

Montgomeryshire Bird Report 2013



Compiled by M.D.Haigh

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M.D.Haigh

Montgomeryshire County Bird Recorder

September 2014

Front Cover: Surf Scoter at Lake Vyrnwy – a new County Record in 2013 - by Gavin Chambers

The Weather 2013

The previous summer of 2012 had been virtually non-existent with prolonged rainfall having a detrimental effect on most breeding birds. 2013 was generally much better for birds, once the deep winter snow and the second coldest March on record had passed.

The first snow of the year fell in January with up to a foot in some parts of Montgomeryshire mid month. Particularly large numbers of blackbirds and robins were drawn to bird feeders at this time. Following an unremarkable February, the weather in March was horrendous. It was the coldest March in Wales since 1962. Snow fell to a depth of 2' and persisted for the second half of the month causing significant suffering to everything, not just birds. Snow remained on the ground well into April in some parts of the county.



House Sparrow by Jake Stephen

Whilst temperatures did pick up towards the end of April, 2013 experienced the coldest April in Wales since 1989. Birds arriving from Africa were unimpressed and there was a suggestion from some bird ringing recoveries that hirundine actually turned back south rather than try to eek out a living in the cold damp gloom that was Wales. The month of May was not much better being the coldest recorded since 1996 and the overall rainfall total in Wales was 131% of average.

June was a significant improvement and led into July weather which for the most part was very warm and settled with plenty of sunshine. Temperatures exceeded 28°C widely on several days and were well above average everywhere. July 2013 was the third warmest July recorded since 1910 and the second sunniest since 1929. Needless to say, this presented perfect breeding conditions for most bird species with insect eaters doing particularly well.

August was more unsettled although pleasant enough before September continued a more unsettled but duller theme.

October was mild but wet, a portent of things to come. A relatively dry November led into a mild but wet and windy December that frequently saw very strong winds and heavy rainfall. The mild winter conditions were reflected across Northern Europe and numbers of winter birds appearing within the county seemed low, with just scattered flocks of winter thrushes and no Waxwing recorded in Montgomeryshire.

Systematic Species List 2013

Overview

A total of 175 species were recorded in 2013 of which 2 were new to the county – Surf Scoter and Ring-necked Parakeet. The most obvious absence this year is probably Grey Partridge.

Key: - Status/Frequency – An estimate for Montgomeryshire in 2013

R - Resident; **W** - winter; **S** - summer; **B** - breeding; **P** - passage

- 1** Very rare, less than 10 records ever
- 2** Rare, > 10 records but not annual
- 3** Scarce (10 – 100 birds occurring or pairs breeding annually)
- 4** Reasonably Common (100 – 1000 birds occurring or pairs breeding annually)
- 5** Common

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Alarch Dof

RB4

Scattered records of breeding and wintering birds but nowhere in large numbers e.g. maximum counts were 12 at Llyn Coed y Dinas 28th Sept and 11 at Abermule on 19th May (2 adults and 9 cygnets).

WHOOPE SWAN *Cygnus Cygnus*

Alarch y Gogledd

W3

The regular wintering flock at Aberhafesp numbered 11 (6 adult, 5 immature) Jan – March and 8 adults were present on 27th Dec. Elsewhere 2 birds were at Dolydd Hafren on 6th March. 5 were on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 11th Nov and 3 were present 13th Nov. 3 were recorded again there on 3rd Dec. 2 were at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 12th Oct, 2 adults at Llyn Hir on 7th Dec, and 1 bird was seen at Llyn Gwyddior on 8th Dec.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

Gwydd Dalcen-wen

W2

2 birds were present at Dolydd Hafren between 6th Mar and 14th Apr.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Gwydd Wyllt

RB4

All but two of the 25 records received were from Dolydd Hafren or Llyn Coed y Dinas with a large feral flock commuting between the two sites. The max count at Dolydd Hafren was 400 on 29th Aug and the species was recorded there in 11 months of the year. A number of hybrid x Canada x domestic goose occur within the flock. Confirmed breeding also occurred on the Upper Dyfi Estuary.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta Canadensis*

