

Newport Forest January 31 2005 1:05 - 3:30 pm

Weather: prec. 63 mm; clear, calm, LM 4 C; FCF 3 C

Purpose: to measure precipitation & feed animals

Participants: Kee

The gate was frozen shut, blocked by heavy drifting snow, so I climbed the adjacent fence, throwing my field pack and a gargage bag with 40 lb of feed over the fence before me. On the way in I noticed some rather large coyote tracks, as well as a cottontail and tracks of a house cat. Some large deer had come up from the creek, then followed the road before veering off over the UM.

The walk to the trailer was rather tiring so, when I got there, I turned on the stove and rested in the breakfast nook while the trailer warmed up.

I filled the LM deer feeder with 125 lbs of shelled corn and scattered half a bag of rabbit food under the trailer. Both bird feeding trays got filled. I noted that the suet has all been eaten. Finally, I put half a bag of cat kibble out in the nook, hoping that the weather would be just warm enough to attract our raccoon friends.

The snow bucket was quite heavy. When I got it into the trailer, I scooped off all the snow from the upper part, placing it in a frying pan to melt it. (2 cm when I poured it back into the bucket) The rest of the precipitation was solid, clear ice which, I thought, must have originally fallen as rain. I measured between 7 and 7.5 cm depth for this deposit, but took the measurement at 7 cm, to allow for the expansion of water in turning to ice. This gave me 9 cm of precipitation which corrected to 63 mm, a nice start to the new year.

There were very few birds around, either owing to the recnt cold or perhaps with no feed for a month, they had given up on us. In fact I saw only a female red-belly and heard a few chickadees.