

## Montgomery Town, Castle and surroundings

18 August 2015

Organizer Lizzie Beare

In a month of alternating rain and sun we were lucky enough on this Tuesday to have a perfect day of sunshine without excessive heat and the occasional light breeze. 25 members met at the recently opened Monty Brewery Visitor Centre. Here we sat outside to eat our lunch and decide who was going on which walk. Jeny Heard led the long walk, some 4-5 miles and they set off from the castle to take in the surrounding farmland towards Llandyssil and then south via Castel y Gwynt and back over Town Hill where the County War memorial is situated and to the Castle. This group did some in depth botany recording. Jeny noted the following butterflies Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Small White, Large White, Painted Lady, Common Blue, Small Copper, Small Skipper, Comma, Meadow Brown and Peacock. Also seen: Shieldbug- *Pentaloma rufipas* (Forest Bug/ Red-legged Shieldbug) and Dusky Puffball- *Lycoperdon nigrevcens*. Mike Backhouse walked part of Offa's Dyke in search of birds - see list of end of report. Those who decided to take the short walk needed first to negotiate a tangle of bramble, nettle, raspberry and dog's mercury before tackling the climb through the woods almost straight up towards the castle - a short but challenging route. Richard and Sue Swindells found Tunbridge Green on wood stained by the fungus *Chlorociboria aeruginascens* - Green Elf Cup.

At the castle we spotted Wallflowers, Great Mullein, Pellitory of the Wall, Harebells, Wall rue and Ivy-leaved toadflax making their home in the lime mortar of the walls. The views were superb and the air so clear Sylvia was able to spot Mike making his way along Offa's Dyke off to the NE. A leisurely half-hour was spent up here enjoying the sun and surroundings. A short walk down the east side of the hill took us via the original gaol whose walls sported plenty of Rustyback fern and on into the town where the delights of The Bell Museum, an Art Exhibition, the new Cloverlands model car museum and Bunnery were enjoyed by several members. The route to the Activity Centre led down Broad Street where the fine Georgian facades give Montgomery its unique look, enhanced by the elegant manicured hornbeams in large square tubs. To suppress weeds the tubs are planted with clover which is kept neatly grazed by Bob Jones's pet rabbits. Tea at the Activity Centre was provided by three generations of the same family, Christine Williams, her daughter Shelley and grand-daughter Katie, and a splendid tea it was with a wide variety of sandwiches, biscuits, cakes and raw vegetable sticks with a dip and very welcome fresh brewed tea. The following day it rained quite hard for most of the day.!

### Birds seen:

Mute swan	Cygnus olor
Red kite	Milvus milvus
Common buzzard	Buteo buteo
Common kestrel	Falco tinnunculus
Stock pigeon	Columba oenas
Common wood pigeon	Columba palumbus
Great spotted woodpecker	Dendrocopos major
Barn swallow	Hirundo rustica
House martin	Delichon urbicum
Winter wren	Troglodytes troglodytes
European robin	Erithacus rubecula
Common chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita
Long-tailed tit	Aegithalos caudatus
Blue tit	Cyanistes caeruleus
Black-billed magpie	Pica pica
Eurasian jackdaw	Corvus monedula
Carrion Crow	Corvus corone
Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs

European goldfinch  
Common linnet  
Common bullfinch

Mistle Thrush

Carduelis carduelis  
Carduelis cannabina  
Pyrrhula pyrrhula  
Mike backhouse  
Turdus visciorus  
Jeny Heard