

## **Martens in the Roof and Bats in my Belfry**

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**Date :** March 16, 2017



Officially, this post is about the pine marten that has been determined to share our cabin with us, but in actuality, it's more about all those little things that have been happening in my life, and my head, since my last post, way back in December – the bats in my belfry, so to say.

It's hard to believe that it's March already – so much and so little have happened since December:

- What a winter! Snow ... torrential rain ... snow ... etc. *ad nauseam*. Seriously, I've gone into hibernation. The weather has been so unpleasant that we've been staying at the cabin for two month stints between town trips for groceries. We had to do wood resupply trips twice this winter, when we thought originally that we'd had enough wood last fall to keep us going until spring. On a positive note, we've made it through the winter without any major problems, just a real case of the blahs.
- Imbolc has passed, and I'm another year older (did I say that?). I had a surprise birthday party up at the neighbors – I haven't done something like that in years! But where is spring? Where are the snow drops?
- We made a trip into town to finally sort out the last of my father's estate – it's taken three years. If you love the people you might leave behind, make a will! My father didn't, and this was not a good thing for my mother. At least this is one more task in my life that I can happily say is finally over.
- We built another, higher dam on our house creek. This has created a good sized pond, which we hope will keep us supplied with gravity-fed water until well into the summer. Our goal is to build a series of dams along both creeks, pretending to be beavers, and thus create a greater water reserve on the property. This might prevent us from going dry in the summer.
- Making contact ... maybe not so well. I've reached out to a lot of people over the last year or so. Most either respond once, or not at all. Thank you to those friends who have remained in touch with us! Your continued friendship, support, and good humor are a great boon to us. The ones who haven't remind me of how isolated and insular most people in today's world have become. It makes me very sad.
- I thought I could avoid Vancouver for ever ... but it looks like I will be making two trips in the next month – once to say goodbye to an old friend and mentor, and one to be honored for surviving as a biologist for as long as I have. Does this make me feel old, or what?
- So, while it rained, snowed, slushed, and iced outside, I've been writing. I'm concurrently working on two book ideas – one is a kind of philosophical memoir of our adventures in the past three years and the other is an old sci fi plot that I had on my shelf from years ago. Looks like the fiction idea is winning the race ... I'll post more tidbits when it's further along.
- Oh, yes ... the pine marten. It's a really cute little critter, but absolutely stubborn beyond all comprehension. We didn't get our soffits installed last year, and the little %#\$@?? is crawling into the roof insulation through the air venting spaces. We've chased it, hit it, scared it, and blocked all the vents we can (with ice all around and snow on the roof). Now it has to climb almost to the peak to get in, some 18+ feet, but we're not sure we've won the battle. Anyways, last trip to town, we purchased a live trap, which is standing by baited with (now) rotting sardines – and the marten seems to have left. I'll get some pics if we catch it, and post those in another entry.

And that's all for the bats in my belfry (not so sure about the marten in my roof).