

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Malvern Group 1.10.15 and 10.10.15

Ravenshill Reserve, by Trevor Smart

Trevor Smart is the manager and owner of Ravenshill Reserve, a woodland near Alfrick, 50 acres of which is open to the public. It is a precious area of ancient woodland, full of a multitude of wildlife, which he looks after with care and devotion. The Malvern Group was treated to a show of his photographs, taken over many years of patient and meticulous observation. He began with the dormouse, not often seen because it is arboreal and nocturnal. Then we saw some of the diverse birds which visit the wood: redpoll, crossbill, raven, pied flycatcher, nuthatch, treecreeper and tawny owl. Butterflies abound and the scent of honeysuckle fills the air. More unusual plants include herb paris and several types of orchid. Badger and deer appear, and just once, an otter was caught on the trail camera. Two ponds are fed by springs and hundreds of toads live there; Trevor helps them cross the road to their spawning site each year, with the assistance of enthusiastic school groups.

On the morning of Saturday October 10th Trevor led some of the Malvern Group on a guided walk around Ravenshill. It was fascinating to hear about the details of woodland management, for example coppicing and the clearance of a glade for butterflies. We saw ravens, woodpeckers, long-tailed tits and goldcrests, and we were introduced to Nelson, the tawny owl with the damaged wing, which Trevor looks after (see photo).

The next Indoor Meeting is on November 5th at 7.30pm, at the Lyttelton Rooms, Church Street, Malvern WR14 2AY. Steve Bloomfield, WWT Conservation Officer, will talk about Nature Conservation and Urban Development – the opportunities and risks.

Alison Uren