

Date and time: Thursday May11 2023 2:30 - 5:15.

Weather: RH 29%; BP 101.9; clear; winds calm; T 30°; Pr 0 mm.

Contents: Once more into the litter we go.



The River Landing has lots of old flood debris on it.

Just as we did last week, Brian & I wasted little time in collecting another garbage bag full of litter, this time from the upper Creek Bluffs, just below the Nook. Something I didn't notice last week is that, in spite of the dry weather, the lower layers of litter are all soaking wet, providing ample moisture for the creatures hiding there. I wondered, as we began sorting through the leaves, whether the overwintering arthropods had already left for greener pastures. In other words, were they all gone?

Hardly! Today's catch was at least twice the catch of last week! We set to; here is a list straight from my notebook of the arthropods and other invertebrates that we came upon in this batch— all in informal language:

jumper; ghost; black millipede; two sow bugs; jumper; weevil; ant; small dark bug; black jumper; mall earthworm; harvestman; another earthworm - 2 cm; assassin bug; green tiger beetle; rove beetle; another assassin bug; formica ant; sow bug, black ant carrying food; earthworm; red centipede; small black jumper; whitish spider; crane fly larva?; small black ant; possible centipede or red worm, small pupilid snail; larger earthworm. Many in the above list are repeats, others could not be identified and a few others were lost in the search through my camera files.

Before leaving for the River Landing, I took a look down the creek bluffs,

somewhat surprised to see no trout lilies at all, no leaves with dark spots! Did I miss them earlier?

The Fleming Creek Forest wore a thin coat of verdure, giving a park-like appearance to the woods behind the vernal ponds. At the River Landing we made a beeline for the rotted cornstalks and other river debris that had been lying there for several years. At soil level, under the pile, all we found were several earthworms, one small metallic beetle and a slug. The conversion to soil is well under way. We then cleaned up the camp and four-wheeled it out to the road.

Phenology: Property is now dry enough to form mud cracks.

Biological Inventory (ATBI)

New Species:

Guardstone Spider*	<i>Phrurotimpus borealis</i>	Nk KD Ap20/23
Hacklemesh Weaver	<i>Amaurobius borealis</i>	CB/Nk KD My11/23
‘Checkered Broadnose’	<i>Trigonorhinus sticticus</i>	CB/Nk KD My11/23
Large Rove Beetle	<i>Ocypus nitens</i>	CB/Nk KD My11/23
‘Narrow black Millipede’	[<i>Ophylulus pilosus</i>]	CB/Nk KD My11/23

*Spider got missed in the previous Bulletin, reported in this issue.

Recurring Species:

‘Daddy Shortlegs’ (*Odiellus pictus*); Red Soil Centipede (*Strigamia bothriopus*); European Sowbug (*Oniscus asellus*); ‘Crenellated Nursery Spider’ (*Pisaurina mira*); Hentz’s Meshweaver (*Emblyna hentzi*); Leafhopper Assassin Bug (nymph) (*Zelus luridus*); Six-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela sexguttata*); Crane Fly larva; Ulke’s Mound Ant (*Formica ulkei*); plus one unidentified small black spider.

Yellow-soled Slug? (*Arion* sp); Common Earthworm (*Lumbricus terrestris*).

Comments: The centipede, the millipede, the sowbug and the earthworms all appear to be obligate litter critters. Harvestmen are more common in latter than elsewhere. We note that spiders and insects are equally common in the leaf litter, possibly indicating a balance of predators and prey.

Images



I have called the Weevil shown here (with apologies for a blurred image) the 'Checkered Broadnose Weevil', resembling a weevil in the Broadnose family and being somewhat checkered. When common names are lacking for a species, I usually make one up. This helps me remember something of the specimen's appearance.

The species at hand is a Fungus Weevil living, one assumes, on fungi. It is widely distributed in the Great Lakes area.



Guardstone Spider (*Phrurotimpus borealis*)

Two views of the Guardstone Spider (a “real” common name). How did it get that name? By perching on top of stones? It is broadly distributed across mid North America. Officially it is known as an “ant mimic” but it doesn’t remind me of an ant.



The Red Soil Centipede (*Strigamia bothriopus*) lives on insects and their larvae. It is found mainly in Eastern North America.



This Millipede, which I tentatively identified as *Ophylulus pilosus*, (Hence the square brackets.) is found throughout eastern N. America. It lives on dead leaves and decaying organic matter generally. The species named originated in Europe.



Everyone's favourite Ground Beetle, this Six-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela sexguttata*) is a predator, feeding on spiders, other beetles and small insects like aphids, springtails etc. This beetle is very widely distributed and very common throughout eastern North America. At Newport Forest, one runs across them everywhere, from the Nook to the Forested areas. Two other species of Tiger Beetle have been found at Newport Forest. All are colourfully patterned.