

Newport Forest

Wednesday February 8 2006

2:30 - 5:10pm

Weather: prec. 63 mm; clear; calm; LM -5 C; FCF -4 C.

Purpose: to check property elements

Participants: Kee

The property as a whole had a fairly thin snow cover, about 5 cm in the meadow areas. The snowplow had piled roadside snow against the gate, making it impossible to open, so I walked in, seeing both deer and coyote tracks on the road or crossing it. The lower meadow had a strange appearance, like a faerie kingdom dotted with their castles, fanciful affairs built over bushes of rose and blackcap. The ground under the snow proved to be spongy and wet, certainly not frozen, despite the run of cold nights we've had lately.

I was delighted to see so much water and ice in the new snow gauge (a maple syrup bucket). After putting out one tray's worth of birdseed, I brought the bucket in to heat on the stove, while I used calculus to develop a formula relating water depth to actual rainfall. It's not easy doing calculus under these circumstances, but my final formula gave the reasonable answer this time of 63mm, a Gift!

A short trip on the FCT revealed some new developments: a recent run of high water in the creek had scoured both banks up to 2 m above the lower terrace, deer had nipped both TTs severely, the log bridge had rolled somewhat in the last high water episode, so that the decking now made an angle of 30 degrees with the horizontal, the log nevertheless still in the same position as before. It may even have been rotating like a waterwheel at some point!

I was gratified only by the many animals, including a wild turkey, that had used the trail recently.

Birds:

Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wild Turkey (FCT/GF)