

**Date and time:** Wednesday May 10 2017 1:45 - 5:15 pm

**Weather:** Pr 30 mm; RH 73%; BP 101.8 kPa; haze/sun; calm; T 17°C

**Contents:** ATBI goes into high gear while the trail is fixed.

In spite of the recent rains, the property has remained drivable. I met Steve Logan and his friend Herb down at the camp. After a brief social sit in the Nook, the two departed for the trail to clean up the cuttings, clear branch debris and re-line parts of the trail — all in preparation for Sunday's Wildflower Walk.



While Steve and Herb walked the trail, grooming as they went, I went out to hunt for arthropods. The air was active with bees, flies and wasps flying about the trailer. A fine patch of new Dandelion blooms kept me busy with familiar species such as the Northern Paper Wasp (above left), the 'Two-striped Sweat Bee' (center) and the common Honeybee (right).

On the trailer surface I found the American Carpenter Ant, a Six-spotted Tiger Beetle, always common around this time of year, and a Black Blow Fly. In the Regen Zone nearby I found tents of Eastern Tent Caterpillars. They were covered with young larvae wandering sluggishly over the silken surface. In the middle of this activity I stopped to admire the trees that we had planted back in 2001 to 2003. The ones nearest to the Gallery Forest (east) or to the Blind Creek Forest (west), were already up to 20 or 30 feet, while the ones in the middle of the Zone languished at more modest heights. The explanation is simple. The mycorrhizal "feeding lines" from the mature forest trees nearby had already reached the young trees at the edge of the Zone, but had not yet penetrated far into the interior.

Although few planted trees were immune to loss from drought and other factors,

the Tulip Trees were the only species we planted with a 100% survival rate! In the general area all trees are now in various stages of leafing out, with Walnuts still lagging behind.

Next I wandered into the Blind Creek Forest armed only with my camera. Something tiny, furtive and reddish caught my eye under some plants by the trail. “Aha! Think you can get away from me?” I kept lifting a leaf, only to see my target scuttle to the shade of a neighbouring leaf. I snapped image after image, finally getting a somewhat blurry picture of a False Milkweed Bug. The striking black-and-red pattern on the dorsum of this insect is not found on any other species — except the Milkweed Bug. (See the list at the end of this *Bulletin*.)

Farther along the trail, I knocked some bark off a rotting Willow log, discovering several Sow Bugs which never fail to remind me of miniature trilobites. (They are Crustaceans, after all.) A walk to the Thames brought in little else. The river was up about two feet above normal. On the way back I was pleasantly surprised to see Muriel Andreae well ahead of me. She was bent over one of the vernal ponds, staring intently. Catching up, I found the reason. There were small black insects (?) swimming about, although not in great numbers. Muriel was reconnoitring the main trail in preparation for the TTLT Wildflower Walk this Sunday. I explained about the crew ahead of her and suggested that she look for the Flowering Dogwood, now in bloom high on the river Bluffs, as she walked the 1.8 km circuit

Back in camp, I heard Grey Tree Frogs calling in the Gallery Forest, not to mention some Wild Turkeys off in the distance to the east. Nearby a Common Yellowthroat sang its “wichity” song. But I had more arthropods to search out. It wasn’t until Steve and Herb came out of the woods a half hour later that the next one showed up. It was Herb who pointed out a pair of wolf spiders on one of the tires of Steve’s truck. This reinforced the old (?) adage, “Arthropods are where you find them.” I got some fairly good images that would lead me, later that day, to the ID of a new species in the genus *Pardosa* (Thin-legged Wolf Spiders).

After Steve and Herb drove off down the track, giving the spiders a ferris-wheel ride, Muriel came striding out of the woods looking enthusiastic. She announced that the Virginia Bluebells were still at their peak and that the weather for Sunday looked fine. So the Walk is on. Then Muriel walked off to the gate and, just minutes later, I left as well.

**Birds: (10)**

American Crow (UM); American Robin (RL); Baltimore Oriole (BCF); Blue Jay

(GF); Common Yellowthroat (GF); Northern Cardinal (FCF); Northern Flicker (EW); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Turkey Vulture (LM); Wild Turkey (EW).

**Phenology:** Wild Geraniums and Strawberries in bloom.

**New Species:** (% new = 20)

“White-sided Wolf Spider”	<i>Pardosa moesta</i>	LM KD My10/17
Black Blow Fly	[ <i>Phormia regina</i> ]	GF KD My10/17

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

**Species Notes:** We could have recorded the fly years ago, but thought it was already on the list; an all-black carapace is unusual among Lycosid spiders.

**IMAGES:**



*Pardosa moesta* clings to the wall of a truck tire, its mate (?) clings about a foot below on the same tire.



Among the humbler wildflowers we might expect to see during the Wildflower Walk this Sunday are two plants called Yellow Rocket (*Barbarea vulgaris* - left) and Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculata* - right). The former plant is an introduced species, but the latter is native. Both are beautiful and will be seen occasionally next to the trail.



A male Wild Turkey sets up a partial display to see if the camera tripod responds favourably — or perhaps a hen is lurking behind the camera.

### **Reappearances:**

American Carpenter Ant (*Camponotus americanus*); Eastern Tent Caterpillar (*Malacosoma americanum*); False Milkweed Bug (*Lygaeus turcicus*); Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*); Six-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela sexguttata*); 'Three-lined Sowbug', (*Trachelipus rathkii*); 'Two-striped Sweat Bee; (*Lasioglossum* sp.); Northern Paper Wasp (*Polistes fuscatus*).