

Newport Forest

Wednesday June 1 & 2 2005

2:05 - 6:30 pm

**Weather:** prec. 2 mm; clear; calm; LM 26C; FCF 24 C

**Purpose:** two-day stay

**Participants:** Pat, Kee

We were greeted by a cacophony of birds, all singing at once. Michelle Carnery and her friend Wayne showed up to help with the bird census. They not only confirmed the Indigo Buntings in Eva's Woods, but they spotted what Michelle regarded as a breeding pair. By the time they left, the count had reached 30 spp. (See list below.) Michelle's best find was a new species for us, the Clay-colored Sparrow.

I brought a wheelbarrow load of mulch from the river, then set out to walk the TRT. I found the path getting rapidly overgrown and I resolved to bring the brush hook with me on the next circuit. Out on the Sand Bar I spent nearly half an hour searching for my planted trees. (The vegetation is near to full growth.) I was finally relieved to find all four, noting that they looked very healthy and obviously growing quickly. Up on the HB I was delighted to see the first Jewelwing of the season.

The trees in the two LM cores are all healthy, even ones I thought had died resprouting from the base. Up to 10 cm of new growth has already been added by some species. I spotted an orange Ichneumon (*Ophion?*) while inspecting the trees along the GF.

During supper we were serenaded by a Northern Oriole. After supper we sat on the new deck, watching the BCF skyline as the light slowly faded. We then walked up to the gate, where I closed up and Pat inspected the area on the "knoll," where the farmhouse used to be. None of the trees planted there have taken, apparently.

After dark, we watched for raccoons, finally spotting "Momma," but seeing no kits. We could hear them churring, however, so we knew they were close by. At 11:30 pm the Grey Tree Frogs started up again. This is confusing because they sound similar to the burbling call of raccoon kits. Several times we went outside the trailer to see if we could spot a Southern Flying Squirrel at the feeder. No luck. By 12:30 the air temperature had dropped to 10 C. At about this time, three big, burly-looking raccoons with faded-looking coats showed up at the nook to clean up what remained of the DBs. We wondered if they might be having an

inhibitory effect on Momma & her kits.

In the wee hours of the morning, about 4:30 - 5:00 am, we were out on the deck watching the sky lighten, when we were rewarded by two birds close by. First, a Great Horned Owl came flying noiselessly past our very noses, some 12 feet off the ground and no further away. It followed the track to the east. (Home is the hunter) A few minutes later, a Great Blue Heron, only slightly higher, flew the same flight path in the opposite direction. It was magical how both birds just seemed to appear out of nowhere in a completely unexpected fashion.

After breakfast, I mulched about 30 trees and cut approximately 100 Hawthorns. During a break in the nook, I heard a raccoon kit churring up in the box. Going down to the old BM snag, I looked inside the den in time to see two kits climbing up inside. Had the family split? Have there been two families, all along?

Down at the creek, I collected some samples of riffle rocks and Cladophora tresses, (2S) before we closed camp and headed for the UM. At the TS, Pat cut coathangers into staples, while I pinned black garbage bags to the soil of Bed B. (This is the easy way to weed.) Going out, we drove over to the WM, entering by the slip gate and walking over to the ploughed strip. A walk along about 50 m of it was completely unfruitful. No new trees yet. The meadow is becoming densely peppered with thorn trees and any decision to cut must be made very soon.

**Birds:** (41 - filed separately)

**New species:**

Clay-colored Sparrow	<i>Spizella pallida</i>	UM MC
“Shore Beetle”	<i>Chlaenius [sericeus]</i>	RB NZ My29/05

**Phenology:**

Grey Tree Frogs calling; Stinging Nettles nearly full grown; first Jewelwings (HB); first forays for Raccoon kits.