

Dec. 22, 1963

Saw James and I traversed Rock Creek from a point on west side of sec 8, T14S and R.18E where bridge crosses road, to a point on north edge of Sec. 19, T13S, R19E where bridge crosses Creek (main Clinton highway). The entire trip, ^{13.2 miles} was in creek bottom on frozen surface of creek or on dry intermittent section of creek bottom. Left bridge 10:35 A.M. Temp 0°F, sun skinning and sky clear, slight wind from N. Will keep complete record of observations. As is true with this kind of trip, it is not possible to check every bird and as a result there will be birds not identified, as some of the small sparrows, and many numbers are approximates. Snow in protected places, some on ice. 10:40 A.M. muskrat activity, trails follow along edge of ice and holes directly above ice are used. Ice completely sealing river and no water showing. Ice as thick as 2 or 3 feet. Considerable bird activity in localized area, especially on sunlit side of creek, including 1 redtail hawk, 16 slate-colored juncos and some Oregon juncos, 3 chickadees and 2 mourning doves. 10:40 5 beaver holes at and above water level. These holes were maintained as open throughfares before solid ice formed. At present the openings are thick clear ice with parts of freshly eaten stems and bark frozen in the solid ice at entrance. Tracks show that the upper holes had been used during a temporary thaw which left raised tracks on the ice of the creek. These slush marks refroze and marked their wandering up & down the creek. The last two weeks have been below freezing, some temps to -4 or 5° below 0. There was apparently one day in which the ice thawed enough to make slush for recording of foot imprints (rabbit, fox, coyote, beaver, muskrat). As far as I could tell the beaver were inactive on this day. In some area, which is represented by wide, long & deep creek bed with intermittent connections, noted 4 blue jays, 3 mourning doves, 8 juncos, 6 cardinals, 1 downy woodpecker, 1 red-bellied woodpecker, and 2 golden crowned kinglet. Tracks of cottontail rabbit, almost completely covered snow on ice, also tracks of coyote & fox. 10:45 end of cliffs on N side. 1 great horned owl. 10:50 beaver tracks on snow and ice, now at south side of valley. 10:52 beaver tracks on snow & ice 10:53 beaver tracks. 10:58 cliffs on south side of valley. wooden gate crosses creek.