

## At Last Some Snow !

Newport Forest Thursday February 11 2010 2:40 - 6:20 pm

weather: prec. 15 mm; RH 68%; BP 98.7 kPa; calm; sn/cld; T - 1° C  
purpose: to check property  
participants: Kee

In spite of warnings that I might not be able to get into the property, I came anyway, trusting in my new Hankook (Korean) snow tires with enlarged tread blocks. The gate was piled up with freshly plowed snow, so I had to dig around it in order to get it open. The Upper Meadow (UM) was covered by about 9" of snow, but the Windstar ate it for dessert, arriving at the trailer after an eerily muffled ride. Average snow depth around the trailer was 16.5 cm, a later measurement in the woods yielding 22 cm. Although I arrived under a gloomy overcast, the sky began to break up and, within an hour, all was bright and sunny.

It took quite a while before any birds showed up at the replenished feeders. As if to make up for this, I had one somewhat unusual visitor, an American Tree Sparrow, complete with rufous cap and ebony stickpin.

I walked to the river, changing the trail cam card as I went. A Pileated Woodpecker shrieked several times as I walked through the thick snow on Edgar's Trail and, when I got to the river, I was treated to an unusual sight that a Sibley would be sure to add to his catalogue of bird behaviour: A flock of Wild Turkeys flew across the river, one at a time, at 10-second intervals. There would come a "gobble-gobble-cluck-cluck" sound (as if to say, "Okay, Bill here: It's my turn now!") and then a flap of mighty wings as another great bird soars across the river to the north side, where the flock is reassembling.

I took a wee meal in the trailer, then packed up to leave, having earlier turned the van around and prepared a takeoff track for it. (not needed today, but sometimes necessary to develop what I call "escape velocity.") Almost as soon as I gained the UM, three deer raced for their lives across the track ahead of me, heading for the East Ravine. I took it as a "good-bye."

birds: (5)

American Tree Sparrow (Tr); Black-capped Chickadee (Tr); Pileated Woodpecker (EW); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr); Wild Turkey (TR)

new species: (still completing Marshall's list)

'Diamond-backed Spittlebug' *Lepryonia quadrangularis* NF SM J130/09  
Two-spotted Tree Cricket *Neoxabea bipunctata* NF SM J130/09  
thick-headed fly *Zodion* sp NF SM J130/09

## IMAGES:

(click on image to enlarge)



Stealth Cam 02/06/2010 22:42:58 7F

*Coyote visits The Hole last Saturday night, possibly attracted by smell of sheep's head, directly to its right.*

(click on image to enlarge)



Stealth Cam 02/09/2010 19:36:29 18F

*Deer checks post for scent-mail last Tuesday night. The Hole was also visited by deer at 8:05, 8:07, and 8:20 this (Thursday) morning.*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Wild Turkey flies across river: elongated black shape to left of small tree in foreground*

*(click on image to enlarge)*



*Fleming Creek now iced over under a picturesque blanket of new snow*