

## Notable Trees of the Malvern Hills

Peter Garner



Black poplar. Photograph by Peter Garner

This was one of those inspiring talks which makes you stop and think; most of us walk on the Hills regularly and think we know them well, but you suddenly realise that there are places you haven't been, and many things you haven't noticed.

Peter Garner shared his detailed knowledge of the Hills and the trees which grow there, with humour and great enthusiasm. There are over 50 species of tree on the Hills but Peter chose to describe 20 in the talk, with many beautiful pictures, taken in all seasons of the year. Some interesting facts emerged, for example: mistletoe grows only on non-native trees and hybrids; the only non-poisonous part of a yew tree is the red fleshy fruit; ash dieback disease was less apparent in 2013 than 2012 and is possibly less of a threat than originally thought. Black poplar is scarce nationally, but common on Castlemorton Common, although there are only male trees (the females were cut down years ago because the fluffy seed contaminates corn). A few surprises were picked out, like the fig tree in Little Malvern Quarry, the holly with yellow berries, and the whitebeam in the Dingle.

Peter linked his tree knowledge with other wildlife especially birds. The redwings and fieldfares love the crab apples on Westminster Bank, the stock doves like to nest in the black poplars, and the ring ouzel visits one particular rowan tree on North Hill.

The next meeting will be on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7.30pm at the Lyttelton Rooms. Mike Wilkes will talk about the Wildlife of the Cloud Forest and the Galapagos Islands.

Alison Uren