

BioBlitz 2008

The 2008 BioBlitz took place in Bruce Peninsula National Park from 19–23 June and was organized by Steve Marshall (University of Guelph). One of the main purposes of this particular BioBlitz was to enhance a longer term Bruce Peninsula Insect Survey Project. See: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/debu/brucepeninsula.htm> for the project website. The Bruce Peninsula BioBlitz brought in 20 participants from a number of Ontario institutions and even one researcher all the way from the Czech Republic. In the days leading up the BioBlitz, some of us were nervously watching the very cold wet weather forecast for the Bruce Peninsula on the Internet and were worried that the collecting might not be good. Fortune smiled on the event though with completely unexpected warm and sunny weather throughout the entire BioBlitz.

The BioBlitz participants stayed both at Emmett Lake Cabin in the park and at Steve Marshall's cottage (located just north of the park on Dunks Bay). The Emmett Lake Cabin was billed as being "very rustic," which conjured up all sorts of images of beaten-down shacks – however, the cabin was very clean and in excellent condition, had a large common area and kitchen, and even had running water and a generator for electricity. This suited our purposes well and served as centre of operations for the BioBlitz participants. All were very grateful for the hospitality of both the park staff and Steve Marshall, who opened up his own cottage to BioBlitzers.



Platycerus virescens (Fabricius), a species of lucanid beetle, was found in rotting logs.
(Photograph by A. Smith)



Night collecting using ultraviolet lights near the Singing Sands dunes.
(photograph by A. Smith)

As in past years, the BioBlitz gave participants the chance to promote entomology, the BioBlitz program, and the Biological Survey of Canada. Participants interacted with park staff and with the public, and I gave a public presentation at the park interpretive center one evening. The presentation was heavily illustrated with Steve Marshall's insect photography – the vast majority of which was taken right there on the Bruce Peninsula.

On the first full day of the BioBlitz, participants met with Scott Parker, Bruce Peninsula National Park Ecologist and Research Coordinator, to pore over maps of the area and work out logistics. The park staff were extremely supportive and had lots of helpful suggestions for collecting localities. BioBlitz participants were even offered the opportunity to accompany Scott on one of the park boats to some of the islands off the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. An obvious perk to holding a BioBlitz in a national park! Several participants went on the boat tour and collected specimens from a few different islands. On the peninsula, there were lots of forested habitats, sand dunes, ponds, bogs, fields, streams, and other habitats to sample. Participants used

insect nets, flight intercept traps, baited pitfall traps, mosquito traps, ultraviolet lights, beating sheets, sand sifters, dip nets, and several other techniques for catching insects. The focal taxa of most participants were flies and beetles, but there was also interest in other groups such as ants, moths, and wasps. François Génier and I were after scarab beetles and caught an impressive 346 specimens representing 17 different species. The specimens collected by the various participants will all be deposited in insti-

tutional collections (mainly the University of Guelph and the Canadian Museum of Nature) and specimen data is being added to the Bruce Arthropod Database maintained by Steve Marshall. The overall consensus was that the 2008 BioBlitz was a huge success and the scientific results will greatly enhance the Bruce Peninsula Insect Survey



BioBlitz 2008 participants, from left to right – Vincent Belluz (University of Guelph), Jan Sevcik (Silesian Museum, Czech Republic), Andrew Smith (Canadian Museum of Nature), Kevin Barber (National Research Council), John Klymko (University of Guelph) (in back row), Adam Brunke (University of Guelph), Hui Dong (University of Guelph), Sarah Hendershott (University of Guelph), Chris Ho (University of Guelph) (in front row), Leyla Thielman (Brock University), Margie Wilkes (Pinery Provincial Park) (seated in middle row), Aynsley Thielman (Brock University), Lauren Pinault (Brock University), Gil Miranda (University of Guelph), François Génier (Canadian Museum of Nature), Steve Marshall (University of Guelph), Gary Umphrey (University of Guelph). Missing from picture: Jeff, Heather, and Susan Cumming (Canadian National Collection of Insects).

(Photograph by A. Smith)