Date and time: Tuesday June 26 2018 2:25 - 5:30 pm
Weather: Pr 38 mm; RH 50%; BP 101.9 kPa; sun/haze; winds calm; T 22º C
Contents: Steve Logan cuts plants while I sweep them.

Baiting the Nook with kibble gives us a window on the Raccoon population. This image reveals a potential problem. (More below.) Just two adults showed up and no kits.

Steve was not around when I arrived on site, although his truck was parked in the usual spot. I decided not to waste time while waiting for his return from grooming the trails, so I took a walkabout with the camera to see who was about, so to speak. Looking for "parkers" (insects perched on leaves), I spotted an unusual gall on a Hawthorn tree (*Crategus crus-galli*) that was quite unlike the orange-brown spot left by the Cedar-apple rust gall made by the fungus *Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginianae*. Rather small spiked globes had developed on the upper surface of a few leaves. The globes resembled miniature versions of the large ones that this fungus develops on the branches of Eastern Redcedar. A different species (*G. globosum*), may be responsible. One for our fungal expert!

I stopped to visit the same patch of Black-eyed Susans growing along the trail through the Lower Meadow, noting the same two species of Blister Beetle crowding the flower head. This time I was determined to get a better image of the smaller of the two species, convinced that it would be new. It has been happening with increasing frequency in recent years that I find something that looks new, but turns out not to be. We last saw the 'Red-collared Oil Beetle' in 2016. Should I be expected to remember all ~1500 species of arthropods logged so far? I think not!

Continuing my walkabout, I spotted a robber fly clinging to a grass stem under a rose bush.I took multiple photos that were never quite perfect, although good enough to ID it as a new species — and genus: *Efferia*. Passing the rain gauge, I was delighted to find that some 38 mm had fallen on the property during the passage of a cold front a few days ago. I had already noticed that the property seemed more "lively", possibly because of the rain, with more insects visible (and audible) than ever before in 2018.

I carried out a sweep in the Lower Meadow and the Regen Zone, finishing just as Steve emerged from the woods, his overalls coated in grass clippings. In my net were several individuals of a small red and black bug or beetle, a Milkweed Bug, an Ebony Bug, a hopper, a grasshopper nymph and others.

In the Nook I explained to Steve the need to put up a white sheet for Tuesday's light trap project. How to attach it? Steve provided a simple and elegant solution. He picked up my walking pole and laid it across two of the overspreading branches of the Black Maple that shades the Nook. All I have to do is drape the sheet over the pole. Before he left, I asked Steve to accompany me down to the creek to get a benthic sample from the rapids. But half way down, Steve pointed out that the creek was running some high water, loaded with runoff and submerging the rapids in its murky depths. We went right back up again and Steve departed.

I tried another sweep on the creek bluffs, but the take was poor: one mosquito and two spiders I sometimes call the 'Watermelon Spider' because its abdomen resembles a watermelon. More officially, it's a Cobweb Spider (in the same family as the Black Widow: Theridiidae). One more sweep along the Blind Creek Trail in the cool woods and I was done for the day.

Raccoon Population Report:
The cover image taken by Trail Cam #2 has alarmed us; baby Raccoons have *never* failed to show up at this time of year when the Nook is baited. Trail Cam #1 told the same story: three adult raccoons passed the cam over the week, but no kits. Possible explanations include: 1. kits did not survive the very cold early spring; 2. kits were never born because it was too cold to mate during the winter; 3. breeding took place late, litters were born late and kits are not yet ready for outings.

Biological Inventory (ATBI)

New Species: (18% new arthropods)

'Large Robber Fly'	*Efferia aestuans*	LM KD Je26/18
'Three-spotted Crane Fly'	*Tipula trivittata*	BCF KD Je21/18

‘Speckled Limoniid’ *Erioptera califera* BCF KD Je2618

Species Notes:
The latter two records are both Crane Flies, but from different families, Tipulidae and Limoniidae. Both specimens were identified mainly on the basis of morphology and distinctive patterning of wing cells.

Recurring Species:
Cobweb Spider (*Enoplognatha ovata*); One-spotted Harvestman (*Leiobunum ventricosum*); Ebony Jewelwing (*Calopteryx maculata*); Northern Two-striped Grasshopper (nymph) (*Melanoplus bivittatus*); ’Yellow-striped Plant Bug’ (*Plagiognathus obscurus*); Small Milkweed Bug (*Lygaeus kalmi*); ’Red-legged Plant Bug’ (*Collaria meilleurii*); Ebony Bug (*Corimelaena pulicari*a); ‘Black Plant Bug’ (*Capsus ater*); Six-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Cicindella sexguttata*); ’Brown Click Beetle’ (*Oestodes tenuicollis*); ’Red-collared Oil Beetle’(*Nemognatha nemorensis*); ‘Red-striped Oil Beetle’ (*Zonitis* sp.); Cabbage White (*Pieris rapae*).

Deferred or Discarded:
Red bug nymph; obscure black bug; dark fly; unID’d White Moth; 3 unID’d hoppers; 2 unID’d Muscid flies.

Readers Write

Entomologist Steve Paiero at the University of Guelph warned that the “challenge” specimen shown in the last issue of The Bulletin might well be the lookalike (*Stenotus binotatus*) that I mentioned there. That species is subject to variability. Consequently my brother Peter searched the web for images and succeeded in locating precisely the possibility that Paiero mentioned. Kudos all round!

Image Gallery

While Harvestmen share the eight-legged attribute with their Arachnid cousins, they do not have eight eyes, as most spiders do. Their have just two, as above.

Here is an unusual pattern for the Harvestman Species *Leiobunum vittatum*, but within the range of variations. I just love surprises like this, insects or spiders with amazing works of art on display.

What is it about the “eyes” of the Black-eyed Susan that these Meloid beetles find so attractive? Is it the pollen? And why is this the only family of beetles that seem so drawn to the plant?