

**Date and time:** Sunday July 9 2017 1:50 - 6:00 pm

**Weather:** Pr 9 mm; RH 45%; BP 101.5 kPa; sun/cloud; SW 5-10 kmh; T 26° C

**Contents:** Changing the rain gauges and meeting the challenges of aging.



A view down the track to the base camp through a lush-looking landscape.

Thanks to mainly dry weather, the property remains readily drivable and the mosquitoes continue their low profile. Indeed, only one of us has been bitten! Our first task on site was to replace the old rain gauges (one of which leaked) by brand new ones. This turned out to be trickier than we thought, owing to the lack of a Robertson screwdriver of the right size.

That little obstacle worked around, we sat down to plan the day's survey work. We decided to try a new method of recording our finds by the simple expedient of Pat taking notes while I emptied the bag of the sweep net one arthropod at a time. To begin, Pat walked the old watering trail in the RZ (Regeneration Zone) to check it out for insects, but finding the ground so uneven, she was hard put to keep her balance. I then went through with the sweep net finding, among other things, a darkly coloured Leaf-Footed Bug that I recognized almost instantly, thanks to its orange-tipped antenna (*Acanthocephala terminalis*) — seen almost every year.

The note-taking experiment began in earnest at the Elbow. As I called out the items, she listed them: “sm. black ants; Imm. Weevil; red DLL; green fly; medium moth; alder hopper; sm. black Mirid; signal fly, sm. wasp; sm. fly; green hopper; wasp; tarn. plant bug; tiny black btl; and alf. bug — all items in a cryptic short form to key with imagery. This would help to assign a locale to any arthropods that ended up on either the ATBI list or the long-term monitoring list. (We should live so long!) We will not bore readers with the lists from subsequent sweeps.

Making our way slowly to the River Landing, we surveyed the enormous pile of river drift brought in by a winter flood — mostly cornstalks from farms upriver. The pile blocked our way down to the shore and the clay beach at the foot of the bluffs. Next visit would have to focus on maintenance, with a new path cleared down to the river and the rest of the 1.8 km trail system groomed.

The next sweep at the River Landing brought in 17 specimens, while a subsequent one on the River Bluffs netted only 13 specimens. We had hoped for a golden Dogbane Beetle from the Spreading Dogbane plants that cover the bluffs, but no such luck. Two of today’s new species came from the River Landing (RL). One appeared as Pat’s note, “small black wasp”, and the other was a serendipitous find, a Long-legged Fly drowning in the “pool” formed in the axil of a Cup Plant!

Through all of this, we were aware as never before that our mobility is increasingly limited, so we set to “work smart” as the saying goes, trying not to do the same thing twice. Finished at the River Landing, we made our way slowly back to camp. Passing through the Lower Meadow, Pat spotted two Giant Swallowtail butterflies while I spotted a Monarch.

Relaxing in the Nook, we watched what Pat has been noticing for weeks, a hole in the ground near her chair, with a “bee” that would occasionally fly in to disappear underground. As she spoke, the “bee” arrived and I caught it in my camera just before it disappeared. Back home I discovered it was an Eastern Yellowjacket, so the hole in the ground was the entrance to its nest. Another mystery solved!

While making my way to the camera tree at the creek, I spotted a rather odd Jewelwing; it had a chalk-white abdomen and a fringe of light blue ticking along the “posterior margin” of its wings. Superficially it seemed to be a new species, but I guessed it was simply a variant Ebony Jewelwing. See remarks by Steve Paiero below. He could only theorize how it got that way.

We left the property right after this.

**Birds:** (12)

Common Yellowthroat (LM); Blue Jay (GF); Field Sparrow (LM); Grey Catbird (RL); House Sparrow (Rd); House Wren (Rd); Northern Flicker (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (RL); Song Sparrow (RZ); Tree Swallow (UM); Turkey Vulture (UM); Wood Duck (RL).

