

**Date and time:** Monday September 28 2015 1:45 - 5:40 pm.

**Weather:** Prec. 0 mm; RH 77%; BP 101.9 kPa; sun/cloud; calm; T 25° C

**Activity:** Trail maintenance and casual collecting.

By the time I arrived on site, Steve Logan and his friend Herb Snake had nearly finished grooming the river bluffs portion of the Thames River Trail. By levelling away many of the lumps and rough spots, they had made the trail much safer to walk for older people — like us. After they had left, I returned to the river, this time to Mussel Beach at the base of the bluffs. I made a rough assessment of the state of erosion by examining the hummocks: how many are there? What size? How fast are they migrating toward the river? The image below shows two or three small ones and, above them, an elongated one that has already detached from the ground above it. Erosion is inexorable and ultimately inevitable, indeed desirable.



(with apologies for the foggy, lightshot image, darkened here to compensate.)

When I got back to the Nook to finish my egg salad sandwich, I was shocked to see two carrion beetles nibbling away at the egg. I had forgotten to put the sandwich away. (See IMAGES.)

Sweeping along the vegetation that borders the Gallery Forest, I was surprised by the number of spiders that I kept encountering. These include two new spiders, a jumper and a crab spider. (See **New Species**.) Back in the Nook for a break, I spotted a young stick insect crawling over the leaves next to my feet. It was past the greenish nymphal phase and resembled a miniature male adult. (See IMAGES.)

A final foray down to the creek netted several water striders, one of which was already known, the others being uncertain and/or nymphal. Water Striders are very difficult to ID from images — unless they're macro shots.

To round out the afternoon, I photographed two more plants for the plant image bank, a Silverweed at the river and a Wide-leaved Plantain by the creek.

### **Phenology:**

Leaf fall starting, an extended dry spell now threatening some trees.

### **Precipitation report:**

Up to the end of September, the property received 478 mm of precipitation (incl. water equivalent of snow). This is rather low and comparable with 2003 in which the end-of-September amount was 470 mm. Locally, 2003 was a drought year in which corn crops suffered low yields. Other years varied from 740 to 955 mm.

**New Species:** (Percent of new species: 20%.)

'Spotted Jumping Spider'	<i>Marpissa formosa</i>	LM KD Sp28/15
'Long-legged Crab Spider'	<i>Misumenops</i> sp.	LM KD Sp28/15

**Old Species:** (Observed on this occasion but already logged.)

Furrow Spider (*Larinioides cornitus*); Northern Crab Spider (*Mecaphesa asperata*); 'Striped Longjaw' (*Tetragnatha straminea*); Nursery Web Spider (*Pisaurina mira*); Northern Walkingstick (*Diaperomera femorata*); Water Strider (*Aquarius remigis*); Spotted Cucumber Beetle (*Diabrotica undecimpunctata*); Eastern Yellowjacket (*Vespula maculifrons*). Unidentified and not contributing to the percentage above: a Muscid Fly and a (very dark) Leaf Hopper, not to mention numerous grasshoppers that were virtually unapproachable.

### **Catching up:**

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

### **IMAGES:**



The Carrion Beetle *Nicrophorus tomentosus* enjoys a snack of egg salad, joined for lunch by an ant of the sort called “picnic ants,” owing to their annoying habit of always showing up for picnics.



A young stick insect, *Diaperomera femorata*, is easy to miss among the fallen leaves. Its abdomen, to the left, sports a ring at the end. Not a ring actually, but a pair of incurved cerci that may be useful for clasping females during mating — at a guess. Females have no cerci.