**St. Micheal’s and All Angels, All Stretton SO462958**

**A Wildlife Survey by Strettons Area Community Wildlife Group (SACWG)**

Report by Caroline Uff

Image: C.Uff

**Introduction**

St Michael’s and All Angels is situated on the edge of All Stretton. It is bounded on the south side by the Shrewsbury Road and to the north by the Long Mynd SSSI. It is quite shady and mostly on steep ground with exposed rock behind the church. A previous survey of the churchyard was carried out in 1998 by J.Thompson.

**Survey details**

On 17/5/2014 members of SACWG assessed the site.

**Ground Flora**: Species were recorded from a general walkover. Ferns were also identified.

**Trees**: The existing map from 1998 was checked and updated if necessary.

**Mammals**: A baited hedgehog tunnel was left for two nights to collect mammal footprints. Tracks and signs of other mammals were also recorded. Bats were not assessed.

**Birds**: Any birds seen or heard within churchyard were recorded. Those seen in flight were only recorded if it seemed likely they were using the site. Signs of nesting were noted.

**Invertebrates**: Any species encountered within the churchyard were identified as far as possible. Seep nets and beating trays were used.

**Reptile mats**: Two mats (felt roofing tiles) were left *in situ* for approx. 1 month around the period of the visit to act as refuges for reptiles.

**Results and comments**

In all 90 species were recorded and summarised below – the full list is given at the end.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **# Species recorded** | **Comments** |
| **Ground Flora** | **44** | Little change since 1998. The grassland here is of no special importance, but the flora includes some nice spring woodland species such as bluebell and primrose as well as cuckoo flower, food plant of the orange tip butterfly. The bare rock has good amounts of the aptly named navelwort. |
| **Trees** | **11** | Trees recorded in 1998 were still present. Old laburnum rich hedges are a feature of local interest. Despite its poisonous nature many hedges were planted with laburnum about 150 years ago in south- west Shropshire and parts of Wales, but the reason is open to debate. |
| **Birds** | **11** |  |
| **Invertebrates** | **22** | Of particular note was the striking soldier beetle, *Cantharis obscura*. It is rare in Britain, designated ‘Nationally Scarce’ and has its stronghold in the Lake District as it favours wooded hillsides. However several recent records, including this, have confirmed that there is also a population in the Shropshire Hills. |
| **Mammals** | **1** | Mouse and cat footprints were picked up together in the mammal tunnel! |
| **Reptiles** | **1** | A slow worm was found. These shy and increasingly uncommon reptiles are in fact legless lizards rather than snakes. They do however often find a welcome refuge in churchyards. They are a legally protected species. |

Image: C.Uff

Navelwort growing on the rocks (left)

Slow worm (above) and the soldier beetle *Cantharis obscura* (right) were worthy of note.

Image: C.Uff

Image: G.Wenman

The following sketch map by John Thompson in 1998 is still a good representation of the plants in the churchyard and the management suggestions in John’s report remain relevant today. The hedge along the eastern boundary is difficult to manage using traditional methods such as laying, but it may be possible to coppice and gap up if desired.

Plants recorded 2014 (English names used where possible)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Plant name** |
| Flowers | Alkanet, green |
| Flowers | Bluebell |
| Flowers | Bramble |
| Flowers | Buttercup, bulbous |
| Flowers | Buttercup, creeping |
| Flowers | Celandine, greater |
| Flowers | Celandine, lesser |
| Flowers | Cleavers |
| Flowers | Chickweed, common  |
| Flowers | Crane's-bill, shining |
| Flowers | Dandelions |
| Flowers | Field speedwell |
| Flowers | Field/wood forget-me-not |
| Flowers | Foxglove |
| Flowers | Garlic mustard |
| Flowers | Herb-Robert |
| Flowers | Himalayan Balsam |
| Flowers | Hogweed |
| Flowers | Ivy |
| Flowers | Lady's smock |
| Flowers | Lamb's Lettuce |
| Flowers | Lord's-and-ladies |
| Flowers | Navelwort |
| Flowers | Nipplewort |
| Flowers | Primrose |
| Flowers | Ragwort |
| Flowers | Ramsons |
| Flowers | Speedwell, slender |
| Flowers | Solomon's seal |
| Flowers | Sorrel, common |
| Flowers | Speedwell, germander  |
| Flowers | Stinging nettle |
| Flowers | Stitchwort, lesser |
| Flowers | Strawberry, barren |
| Flowers | Tutsan |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Plant name** |
| Flowers | Vetch, common |
| Flowers | Wavy bittercress |
| Flowers | Wild strawberry |
| Flowers | Willowherb, rosebay |
| Flowers | Wood avens |
| Flowers | Wood sage |
| Ferns | Buckler-fern, broad |
| Ferns | Male fern |
| Trees and Shrubs | Ash |
| Trees and Shrubs | Crab Apple |
| Trees and Shrubs | Deodar |
| Trees and Shrubs | Holly |
| Trees and Shrubs | Laburnum |
| Trees and Shrubs | Laurel, Cherry |
| Trees and Shrubs | Lilac |
| Trees and Shrubs | Oak |
| Trees and Shrubs | Ornamental cherry |
| Trees and Shrubs | Rowan |
| Trees and Shrubs | Yew |

Animals recorded 2014 (English names used where possible)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Animal name** |
| Bird | Blackbird |
| Bird | Blue tit |
| Bird | Carrion crow |
| Bird | Chaffinch |
| Bird | Collared Dove |
| Bird | Goldfinch |
| Bird | Great tit |
| Bird | Robin |
| Bird | Stock Dove |
| Bird | Wood pigeon |
| Bird | Wren |
| Mammal | mouse/vole |
| Reptile | Slowworm |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | ladybird, 7-spot  |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | soldier beetle*, Cantharis cryptica* |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | soldier beetle, *Cantharis obscura* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | Shieldbug, green  |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | mason bee, *Osmia laeiania* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | ant, *Myrmica rubra* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | bumblebee, buff-tailed  |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | Honey Bee |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | mason bee, *Osmia bicornis* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | bumblebee, white-tailed  |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | micromoth, *Adela reamuealla* |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | moth, brown silver-lines |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | moth, common carpet |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | moth, common marbled carpet |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, green hairstreak |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, large white |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, orange tip |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | moth, speckled yellow |
| Snail | snail, *Cepaea nemoralis* |
| Snail | snail, common garden |
| Snail | snail, glass (probably more than one sp) |
| Snail | snail, white lipped garden |