**Biological Inventory Project (ATBI)****New Species:** (20 % new — arthropods only)

'Curly Wings'	<i>Hohenbuehelia angustata</i>	FCB kd/GT Je21/17
Cedar Quince Rust	<i>Gymnosporangium [clavipes]</i>	BCF kd/GT J109/17
Aspen Skeletonizer	[ <i>Phratora purpurea</i> ]	GF pd/KD My20/17
Clover Looper	<i>Caenurgina crassiuscula</i>	LM KD J109/17
'One-banded Mason Wasp'	<i>Ancistrocerus unifasciatus</i>	RL KD J109/17
'Long-legged Goldfly'	<i>Condylostylus [caudata gp]</i>	RL KD J109/17

**Species Notes:**

The first two items are fungi, the remainder arthropods. Mycologist Greg Thorn checked the fungal imagery and the remaining IDs are due to Kee. Note the use of square brackets to indicate what could be called the "best guess" to within the taxa so involved and (of course) relative to the degree of expertise involved. Note that two of the species are holdovers for which an ID had been pending.

**Recurring Species:**

Orchard Spider (*Leucauge venusta*); 'Crenellated Nursery Spider' (*Pisaurina mira*); 'Black-banded Harvestman' (*Leiobunum vittatum*); 'Fast Crab Spider' (*Mecaphesa celer*); European Spittlebug (*Aphrophora alni*); 'Brown-tailed Coreid' (*Acanthocephala terminalis*); Black Mirid (*Capsus ater*); 'Black-shouldered Green Bug' (*Ilnacora malina*); Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus lineolaris*); 'Yellow-striped Mirid' (*Plagiognathus obscurus*); White-belted Burrower Bug (*Sehirus cinctus*); Green Immigrant Weevil (*Polydrusus formosus*); Northern Paper Wasp (*Polistes fusca-tus*); Eastern Yellowjacket (*Vespula maculifrons*); Deer Fly (*Chrysops frigidus*); Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*).

**Holdovers & Discards:**

Anglewing butterfly; unid. firefly; dark green Dolichopodid fly; small black beetle; Pale Glyph Moth?

**Report from the Skunk's Misery Butterfly Count**

Every summer on Canada Day weekend, Nature London conducts a survey of butterflies in the Skunk's Misery Forest Complex, which includes Newport Forest. The following list, compiled with thanks to Betsy Baldwin, Ric Symmes and Garth Casbourn, pertains only to Newport Forest.

American Snout	1	UM
Cabbage White	14	atop
Common Wood-Nymph	8	UM, LM
Eastern Comma	1	UM
European Skipper	2	UM
Great Spangled Fritillary	6	UM, RL
Little Wood Satyr	6	UM, LM
Monarch	7	UM
Mourning Cloak	3	UM
Orange Sulphur	2	UM
Pearl Crescent	1	UM
Silver-spotted Skipper	1	UM
Silvery Checkerspot	1	RL
Summer Azure	2	UM, BCF
Tiger Swallowtail	2	UM, BCF

### Readers Write

Bruce Parker is our local Monarch expert: "Glad to hear of the 'lots of Monarchs'. There has been an increase in sightings of adults and eggs in SW Ontario this spring. I have a friend who has 38 in pupa at this time. So far, I have been able to procure 6 larva for [the] Landon Library enclosure. In recent years, at this time of year, it has been difficult to find larva and eggs. This certainly puts us ahead of last spring. Hopefully this will transfer into a good fall migration."

About the mysterious Jewelwing mentioned above, entomologist Steve Paiero writes: "I agree it is an Ebony Jewelwing. I presume you saw the specimen as opposed to just photographed it, otherwise the colouration might have something to do with light diffraction off of the abdomen to make it look white. If it was indeed chalky white, perhaps it was sitting (or moulted) somewhere with a pale chalky soil... the wings also seem to have a white fringe on the posterior margin which might be consistent with this."

### Image Gallery



The Mason Wasp *Ancistrocerus unifasciatus* shows up clearly in this image. The unifasciate diagnostic of the wasp refers to the front band on the abdomen. There can be zero to three bands on the rear end.

Mason wasps build nests of clay or mud in available cavities or re-use abandoned nests of mud-daubers. They feed on moth larvae and nectar.



This attractive Condyllostylid fly was drowning in the “pool” of a Cup Plant. After taking some images I drained the cup. Whether the fly ever recovered I don’t know. This is our second species of *Condylostylus*, in a group that includes *C caudatus*.

You get your species where you find them!





A mother stands guard while her fawn browses in front of her. The Virginia Deer strikes us as a noble creature.