

Date and time: Tuesday July 11 2016 1:35 - 7:30 pm.

Weather: Pr 38 mm; RH 58%; BP 101.6 kPa; cloudy; calm; T 29°C.

Activity: Searching for new insects and hosting some TTLT visitors.



Entering the property a little before 2:00 pm, we stopped to admire the extended patch of Milkweed now covering several hundred square metres. How could we resist going to check for Monarch butterflies or their larvae? Indeed, we found several adult Monarchs on the plants, possibly laying eggs. The image on the left shows one of them.

Down at the camp, we checked the weather instruments, delighted to see the rain gauge holding some 38 mm of new precipitation. Two victims of the heavy rainfall floated in the water column, a drowned Jumping Spider (*Phidippus audax*) and an unidentifiable scarab, possibly a rose chafer.

We were sitting in the Nook, getting up our gumption for a walk to the river, when the haunting call of the Wood Thrush rang through the Gallery Forest: "Eee-ol-lay"! As if we needed more urging, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo joined the chorus with its seven-note song nearby; the "Rain Crow" as some people call it, makes a repeated descending coo: "koo-koo- . . . -koo."

I got up to look around the trailer, sometimes a good place to look for specimens, whether inside or out. Glancing under the main shutter outside, I spotted a new nest with about a dozen cells, all constructed by the Paper Wasp *Polistes fuscatus*.

Several of the wasps busied themselves adding new paper while I clicked away for the best picture I could get. (See IMAGES below.)

We had set out for the river, searching the foliage along the trail for new species, when we heard the voices of several men approaching us from behind. It was Dave Wake, current President of the TTLT, and Stan Caveney, a past President. They were accompanied by Mark Drewe, a videographer who is making a film about the Thames River. I arranged to see them at the river, then joined Pat at The Elbow. “Look over there!” Was it an Eyed Brown or a Pearly-eye? We took a telephoto shot to avoid disturbing this handsome creature.

Pat lingered at the Elbow while I moved on to the river where Mark had already set up his camera and Dave was describing the work of the Thames Talbot LandTrust, while Stan stood by for his turn. I had little time for gawking so I moved down to the end of the Beach to sweep the bushes there. As it turned out, two of the day’s three new species arrived in that same series of sweeps, the Stink Bug nymph and a large black Mayfly with a red patch on its thorax. There were very few spiders out today, even though a regular community of Lycosid and Pisaurid spiders that live and hunt on the Beach, about a dozen species, all told. They lurk in the mud cracks when not out stalking prey.

Back at camp we bade farewell to the video gang and then got back to business. While I went down to check out the vegetation by the creek, Pat spotted a single organ pipe nest under construction beside the bathroom door in the trailer. She sat on the couch to watch in comfort as a large metallic blue/black Organ Pipe Wasp would fly in periodically with a (relatively) large ball of dark brown clay grasped it in forelegs. Inside the nest it would lie on its back to press the mud into place along the outer edge of the “pipe”, making a buzzing sound as it did so. I returned from the creek to witness this part of the operation. We described the buzzing as its “nest-building song”. After fashioning the latest strip of nest, the wasp would quickly depart, absenting itself for several minutes while we speculated about where it was getting its clay. I thought maybe the creek.

We stayed on site until after 7 pm, dining in the Nook while the Rain Crow sang a dinner song.

Birds: (15 of ours plus 7 more from Dave Wake.)

American Crow (FCF); American Robin (GF); Blue Jay (GF); Common Flicker (BCF); Common Yellowthroat (LM); Eastern Towhee (GF); Field Sparrow (LM); Gray Catbird (GF); Great Crested Flycatcher (BCF); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-

bellied Woodpecker (GF); Song Sparrow (LM); Wood Peewee (BCF); Wood Thrush (BCF); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (EW).

Supplemental: Bald Eagle (TR); Belted Kingfisher (TR); Cedar Waxwing (TR); House Wren (BCF); Indigo Bunting (BCF); Spotted Sandpiper (TR); Vesper Sparrow (BCF).

Phenology: Monarda in full bloom.

New Species: (18% new/total)

‘Red-sided Mayfly’	<i>Ephemerella [varians]</i>	MB KD J11116
‘Stem Gall Aphid’	<i>Pemphigus</i> sp.	BCF KD J11116
Predatory Stink Bug	<i>Apoecilus cynicus</i>	MB KD J11116
Kidneyshell	<i>Ptychobranthus fasciolaris</i>	MB WVE J101/16

(For “Old” species see the end of this Bulletin.)

Species Notes:

The mussel was recorded by Will Van Hemessen last week. (See **Readers Write**).

Readers Write:

Entomologist Dan Bickel has sent us the link to an important article hosted by Yale University: Vanishing Act: Why Insects Are Declining and Why It Matters.

http://e360.yale.edu/feature/insect_numbers_declining_why_it_matters/3012/

(We are considering devoting a special issue of *The Bulletin* to cover the decline.)

Newport Forest Steward Bruce Parker summarizes the Monarch situation: “No Monarchs [at Newport], I see. The overwintering population in Mexico was higher than the previous year, but a storm on March 10 killed over 50% as they were beginning to move northward. I recently checked over 600 [Milkweed] plants at Newport. The plants were suffering from drought stress. No larva were found.”

