Newport Forest Wednesday March 12 2:35 - 5:20 pm

**weather:** prec. 35 mm; RH 69 %; BP 98.8 kPa; sn/cld; calm; LM 4 C

**purpose:** feed animals, check property

**participants:** Kee

The gate was hard to open against what I thought was about 10 cm of powder snow, but when I drove onto the track, I realized I had made a mistake. The snow was nearly “solid” and forced the van to slow. When I tried to speed up, the van began to slew both right and left. When I got to the top of “Dedication Hill,” I brought the van to a halt on the somewhat thinner snow there.

I walked to the trailer, opened up, put out birdseed in 3 feeders, along with suet in the Nook. At first there were no birds around, so I thought I would pish & whistle a bit. The effect was quite dramatic, with chickadees flying in from various directions, then a sparrow, some Juncos, and so on. Suddenly a Robin flew in! I witnessed a male and female Cardinal involved in chase behaviour and this made me think the birds knew something we didn’t.

I walked the TRT as far as Cam #2, where I changed the image card and installed fresh batteries. Along the way I saw tracks mainly of deer, squirrels and Cottontail Rabbits, but no Wild Turkeys or any other large-ish animals. I saw some Winter Stoneflies crawling over the snow along the Bluffs portion of the TRT.

The river has dropped about a metre since my last visit, but it still covers the beach. The creek is almost back to normal levels; I could hear the rapids from the trailer once again. Getting out was dicey, with the mere operation of turning the van around without getting stuck taking about half an hour.

**birds:** American Robin (GF); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Blue Jay (LM); Canada Goose (TR); Dark-eyed Junco (GF); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Mallard (TR); Northern Cardinal (LM); Red-bellied Woodpecker (GF); White-breasted Nuthatch (GF)

**phenology:** first Winter Stoneflies, first Robin  (still no ice on TR & FC)