

**Date and time:** Saturday October 7 2023 2:15 - 5:15 pm

**Weather:** RH 59%; BP 101.1 kPa; Pr 25 mm; overcast, winds calm; T 11° C.

**Contents:** Last sweeps of the year!



The weather on site today was a cool 11°C but there was no rain. Here, on the way home, we saw heavy rain clouds off in the London area.

Today we “put the wrap” on the sampling season, leaving only enough time for camera maintenance. The two trail cams were taken down and equipped with fresh batteries that would be expected to last into winter. Our Assistant Sharon Campbell, was along to help with our last sampling visit of the year.

We each made heavy sweeps of the lower meadow (one each) that yielded little more than a couple of tree hoppers, plant hoppers and a Jumping Spider. There could all have come from the Gray Dogwoods that I swept near the Hole. Steve dropped by at this point to see how we were doing.

For several months now, a pair of deer antlers (found by Sharon in the summer) have decorated the giant log in the Nook. Over time, mice have nibbled away most of the antlers, leaving only the cranium and both antlers now detached from the skull and lying beside it. Since the “mice” obviously have no intention of stopping their salt raids, we decided to mount one of the camera next to the log and aimed squarely at what was left of the antlers, the idea being to get a look at those “mice” to determine their species: Wood Mice, Meadow Voles, White-footed Mice, or whatever. We mounted the other camera in its usual place in the Hole. This meant that I could avoid a somewhat tiring walk to the river.

The paucity of arthropods on the field plants meant that they had mostly descended from the dying Goldenrods and gone to the ground. The only other sampling effort involved a search of the leaf litter. As usual we filled a black garbage bag with leaves from around the Nook, shaking the bag to concentrate our finds at the bottom. Cautiously examining the bottom contents, we found a much richer haul than the nets had delivered. The haul included a new fly, a new beetle, and a new spider, as stated below under New Species.

Thankfully, it had not rained on site during our visit. But on the way home, we saw rain clouds clouds in the direction of London. That was fine with us!

### **Note on cameras:**

While changing the camera batteries, I had failed to get the camera menus to appear. This meant that all camera settings would revert to their default values, which were acceptable except for the day and time which would show much earlier dates. To work around this problem, we signalled the present time of day with a display of fingers held up for the cameras to photograph. Better than nothing.

**Phenology:** Goldenrod senescent; fall colours 10% turned and .

### **Biological Inventory (ATBI)**

#### **New Species:**

'Brown Banded Ground Beetle'	<i>Agonum lutulentum</i>	Nk kdMK Oc09/23
Hacvklemesh Weaver	[ <i>Amaurobius borealis</i> ]	Nk KD Oc09/23
Satellite Fly	<i>Metopia argyrocephala</i>	Nk KD Oc09/23

#### **Species Notes:**

A remarkable thing happened while I was trying to zero in on a possible new Ground Beetle. With the beetle displayed on my computer screen, an inquisitive dinner guest asked how I identified insects. I explained the use of arthropod image galleries. "Why don't you just use AI?" he said. "What?" "Here, let me show you." He photographed the specimens with his cellphone and uploaded the image to a special app. Suddenly an image identical to our specimen appeared on the screen along with an identification. I must try this facility in the future.

#### **Recurring Species:**

European Sowbug (*Oniscus asellus*); Bowl & Doily Spider (*Frontinella communis*); Two-striped Planthopper (*Acanalonia bivittata*); Buffalo Treehopper (*Stictocephala alta*); Buffalo Treehopper *Stictocephala alta*); Spotted Brown Lacewing (*Hemerobius stigma*); Isabella Tiger Moth (*Pyrrharctia isabella*).

### Readers Write

Susan Price, a local naturalist, wonders about mosquito species: “Do you think the mosquitoes are a different type this year? Other people I know have commented that they are reacting to bites this year when they haven't in the past.”

### Images



The Ground Beetle *Agonum lutulentum* was found in leaf litter.



The Hacklemesh Weaver (*Amaurobius borealis*) has a lookalike in the species *Steatoda borealis*, a member of the Cobweb Spider family. However, the leg banding differs. The Black Widow also belongs to this family, but most members are not poisonous.



At first we mistook this Spotted Brown Lacewing (***Hemerobius stigma***) for some kind of leafier moth.

**A wonderment:** although our samples were too small to determine such an issue, but I have wondered whether at least some of the arthropods migrate to leaf litter to winter over.



Back in london it was raining cats and dogs — or at least kittens and puppies.

**Note to recipients** of *The Newport Forest Bulletin*: Please feel free to leave our email list at any time by replying to the carrier message and requesting that we take your name off the list.