

Field Society trip to Rhoslan, Rhos y Brithdir, near Llanfyllin, June 23rd 2014

Leader, Sue Bosson

On one of the hottest and sunniest days of the summer around 20 members found shelter under the fruit trees to have their picnic lunch in Simon and Anne Spencer's garden before taking a leisurely stroll through the pasture which Simon told us had not been extensively managed or treated with chemicals for as long as he was aware of.

The fields are part of the 8 acre smallholding sitting below Allt tair Ffynnon, known locally as the Devil's Rib Cage. Managed by Dexter cattle and Black Mountain sheep and timed to allow butterflies and flowers to grow and to set seed, but on this day empty, it wasn't long before botanists were down in the grass identifying the many species of plants. Simon had his net with him and in no time had caught a Dark Green Fritillary butterfly to show us. Looking like any other fritillary on the top but with dark green patterning on the under wing it was good to see as was the Common Blue butterfly also.

More than 70 different plants were identified and thank you to all who submitted lists. These included Common and Heath Spotted Orchids as well as Broad Leaved Helleborine. More specials were Changing Forget me not, Devil's bit scabious, Pignut and Quaking grass, as well as many other grass, rush and sedge species.

Some of us visited the vegetable garden by which Simon and Anne are able to be self sufficient with fruit and vegetables as well as poultry, pigs, sheep and cattle. Others ventured down the nearby lane which is a typical, little used beautiful place to be and leads to a footpath below the Allt tair Ffynnon. Birders came back with a small list including Blackbird, Blue Tit, Buzzard, Carrion crow, Chaffinch, Dunnock, Goldfinch, House sparrow, Jackdaw, Mistle thrush, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Robin, Starling, Stock dove, Swallow, Treecreeper with fledglings, Wood pigeon and Wren.

The afternoon finished with a delicious tea provided by Anne and served in the conservatory but one again eaten outside in the lovely sunshine. This was one of the most relaxing and informal days out this year. Where were you all?