Gwydd Canada

RB5

A much more widespread breeding bird than the Greylag and recorded throughout the county. Canadas can potentially be found on any water body within the county. 750 were counted at Dolydd Hafren on 24th Nov, 416 at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 14th Nov and 300+ were on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 1st Oct.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

Gwydd Wyran

R3/W3

Approx 300 birds again wintered on the Dyfi and were occasional visitors to the Upper Dyfi Estuary, the first 20 of which arrived on 9th Sept. In an effort to determine the origin of the flock, 25 of the birds were caught (at Ynis-hir) and colour ringed in November 2013. Subsequent sightings of the birds have identified them as feral, breeding in the Lake District and over-wintering in Wales. Elsewhere, there were 2 birds at Llyn y Fan on 12th Sept.

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

Gwydd Ddu

W2/P

A Dark-bellied bird was found at Dolydd Hafren on 27th Jan.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Gwydd yr Aifft

V1

An unusual record for the county with at least 2 birds at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 22nd January.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Hwyaden yr Eithin

RB3/W3

Recorded from just 3 locations (Dolydd Hafren, Dyfi Estuary and Llyn Coed y Dinas). Present all year round on the Upper Dyfi Estuary with the highest counts (c.10) recorded in Spring. No 2013 records of breeding inland with Dolydd Hafren recording a max of 3 on 12th March and 2 (maybe the same birds) present at Llyn Coed y Dinas around the same time.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

Hwyaden Gribog

RB3

Present and probably breeding on most county rivers, Mandarin Duck are quite secretive which perhaps explains why Dolydd Hafren had not previously recorded the species until 2013 (3rd Nov). Elsewhere there was a max count of 12 full grown birds at Llyn Du on 10th Jan and other scattered records mostly along the River Vyrnwy catchment.

WIGEON *Anas Penelope*

Chwiwell

W5

The Dolydd Hafren max count was 200 on 27th Jan. 100+ were on the Upper Dyfi Estuary in January. In the 2nd Winter period, the birds returned to the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 9th Sept and the max count there was 173 on 8th Dec. There were apparently more Wigeon at Llyn Coed y Dinas in the 2nd Winter period (max count 40+ on 13th Dec) compared to earlier in the year (max count 18 on 8th April). Records from the 2nd winter period also came from Llyn Hir, Llyn Mawr, Llyn Y Tarw and 20+ counts from both Lake Vyrnwy and Lymore Pools.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

Hwyaden Lwyd

R3/W3

There were no records in 2012 and few in 2013 with 2 birds at Dolydd Hafren 10th & 12th March and also on 28th & 30th April. 1 bird was reported from Llyn Coed y Dinas on 25th Aug and up to 2 birds were present there between 30th Sept – 4th Oct.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Corhwyaden

RB1/W4/P

Widespread within the county with evidence of successful breeding (e.g. Pwll Penarth 8th June). 30 Teal were at Pwll Penarth on 26th Jan with 80 recorded on the same day at Llyn Coed y Dinas. Teal were seen at Dolydd Hafren in 9 months of the year with 60 recorded on 6th Oct. The count on the Upper Dyfi Estuary exceeded 100 in February but the largest flock recorded there was 180+ on 20th Sept. 23 Teal were at Lake Vyrnwy on 1st Oct with 37 there on 18th Dec.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Hwyaden Wyllt

RB5/P/W5

Widespread breeder with numbers artificially increased by birds released for shooting. The largest count was 200 at Dolydd Hafren 3rd Nov. Counts of 100+ were also made at Llyn Coed y Dinas in the 2nd winter period and there were up to 80 at Lake Vyrnwy on 18th Dec.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Hwyaden Lostfain

W3/P

A large flock (for Montgomeryshire) of 71 was on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 5th Nov with some remaining there into December (e.g. c.30 on 5th Dec). Good inland records were 11 (6 drakes, 5 ducks) at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 21st Jan with 1 drake seen again there on 31st Jan. 1 bird was also reported from Pwll Penarth on 3rd Dec.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Hwyaden Addfain

P3

A Juvenile at Leighton on 15th Sept was an excellent find.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Hwyaden Lydanbig

RB1/W3/P

Recorded at just 2 sites. There were 2 records from Dolydd Hafren of 2 birds on 19th Feb and 1 bird on 15th Dec. Similar winter records came from Llyn Coed y Dinas with up to 4 birds occasional between Jan-April and single drakes infrequently seen between Oct -Dec.