Botanist Will Van Hemessen reports on his July 1 site visit: “I went to the forest this morning to see if I could find anything cool. Time in was 9:02 AM, time out was 11:30 AM. Temperature was 23C. I checked the rain gauge and the meniscus was hovering right at 5mm after this morning's rain . . . I spent most of the time combing the river flats and bluffs. I didn't find any new plants but the Northern Bedstraw (*Galium boreale*) was in full bloom all over the bluffs and I found some beautiful specimens of Threesquare Bulrush (*Schoenoplectus pungens*) down by the river. I [also] found some really great mussel valves owing to the low water level [:] Fawnsfoot (*Truncilla truncata*); Black Sandshell (*Ligumia recta*); Fragile Papershell (*Leptodea fragilis*); White Heelsplitter (*Lasmigona complanata*);

Mapleleaf (*Quadrula quadrula*); Elktoe (*Alasmidonta marginata*); Kidneyshell (*Ptychobranthus fasciolaris*) (this was the highlight for me!); Plain Pocketbook (*Lampsilis cardium*)

“I then went down to Fleming Creek. I had my boots on so I followed the shallow parts of the creek for a while and took a look at the woods on the eastern side. The vervains (*Verbena hastata*, *V. stricta*, *V. urticifolia*) are just getting ready to bloom as is the Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*). The American Speedwell (*Veronica americana*) is blooming along the creek. I also managed to ‘pish’ out two beautiful indigo buntings and watched them from about 5m away.”

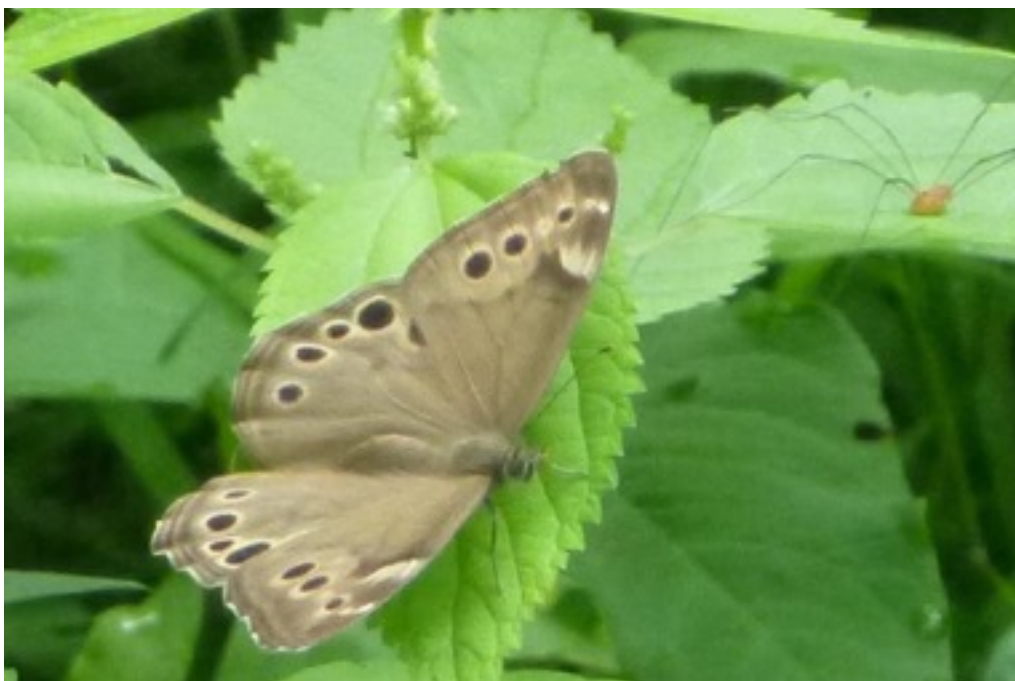
IMAGES:



A late instar nymph of the Stink Bug, *Apoecilus cynicus*. (new)
Bug nymphs are often more colourfully decorated than the adult forms. Wait until fashion designers catch up with entomologists!



A new nest under construction behind the trailer shutter now has several adults working on it while still-capped cells enclose the larval wasps, soon to emerge.



The Eyed Brown is an elegant Butterfly in the family Satyridae. The “eyes” all have black “pupils”, setting off the soft browns.

Old Species:

‘Naphrys Jumping Spider’ (*Naphrys pulex*); Bold Jumping Spider (*Phidippus audax*); Wood Tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*); European Earwig (*Forficula auricularia*); Ebony Jewelwing (*Calopteryx maculata*); Widow Skimmer (*Libellula luctuosa*); Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus lineolaris*); Diamond-back Spittlebug (*Lepryonia quadrangularis*); Brown Stink Bug nymph (*Euschistus servus*); Asian Lady Beetle (*Harmonis axyridis*); Seven-spotted Lady Beetle (*Coccinella septempunctata*); Eastern Comma (*Polygonia comma*); Eyed Brown (*Satyrodes eurydice*); Snowy Geometer (*Eugonobapta nivosaria*); Fall Webworm Moth (*Hyphantria cunea*); Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*); Paper Wasp (*Polistes fuscatus*); Pipe Organ Mud Dauber (*Trypoxylon politum*); ‘Checkered Flesh Fly’ (*Sarcophaga crassipalpis*); ‘Dappled Fruit Fly’ (*Eutreta novaboracensis*).

Un-ID: Pholcid Spider; green SB nymph; brown grasshopper nymph; waterlogged Scarabaeid; Clusiid fly.