

FINGER LAKES - NY

TRIP REPORT



Our wonderful Sunrise Birding group at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Finger Lakes - New York - 2025

20th June –24th June 2025

TOUR SUMMARY:

The Sunrise Birding tour to the Eastern Finger Lakes region of Central New York was designed to look for warblers and other birds in the mornings and then to look for Orchids and flowers in the afternoons. This was a completely new concept which actually worked out very well, and we all enjoyed seeing 20 species each of both warblers and orchids. Our arrival had us visit a small stream running into a pond. Here we found our first 3 orchids. Shinning Ladies' Tresses, Green Bog Orchid and Northern Green Orchid. The next full day had us visit several fen, bogs and ponds. We started the day listening to birdsong in the forest before seeing our first warblers, including Pine, Chestnutsided, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green and Mourning Warbler. A visit to a very spongy bog found us White-fringed Orchid, Rose Pogonia, Grass Pink and also the very localized and hard to find Southern Twayblade Orchid. There were also 2 species of sundew, pitcher plants, and this unique place was a highlight for everyone. During the rest of the day, we visited more sites and found Ragged Green-fringed Orchid, Tubercled, Little Club-spur and Broad-leaved Helleborine. We visited the house of a lovely gentleman who took us into his 165-acre backyard where he showed us a beautiful flowering Round-leaved Orchid, and some Early Coralroot, which were mostly in seed. This day added a few more warblers with good views of Black-throated Blue, Nashville, Canada Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush. So, we were up to 14 species of warbler and 14 species of orchid with 9 of these in good bloom. The next full day had us searching for more warblers and we connected with Hooded, Blue-winged, Mourning, American Redstart. Several wetland areas produced Greater Purple-fringed Orchid, Downy Rattlesnake Plantain, and some Pink Lady's Slippers that had gone over. We also saw Red Eft Newts and some cool looking fungi. The finale of the day took us to a rich fen where we had over 350 Showy Lady's Slipper orchids, plus a single Fen Orchis, and several Tall White (Bog Candle) Orchids. Tracy entertained us all by showing how deep the bog was !! and, all in all, we had a fantastic day. On the second-to-last day we visited the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge Complex and were treated to several waterfowl species, Sandhill Cranes, Black Terns, Bald Eagles, but also Cerulean and Prothonotary Warblers! On our final day we got to see a Ragged Green-fringed Orchid that was blooming, and then visited the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It was a wonderful group and we all had fun being guided by Matt, who had worked very hard to find the birds and orchids we were looking for. Many thanks from us all.

HIGHLIGHTS: Either for rarity value, excellent views or simply a group favourite.

- 350+ Showy Lady's Slipper
- Greater Purple-fringed Orchid
- Southern Twayblade Orchid
- Tall White (Bog Candle) Orchid
- Ragged Green-fringed Orchid
- Fen Orchis
- White-fringed Orchid
- Tubercled (Pale Green) Orchid
- Northern Green (North Wind) Orchid
- Green Bog Orchid
- Shinning Ladies' Tresses
- Little Club-spur Orchid
- Early Coralroot
- Broad-leaved Helleborine

- Hooded Warbler
- Prothonotary Warbler
- Cerulean Warbler
- Blue-winged Warbler
- Ovenbird
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Mourning Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Canada Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- Pine Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler
- Northern Waterthrush
- Black-throated Green Warbler

Our tour started with some of the group arriving at Syracuse Airport. Once we were all together, we made our first visit to a calcareous swampy stream, not too far from our accommodation in Cortland, New York.



Our first orchids included some superb Shining Ladies' Tresses and both Northern Green and Green Bog Orchids.



Shining Ladies' Tresses (Spiranthes lucida)



Northern Green Orchid (Platanthera aquilonis)



Green Bog Orchid (Platanthera huronensis)



The Round-leaved Sundew (Drosera rotundifolia) was plentiful at this spot

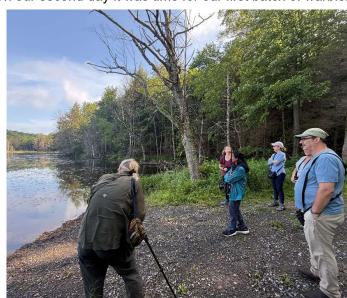
Although our focus was on Orchids and Warblers, as most people know, we are naturalists and we look at everything.