POCHARD *Aythya farina*

Hwyaden Bengoch

W3

Very scarce with just 3 records of a single drake at Llyn Coed y Dinas in Feb and March and then again on 30th August. The only other record was a drake at Llyn Mawr on 12th July.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

Hwyaden Dorchag

P1

A female Ring-necked Duck mixing with Tufted Duck was an excellent find at Llyn Ebyr on 30-31st March.



Ring-necked Duck (right) by Owen Selly

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Hwyaden Gopog

RB3/W5

2 birds were at Dolydd Hafren 15th May and 6th October and a few were present at Llyn Ebyr with the Ring-necked Duck on 30th March. 2 were seen at Forden on 23rd April. Elsewhere the stronghold locations for this species appear to be Llyn Coed y Dinas (max 34 on 5th Dec), Llyn Mawr (max 17 on 13th Oct), Powis Castle Park and Welshpool Flash. Breeding was recorded at Pwll Penarth where 2 ducklings were seen on 8th June.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Mor-hwyaden Ddu

P2

A passage male was recorded at Lake Vyrnwy on 14th August.

SURF SCOTER *Melanitta perspicillata*

Mor-hwyaden Yr Ewyn

P1

A first County Record was a drake found at Lake Vyrnwy on 2nd July.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Hwyaden Lygad-aur

W4/P

Present at Lake Glaslyn with 6 reported on 13th Jan and at least one pair in the same area in Feb. In the 2nd winter period a pair was reported at Glaslyn on 28th Nov. Llyn Mawr held 5 birds on 28th Mar and singletons were at Llyn Coed y Dinas in January. 2 pairs on the Upper Dyfi Estuary in January increased to a max count of 12 by 12th Mar. The first late winter record there was on 6th Nov.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Hwyaden Frongoch

RB3/W3

The Dyfi Estuary was the only place to see this species in 2013 with single males on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 15th Mar and 23rd Apr. A sighting was reported from Dyfi Junction on 23rd Sept and Cors Dyfi also recorded the species.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Hwyaden Ddanheddog

RB4

A resident breeder on most large rivers and lakes. On the Upper Dyfi Estuary, youngsters (11) were first seen on 25th June. Earlier breeding was noted at Pwll Penarth with 3 chicks seen on 30th May and 2 broods were observed on Lake Vyrnwy in 2013. Goosander numbers increase through the summer at most sites before dispersing, and max counts were 60+ on the Upper Dyfi Estuary by late August, and 39 at Dolydd Hafren on 4th July.

RED GROUSE *Lagopus scoticus*

Grugiar

RB4

Most records were from Lake Glaslyn and Lake Vyrnwy (and nearby Bwlch y Groes) and Stiperstones NNR (presumably some birds on the Montgomeryshire side). At Lake Vyrnwy the warden noted in May, "Red Grouse seem to be everywhere, over 550m, so must have had a good 2012 breeding season and winter survival rate".

BLACK GROUSE *Tetrao tetrix*

Grugiar Ddu

RB3

6 males were heard lekking in the Lake Vyrnwy area and there was one record of a bird in flight across the A44 near Plynlimon on 19th October.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Petrisen Goesgoch

RB4/W5

Widespread with numbers artificially increased in winter for shooting.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Ffesant

RB5/W5

Widespread and especially abundant in areas where they are released for shooting. Various colour morphs and ornamental strains are also introduced which more than likely explains the origin of a Golden Pheasant near Garthmyl on 9th June and reports of Reeve's Pheasant (e.g. Castle Caereinion 11th Jan).

