

**Date and time:** Monday June 12 2017 1:25 - 6:20 pm

**Weather:** Pr 0 mm; RH 49%; BP 101.4 kPa; sun/cloud; S 10-40 kmh; T 00°C

**Contents:** Working down by Fleming Creek.



The Lower Rapids have recently developed this chute with the help of a submerged log. Small dark green patches indicate the growth of colonies of the Chlorophyte alga *Cladophora*. They host a rich community of micro-animals, protozoa, and diatoms.

We arrived on site only to find the track lost in a virtual tall-grass prairie, with a strong south wind sending waves of bending stalks ahead of the van. It was disappointing; we had hoped for a good collecting day, with ideal temperatures in the low thirties and no wind. Now there would be few insects, birds, or other animals about. Pat and I made the executive decision to switch our operations to the bottom of the Creek Bluffs, as well as the creek itself. There would be less wind by the creek. She agreed to stay “upstairs” to keep an eye on my doings.

On the way down the creek trail, I spotted a wonderful troop of Black-footed Polypore mushrooms sprouting along a log. One thing leads to another; behind the log a large sheet web made by an Agelenid spider lay draped across three anchoring plants. It took me a while to find the spider’s retreat, a small dark funnel leading downward, with no spider crouching near the entrance. I poked in a stick to tease it out. Nothing. No one home?

Further on I came to Trail Cam #3. Surrounding vegetation was now blocking its view and a new location would be necessary. I dismounted the cam and took it with me down to the creek. Close to the rapids I found a dead Bitternut still standing that looked as though it might last a few more months. (Later I would kick myself because I forgot to reset the camera's time stamp after mounting it.) Before going back up the hill, I made an exploratory sweep of the vegetation along the bank of the creek with the expected result. A few ants, a jumping spider, a (dead!) black beetle, and a few plant bugs.

Back up the bluffs, I followed Pat to the Elbow in the Blind Creek Forest, normally an arthropod hot spot. On the way Pat spotted a Black Swallowtail, while a Giant Swallowtail crossed my path in a flash of brown and yellow glory. Then came our first Wood Anemone in bloom, then a Six-spotted Tiger Beetle. At the Elbow, I did one ineffectual sweep, while Pat cleared some leaf litter nearby, petri dish in hand. The cover can be used to trap an arthropod trying to escape across the bare soil by slapping the cover down over the critter. Her luck was hardly better than mine, except she found an immature Earwig that looked like it might not be heading to Europe, so to speak; the only species of Earwig we have found on site so far is the European Earwig, with at least two other native earwig species probably around.

We decided that one more visit to the creek might be appropriate. I wanted to wade across the rapids to visit Fleming Creek Forest. Unfortunately I forgot to bring my rubber boots, so I donned a pair of galoshes which immediately sprang a leak as I waded across, giving me two major soakers. On the other side I found a pile of drift logs that blocked my way to the part of the forest I wanted to visit, so I merely wandered around the immediate vicinity, spotting a dingy-looking Damsel Fly, as well as a small millipede making its way along a trunk of bare driftwood. (Back home I could identify neither.) Time was growing short. Better head back. On my way across the water, I was astounded to see an enormous Fishing Spider sprawled out on a rock in midstream. It cooperated by not moving as I took a succession of images. (See the Image Gallery below.)

My mood brightened after that. It almost made the visit worthwhile, as I remarked to Pat on the way out,

**Birds:** (11 - would have been more like 20 without the wind!)

American Robin (BCF); Blue Jay (GF); Common Flicker (BCF); Eastern Kingbird (UM); Field Sparrow (LM); Grey Catbird (BCF); Northern Cardinal (BCF); Red-

bellied Woodpecker (GF); Song Sparrow (LM); Tree Swallow (Rd); Wild Turkey (NP).

**Phenology:** Wood Anemones in full bloom; mosquito population still small.

### Biological Inventory (ATBI)

**New Species:** (17% new)

‘Foliated Fishing Spider’

*Dolomedes scriptus*

FC KD Je12/17

Ebony Bug

*Corimelaena pulicaria*

BCF KD Je12/17

**Species Notes:** Readers always have the option of entering the word “bugguide” into their browser along with a species name, as given above. You will then see images of the species so named, along with much information.

### Recurring Species:

‘Giant Tetragnathid’ (*Tetragnatha elongata*); ‘Striped Orbweaver’ (*Tetragnatha straminea*); ‘Miniature Jumping Spider’ (*Pelegrina proterva*); Dwarf Spider (*Hypselistes florens*); Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus lineolaris*); Meadow Plant Bug (*Leptopterna dolabrata*); Six-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela sexguttata*); ‘Pale Plume Moth’ (*Hellinsia* sp.); European Skipper (larva) (*Thymelicus lineola*); Black Swallowtail (*Papilio polyxenes*); Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*);

### Holdovers & Discards:

Damselfly with amber thorax; red-headed black millipede; immature earwig;

### Readers Write:

A reader kindly sent this link to a wonderful video about how the return of wolves to Yellowstone National Park in the US produced profound changes throughout the landscape. It’s called “Wolves Make Rivers” : <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q>>

Dr. Tom Powers, who conducted a nematode survey at Newport Forest last August (See The Bulletin #1042), along with biologist wife Kris, has reported that some 125 potential species have been found so far, with 25 already keyed out. He has sent us his data from both the Newport Forest site and one on Mont St Hilaire.

### Image Gallery:



The Fishing Spider *Dolomedes scriptus* waits on a rock in midstream. It preys on Water Striders, any floating insects and even small fish!

This specimen is the second largest spider ever found on site. The body length is 2.0 cm and it straddles a good 5.3 cm at its widest point. When my camera got too close, it suddenly dove into the water, disappearing under the surface. I could then take an image of my centimetre ruler on the same rock to get the measurements above.

The largest spider ever found at Newport Forest is the Carolina Wolf Spider (*Hogna carolinensis*), as identified by an arachnologist at the Toronto Zoo. It looked rather like a small Tarantula.



A proud young buck tries to stare down a one-eyed three-legged rival for the affections of its females: Trail Cam #3 on its tripod. "If I catch you following one of my does, you're going to get a horn in the eye."



The retreat of a Funnel Spider can be seen in the middle of this image. Imagine being small enough to wander into that funnel-tunnel. What horrors might you find?

The caterpillar below looks vaguely like that of a Tussock Moth. A special prize will be given to the reader who identifies it first! It's driving us crazy!