This was a Dot-tailed Whiteface (Leucorrhinia intacta) a bog specialist.



The Red-spotted Admiral ((Limenitis arthemis) showed off feeding on the road side



Birding beside one of numerous lakes



A Chestnut-sided Warbler sings its heart out



Our first Black-and-white Warbler of the tour - photo by Meera Mahadevan

On our second day it was time for our first batch of warblers for the trip, all in spectacular scenery.

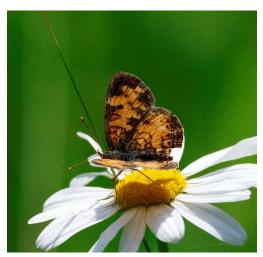
One of the favorites was the Canada Warbler, but the bright Blackburnian also takes some beating.



A nice Black-throated Blue Warbler

An Eastern Tiger Swallowtail





A couple of butterflies - the Long Dash and Northern Crescent

We then moved on to a beautiful floating bog, a new experience for many people.





This wonderful Bog held many rare and fascinating plants. Below is the White-fringed Orchid



Tuberous Grass Pink Orchids were common



The bog was filled with Purple Pitcher plants. The tall flowers stood nearly two feet and the carnivorous pitchers were everywhere.



This was a great place to see Nashville Warblers and this one gave us excellent views.



The Rose Pogonia and Tuberous Grass Pink Orchid





It may not look much, but the Southern Twayblade is an extremely rare and localized orchid.





We visited the house and gardens of Matt's good friend Jerry and were taken to see the only Round-leaved Orchid around.



After our forest walk to the orchid, we found a few fungi and this Salmon Eggs Slime Mold.



While in the forest we found a few Red Eft – the terrestrial stage of the Red-spotted Newt

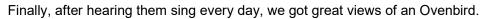


Next was a lovely forest reserve where we saw all sorts of wildlife. The misty forest stream was very atmospheric, while the Greater Purple-fringed Orchid was outstandingly beautiful.



These Downy Rattlesnake Plantain Orchids were not yet in flower, and nearby we got distracted by a very shiny Hemlock Varnish Shelf Fungus.

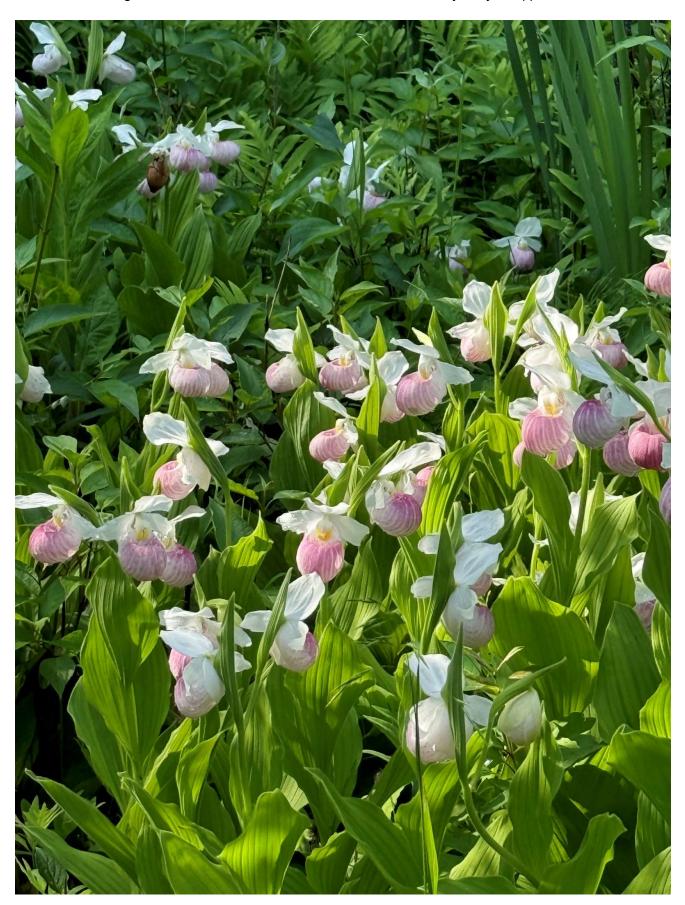






We moved on to a wet meadow where a group of Bog Candle Orchids were found.