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*

Trochydd Mawr

W1/P

1 present on the Upper Dyfi Estuary 24-26th Feb.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Gwyach Fach

RB3/W4

Apparently just a winter visitor to Dolydd Hafren this year with a max count of 4 between Sept and Dec. Similarly at Llyn Coed y Dinas only passage birds were recorded. A passage pair was also present on the Upper Dyfi Estuary 10-16th March. 3 birds were present at Lake Vyrnwy Jan-Feb with autumn passage birds numbering up to 8 on 10th Sept. Pwll Penarth had potential breeding birds with the species present in May and June and nearby, 4 were reported on the Severn Way (Abermule to Newtown) on 11th August.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Gwyach Gopog

RB3/W4

There were max counts of 4 at Llyn Coed y Dinas (25th Apr) and Lake Vyrnwy (3rd July). The 2 pairs at Llyn Coed y Dinas each made 3 attempts to breed in 2013 but were either washed out or predated. The only other records came from Llyn Clywedog (Jan – July) and Llyn Mawr (a pair in May).

GANNET *Morus bassanus*

Hugan

P1

A juvenile at Llyn Coed y Dinas in the evening of 26th Sept was an excellent inland record. One observer reported, "late evening the gannet did a flypast over the pool and then luckily it came around again giving a better view before flying off. Then about half an hour later it did the same thing again..."



Gannet by John Morris

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Mulfran

R4/W

Present across the county (mostly outside of the breeding season), the bird can appear in small numbers on any water body and sightings were received from Bugeilyn, Lake Vyrnwy, Llanfair Caereinion, Wern, Dyfi Estuary and Llyn Coed y Dinas (max count 8 on 24/2). In 2013, numbers were lower at Dolydd Hafren with 11 being the max count (27th Jan & 15th Dec) compared to 28 in 2012.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

Aderyn y Bwn

P1/W1

2 birds were reported circling adjacent to the Cors Dyfi MWT Reserve on 31st Mar and one was then seen on 3rd April. A bird was also photographed at Cors Dyfi later in the year in December. Sightings were reported from Dolydd Hafren 31st Jan and 3rd Feb. Lake Vyrnwy recorded a site first when an obliging bird appeared below the dam wall on 29th August.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

Creyr Bach

RB3/W

Resident around the Upper Dyfi Estuary where max count was 11 on 5th Nov. Present 6 months of the year at Dolydd Hafren with 4 there on 11th Aug. Other records came from Pwll Penarth (4th May) and the River Vyrnwy near Wern.

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Egretta alba*

Creyr Mawr Gwyn

V2

Single birds were at Dolydd Hafren on 4th and 6th Aug. At Llyn Coed y Dinas a bird was found at 4pm on 26/9 and remained present until 6/10 (although was more elusive in the final 2 days of the stay). Remarkably, a second bird joined the first from late afternoon on 28/9 and was last reported from the location on 1/10. A Great White Egret reported flying over Pwll Penarth on 2/10 was most likely this second bird departing.



Great White Egret and Grey Heron by Brian Pollard

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Creyr Glas

RB4

Montgomeryshire contains approx 10 active heronries ranging in size from 1 nest to 15 'apparently occupied nests'. The highest number of non breeding birds seen at Dolydd Hafren was 6 during the Autumn/late Winter period. Elsewhere Herons are seen widely across the county (quite often from gardens judging by the number of records received from the MWT Garden Bird Survey).

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

Bod y Mel

SB2/P3

A sighting at Cors Dyfi on 19th July was the only record.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

Barcud Coch

RB4

A large number of sightings suggest the species is widespread in the county but is clearly more common in some parts than others. Max counts were 8 together, presumably close to winter roosts near Pentre Llifior (30th Oct) and Penegoes (14th Nov). No breeding data has been forthcoming but Red Kite was surely a successful breeder somewhere in Montgomeryshire in 2013.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Bod y Gwerni

P2

A female was seen at Cors Dyfi on 8th Apr and remained for most of the day. Presumably the same bird then moved a mile downstream and frequented the Upper Dyfi Estuary 9-11th Apr. Another sighting was made there later in the year on 3rd Dec.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

Bod Tinwen

RB3

Over wintering/passage records on the Upper Dyfi Estuary were males (2nd Feb, 26th Mar, and 16th Apr) and females (26th Feb, 7th Apr, 13th Apr, 11th Dec, and 27th Dec). Unsurprisingly, Cors Dyfi recorded a similar date range with males (19th Mar, 10th Apr) and a female (20th Mar). Elsewhere there were spring passage sightings at Cefn Coch, Cwmderwen and Lake Glaslyn. Two nest attempts were recorded in the county at Lake Vyrnwy from which one chick was confirmed to have fledged.

