

**Newport Forest** Saturday December 27 2008 2:40 - 4:45 pm

**Weather:** prc. 146 mm; RH 85%; BP 98.37 kP; ovcast; S 5-15 km/h; T 13° C

**Purpose:** Christmas bird count

**Participants:** Pat, Kee

Coming in, we got word that the West Elgin Naturalists were not having a great birding day. Nor did we. In spite of warmish temperatures and light winds, few birds were out, our total count running to a mere 49 individuals: (total observing time was less than two hours)

<b>species</b>	<b>number</b>
American Crow	29
Black-capped Chickadee	4
Canada Goose	1
Dark-eyed Junco	5
Downy Woodpecker	2
Hairy Woodpecker	1
Northern Cardinal	1
Tufted Titmouse	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	5

Our “best bird” was a Tufted Titmouse, a bird we see only a few times every year.

We walked into the property carrying our meagre supplies, Pat making a side trip to the East Ravine, normally a habitat rich in birds. I took the weather, put out ample birdseed, and checked all three cameras, changing the image cards and the batteries (in two of them). We noted that the creek was once more in flood (but still running), spilling over its banks and covering about half the FCF flood plain. The vernal ponds are already nearly full and will undoubtedly freeze over in the days ahead. Several of them sported a modest algal bloom, a teaser for the coming spring.

When we got home and examined the cards, we were pleased to see more deer than ever, including a doe and her yearling, caught by Cam 1 and Cam 2 ! We also noted that total precipitation had reached the 1208 mm mark, a nine-year record, at least. Snow coverage in the open was about 10%.

## **IMAGES**



Algal “bloom” in Vernal Pond A