

Date and time: Thursday July 21 2016 3:00 - 10:00 pm.

Weather: Pr 3 mm; RH 47%; BP 101.6 kPa; cloudy; S 0-5 kmh; T 32°C

Activity: Running a light trap and rescuing a fungus.

We hosted friends for a picnic lunch and walkabout in the afternoon, but the real excitement lay ahead in the evening; we planned to set up a light trap, thanks to the arrival of a UV flashlight that we had ordered online. The image below shows the UV trap and our first customer, a Grapevine Beetle resembling a large June Beetle.



But first the afternoon: between sandwiches I made a foray or two into the Lower Meadow, accompanied by Aisha and her camera. I found a new moth in its larval form, the Zebra Caterpillar. Aisha found a new Longhorn Beetle as well as a Six-spotted Orb Weaver (not new). Even mother Heather got into the act with net and a jar, finding a rarely-seen Tree Hopper and a Moth that turned out to be new.

Soon enough, everyone decided to visit the river, Pat staying in camp: Heather Greenwood and her three daughters, all in their twenties: Sarah (with baby Noah), Layla who is taking the Nursing program at Western, and the youngest daughter Aisha, who has been studying photography. It was Aisha on whom I would depend in the evening to give us some brilliant photography at the light trap.

On the beach, my attention was directed to a spider near the water's edge, This proved to be a common Fishing Spider, *Dolomites triton.*, doing a wonderful job of making its legs disappear, thanks to camouflage. We had wandered down to the end of the beach when someone called out, "What's that up in the tree?" We all looked up to see a largish animal hanging in the crotch of (what appeared to be) a Silver Maple growing on the river bluffs. The corpse was hung about 20' up the trunk. It was too large for a Raccoon and appeared to have the paws of a canid. It was mostly depleted of innards and looked almost like a pelt simply hanging there. I will send the suite of images off to a wildlife expert for an opinion.

On our way back from the river. one of the sisters spotted a bright orange ball in the vegetation by the trail. It was the long-sought golf-ball fungus (as I call it) that had so excited mycologist Greg Thorn. And now, all I needed to do was to dig up the plant the fungus was growing on (Virgin's Bower - a vine) and bring it to Greg as he had suggested a week ago. Since spores are abundant in the vicinity of the balls, it will be easy for Greg to get spores and culture them in potato agar, a standard growth medium. Watch for an announcement in this department!

For me the most interesting part of our visit began around six pm when Heather drove home with Pat, Sarah and little Noah, leaving Layla and Aisha with me. I put them to work to make the light trap out of a converted pillow case that was to be suspended at all four corners by stout twine, above to an overhanging branch and below to a bench. We then waited impatiently for sunset. While trying to photograph the setup, I made the unhappy discovery that the battery of my Lumix camera had completely run out. I was now totally dependent on Aisha.

Shortly after sunset I turned on the UV flashlight that was mounted on a tripod and aimed more or less at the centre of the sheet, covering about 3/4 of it. No more than ten minutes had elapsed when our first customer showed up, flying into the sheet and clinging there for the duration: a Grapevine Beetle (*Pelidnota punctata*), looking like a large June Bug. Not new. There was a long wait of about 15-20 minutes for the next insects, mostly small moths and other beetles, to show up. Before long, in the now pitch black night, the insects had become very thick around the trap, with few of them settling down onto the sheet. As poor Aisha dived in to get a shot, she would spend most of the time brushing insects off her face and out of her hair! (And me without my camera.) Another problem that surfaced soon in this photographic adventure involved the light itself. Shadows were too sharp and there were few highlights, owing to the monochromatic nature of the illumination. Layla volunteered to hold a regular flashlight on an insect of

interest, while her sister took the shot, now mostly telephoto. UV light and macrophotography are not made for each other.

I would have to describe the light trap as a “success” in its ability to attract lots of insects, but otherwise as a “learning experience”. Since today’s visit, I have learned that many arthropods fluoresce under UV light. That suggests some nighttime forays in field, soil and leaf litter in the weeks to come. Many insects are nocturnal and this might help to round out that part of the master ATBI list.

As we pulled out of the farm gate, the stars were brilliant overhead and off to the east, a full moon slowly rose, a mysterious orange ball (like our new fungus). Reluctantly, we left the beautiful night to itself.

New Species: (arthropod index: 25% new)

Creeping Yellow Cress	<i>Rorippa sylvestris</i>	RB WVH JI23/16
Ditch Stonecrop	<i>Penthorum sedoides</i>	FC WVH JI23/16
Pennycress	<i>Thlaspi arvense</i>	FC WVH JI23/16
‘Banded Harvestman’	<i>Hesperonemastoma modestum</i>	LM aa/KD JI21/16
‘Spotted Flower Longhorn’	<i>Typocerus acuticauda</i>	LM aa/KD JI21/16
Zebra Caterpillar Moth	<i>Melanchra picta</i>	LM KD JI21/16
‘Fringed Olethreutes’	<i>Olethreutes [clavana]</i>	GF hg/KD JI21/16

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

Species Notes:

The three plants at the beginning of the list above were found by Will Van Hemessen during a recent visit to newport forest. The Harvestman has distinctive white bands encircling the abdomen. Two moths end the list. The first showed up in larval form, a large yellow caterpillar with a black medial stripe. The *Olethreutes* moth is not yet nailed down, thanks to incomplete photographic records on the web. But it is most like *O. clavana*, with a more developed fringe on its wings.

Note on species entries for our new readers:

A code such as GF hg/KD JI21/16 may be read as follows: Gf = Gallery Forest; hg = collector of specimen (Heather Greenwood); KD = identifier of specimen; JI21/16 = date of record.

Readers Write:

Botanist Will Van Hemessen notes items of interest during a recent visit to search out new plants: “We’re in an in-between period for flowering plants right now with some wildflowers on their way out and others just beginning to bloom. Plants in

flower in the woods included [gives list of six plants] Plants in flower along the bluffs included [gives list of four plants] Plants in flower along Fleming Creek included [gives list of four more plants]. I also saw two Spiny Softshell Turtles in the river and had a hummingbird land on me. Lastly, I found this white moth which I think is a Snowy Geometer (*Eugonobapta nivosaria*). I'm looking forward to visiting the property again in a few weeks to see if the Cup-plant is flowering.”

IMAGES:



The Fishing Spider *Dolomites triton* has the typically thickened legs of a Fishing Spider, as opposed to the thinner legs of the closely related Wolf Spider family. We note also a greenish cast on the femoral segment, a khaki camouflage that visually disconnects the body from the legs.



The orange mystery fungus as found today. A scattering of orange spores decorates an adjacent leaf. A second ball lurks behind another leaf.



This jumping spider takes on an ogre-like appearance in Aisha's macro lens. Jumping spiders all have two of their eight eyes greatly enlarged and placed for true binocular vision. Note the blood-red fangs!

Old Species:

Six-spotted Fishing Spider (*Dolomedes triton*); Cobweb Spider (*Enoplognatha ovata*); Marbled Orb Weaver (*Araneus marmoreus*); Cross Spider (*Araneus diadematus*); Wide footed Treehopper (*Campylenchia latipes*); ‘Three-spotted Leaf Beetle’ (*Trirhabda borealis*); Seven-spotted Lady Beetle (*Coccinella septempunctata*); Grapevine Beetle (*Pelidnota punctata*); Snowy Geometer (*Eugonobapta nivosaria*);

Un-ID: Orbweaver spider; small red bug nymph; 3 mm ‘indented’ black beetle; indistinct jumping spider; 2 mm round black beetle with grey head.