It was then time to visit a hidden bog where the spectacle awaiting us was almost breath-taking. Altogether we saw more than 350 of these beautiful Showy Lady's Slipper Orchids. And here are a few more Showy Lady's Slipper Orchids.



A happy group of orchid spotters

Showy Lady's Slipper



More Showy Lady's Slipper Orchids

Mmm! What happens in a bog in New York, stays in a bog in New York.

There were a few dragonflies in the orchid bog, but most people were mesmerised by the orchids.



Female Widow Skimmer

Emerald Spreadwing



Our last day saw us revisit an area to get better views of Hooded Warbler which we were successful.

Our last target warbler was the bright Prothonotary Warbler.

We also got our best views of Common Yellowthroat.





Our visit to Montezuma Wildlife Refuge had many birds including these entertaining Purple Martins.



We also got two groups of Sandhill Cranes totalling 9 birds





After seeing several Ragged Fringed Orchids that were not in bloom, we finally got one that had just started blooming – fabulous!

And so, our fabulous Warbler & Orchid trip was over. With great memories of these and much more with a wonderful group, full of fun and laughter.

WILDLIFE LIST for Finger Lakes 2025

A = Number of species recorded on tour

B = Number of days out of 4 recorded C = Highest daily count

H = Heard Only by Ear (not Merlin) N/C = No Count C=Common

This bird list is in line with IOC WORLD BIRD LIST v(14.2) and as such names may be different than some of the field guides and other taxonomy's – any additional notes see appendix *

Α	BIRD SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME	B	С
1	Canada Goose	Branta canadensis	4	18
2	Trumpeter Swan	Cygnus buccinator	1	4
3	Sandhill Crane	Antigone canadensis	1	10
4	Wood Duck	Aix sponsa	1	6
5	Green-winged Teal	Anas carolinensis	1	12
6	Northern Shoveler	Spatula clypeata	1	4
7	American Wigeon	Mareca americana	1	4
8	Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	1	20
9	Redhead	Aythya americana	1	8
10	Ruddy Duck	Oxyura jamaicensis	1	2
11	Hooded Merganser	Lophodytes cucullatus	1	4
12	American Coot	Fulica atra	1	2
13	Common Gallinule	Gallinula galeata	1	4
14	Pied-billed Grebe	Podilymbus podiceps	1	2
15	Great Egret	Ardea alba	1	2
16	Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias	2	4
17	Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	Colomba livia	4	N/C
18	Mourning Dove	Zenaida macroura	4	20
19	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus americanus	1	Н
20	Chimney Swift	Chaetura pelagica	1	4
21	Killdeer	Charadrius vociferus	1	6
22	Lesser Yellowlegs	Tringa flavipes	1	3
23	Spotted Sandpiper	Actitis macularius	1	1
24	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Archilochus colubris	1	1
25	Black Tern	Chlidonias niger	1	8
26	Double-crested Cormorant	Nannopterum auritum	1	1
27	Turkey Vulture	Cathartes aura	3	12
28	Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	1	2
29	Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	2	2
30	Broad-winged Hawk	Buteo platypterus	1	2 + 1H
31	Red-tailed Hawk	Buteo jamaicensis	2	1
32	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Sphyrapicus varius	3	1 + 2H
33	Hairy Woodpecker	Dryobates villosus	1	1
34	Pileated Woodpecker	Dryocopus pileatus	2	Н
35	Northern Flicker	Colaptes auratus	1	Н
36	Great Crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus crinitus	3	1 + 2H
37	Eastern Kingbird	Tyrannus tyrannus	1	2`
38	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Contopus virens	1	1
39	Alder Flycatcher	Empidonax alnorum	1	1
40	Least Flycatcher	Empidonax minimus	1	Н
41	Eastern Phoebe	Sayornis phoebe	1	2
42	Yellow-throated Vireo	Vireo flavifrons	1	1
43	Blue-headed Vireo	Vireo solitarius	2	1
44	Warbling Vireo	Vireo gilvus	1	Н

