

Date and time: Tuesday November 7 2017 1:40 - 5:05 pm

Weather: Pr 62 mm; RH 60%; BP 102.5 kPa; cloud/sun; N 05-10 kmh; T 8° C

Contents: Looking for logs, looking under them and carrying them.



Layla inspects a large Hackberry (?) deep in the Blind Creek Forest. It stayed upright for a decade or two and blew over in a west wind after the roots had rotted.

Today's assistant, Layla Amer, took time off from her medical school studies to help out on the property. Today's plan was to rummage around in the woods for new log-liners (trail maintenance), to look under each log for new arthropods as we went, then to carry the logs out to the trail for placement on the next visit.

Unfortunately, we won't see Layla again for many more weeks, so Pat and I will motor along as best we can.

Today's *Bulletin* will be shorter than usual because our visit was shortened by the early darkness. In any event, Steve showed up about an hour after our arrival and got right to work on the trail down to the creek, repairing steps.

It is much harder to find good log liners these days because most of the good ones close to the trail are already in place. As a result we have to go further into the woods to find good liners. It is doubtful that we put out more than 20 logs today; their diameters varied from three to six inches, at a guess.

As for the underside of the logs, the pickings were pretty slim, thanks in part to the season: a few earthworms, including what appeared to be a Woodland Blue Worm (*Octolasion cyaneum*). There were no sow bugs., millipedes or centipedes, one or two Ghost Spiders and a small Wolf Spider, not to mention a very nice Ground Beetle that turned out to be a new species of *Harpalus*. (See IMAGES below.) I have often wondered about what appear to be giant slime molds under logs. However, an image sent recently to mycologist Greg Thorn straightened us out on that score. (See IMAGES.)

Coming out of the forest, we met up with Steve in the Nook. He regaled us with some stories about native medicine, including how to use an aging giant puffball to incapacitate an enemy by blowing spore dust into his face, causing his throat to constrict and (possibly) choke him to death. Apart from such grisly items, Layla's interest in natural medicines was repaid with more helpful ideas, including how to make and use a "smudge".

With daylight drawing to an end we got in our respective vehicles; Steve drove off into the sunset while Layla and I drove off into the night.

Phenology: First snowfall on November 9.

Biological Inventory (ATBI)

New Species:

'Dark-sided Ground Beerle' *Harpalus erraticus* BCF KD Nv0717

Species Notes:

The term "dark-sided" refers to the margin of the thorax which is often darkened; the animal has an otherwise red thorax, red head and black-to-blackish elytra. The species is northeastern in distribution and is readily distinguished from *Bruchinus*, the other genus of Ground Beetle with a similar red & black colour scheme.

Readers Write * Plus * Image Gallery

Professor Greg Thorn, our mycological consultant, responds to a query: "Your photo below shows a mycelial network with 'hyphal cords' - just a fancy way of saying strings of microscopic filaments joined to a thickness visible to the naked eye. It is an efficient way for fungi to explore their environment and transport food, water, or themselves, to sites of interest."



Hyphal cords decorate the underside of a rotting log in the Blind Creek Forest.



This Ground Beetle, *Harpalus erraticus*, was also found under a log.