

Newport Forest

Sunday April 24 2005

3:40 - 5:25 pm

**Weather:** prec. 50 mm (!); ovcst/snowing; NW < 30 kmh; LM 0 C; FCF 0 C

**Purpose:** to check property

**Participants:** Kee

Because of all the recent rain (and snow!) I parked the car outside the gate and walked in. As I came abreast of the Gallery Forest, a large buck saw me about the same time I saw him. (I was walking quietly.) What a graceful animal. Since I hadn't been this close to a deer in a few years, I could see the white tail go up like a flag as the deer took off through the GF. The tail is much larger than I thought - a good two feet! I was thrilled to see the rain gauge so full. Today's 50 mm, added to the 23 mm that fell early in the month takes us over quota, so I am less obsessed with drought for the time being. I noted that the frog chorus had stopped. (I can therefore guess that the cutoff temperature is between 2.5 and 0 degrees C.)

I filled the three seed feeders with the remaining seed and scraped the snow off the new deck. Then I went down to inspect Fleming Creek. Although the level is about two feet higher than normal, it's still two feet below the banks when I have to worry once more about the two Tulip Trees planted down by the bridge. (What a rough time they've had!) The water is very brown with runoff and moving quickly. With all that energy, it was not surprising to see how much new bank had been cut. I walked the new FC trail, clearing fallen branches as I went. I was amazed to see, as I rounded a bend in the creek, that a perfectly straight, rather large log, free of limbs, had fallen across the creek at a perfect, 90-degree angle. Moreover the ends were both firmly wedged into their respective banks. An act of God, as it were. I wonder if the log will survive the rainy season and not get swept away by another flood.

At present, the LM is about 70% snow covered (less than an inch of wet snow), while the wooded areas are about 20 %. I was on the property too short a time to see many birds - plus the wind-driven snow did little to encourage them:

American Robin (GF); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (GF); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Song Sparrow (LM); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

**Phenology:** last snow?