45	Red-eyed Vireo	Vireo olivaceus	2	Н
46	Blue Jay	Cyanocitta cristata	4	8
47	American Crow	Corvus brachyrhynchos	4	N/C
48	Northern Raven	Corvus corax	2	2 + 1H
49	Black-capped Chickadee	Poecile atricapillus	2	1
50	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Regulus satrapa	1	Н
51	Purple Martin	Progne subis	1	10
52	Tree Swallow	Tachycineta bicolor	3	10
53	Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	3	15
54	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Sitta canadensis	1	Н
55	White-breasted Nuthatch	Sitta carolinensis	1	Н
56	Brown Creeper	Certhia americana	2	Н
57	House Wren	Troglodytes aedon	2	2
58	Winter Wren	Troglodytes hiemalis	2	H
59	Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	4	N/C
60	Gray Catbird	Dumetella carolinensis	3	4
61	Veery	Catharus fuscescens	4	3 + 3H
62	Swainson's Thrush	Catharus ustulatus	1	H
63	Hermit Thrush	Catharus guttatus	1	H
64	Wood Thrush	Hylocichla mustelina	2	H
65	American Robin	Turdus migratorius	4	25+
66	Cedar Waxwing	Bombycilla cedrorum	4	10
67	House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	2	4
68	American Goldfinch	Spinus tristis	3	4
69	Chipping Sparrow	Spizella passerina	2	1 + 1H
70	Field Sparrow	Spizella pusilla	1	1
70	Dark-eyed Junco	Junco hyemalis	3	2 + 1H
72	Song Sparrow	Melospiza melodia	4	6
73	Eastern Towhee	Pipilo erythrophthalmus	2	1
73	Baltimore Oriole	Icterus galbula	2	1
74	Red-winged Blackbird	Agelaius phoeniceus	4	C
76	Brown-headed Cowbird	Molothrus ater	2	10
70	Common Grackle	Quiscalus quiscula	4	C
78	Ovenbird	Seiurus aurocapilla	4	2 + 3H
	Northern Waterthrush	Parkesia noveboracensis	4	2 - 31
79			1	1
80	Prothonotary Warbler	Protonotaria citrea		
81	Blue-winged Warbler	Vermivora cyanoptera	1	1
82	Black-and-white Warbler	Mniotilta varia	1	
83	Nashville Warbler	Leiothlypis ruficapilla	1	1
84	Mourning Warbler	Geothlypis philadelpia		
85	Common Yellowthroat	Geothlypis trichas	4	2
86	Hooded Warbler	Setophaga citrina	2	1
87	American Redstart	Setophaga ruticilla	1	2
88	Cerulean Warbler	Setophaga tigrina	1	1
89	Magnolia Warbler	Setophaga magnolia	1	1
90	Blackburnian Warbler	Setophaga fusca	1	2
91	Yellow Warbler	Setophaga petechia	2	2
92	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Setophaga pensylvanica	2	4
93	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Setophaga caerulescens	1	1
94	Pine Warbler	Setophaga pinus	1	2
95	Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler	Setophaga coronata	1	2
96	Black-throated Green Warbler	Setophaga virens	1	2
97	Canada Warbler	Cardellina canadensis	1	1

98	Scarlet Tanager	Piranga olivacea	1	Н
99	Northern Cardinal	Cardinalis cardinalis	1	1
100	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Pheucticus ludoviciannus	2	1
101	Indigo Bunting	Passerina cyanea	1	1

