

**Date and time:** Saturday May 27 2017 2:20 - 6:00 pm

**Weather:** Pr 38 mm; RH 68%; BP 101.2 kPa; cloud/sun; winds calm; T 20° C

**Contents:** We continue with the ATBI project and have the best success to date.

An Amber Snail (*Succinea* sp.)  
creeps along a (horizontal) log .



Almost as soon as we arrived on site, the arthropods showed themselves in numbers. There was a Bold Jumping Spider waiting patiently for customers on the trailer steps. And there was a Satellite Fly clinging to the trailer wall.

My first few sweeps with the net brought a cornucopia of little friends, including a Green Stink Bug, a Soldier Beetle with a red pronotum, a Long-jawed Orbweaver, a Dwarf Spider, a grey Jumping Spider, a small beetle with red markings, a nymphal grasshopper, several ants, and a few Mirid bugs. Subsequent sweeps in the Lower Meadow yielded similar numbers, the whole amounting to a considerable harvest.

Among today's special prizes were the Helmeted Squash Bug, only our second encounter with this species, not to mention the (long overdue) Two-spotted Bumblebee and our first Burrowing Bug. (See **New Species** below.)

The most common insect was the Green Immigrant Weevil, an attractive little alien, green of course. The most common spider was the Long-jawed Orb Weaver.

Relaxing in the Nook, we could hear the Grey Tree Frogs calling. Was that a mosquito that just landed on my arm? It won't be long now before they become a major nuisance. Pat and I, being in our mid-70s, are no longer as mobile as we used to be, but we got as far as the Elbow to carry out some sampling. This is a

fascinating little biome in its own right; it's where Blind Creek and its chain of vernal ponds crosses the main trail. A soggy, somewhat boggy place, it makes a home for plants and animals that thrive in a moist environment. It is here that we find the Green Dragon almost every year, 2017 being no exception. Pat made her way to the current specimen growing somewhat under threat in the middle of the main trail. She placed a stick wrapped in red warning tape into the soil next to the plant.

Returning to the Elbow, Pat found a nice black Forest Snail near a log, while I discovered an Amber Snail right on it. Both are native species, unlike the now ubiquitous European Striped Snail. I carried out some sweeps of the vegetation around the Elbow, but netted only half the abundance of the meadow sweeps.

We were very happy with this visit, not only because insect decline seemed less of a problem, but because the birds were back in force, with a count that matches our best springtimes in memory.

**Birds:** (17)

American Crow (FCF); American Robin (GF); American Tree Sparrow (GF); Blue Jay (GF); Canada Goose (TR); Eastern Towhee (GF); Field Sparrow (LM); Great Crested Flycatcher (LM); House Wren (Rd); Mourning Dove (HP); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (FCF); Song Sparrow (LM); Tree Swallow (Rd); Turkey Vulture (UM); White-breasted Nuthatch (FC).

**Phenology:**

Dame's Rocket, Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria*) in bloom; mosquitos begin biting.

**New Species:** (14% new arthropods)

Canada Warbler	<i>Wilsonia canadensis</i>	BCF PD My20/17
White-margined Burrower Bug	<i>Sehirus cinctus</i>	LM KD My27/17
Rice Leaf Bug	<i>Trigonotylus caelestialium</i>	LM KD My27/17
Two-spotted Bumble Bee	<i>Bombus bimaculatus</i>	LM KD My27/17

**Species Notes:**

We were surprised, after Pat identified a Canada Warbler in a tree by the meadow, to learn that we had never added one to the ATBI file. The Burrower Bug is an attractive insect, all black with a thin white marginal band. I could obtain a very clear image of the bumblebee because it was resting on a bench when I came upon it. The Chestnut Timberworm listed in the previous issue presented entomologist

Steve Marshall with something of a puzzle when I sent him the image for confirmation. He will need a physical specimen to confirm it. We'll be on the lookout for an all-black beetle with a red abdomen.

### **Recurring Species:**

Bold Jumping Spider (*Phidippus audax*); Nursery Web Spider (*Pisurina mira*); 'Red-headed Dwarf Spider' (*Hypselistes florens*); Tuft-legged Orbweaver (*Mangora placida*); Long-jawed Orbweaver (*Trigonotylus caelestialium*); 'Army Treehopper' (*Cyrtolobus tuberosus*); 'White-marked Treehopper' (*Publilia concave*); Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygaeus lineolaris*); Plant Bug (*Leptoterna dolobrata*); Green Stink Bug (*Chinavia hilaris*); Goldenrod Soldier Beetle (*Chauliognathus pensylvanicus*); Soldier Beetle (*Podabrus* sp.); Green Immigrant Leaf Weevil (*Polydrusus formosus*); Northern Crescent (*Phyciodes cocyta*); 'Pale Plume Moth [*Hellinsia*] sp.'; Satellite Fly (*Metopia* sp.); Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*); Northern Paper Wasp (*Polistes fuscatus*); Allegheny Mound Ant (*Formica exsectoides*).

### **Holdovers & Discards:**

A Brown Lacewing; 'Blotched Weevil' *Sciaphilus asperatus*?; Tussock-like moth; Black bug nymph; dark mosquito; grasshopper nymph; out-of-focus wasp with red & black abdomen.

### **Readers Write:**

Jonathan Piel, Editor Emeritus of *Scientific American*, reacts to our mention of flood-drift: "Madealine and I walked the Ashokan Dam (which creates the Ashokan Reservoir) last Saturday from which we looked down on a vast drift of dead wood--who would have thought that so much timber could be shed and still leave a forest behind (?)."

Sandy Levin, former city councillor and committed naturalist, comments on our plant reports: "Striped Cream Violet? If so, an S3 species. Green Dragon is also found in the Medway as well as in a cultural woodland on the north side of Windemere Road, east of Adelaide."

### **IMAGES:**



The Green Stink Bug (*Chinavia hilaris*) seems only mildly comical and undeserving of such a sobriquet. As a member of the Pentatomid family, it is capable of emitting a foul odor reminiscent of human intestinal gas, not particularly hilarious.



The Helmeted Squash Bug belongs to the family Coreidae of Leaf-footed Bugs. Note the horn-like projections on the head.

This insect has the same ability to emit a foul odor when disturbed as the stink bugs do.



**Top:** *Phidippus audax*, the Bold Jumper, is one of the largest jumping spiders on site.

**Middle:** *Habronattus [borealis]* is a new species for us. This one is a female with a prey item clutched in her jaws.

**Bottom:** The Dwarf Spider *Hypselistes florens* shows up in our nets every few years.

As it happens, all three spiders are females!