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentiles*

Gwalch Marth

RB4

Goshawks are elusive but widespread within Montgomeryshire and can be seen at any time of the year. Sightings in 2013 came from Carno, Cefn Llwyni, Ceri Ridgeway, Cors Dyfi, Dolydd Hafren, Dyfnant Forest, Lake Vyrnwy, Llanfyllin, Meifod, Pentrebeirdd, Pwll Penarth and Tyn y Cefn. 4 nests were found at Lake Vyrnwy of which 3 were thought to have successfully fledged young.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Gwalch Glas

RB4

Sparrowhawk was recorded in 66.7% of MWT Bird Survey gardens in summer 2013 and a wide range of locations reported suggest it is present pretty much everywhere.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Bwncath

RB5

Buzzard is the most common raptor in Montgomeryshire with 50% more records in 2013 than Red Kite or Sparrowhawk (both having similar sighting rates). Buzzard remained in the 'top 10' birds seen from MWT Bird Survey gardens for summer 2013 where it was seen from 100% of gardens. Sightings of multiple birds on thermals are common and large gatherings on winter fields are not unusual.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Gwalch y Pysgod

RB2/P3

At least 2 pairs attempted to breed in Montgomeryshire in 2013. The first sighting at the Dyfi Osprey Project at Cors Dyfi was on 19th March. The breeding pair there went on to fledge 2 young – both female (named Clarach and Clerist by the DOP team). Dolydd Hafren recorded 9 sightings of passage birds between 30th March and 28th August. One observer witnessed an Osprey there “with a very large fish” on 10th Aug. Spring passage birds were seen at Geuffordd and Lake Glaslyn. Lake Vyrnwy recorded Osprey on return migration on 9th Sept.



Osprey at Dyfi Osprey Project by Emyr Evans

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Cudyll Coch

RB4

Kestrel is now a scarce species in Montgomeryshire. Although year round records were received from the Roundton Hill/ Stiperstones/ Corndon Hill area, elsewhere, there were just scattered sightings suggesting only a handful of breeding pairs remain in the county. Winter records were also sparse e.g. Kestrel which used to be regular on the Upper Dyfi Estuary was seen there in 2013 on just 6th Feb and then in December on 5th-6th and 16th. Dolydd Hafren has previously held breeding Kestrel, but in 2013 could only manage 12 sightings of which 11 were of single birds.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Cudyll Bach

RB3/P3/W

Another raptor in trouble in the county. A few scattered sightings were received from around Montgomeryshire all outside of the breeding season. Winter records from the Upper Dyfi Estuary were 28th Oct, 2nd Nov, 4th Nov, 6th Nov and 7th Dec. A pair was present at Lake Vyrnwy in the breeding season but there was no actual evidence of breeding.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Hebog yr Ehedydd

RB2/P3

Typical of this species in recent years is that all bar one of the widespread sightings received (away from Dolydd Hafren and Lake Vyrnwy) were in August or September of single birds no doubt enticed here by migrating hirundine. Dolydd Hafren had more consistent sightings of 2 birds in early spring (the first on 23rd Apr). Unfortunately they did not stay to breed but 2 birds did reappear at Dolydd for the last record of 2013 on 21st Sept. The Lake Vyrnwy area also enjoyed sightings of birds throughout the summer with breeding thought possible but not confirmed.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Hebog Tramor

RB3

Peregrine are widespread and regularly recorded in Montgomeryshire. Dolydd Hafren recorded Peregrine in 11 months of the year with 3 seen together on 25th Aug. A rather unusual record was of a Peregrine eating its lunch outside Macdonalds in Newtown on 17th Oct. Elsewhere the frequency of records depends on the proximity to eyries and Peregrine wintering grounds (e.g. Dyfi Estuary).

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Rhegen y Dwr

RB2/P3/W

A confirmed breeding record on the Upper Dyfi Estuary where birds were also observed visiting bird tables during the winter as they were, just along the river, at Cors Dyfi for 16 days from 16th Mar. Pwll Penarth was a good place to see the species in 2013, present all year with 5 seen on 30th Nov. 5 were also at Dolydd Hafren on 26th Feb with 6 the max count there on 1st Dec. At Llyn Coed y Dinas a Water Rail was observed to catch and eat a perch on 7th April (see pic right) and another was eating fish on 28th Feb. A nice video was taken of Water Rail in a Middletown garden on 28th August.



