

Date and time: Thursday August 2 2018 3:10 - 7:30 pm

Weather: Pr 24 mm; RH 68%; BP 101.6 kPa; haze/sun; SE 5-15 kmh; T 26° C

Contents: A big day for spiders.



The Jane Bowles Memorial Sassafras has a baby. This one sprouted just a few metres from the base of the parent tree.

Arriving at the property gate, we were pleased to see new bird boxes installed along the Bluebird Trail. Good for the TTLT! The drive into the site was dry, in spite of a recent 24 mm of rainfall. The soil has an insatiable thirst. On the way in, we saw several Monarchs fluttering over the Upper Meadow and all the way down to the trailer, a good sign.

We climbed out of our minivan into a heavy, humid atmosphere, stirred occasionally by a light breeze. Pat seemed to find mushrooms everywhere she looked, including button-stage boletes springing up under the Gallery Forest. The Field Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat were calling, followed by a House Wren and Song Sparrow, enough to motivate a bird list, as below.

Are there deer ticks at Newport Forest? Almost certainly, but to find them requires a special technique described to us by Darren Jacobs who does tick sampling at Rondeau Park. You tie an old rag with lots of texture to a stick, then wander around deer browsing areas, brushing the rag against twigs on bushes or low tree branches. Check the rag periodically for small black, spider-like creatures that are less than half the size of a Wood Tick. Collect in alcohol for verification by microscope or

powerful hand lens. Pat spent half an hour sampling in the vicinity of the trailer, but no ticks showed up. That would be another species.

Down to business, I collected along the track for Sweep A, then went over to the area under the Power Lines. We rarely sample here, but I took Sweep B with a brief foray into the area, now rapidly succeeding through the apple/thorn stage into primary forest. For Sweeps C and D we took the trail to the river, stopping to take Sweep C at the Elbow and Sweep D at the River Landing. Pat gamely stayed with me throughout this foray, noting plants and insects along the way. I went out to the edge of the beach. It looked rather wet. I wish I had not been distracted by a Great Blue Heron downriver, for I heard a “plop” right in front of me and saw expanding rings in the water made, in all probability, by a Spiny Softshell Turtle.

I took Sweep D and we headed back to camp. A Giant Swallowtail greeted us as we passed the Elbow. Passing a sunflower (*Helianthus/Heliopsis*) before emerging from the woods, I noticed it's head was shrivelled and crumpled. Would that be a gall or a leaf-tier? Gingerly I pried it open to reveal a surprisingly large larva coloured a sickly white with a red head, trying to hide behind the stem. I apologized for the break-in as I took image after image. (See below.)

Back at the Nook, Pat said, “There goes the cicada.” “What cicada?” “Don't you hear it?” “No.” We thought perhaps our ears were tuned to different frequencies, like old fashioned radios. We had a dinner of wieners and beans in the Nook, accompanied by a young Raccoon who seemed much more interested in the birdseed up in the tray than it was by a little pile of beans left for it on a board. We have a system for recognizing individual Raccoons based on variable facial features: mask - solid or broken; nose stripe - same shade as mask or different; eyebrows white with one narrow stripe (a peak), two or none. There are more features, but there's a beginners kit.

Birds: (15)

American Goldfinch (UM); American Robin (LM/BCF); Blue Jay (GF); Canada Goose (TR); Common Yellowthroat (GF); Eastern Towhee (BCF); Field Sparrow (LM); Great Blue Heron (TR); Grey Catbird (HO); House Wren (GF); Mourning Dove (BCF); Song Sparrow (); Tree Swallow (Rd); Turkey Vulture (LM); Eastern Wood Peewee (BCF).

Phenology: Cicadas singing; Wingstem within a week of bloom.

Biological Inventory (ATBI)

New Species: (16% new arthropods)

Whitebanded Crab Spider	<i>Misumenoides formosipes</i>	Elb KD Au02/18
'Funereal Cobweb Spider'	<i>Euryopis funebris</i>	Tr pd/KD Au02/18
Green Lynx Spider	[<i>Peucetia viridans</i>]	Elb KD Au02/18
Conehead Katydid	<i>Neoconocephalus</i> sp.	LM KD Au02/18

Species Notes:

If the "Green Lynx Spider" is not as named, then it must be a species of *Ovyopes*. Our spider is pale green, with heavily spined legs, but with a narrow stripe on the carapace, instead of a broad one. The Funereal spider was spotted by Pat clinging to the bottom of the trailer door. (The spider, not Pat.)

Recurring Species:

'Teapot Spider (*Micrathena gracilis*); Ebony Jewelwing (*Calopteryx maculata*); 'Blue-veined Leaf Hopper' (*Coelidia olitoria*); Two-striped Plant Hopper (*Acanalonia bivittata*); Buffalo Treehopper (*Ceresa alta*); Shortwinged Meadow Katydid (*Conocephalus brevipennis*); Say's Trig (*Anaxipha exigua*); Two-spotted Tree Cricket (*Neoxabea bipunctata*); False Milkweed Bug (*Lygaeus turcicus*); Juniper Stink Bug (*Banasa calva*); Green Stink Bug - nymph (*Chinavia hilaris*); 'Diamond-back Grass Bug' (*Phlegyas abbreviatus*); Scentless Plant Bug (*Stictopleurus punctiventris*); Hickory Tussock Moth (*Lophocampa caryae*); Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*); Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*); Anglewing (*Polygonia* sp.); Flesh Fly (*Sarcophaga* sp.); Basswood Miner (*Baliosus nervosus*); Meadow Mound Ant (*Formica ulkei*); Spider Wasp (*Anoplius* sp.).

Deferred or Discarded:

UnID red jumper; unID B&W jumper; unID brown spider; red harvestman; black hopper; unfocused orb weaver; unID green bug with black stripe; ragged moth; Muscid fly; unID Linyphiid spider.

Image Gallery



This female Whitebanded Crab Spider (“band” barely visible in front of carapace) wears a daring outfit of purple leggings, orange skirt and green top. Anyone in a provocative mood can try this combination. It might work since nature’s colours are said always to be in harmony.

Seriously, one of the great joys of this work is to see a rather small, non-descript looking arthropod transformed into a riot of colour and pattern, some of it simply jaw-dropping. Not imagination, magnification.



Among the more colourful insects found today was this green Buffalo Treehopper with its yellow “horns” and dappling. *Leaf* Hoppers have their wings folded together, somewhat tent-like, *Plant* Hoppers sometimes have higher wings in a peak — or flat against the dorsum. *Tree* Hoppers tend to have rather high crests on their dorsum, as above.



Is this the larva of a leaf-tier moth? Not great with caterpillars, I'd like to throw this ID problem open to readers. Prize: \$10 Timmie's card.