

Newport Forest Monday July 24, 25 2006 2:10 - 4:30pm

Weather: prec. 2mm*; RH 80%; clr; SSW 0-15kmh; LM 31C; FCF 26C

Purpose: two-day stay

Participants: Pat & Kee

We let the girls run loose as soon as we arrived and about 15 minutes later, were joined by Ken and Nancy Murray, who live in Muirkirk. The Murrays do raccoon rehab and are looking for a new release site. They have two older, somewhat tame, 1.5 yr old males who should have been released last year, as well as three younger males due for release this year. I showed the Murrays our habitat and expressed doubt that this area could absorb all five males. When we returned the girls showed up and (slowly) made friends with the Murrays, so to speak. We agreed that the two older males could be released in the Point Bar Forest a week tuesday. (Aug. 1) (Ken Murray spotted a snake (Garter or Brown) near the Nook.)

Walking back along the bluffs with the Murrays, I spotted a Zoned Lactarius and lots of Rosy Russulas. After the Murrays left, we led the girls down to the FC rapids, where they explored upstream for about 15 metres, then crossed the bridge to explore the opposite bank. On several occasions, I watched them eat mud or stringy algae from the muddy shore bottom. The explored the east bank along a 20-metre stretch, frequently stopping to fight and “buffalo” or to engage in other expressions of high spirits. A yellow-flowered plant caught my eye on the far side of the bridge. Pat wasn’t sure if we had logged it already, so I collected one, a new record - The Monkey Flower.

The girls came up to the Nook for some food, then roared off again, not to be seen until well after sunset. Making notes in the Nook a little later, I was startled by the sound of a limb crashing to the forest floor down by the creek. Had the girls finally succeeded in killing themselves? It took some time to find the downed limb, but no sign of dead bodies nearby. After supper, we drove to the UM, where I set up camera and tripod to video the sunset (V). Pat, meanwhile, went up to visit the Hurdles. I videoed about ten minutes of the sun descending behind the old pear tree on the UM rise. (homestead site)

Anxious about our little charges, I whistled from the bridge for several minutes before Thelma showed up on the east bank. She crossed the bridge and dived under the peg trestle, where Louise had been sleeping all this time.

The night was warm , the temperature never falling below 23C. We sat outside the trailer in deck chairs to enjoy the stars and night sounds. Greylock had shown up early to claim his right to the kibble in the nook, but a female

showed up to nibble in the grass nearby. Where were her kits? Inside the trailer, I found a new moth on a screen. It was of dusky hue with a distinctive hieroglyphic resembling a white flaming heart on its forewing. It took relatively little time to identify it from the moth book. (See new species.) I was observed, during this process, by a Katydid that had flown into the trailer, attracted by the lights. It clung to the screen, watching me with angled head and green eyes. The girls, meanwhile, slept in our bed with Pat.

Now and then I could hear screams in the night, most of them raccoon disputes, but none nearby. The first female reappeared in the company of a second female, neither with kits. This is puzzling. What happened to the litter of which Thelma & Louise had once been a part? Greylock showed up to share in the grass kibble, but the lady coons shoed him away with a snorting noise.

Shortly after dawn I got up to make some coffee and noticed a young Jackrabbit sniffing along the edge of the meadow, where Pat had thrown some old seed the previous evening. After Pat and the girls got up, I slept more soundly until nearly 1 pm. Pat had meanwhile gone to the river, picking up several more birds for the list. She saw six Spiny Softshell Turtles (most of them young) basking on the clay beach, as well as six Canada Geese. There also, she found a new dragonfly species, the Fawn Darner.

When I reawakened, I drove to Wardsville to replace a few items destroyed by the sisters during Pat's absence from the trailer. A young groundhog scuttled off the road into the grass of the UM. A light rain lasted about 20 minutes. As we packed up, An all-grey stink bug landed on my wrist. I was not able to capture it effectively, so I just examined it closely. (See new species.)

Birds: (28)

American Goldfinch (LM); American Robin (GF); Belted Kingfisher (FC); Black-capped Chickadee (ET); Blue Jay (Tr); Canada Goose (FC); Cedar Waxwing (TR); Common Flicker (LM/HL*); Common Grackle (Tr); Common Yellowthroat (GF); Eastern Kingbird (LM/BCF); Eastern Towhee (FCF); Field Sparrow (UM); Gray Catbird (ET); House Sparrow (UM/Rd); House Wren (WM/Rd); Killdeer (HP); Mourning Dove (FCF); Great Crested Flycatcher (LM); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Red-tailed Hawk (LM); Song Sparrow (FC!); Turkey Vulture (TR); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wood Thrush (BCF); Yellow Warbler (RL)

*with family

New species:

Monkey Flower	<i>Mimulus ringens</i>	FC/Br KD/PD
Signate Quaker	<i>Tricholita signata</i>	Tr KD
Fawn Darner	<i>Boyeria vinosa</i>	TR PD

“Gray Stink Bug” This specimen has the same size and shape as the Green Stink Bug, except that it is entirely grey, with a white scutellum and a dusky tail.

“Tasty Milky”	<i>Lactarius deliciosus</i>	RBIfs KD
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(from the malaise samples)

Three-banded Grape Leafhopper	<i>Eurythroneura tricineta</i>	LM nz/KD J118/06
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Phenology:

Katydid starting to sing; Black Maples in heavy mast (not ready for harvesting yet)