



# The Atrium Outing Report

August 31, 2019

By Val Walker

The Niagara Escarpment extends across the southern portion of the Upper Peninsula from DeTour in the east to Manistique in the west. It once marked the shoreline of an ancient sea centered in Michigan 450 million years ago. This magnesium-rich, dolomitic limestone ridge serves as a diverse natural landscape, home to an outstanding assortment of flora including many unique calciphiles (calcium loving plant).

Our troop of eleven began our trek on the North Country Trail east of East Lake, following along the base of the Niagara Escarpment. The precipitous wall of limestone, draped in ferns and mosses, made a dramatic backdrop as we passed through the dappled light of a mature maple forest. As in previous years, the lushness and size of the plants beneath the canopy was truly spectacular.

With the exception of the occasional splash of pink from Herb-Robert, orange from Spotted jewelweed and white from Dead-nettle and Canada violet, flowers were sparse given the time of year. Fruits however, were large and plentiful.

Notable were the berries of False Solomon's seal, American spikenard, Red-berried elder, Canada mayflower, White baneberry, Red baneberry and Jack-in-the-pulpit.



*The Escarpment*



*Festooned with ferns*



*Red baneberry*



*American spikenard*

Seeds of Sweet cicely, Heath speedwell, Broad-leaved helleborine, Wild lettuce and Wild leeks had all set for dispersal.

The usual assortment of ferns including the delicate Maidenhair, Ostrich, Lady, Spinulose Wood, Long Beech and Sensitive, lined the trail. Bulblet fern and a diversity of mosses graced the cliff face. A quick step off the trail revealed sporadic pockets of Northern holly fern often wedged between large chunks of limestone.

Fungal specimens were few and far between. Unlike a few years ago where an impressive array of species could be found including the highly prized Oyster mushroom. We did manage to see some polypores, corals and gilled mushrooms but strangely, no boletes. Thanks to Ev for identifying them.

For most of the day, aside from an Eastern wood-pewee calling, we heard little but the rustling of leaves and a persistent rapid clucking sound throughout the forest. There was no consensus on the identity of the source at the time. Later it was revealed that this was one of the alarm calls of an Eastern chipmunk .... specifically an alert for aerial predators. And now you know too.

For a list of species seen, see the table below.



*Jack-in-the-pulpit fruit*



*Maidenhair fern*



*Northern holly fern*



*White baneberry*



*Coral mushroom*

## Species List - The Atrium August 31, 2019

Common Name	Scientific Name	Fauna
False Solomon's seal	<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>	Eastern wood-pewee
American spikenard	<i>Aralia racemosa</i>	Eastern chipmunk
Red-berried elder	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	American toad
Canada mayflower	<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>	Sphinx moth larva ( <i>Ceratomia sp.</i> )
White baneberry	<i>Actaea pachypod</i>	
Red baneberry	<i>Actaea rubra</i>	
Jack-in-the-pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>	
Wild lettuce	<i>Lactuca canadensis</i>	
White lettuce	<i>Prenanthes alba</i>	
Wild leek	<i>Allium tricoccum</i>	
Sweet cicely	<i>Osmorhiza claytoni</i>	
Broad-leaved helleborine	<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	
Heath speedwell	<i>Veronica officinalis</i>	
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	
Fragrant bedstraw	<i>Galium triflorum</i>	
Downy yellow violet	<i>Viola pubescens</i>	
Canada violet	<i>Viola striata</i>	
Spinulose wood fern	<i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	
Lady fern	<i>thyrium filix-femina</i>	
Ostrich fern	<i>Mattheucia struthiopteris</i>	
Long beech fern	<i>Phegopteris connectilis</i>	
Sensitive fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	
Maidenhair fern	<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	
Bulblet fern	<i>Cystopteris bulbifera,</i>	
Northern holly fern	<i>Polystichum lonchitis</i>	
Tufted collybia	<i>Collybia confluens</i>	
Black-footed marasmius	<i>Tetrapyrgos nigripes</i>	
Artist's conk/bracket	<i>Ganoderma applanatum</i>	
Dryad's saddle	<i>Cerioporus squamosus</i>	
Crown-tipped Coral fungus	<i>Artomyces pyxidatus</i>	
Flat oysterling / Flat crep	<i>Crepidotus applanatus</i>	
Chaga	<i>Inonotus obliquus</i>	
Tinder / Hoof fungus	<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>	
Deer / Fawn mushroom	<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>	
Fringed Tubaria / LBM	<i>Tubaria furfuracea</i>	