

Newport Forest

September 6 2003

2:05 - 8:25 pm

Weather: prec. 13 mm; clear; SSW < 10 km/h; LM 27 C; FCF 24 C

Purpose: watering & starting new “warden”

Participants: Kee, Nic, Steve & Karen Logan

Nic and I worked at the tree station for about an hour, clipping the grass walks, weeding the beds and watering the young trees. Nic also watered the two trees up by the gate. We then loaded the blue tanks and jugs from the big tank, went down to the trailer and started to water the south core. We were barely done, when Steve showed up with Karen along for the visit. Steve has agreed to be warden for a six-month trial period. His duties include weekly visits during which he will walk the trails and look for any problems that we should know about. I gave him a bag inside of which were two keys (gate and trailer), a letter of authority, a map and sundry other items.

Steve and Karen were barely settled in when Eva showed up with Jordan and Karissa. Their visit was short and, after they left, we went down to the bridge to look around. Steve found a large pile of coon poop on the bridge, so we spent a good ten minutes poking through it with a stick, finding an amazing amount of vegetable material, principally gooseberries, riverbank grapes and chokecherries. The feces did not actually smell like typical mammal feces (i.e., rotten) but sweet, almost like “wine,” as Steve remarked. Moreover, the fruits were barely digested, some still with unbroken skins. Rather odd, I thought.

While Steve and Karen went for a stroll down to the river, Nic watered a few trees in the north core with the large water bottle, while I drove to town for dog biscuits. Returning, I filled the tanks and jugs one more time to finish off the north core. On the way in, I stopped at the hurdles to pick up a spider that Nina had found in her house (figuring it had hitched a ride on snooper). This was a most impressive specimen, looking like a tarantula, almost certainly an exotic and possibly brought by the Hurdles unknowingly from the grocery store. (bananas?)

We finished watering the north core and all took a break in the nook. Steve found a maple branch with a hard, stalked fungus on it. This turned out later to be Stalked Xylaria, a new species for us.

We left the property to eat at a new restaurant that Steve knew about on Highway 79 just north of the Longwoods Road. We said goodbye after supper, whereupon Nic and I returned to Newport Forest to close up, fill the bird feeder and put out

DBs. The sun had already set when a raccoon approached nic, showing very little fear. Nic whispered coarsely into the night, “I think it’s Junior.” But he didn’t see the face clearly enough to see the two white spots, so we can’t be sure. The local raccoons, at least the ones that visit the nook frequently, may well be getting rather accustomed to our presence, anyway. Still . . .

New species

Stalked Xylaria

Xylaria longipes

Tr slKD