

Autumn 2007

Here in the mid-Potomac River region, we are in part two of a drought that began in June. Many tree leaves are turning brown and falling. There is a feeling of uncertainty about autumn's leaf colouring, which usually begins with a couple of tree species in late-September, such as Dogwood and Black Gum or Tupelo. Most of the native tree colouring happens in early-to-mid November, so there is still a chance, depending on rain to release trees from the extreme stress they have been suffering.

Human residents are feeling too the stress of the desperately dry land. Sometimes it's difficult to hold the promise of the encouraging thoughts and actions going on to resolve our disruptions of climate patterns. It's heartening though to see the initiatives by individuals, communities, cities, provinces and states to reduce gaseous emissions into the Biosphere. But our current federal governments in Canada and the U.S. are seriously hindering what needs to be done.

This week the temperatures are in the mid-to-upper 80s.

In the midst of this, there are expressions of beauty, wonder and liveliness to lift the spirit and inspire. Last Friday, on a naturalist field trip, we saw a tiny moth with extraordinary patterns on a bright yellow flower petal of Jerusalem Artichoke. Under a hand lens, this moth with rolled wings appeared as light orange, circled with intricate cloisonné patterns of white outlined in blue. A jewel one could easily pass-by.

Down by the Potomac River we saw another jewel sunning herself on a rock, Ruby-Spotted Damsel Fly.

There is rain in the forecast for Thursday evening and Friday. The land and its inhabitants are thirsty. We will be grateful.

Best wishes for Autumn in the North Land of Earth's Biosphere.

Lorne Peterson
September 27, 2007
Spring Branch Valley
Eastern Piedmont Hills
mid-Potomac River region