**St. James’ Church, Cardington SO506951**

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

Report by Caroline Uff



**Introduction**

St. James’ Church is situated in the centre of the rural village of Cardington, bounded by roads and private houses.

**Survey details**

On 11th July,2014, members of SACWG were joined by Members of Caring for God’s Acre (CfGA) as well as several visiting specialists, Hilary Wallace (botany), Keith Fowler, (hemiptera) and Jim Cresswell (general invertebrates) to assess the site.

**Ground Flora**: Species were recorded from a general walkover. Diversity was assessed in one or two quadrats (2x2m). Information collected was used to trial a ‘churchyard companion’ being developed by CfGA <http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/> which aimed to classify the type of grassland present.

**Trees**: As SACWG were unaware of existing surveys, the trees of the churchyard were both listed and mapped

**Mammals**: Tracks and signs of mammals were 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. Sweep nets and beating trays were used.

**Results and comments**

143 species were recorded – the full list is given at the end. The churchyard had open areas, but there were also shaded/wooded areas. Some areas of grassland were left uncut to allow flowering. A sketch map was made of the churchyard and main tree species mapped.

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|  | **# Species recorded** | **Comments** |
| **Ground Flora** | **52** | In the open areas, several species indicative of old meadows were present including yellow oat grass and oxeye daisy. The churchyard also had some nice woodland flora with bluebells. There was a patch of pink purslane, which although non-native is not particularly invasive, and also a patch of Japanese knotweed which is invasive and should be controlled. |
| **Trees** | **22** | There was a mixture of native and exotic trees on the site, including a magnificent ancient yew with a girth of 4m20.  |
| **Birds** | **6** | Swifts were recorded overhead, and although nesting not confirmed, churches are often used as swift nest sites.  |
| **Invertebrates** | **60** | A very good list of species were using the site which was great to see, including the nationally notable solitary bee, *Stelis punctulatissima* and its host, the carder bee *Anthidium manicatum.* |
| **Mammals** | **3** | A dead field vole was found and mole hills present. Bats were said to be present by the warden, but were not surveyed. |
| **Grassland Type** |  | The grassland was categorised as semi improved neutral grassland of moderate diversity, using the churchyard companion (CfGA) |

A sunny section of grassland along the path edge was left uncut and provided a beautiful display of oxeye daisy interspersed with the naturalised orange hawkweed. This section was one of the more botanically diverse sections of the churchyard and will be an important nectar source for a wide range of invertebrates including the rare solitary bee, *Stelis punctulatissima.* Leaving patches of long grass to flower is important for wildlife, but botanical diversity can also be maintained in shorter areas providing clippings are removed. Information on managing grassland can be downloaded for free from the ‘*managing churchyards &burial grounds action pack’* on the Caring for God’s Acre website <http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/>

The trees and shrubs provide shelter, food and nest sites for a variety of birds, but it is possible that the building itself may also provide nest sites for swifts. Swifts are a species of conservation concern as their numbers have declined rapidly in recent years. Loss of nest sites due to modern building techniques is thought to be a contributing factor, and churches such as this are often valuable nesting sites. It is important to look after these sites and ask for advice if needed. The Shropshire swift group can be contacted at <http://www.shropshireswifts.org.uk/>

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| **ref** | **Name** | **Est height (m)** | **Circumfer-ence (m)** |
| 1 | Horse Chestnut | 40 | 4.50 |
| 2 | Beech | 45 | 2.30 |
| 3 | Yew | 30 | 2.05 |
| 4 | Lime | 40 | 2.30 |
| 5 | Lilac | 6 | 5 boles |
| 6 | Copper Beech | 40+ | 3.00 |
| 7 | Yew (common) | 30 | 2 boles |
| 8 | Yew (common) | 35 | 2 boles |
| 9 | Yew (common) | 40 | 5 boles |
| 10 | Yew (Irish) | 25 | 7 boles |
| 11 | Yew (Irish) | 20 | 12 boles |
| 12 | Yew (Irish) | 15 | 12 boles |
| 13 | Yew (Irish) | 15 | 12 boles |
| 14 | Monkey Puzzle | 40 | 2.10 |
| 15 | Lawson’s cypress? | 30 | 2.40 |
| 16 | Norway Spruce | 45 | 2.20 |
| 17 | Unknown | 2 |  |
| 18 | Silver Birch | 15 |  |
| 19 | Lawson’s cypress? |  | 1.90 |
| 20 | Holly | 18 | 4 boles |

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| 21 | Yew (common) | 35 | 4.20 magnificant |
| 22 | Yew (common) | 20 | ? |
| 23 | Lilac | 4 | Many boles |
| 24 | Laburnum (+ivy) | 10 | Many boles |
| 25 | Maple | 40 | 2.40 |
| 26 | Maple | 40 | 2.60 |
| 27 | Maple | 40 | 2.30 |
| 28 | Maple  | 40 | 2 boles |
| 29 | Holly (variegated) | 2 |  |
| 30 | Holly (variegated) | 4 |  |
| 31 | Lilac | 3 | 3 boles |
| 32 | Rose and viburnum |  |  |
| 33 | Sycamore | 40 | 4.70 |
| 34 | Cherry (Ornamental)  | 1.5 |  |
| 35 | Cherry | 5 |  |
| 36 | Holly | 1.5 | Many boles |
| 37 | Cherry | 4 | 0.95 |
| 38 | Cherry | 4 | 0.95 |
| 39 | Rowan | 8 | 0.6 |
| 40 | Unknown ?Sorbus | 1 | Many boles |
| 41 | Yew (yellow) | 1.5 |  |