Water Rail by Chris Townsend

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Iar Ddwr

RB4/W

Again recorded breeding at Dolydd Hafren where Moorhen was seen in every month of the year. The max count there was 12 on 7th April. Breeding was confirmed at Red House and likely at Pwll Penarth. Elsewhere there were regular records at Llyn Coed y Dinas and others from Gregynog, Llangurig, Powis Castle, Llanymynech and Welshpool Flash.

COOT *Fulica atra*

Cwtiar

RB4/W/P

Breeding was confirmed at Llyn Mawr and was probable at Pwll Penarth. 2 pairs also bred at Llyn Coed y Dinas where, each autumn, there is a build-up in numbers. In 2013 Coot peaked there at 92 on 14th October and declined in November. Elsewhere there were 12 at Welshpool Flash on 3rd Aug, with 11 there on 10th Mar. Coot were regularly seen at Dolydd Hafren.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Pioden y Mor

RB3/W

Breeding was recorded at Dolydd Hafren where the max count was 6 on multiple dates in the breeding season. A pair also bred at Llyn Coed y Dinas with 3 chicks observed on 19th May. 3 pairs returned for the Spring on the Upper Dyfi Estuary 11th Feb, where the max count was 18 (including juveniles) on 25th June. Elsewhere a flyover record at Llandinam Gravels, near Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, 1 at Crewgreen on 30th May and a bird at Lake Vyrnwy on 30th July.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

Cwtiad Torchog Bach

RB3/P

7th May was the first sighting date on the Upper Dyfi Estuary where breeding was subsequently confirmed with 4 recently fledged young there on 18th July. Dolydd Hafren also recorded breeding with a max count of 10 there on 13th April. Little Ringed Plover undoubtedly bred elsewhere along Montgomeryshire rivers but no records were received.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Cwtiad Torchog

P3

Largest counts on the Upper Dyfi Estuary were 160+ 29th May, 140+ 20th May, 100+ 21st May and 40+ 3rd Oct. There were just two inland records both at Dolydd Hafren on 13th and 23rd April.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

Hutan y Mynydd

P2

An excellent record of a bird trapped and ringed on the Ceri Ridgeway on 24th Oct.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Cwtiad Aur

RB3/W3/P

Summer records of birds at Pumlumon and in the Berwyns give hope that there are still some breeding Golden Plover within Montgomeryshire. Elsewhere, sightings were all of passage birds. The largest flocks were again in an area south of Llyn Clywedog in October although the peak of 200 was well down on 2012's exceptional 800 there. The observer reported "the first birds arrived 19th Sept (15-20) then built to 200 by 8th Oct and then disappeared". Other high counts included 150 on the Ceri Ridgeway 26th Oct, 52 around Tyn y Cefn on 9th Nov and, earlier in the year, a flock of c.80 at Cefn Coch Feb-April.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Cwtiad Llwyd

P1

8 passage birds were seen on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 12th Oct and 4 were there on 16th Oct.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

Cornchwiglen

RB3/W4

There were probably breeding pairs in the county but the records do not confirm this. Dolydd Hafren reported sightings 11 months of the year but most of the county records received in 2013 were of birds on passage or over-wintering. The highest counts were 300 at Dolydd Hafren (12th Mar), 120+ at Belan (2nd Mar), 100+ at Llyn Coed y Dinas (21st Jan), and, in the second winter period, 80 at Llanymynech (4th Dec). Numbers have significantly reduced on the Upper Dyfi Estuary over the past few decades and a max count of just 50 there on 7th Aug reflects this.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Pibydd y Tywod

P3

There were 10+ on the Upper Dyfi Estuary 21st May and, inland, 1 at Dolydd Hafren on 27th May.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina schinzii*

Pibydd y Mawn

P3/W

Flocking with Ringed Plover on the Upper Dyfi Estuary, the highest count there was 270 on 27th May. There were very few inland records with singletons at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 23rd Jan, 25th Apr and 30th Nov. The latter may have been the same bird as one on the same date at Pwll Penarth. Dolydd Hafren had just two records of individual birds on 5th and 29th May.

