

Newport Forest

Je09/00

2:30 - 4:50 pm

Weather: warm 25C, SW wind, gusting, sunny with high haze

Purpose: extend trail in river forest

Participants: Kee, Nic

Coming in the meadow, we saw a great many birds, sparrows of various species and numerous butterflies. "Everyone" seems glad the grass is no longer being mown. The grasses are now knee-high or up to mid-thigh in places.

The Thames is currently at medium height, with about 8-10 feet of shallow claybanks exposed. I measured the speed (roughly) in the fastest part at about 0.5 m/sec. We worked on the initial part of the trail, distributing new chips over old, clipping overhanging boughs, cutting notches, paths and steps on the cliffside portion. We did not see the sparrow nest that Pat and I saw on our last trip in.

In the river forest we heard a catbird calling frequently as we pulled plants along an extended trail that led, ultimately, as far as the "Nicamore." Speaking of Nic, he spotted the largest nursery-web spider I'd ever seen, sitting in a folded-over leaf near the ground and bearing an egg-case that was nearly a centimetre in diameter. The spread of the legs was easily 3 cm. Probably *Pisaurina* sp. (Kaston 72).

Coming out along the grassy track, we saw a Giant Swallowtail, *Papilio cresphontes*. Six Turkey Vultures were circling above the meadow.