

Date and time: Tuesday October 6 2015 12:50 - 4:55 pm

Weather: Pr 22 mm; RH 93%; BP 102.2 kPa; overcast; calm; T 20 °C

Activity: Looking for spiders by the river and for fishes in the creek.

I drove into the property to find some 47 grade nine students from Strathroy District Collegiate Institute busily planting a wide variety of wildflowers under the direction of Property Manager Daria Koscinski (far right) and teacher Diana MacKenzie (third from right). Among the plants going in were Tall Sunflower, Canada Tick Trefoil, Butterfly Weed, Wild Strawberry, Gray Goldenrod and five other species. In a distant field on the rise, another group of students under teacher Danny Kajan carried out a parallel planting operation. Over 2000 plants went into the ground. A little rain at this point wouldn't hurt.



After an hour of enjoying the students and their work, I proceeded down to the Lower Meadow to play catch-up. I set my lunch pail on a table in the Nook and relaxed in the warmth for a few minutes. Glancing back at the pail, I noticed a jumping spider climbing it. “*Hentzia*”! I exclaimed, a distinctive genus I had been seeking a long time; Leg 1 is extended well ahead of the body, giving the appearance of a Crab Spider. But it's a jumper.

Taking this fortuitous find as a signal for the day, I continued to let the species come to me, so to speak. First I walked to the river to stroll Mussel Beach with its fascinating spider populations. I got a very detailed image of the Wolf Spider *Pardosa milvina* there. On the way back, I spotted a brightly coloured caterpillar, the next new species. Next came a rather sluggish Tree Hopper parked on a leaf, another new species. But I missed getting an amazing-looking Ichneumon that settled on a leaf by the trail, then flew off without settling anywhere else.

After another rest in the Nook, I made my way down to Fleming Creek armed with Cam #2 on its tripod, three fishing nets and my walking pole. I set the camera up by the rapids to catch incoming traffic at the ford. Then I put on my rubber boots and waded out into the pool above the rapids. I discovered to my amazement that my aquatic net with its wide white mesh kept coming up empty, but as soon as I switched to the black fine mesh net, I came up with something on almost every dip. Perhaps fish don't see the black as well.

Switching to the rapids, I began to nudge rocks, dislodging darters and crayfish from their shelters, netting them, photographing them and returning them to the water as quickly as possible. In this manner I collected two Logperches, Johnny Darters, and a crayfish, as in "Old Species". Even a dragonfly nymph. At one point I came across something very new-looking in my net, shaped like a polliwog, but more like a madtom. I became terribly excited, tried to step over a log to get the specimen ashore, and promptly tripped, losing my specimen and getting a soaker in the process. I was far more annoyed at losing the fish than I was at the soaker!

To dry off, I abandoned the fishing expedition and clambered up the bank and into the Fleming Creek Forest, a place we have rarely gone since the bridge was removed ten years ago. Here I searched for the trail that we had worked so hard to lay down years ago. Not a trace left. Would I see once again that amazing colourful millipede *Apheloria virginiensis*? (Google it.) Fat chance! Erin Carroll and I have been planning an expedition there one day to check on the state of the forest.

It was now nearly five, so I returned to the trailer to close up camp and head for the gate. What a surprise on the way out. I counted them in rapid fire order. Exactly twelve Bobolinks rose from the Upper Meadow, flushed from various spots among the vegetation to fly out over the Fleming Creek bluffs. They may be assembling a flock to head south. Given the coming winter, we may want to do the same.

New Species:

‘Crablike Jumper’	<i>Hentzia palmarum</i>	GF KD Oc0615
‘Black-backed Treehopper’	<i>Pubilia concava</i>	ET KD Oc0615
‘Mini Black Lady Beetle’	<i>Hyperaspis proba</i>	GF KD Oc06/15
Spotted Tussock Moth	<i>Lophocampa maculata</i>	ET KD Oc06/15
Banded Darter	<i>Etheostoma zonale</i>	FC KD Oc06/15

Species Notes:

Spiders tend to be sexually dimorphic, so the female *Hentzia* sports an entirely different pattern on her back than the male does. The treehopper is quite distinctive, all brown with a black, ridged dorsum and a saddle in the middle. The tiny lady beetle is easily mistaken for a related genus *Zagloba*. The Tussock Moth larva normally has black at both ends, but all-yellow variants are not uncommon.

Old Species: (new species ratio: 45%)

Wolf Spider (*Pardosa milvina*); Dragonfly nymph (*Anisoptera*); Eastern Yellowjacket (*Vespula maculifrons*); Northern Clearwater Crayfish (*Orconectes propinquus*); Johnny Darter (*Etheostoma nigrum*); Logperch (*Percina caprodes*).

ATBI Progress Report:

The species count now stands at 2,185 and breaks down into kingdoms as follows:

Plantae	484
Animalia	1199
Protista	200
Fungi & Lichens	274
Eubacteria	23

Not surprisingly, the great bulk of Kingdom Animalia, as reflected in these numbers, consists of about 85-90% arthropods. The vascular plants (i. e. exclusive of mosses) are close to complete, at least 90%, at a guess. Pat and Jane Bowles went over this property with a fine tooth comb back in the early 2000s.

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.

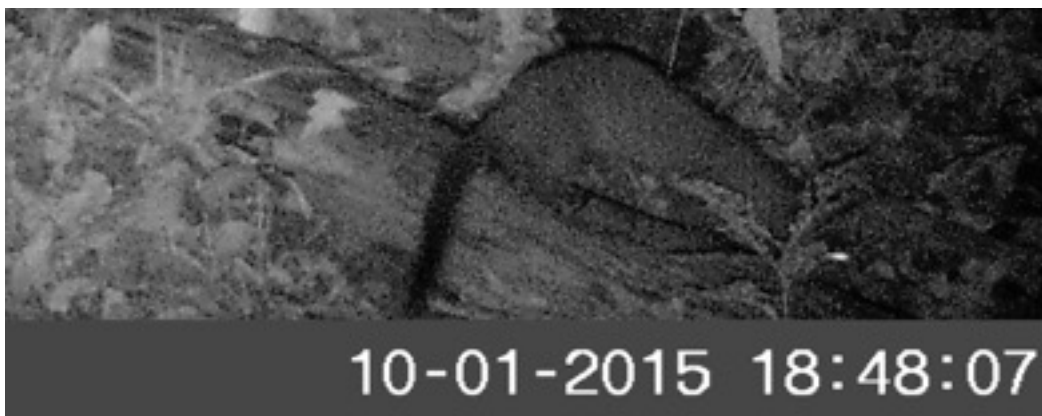
IMAGES:



Larva of Spotted Tussock Moth (*Lophocampa maculata*) above and the Wolf Spider (*Pardosa milvina*) below. Note the spider's effective camouflage, as compared with the caterpillar's "advertising campaign." Why does the caterpillar sport bright yellow? Is it a warning colour?



A buck at Cam #1 tells us that rutting season is not far off. This particular animal kept eyeing the camera for several frames, including one comical image of little more than one gigantic eyeball! (1:47 pm)



Is this Long-tailed Weasel the one we've been calling "Wendy"? If so, she's back home, as indicated by a new gift of scat on one of the trailer cushions. (6:48 am, pre-dawn)