****Plants recorded 2014 (English names used where possible)

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| **Group** | **Plant name** |
| Flowers | Bluebell |
| Flowers | Bramble |
| Flowers | Cat's-ear |
| Flowers | Cleavers |
| Flowers | Clover, white |
| Flowers | Cow parsley |
| Flowers | Daisy |
| Flowers | Dandelions |
| Flowers | Dog-violet, common |
| Flowers | Field/wood forget-me-not |
| Flowers | Fox and cubs |
| Flowers | Garlic mustard |
| Flowers | Herb-Robert |
| Flowers | Hogweed |
| Flowers | Honeysuckle |
| Flowers | Ivy |
| Flowers | Japanese Knotweed |
| Flowers | Nipplewort |
| Flowers | Oxeye daisy |
| Flowers | Plantain, broad-leaved |
| Flowers | Plantain, ribwort |
| Flowers | Purslane, pink |
| Flowers | Ragwort |
| Flowers | Selfheal |
| Flowers | Sorrel, common |
| Flowers | Sow Thistle, prickly |
| Flowers | Sow Thistle, smooth |
| Flowers | Speedwell, germander  |
| Flowers | Speedwell, wood |
| Flowers | Stinging nettle |
| Flowers | Strawberry, barren |
| Flowers | Strawberry, wild |
| Flowers | Trefoil, lesser  |
| Flowers | Vetch, bush |
| Flowers | Willowherb, rosebay |
| Flowers | Wood avens |
| Flowers | Woundwort, hedge |
| Flowers | Yarrow |

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| **Group** | **Plant name** |
| Grasses | Bent grass |
| Grasses | Brome, barren |
| Grasses | Cock's foot grass |
| Grasses | Couch grass |
| Grasses | Crested Dog's Tail |
| Grasses | Fescue red |
| Grasses | Hairgrass, tufted |
| Grasses | Meadow grass, smooth |
| Grasses | Oat-grass, false |
| Grasses | Oat-grass, yellow |
| Grasses | Rye grass, perennial |
| Grasses | Sweet Vernal Grass |
| Grasses | Yorkshire-fog |
| Mosses | Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus |
| Trees and Shrubs | Beech |
| Trees and Shrubs | Cherry |
| Trees and Shrubs | Copper Beech |
| Trees and Shrubs | Cypress sp |
| Trees and Shrubs | Elder |
| Trees and Shrubs | Holly |
| Trees and Shrubs | Horse Chestnut |
| Trees and Shrubs | Laburnum |
| Trees and Shrubs | Lilac |
| Trees and Shrubs | Lime |
| Trees and Shrubs | Maple field |
| Trees and Shrubs | Monkey puzzle |
| Trees and Shrubs | Ornamental cherry |
| Trees and Shrubs | Privet |
| Trees and Shrubs | Rose – field |
| Trees and Shrubs | Rowan |
| Trees and Shrubs | Silver Birch |
| Trees and Shrubs | Spruce, Norway |
| Trees and Shrubs | Sycamore |
| Trees and Shrubs | Viburnum |
| Trees and Shrubs | Yew (Irish and English) |

Animals recorded 2014 (English names used where possible)

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| **Group** | **Animal Name** |
| Bird | Blue tit |
| Bird | Carrion crow |
| Bird | Greenfinch |
| Bird | Robin |
| Bird | Swift |
| Bird | Wood pigeon |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | Beetle |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | Beetle |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | ladybird, 14-spot  |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | ladybird, 2-spot  |
| Coleoptera (Beetles) | soldier beetle |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | Hoverfly |
| Diptera (Flies) | soldier fly |
| Earwig | Common earwig |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Alebra wahlbergi* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Anthocoris confusus* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Anthocoris nemorum* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Aphrodes makarovi* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Aphrophora alni* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Bryocoris pteridis* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Campyloneura virgula* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | Common froghopper |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Eupteryx aurata* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Eupteryx stachydearum* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Euscelis incisus* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Fagocyba cruenta* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Liocoris tripustulatus* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Lygocoris pabulinus* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Monalocoris filicis* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Oncopsis subangulata* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Oncopsis tristis* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Orthops campestris* |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | Shieldbug, green  |
| Hemiptera (bugs) | *Trioza urticae* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | ant, *Formica fusca* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | ant, *Myrmica rubra* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | bumblebee, common carder |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | bumblebee, Red-tailed  |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | Honey Bee |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | *Anthidium manicatum* (stelis host) |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | leaf cutter bee, *Megochile willughbiella* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | mining bee, *Andrena minutula* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | mining bee, *Hylaeus communis* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | mining bee, *Lasioglossum cupromicans* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | solitary bee, *Stelis punctulatissima* (Nb) |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | solitary wasp, *Ancistrocerus parietinus* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | solitary wasp, *Crossocerus podagricus* |
| Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and wasps) | solitary wasp, *Sapyga quinquepunctata* |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, speckled wood |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, comma |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, large white |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, meadow brown |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, ringlet |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, small tortoiseshell |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | butterfly, small white |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | micromoth, *Celypha striana* |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | micromoth, *Pseudargyrotoza conwagana* |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | moth, humming-bird hawkmoth |
| Lepidoptera (Butterflies and moths) | moth, silver-Y |
| Psocoptera (Barkfly) | barkfly, *Graphopsocus cruciatus* |
| Mammal | Bat (reported by warden) |
| Mammal | field vole (dead) |
| Mammal | Mole (hill) |