

WWT Malvern Group 8.1.15

Tim Dixon: The Colwall Orchard Project

Some surprising and interesting facts came out of Thursday's meeting! Apples are a non-native species, and originally came from the Tian Shan mountains in Central Asia. There are now 2000 varieties of apple in the UK, used for dessert, culinary and dual purposes. The apples we eat are propagated by grafting, although wild apples will grow readily from seed. 70% of the UK's apple orchards are in the Three Counties, and there are 43 traditional orchards in Colwall.

Tim Dixon has enthusiastically managed the Colwall Orchard Project for many years. The orchards are now used for Arts events, wassailing, and producing delicious jams, chutneys and apple juice. The habitat is also important for wildlife, supporting many birds including woodpeckers, fieldfares, redwings, blackcaps and mistle thrushes. Polecats, badgers and lesser horseshoe bats are common. Deadwood invertebrates like the Hawthorn Jewel Beetle, Cobweb Beetle and Noble Chafer are found in Colwall. There are 23 species of leaf-mining moths there too, including the rare Mistletoe Tortrix moth.

Our next meeting is on Thursday February 5th at 7.30 pm, at the Lyttelton Rooms in Church Street. Keren Green will talk about Bees and Bee-keeping.

Alison Uren