А	Orchids and other flora	SCIENTIFIC NAME	В	С
1	Pink Lady's Slipper Orchid	Cypripedium acaule	1Past Bloor	
2	Showy Lady's Slipper Orchid*	Cypripedium reginae	1	400+
3	Yellow Lady's Slipper Orchid	Cypripedium parviflorum	1	3 Young
4	Downy Rattlesnake Plantain Orchid	Goodyera pubescens	1	8
5	White Fringed Orchid*	Platanthera blephariglottis	1	4
6	Club-Spur Orchid	Platanthera clavellata	1	10-15
7	Bog Candle Orchid*	Platanthera dilatata	1	12
8	Pale Green Orchid*	Platanthera flava	1	20-30
9	Greater Purple Fringed Orchid*	Platanthera grandifolia	2	1
10	Ragged Fringed Orchid*	Platanthera lacera	1	2
11	Round-leaved Orchid*	Platanthera macrophylla	1	1
12	Northern Green Orchid*	Platanthera aquilonis	1	10
13	Green Bog Orchid*	Platanthera huronensis	1	4
14	Fen Orchis*	Liparis loeselii	1	1
15	Southern Twayblade Orchid	Neottia bifolia	1	20
16	Early Coralroot Orchid	Corallorhiza trifida	1	Seeded
17	Shinning Ladies' Tresses Orchid	Spiranthes lucida	2	12
18	Broad-leaved Helleborine Orchid	Epipactis helleborine	1	12
19	Rose Pogonia Orchid*	Pogonia ophioglossoides	2	15
20	Tuberous Grass Pink Orchid*	Calopogon tuberosus	1	15
21	Round-leaved Sundew*	Drosera rotundifolia	2	500+
22	Oblong-leaved Sundew	Drosera intermedia	2	50+
23	Pitcher Plant	Sarracenia purpurea	1	100+
24	Forget-me-knot	Myosotis arvensis	4	100+
25	Wood Sorel	Oxalis montana	2	20+
26	Ragged Robin	Silene flos-cuculi	3	100+
27	Blue Flag Iris	Iris versicolor	2	20+
28	Blue-eyed Grass	Sisyrinchium albidum	4	20+
29	Speedwell	Veronica officinalis	4	20+
30	Golden Ragwort	Packera aurea	4	30+
31	Eastern Hemlock	Tsuga canadensis	4	100+
32	Black Spruce	Picea mariana	4	50+
33	Red Spruce	Picea rubens	4	50+
34	Tamarack	Larix laricina	3	100+
35	Sphagnum Moss	Sphagnum sp.	2	1000s

Α	Mammals	SCIENTIFIC NAME	В	С
1	White-tailed Deer	Odocoileus virginianus	4	10
2	Woodchuck	Marmota monax	4	2
3	Red Squirrel	Tamiasciurus hudsonicus	4	6
4	Eastern Gray Squirrel	Sciurus carolinensis	3	4
5	Eastern Chipmunk	Tamias striatus	4	2
6	Eastern Cottontail	Sylvilagus floridanus	2	2

А	Reptiles and Amphibians	SCIENTIFIC NAME	В	С
1	Garter Snake	Thamnophis sirtalis	1	1
2	Milk Snake	Lampropeltis triangulum	1	2
3	Ring-necked Snake	Diadophis punctatus	1	7
4	Snapping Turtle	Chelydra serpentina	2	2
5	Red Eft	Notophthalmus viridescens	2	8
6	Green Frog	Lithobates clamitans	1	1

А	Butterflies	SCIENTIFIC NAME	B	С
1	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	Papilio glaucus	3	4
2	Canadian Tiger Swallowtail	Papilio canadensis	2	4
3	Red-spotted Admiral	Limenitis arthemis	2	3
4	American Silver-bordered Fritillary	Boloria myrina	1	1
5	Northern Crescent	Phyciodes cocyta	2	5
6	Clouded Sulphur	Colias vitabunda	1	6
7	Long Dash Skipper	Polites mystic	1	1

А	Moths - there were quite a few more than recorded here	SCIENTIFIC NAME	В	С
1	Polyphemus Moth	Antheraea polyphemus	2	1
2	Elm Sphinx	Ceratomia amyntor	1	1
3	Waved Sphinx	Ceratomia undulosa	1	1
4	Virginia Creeper Sphinx	Darapsa myron	2	1
5	Northern Pine Shinx	Lapara bombycoides	1	1
6	Small-eyed Sphinx	Paonias myops	1	1
7	Peppered Moth	Biston betularia	2	1
8	Leconte's Haploa	Haploa lecontei	1	1
9	Eight-spotted Forester Moth	Alypia octomaculata	1	1
10	Connected Looper Moth	Plusia contexta	1	1
11	Beautiful Wood-Nymph Moth	Eudryas grata	1	1
12	Joyful Virbia Moth	Virbia laeta	1	1
13	White-dotted Prominent	Nadata gibbosa	2	2
14	Harnessed Tiger Moth	Apantesis phalerata	1	1
15	Little Virgin Tiger Moth	Apantesis virguncula	1	1
16	Cloudy Arches	Polia imbrifera	1	1
17	Fluid Arches	Morrisonia latex	1	1
18	Hitched Arches	Melanchra adjuncta	1	1
19	Common Spring Moth	Heliomata cycladata	1	1
20	American Oak Beauty	Phaeoura quernaria	1	1

