible, over time, and my textbook on stream hydro-logy bears me out. Near the rapids I found a log with several Oyster Mushrooms, *Pleurotus ostreatus*, sprouting on it. Not a new species, although apparently a choice delectable.

At the end of our visit we stopped at the gate, where I found a small, metallic green Long-legged Fly, *Condylostyla calcaratus*. That, along with a spider worked on since the previous visit, gave us our two new species of the day, so to speak. As we pulled away from the gate, Pat glanced over the fence to see a lone Monarch fluttering among the Milkweed plants.

### **Birds (11):**

American Crow (EW); American Robin (TR); Blue Jay (GF); Common Yellowthroat (LM); Eastern Towhee (FCF); Field Sparrow (RL); Gray Catbird (BCF); Mourning Dove (GF); Northern Cardinal (RL); Song Sparrow (LM); Tree Swallow (UM).

### **New Species:**

‘Red Meshweaver’	<i>Emblyna [sublata]</i>	GF KD J116/15
‘Green Condylostylid’	<i>Condylostylus calcaratus</i>	UM/Rd KD J121/15
‘Sad Crabronid’	<i>Nysson [tristis]</i>	LM/GF KD J121/15

## **Species Notes:**

The Crabronid record will replace our previous record that listed only the subfamily for this wasp, now *Nysson* [*tristis*]. In cases like this, however, the count does not go up. The remaining two species add 2 to the total count. The “common” names are mostly made up, indicated by single quotes. Most such names are intended to reflect something about the appearance or habits of the organism in question; others are derived from the scientific name, such as the “sad” wasp.

**Phenology:** Milkweed bloom ending, Monarda still in full bloom.

## **Readers Write:**

A reader who wishes to be known only as The Fairy Princess applies Beatrix Potter Ecology to the mysterious firefly light track in the previous issue: “It's a firefly cat on faerie ground and another one on the right!”

Bruce Parker, a Newport Forest Steward and naturalist, takes the issue more seriously: “I love this new mystery discovered by the trail cam. First of all, if you google 'firefly trails', the results are dissimilar to the image. I believe the light emanating from the extreme right is connected to the larger horizontal 'beam'. Something or someone has created a shadow to divide the two. I will enlarge and attempt to examine the image further, but relish the notion that some ingenious trespasser has created this mystery for us to decipher.”

## **Catching up:**

Readers who would like to read past issues of the *Bulletin* are welcome to visit the archive at <http://www.csd.uwo.ca/~akd/newport-forest/> Scroll to the bottom.

## **IMAGES:**



Water Hemlock, *Cicuta maculata*, is a beautiful and graceful plant with tiny flowers gathered into an umbel of small clusters. The plant is poisonous but not fatally so, as was Socrates' fatal drink of "Hemlock", *Conium maculatum*, as shown below. Both plants belong to Apiaceae.





The Nursery Web Spider, *Pisaurina mira*, is very common at Newport Forest. Note how it keeps legs 1 and 2 together, giving the appearance of having six legs, perhaps to lure insects onto the head of this tattered Black-eyed Susan. (Such a specious comment leads to a question: can insects count?)

This species is typical of many spiders in showing a great variety of ground colours and pattern density. In some cases, the central stripe can fade to near invisibility, while others are much darker. The stripe may be wavy, as above, or fairly straight. Legs can be darker and banded.