

Date and time: Saturday May 20 2017 1:35 - 5:45 pm

Weather: Pr 0 mm; RH 41%; BP 102.4 kPa; sun/cloud; SE 10-30 kmh; T 20° C

Contents: Flat out ATBI.



We found our way to the landing blocked by this huge pile of flood drift.

When we arrived in camp, we emerged into an afternoon bird chorus, with Song Sparrows accompanied by Northern Cardinals, Northern Orioles, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. In the distance we could hear the power lines that cross the property adding their hum in the high winds of the Upper Meadow. We sat in the Nook for a few minutes to prepare ourselves for an afternoon of uninterrupted collecting.. While we were sitting thus, Pat spotted a beautiful little maroon beetle which I photographed very carefully, but still can't identify!

The temperature in the Lower Meadow was a balmy 20°C, but a strong wind in the Upper Meadow was only tamed slightly on the Lower Meadow terrace. This would mean fewer arthropods in general but, as things turned out, we had all we could handle. There were also occasional stretches of calm, sunny, weather.

Sweeping with a new insect net around the camp, I was disappointed with my online purchase. What a piece of junk! The bag ring wouldn't screw into the grip properly and the ring itself was made of fragile un-stiffened aluminum, so it bent with every sweep. I went back to my old net, stained with plant juices and slowly becoming unseamly, so to speak, but still useable. In a practice run I netted two spiders, a Jumping Spider and an Orb Weaver, as well as a small snout beetle.

With stiffened resolve, we ventured into the Blind Creek Forest to look for the Green Dragon that Will Van Hemessen found last Sunday. On the way, Pat was

intrigued by a white violet growing out in the meadow. She ID'd it as a Cream Violet — which she thought was (exclusively) a woodland violet. As we entered the Hole, I saw a Silver-spotted Skipper. We stopped at the Elbow to deposit our equipment, then Pat went up-trail to find the Green Dragon while I hovered around the Elbow, sweeping vigorously with my old net and finding more arthropods than I could handle. Opening the bag gingerly, I would photograph everything I could as often as I could, taking extra time to make notes of what had been in the bag. Most of the insects and spiders appearing in the lists below came from these sweeps.

Just for a break, we took the trail to the River Landing. Along the way, Pat spotted an Assassin Bug that turned out to be only our second specimen of *Zelus luridus*, one of the few Assassin Bugs (outside the genus *Phymata*) to sport green areas on its cuticle. Our previous specimen had been a nymph so the adult form was doubly welcome. At the Landing, we found our way blocked by a large pile of river drift. Deposited in the recent flood, it consisted almost entirely of corn stalks. It was only on the return trip that Pat found the Green Dragon. It was smaller than we had expected and liable to be trampled since it grew in the middle of the trail. So we surrounded it with a miniature palisade of branches.

We made our way back to camp. I stopped to collect some leaf litter under the trees of Blind Creek Forest into a large garbage bag. Back in camp we proceeded to process the sample by a) removing a handful of leaves from the bag, b) shaking them vigorously over the bag, then c) dropping them into a second garbage bag for re-deposition at the collecting area. By the time the sample is processed in this way, all that remains at the bottom is fine woody and leaf debris — along with any arthropods that came with the litter. Here we came up empty — until Pat spotted some movement among the bark fragments. This proved to be a new species of snout beetle, one that attacks the roots of Wild Strawberries.

Birds: (15) A good day for birds!

American Crow (BCF); Blue Jay (GF); Canada Warbler (BCF); Common Grackle (BCF); Common Yellowthroat (LM); Eastern Phoebe (HP); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Field Sparrow (FC); Northern Cardinal (FCF); Northern Oriole (BCF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (LM); Song Sparrow (LM); Turkey Vulture (LM); Wild Turkey (FCF).

Phenology: First sighting of a fawn (My19); Hawthorn bloom nearly over; Walnuts leafing out.

New Species: (31% new)

Chestnut Timberworm (beetle)	<i>Melittomma sericeum</i>	BCF KD My20/17
Strawberry Root Weevil	<i>Otiorhynchus ovatus</i>	GF KD My20/17
European Snout Beetle	<i>Phyllobius oblongus</i>	BCF KD My20/17
Inland Floodwater Mosquito	[<i>Aedes vexans</i>]	BCF KD My20/17

Species Notes: In spite of the name “Chestnut Timberworm,” the larva of the beetle listed above feeds on fungi growing on dead oak trees. It’s a coincidence that two of today’s finds are not only beetles, but larval consumers of strawberry plants (See Recurrences). On the other hand, we’ve never seen so many Wild Strawberries blooming everywhere on site. The only other possibility for the mosquito seems to be the Woodland Mosquito (*Ochlerotatus stimulans*). Soon enough we’ll be “collecting” a lot more mosquitoes in any case.

Pending: A maroon-coloured beetle, possibly a Chrysomelid and an Ichneumon with badly twisted wings — probably unidentifiable.

Reccurances:

Long-jawed Orb Weaver (*Tetragnatha straminea*); Mangora Orb Weaver (*Mangora placida*); Orchard Spider (*Leucauge venusta*); Nursery Web Soper (*Pisaurina mira*); ‘White-bordered Jumper; (*Eris flava*); Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus lineolaris*); Green Assassin Bug (*Zelus luridus*); Strawberry Rootworm (beetle) (*Paria fragariae*); Northern Paper Wasp (*Polistes fuscatus*).

IMAGES:

Snout Beetles all belong to the Entiminae, a subfamily of Broadnose Weevils in the Weevil family Curculionidae. To the left is the Strawberry Root Weevil and to the right is the European Snout Beetle.





Two plants got special attention today. The Jack-in-the-Pulpit on the left is a favorite with us, while the Green Dragon on the right is a rare plant and something of a Newport Forest specialty. The specimen above is immature; the adult plant shows the basal forking of the stems more dramatically and has a long yellow dragon's tongue emerging from a "spathe."

The two plants are "sisters", both belonging to the large genus *Arisema* (185 species). The Jack-in-the-pulpit is called *A. triphyllum* while the Green Dragon is called *A. draconium*. The reproductive structure can be seen clearly in the Jack-in-the-pulpit; a spadix pokes out through a leaflike structure called the spathe. A spadix is essentially a floral spike that arises from the spathe in both plants.