А	Dragonflies (Odonata)	SCIENTIFIC NAME	В	С
1	Dot-tailed Whiteface	Leucorrhinia intacta	1	2
2	Swamp Darner	Epiaeschna heros	1	1
3	Common Green Darner	Anax junius	1	2
4	Eastern Pondhawk	Erythemis simplicicollis	1	3
5	Common Whitetail	Plathemis lydia	1	2
6	Familiar Bluet	Enallagma civile	2	10+
7	Eastern Red Damselfly	Amphiagrion saucium	1	1
8	Emerald Spreadwing	Lestes dryas	1	1

А	Fungi	SCIENTIFIC NAME	В	С
1	Hemlock Varnish Shelf	Ganoderma tsugae	1	5
2	Dead Moll's Fingers	Xylaria longipes	1	1
3	Yellowleg Bonnet	Mycena epipterygia	1	3
4	Dryad's Saddle	Cerioporus squamosus	1	10
5	Hoof Fungus	Fomes fomentarius	1	1
6	Yellow Patches	Amanita flavocinia	1	1
7	Coral Tooth Fungus	Hericium coralloides	1	4
8	Salmon Eggs Slime Mold	Hemitrichia decipiens	1	20

*Appendices – note number are is in line with row number in the orchid and flora list.

The following have different names depending which authority or web-site you look at.

1. Pink Lady's Slipper (Cypripedium acaule) – also known as Moccasin Flower

2. Showy Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*) – also known as Pink-and-white Lady's Slipper, or the Queen's Lady's Slipper

5. White Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera blephariglottis*) – also known as White Fringed Orchis, or White Fringed Bog Orchid.

6. Club-Spur Orchid (*Platanthera clavellate*) – also known as Small Green Wood Orchid, Little Club-spur Orchid, Little Club-Spur Bog Orchid.

7. Bog Candle (*Platanthera dilatata*) – also known as Tall White Bog Orchid, White Bog Orchid and Boreal Bog Orchid.

8. Pale Green Orchid (*Platanthera flava*) – also known as Northern Tubercled Bog Orchid, or Tubercled Orchid with subspecies (Platanthera flava herbiola)

9. Greater Purple Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera grandifolia*) – also known as Greater Purple Fringed Bog-Orchid.

10. Ragged Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera lacera*) – also known as Ragged Green Fringed Orchid or Green Fringed Bog Orchid.

11. Round-leaved Orchid (*Platanthera macrophylla*) – also known as Large-leaved Bog Orchid or Large Round-leaved Orchid.

12. Northern Green Orchid (*Platanthera aquilonis*) – also known as North Wind Bog Orchid.

13. Green Bog Orchid (*Platanthera huronensis*) – also known as Tall Green Bog Orchid, Huron Green Orchid or Lake Huron Bog Green Orchid.

14. Fen Orchis (*Liparis loeselii*) – also known as Fen Orchid, Loesel's Twayblade, Loesel's Widelipped Orchid, Yellow Widelip Orchid or Bog Twayblade.

18. Rose Pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*) – also known as Snakeshead Orchid or Adder's Tongue.

19. Tuberous Grass Pink (Calopogon tuberosus) – also known as Grass Pink.

22. Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*) – also known as Oblong-leaved Sundew, Spoonleaf Sundew, or Spatulate-leaved Sundew.

Here are just a few additional photos



Dead Moll's Fingers



Coral Tooth Fungus



This was the wonderful Polyphemus Moth



Beautiful Wood-Nymph



Virginia Creeper Sphinx