

Trip Report, League of Naturalists

4/27/03 Torne Valley, New York

Led by Geoff Welch; Participants: Bob Celandier, Jack Focht, Ed Lenik, Terryanne Maenza-Gmelch, Marsha Meyer, Ken McNichol, Carol Weiss, Alan Wells, Della Wells. Tom ?, Patricia, John, and Ray Clyne, Helen ? (15)

Met in parking area at the Waste Transfer and Recycling Center in Torne Valley at 10 AM. Hiked up the valley toward the Russian Bear. Returned at approximately 2 PM. Weather: Scattered clouds, sunny, 61.2°F, light breeze (from the composting pile!). Candle Brook water temperature, 48.0°F.



Photo 1. Geoff and Crew!

Photo 2. Crossing Torne Brook.

Misc. Invertebrates

Blackflies, Simuliidae, common

Water Strider, Gerreidae

Beefly, Bombyliidae

Craneflies, Tupulidae, mating



Photo 3. Red-backed salamander.



Photo 4. Sooty mold.

Moths & Butterflies

Cabbage White, 1

Spring Azure, several

Unid. Fritillary (?), possible Meadow Fritillary (based on emergence date), seen in parking lot at start of hike.

Reptiles & Amphibians

Spring Peeper, calling

Green Frog

American Toad, trilling, eggs seen

Red-backed Salamander

Eastern Box Turtle (remains of shell found)

Birds

American Crow

American Goldfinch

American Robin

Barn Swallow

Black-capped Chickadee

Black and White Warbler

Black-throated Green Warbler

Bluejay

Brown-headed Cowbird

Chipping Sparrow

Common Grackle

Downy Woodpecker

Eastern Wood Pewee, pair

European Starling entering transmission tower hole with nest material

Field Sparrow (1, heard only)

House Finch

Louisiana Waterthrush

Northern Flicker

Red-tailed Hawk, 1 single, + pair

Red-winged Blackbird

Turkey Vulture (several)

Fungi

Artist Conch
Black Jelly
Earth Star, dried remains on sand pile
Unid. Polypores
Sooty Mold, *Scorias spongiosa* on American Beech

Note: Sooty Mold is a fungus that forms thick, black, spongy mats on the twigs, branches, and trunk of American Beech. It does not attack the tree, but grows on the honeydew of aphids and scale insects. Large amounts of fungus, such as we saw, are suggestive of an attack of the Beech Blight Aphid, *Grylloprociphilus imbricator*. In recent years, this pest has been increasing throughout the Northeast. For more information, see http://www.cs.umb.edu/~alyons/efg_web/grim.html .)

Misc. Plants

Scotch Broom, *Cytisus scoparius*
Canada Mayflower, *Maianthemum canadense*
Trout-lily, *Erythronium americanum*
Mountain Laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*
Spotted Wintergreen, *Chimaphila maculata*
Pennsylvania Sedge, *Carex pensylvanica*
Dwarf Ginseng, *Panax trifolius*
Rock Polypody, *Polypodium* sp.
Common Dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*
Northern Downy Violet, *Viola fimbriatula*
American Beech, *Fragus grandifolia*



Photo 5. Earth Stars.



Photo 6. Dwarf Ginseng.