

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)