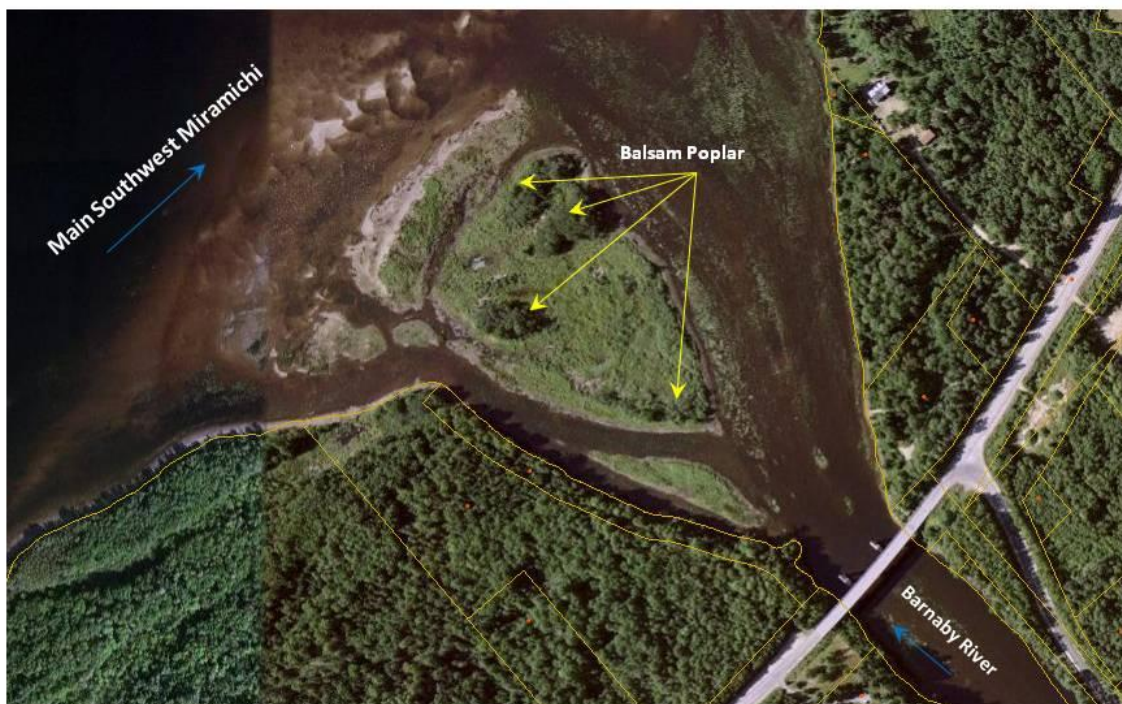


Islands at the Mouth of Barnaby River

On Sunday, March 27, I visited two of the smaller islands at the mouth of the Barnaby River. It was a beautiful sunny day with a wind from the southwest. The trees on the shore protected me from the wind until I got to the outer limits where the wind was blowing freely down the river. In anticipation of this I had stuffed a warmer hat in my pack but it wasn't needed.

The purpose of this trip was to see what tree species and shrubs were growing on the large island. However there were also some dead flowering plants visible in places where the snow had melted.



The most common tree was Balsam Poplar growing in small patches. Mixed in with the Poplars were small amounts of White Birch, Grey Birch, Red Maple and American Elm. A Black Ash was found in the northeastern corner of the larger island. I was fooled into thinking it was White Ash by the closeness of the lateral terminal buds to the terminal bud but the shape of the leaf scar is definitely that of Black Ash.



Balsam Poplar buds



White Birch on right overtopping the Balsam Poplar



Red Maple in centre



American Elm



Black Ash seeds



Black Ash leaf scar

Shrubs I saw included Speckled Alder, two Willows, Northern Holly, Meadow-sweet, Sweet Gale and Wild Rose.



Meadow-sweet



Northern Holly in the centre and Willows with yellow stems in the foreground and background

This is a rich alluvial habitat where spring ephemerals such as Spring Beauty, Yellow Violet, Blue Cohosh and Trout Lily may be present. It will be an interesting site to visit near the end of May. Dwarf Ginseng and Wild Oats are also possibilities as both are well established on the banks of Saunders' Brook which is the first tributary on the south side of the river.



Spring Beauty



Yellow Violet



Blue Cohosh



Trout Lily

Jim Saunders, Miramichi Naturalists' Club
March 30, 2016