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Giach Fach

W3/P

Cors Dyfi, Dolydd Hafren and Lake Vyrnwy reporting records during the first winter period, the first 2 sites mostly in April e.g. 4 birds at Dolydd Hafren on 10th. Many more records were received for the second winter period at locations: Tyn y Cefn, Llyn Coed y Dinas, Lake Vyrnwy, Coed Glaslyn, Ceri Ridgeway, and Cors Dyfi. It was the latter that recorded the maximum for the year with 12 apparently flushed "from the buffalo compartment" on 27th Sept.

SNIFE *Gallinago gallinago*

Giach Gyffredin

RB3/W4

A confirmed breeder on the Upper Dyfi Estuary but as with Jack Snipe, most records relate to passage or wintering birds. Visible for much of the year (except during the breeding season) at Llyn Coed y Dinas, Dolydd Hafren, Llyn Mawr and Pwll Penarth where there were 20 on 22nd Dec. There were 20+ on the Ceri Ridgeway on 24th Oct and a peak count of 8 at Llyn Mawr on 17th March. Scattered smaller numbers of winter records came from all corners of the county e.g. Machynlleth (19th Oct), Llanymynech (23rd Nov), Coed Glaslyn (4th Dec), and Corndon Hill (15th Dec). 1 male was seen to sing and display at Lake Vyrnwy in the spring.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Cyffyllog

RB3/W5/P

Another widespread overwintering species within the county with no summer records received in 2013. The max count reported was 10 at Llyn Hir on 21st Nov. The latest first winter period bird was recorded at Sarn w/c 14th April with snow still on the ground.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

Rhostog Gynffonddu

P2

A bird showing rufous summer colour was on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 26th July, with 2 recorded there 7-8th Aug, 5 on 9th Nov, and 2 on 25th Nov. There were five separate observations of singletons at Dolydd Hafren between 12th Apr and 5th Nov. One was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 10th March.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

Rhostog Gynffonfrith

P3

One recorded on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 9th August.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Coegylfinir

P3

The first bird of the year appeared on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 21st May. 4 were counted there on 26th July. At Dolydd Hafren there were 3 separate records of singletons between 21st Apr and 21st Sept with a max count of 2 on 7th Sept. Lake Vyrnwy recorded 4 passage Whimbrel on 14th-15th May.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Gylfinir

RB3/W4

From the sighting records received, Curlew clearly continues to breed within Montgomeryshire on a widespread (but limited) basis. It would seem there are more breeding Curlew than Lapwing. Whether the Curlew are successful in their breeding attempts is another matter e.g. at Lake Vyrnwy zero young were fledged from 2-3 pairs. Curlews were observed at Dolydd Hafren throughout the year although they did not breed there. A max count of 139 was made there on 19th March. Numbers increased on the Upper Dyfi Estuary from 11 on 21st Feb to 31 on 30th Mar. However, as with Lapwing at this location, the quantities of birds are much lower than in the past.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

Pibydd Coesgoch Mannog

P2

A bird in full summer plumage was seen on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 12th and 17th June. 3 winter plumage birds were present there on 7th Oct with 4 on 9th Oct.

REDSHANK *Tringa tetanus*

Pibydd Coesgoch

RB3/P4

A resident, confirmed breeding, on the Dyfi Estuary. The only other location where the species was recorded in 2013 was Dolydd Hafren on 19th March.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Pibydd Coeswerdd

P3

A number of sightings on the Upper Dyfi Estuary during July peaked at 3 birds on 16th. 4 were there 27-28th Aug with 2 on 20th Sept. 2 birds were also recorded at Dolydd Hafren on 9th July.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Pibydd Gwyrdd

P4/W3

A species that is regularly seen outside of the breeding season at Dolydd Hafren (max count 5 on 16th Feb and 24th Oct) and at Llyn Coed y Dinas. Green Sandpiper were less frequently recorded from elsewhere but, in 2013, records also came from Lake Vyrnwy (7th-16th Sept), Leighton and Wern.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Pibydd y Dorlan

SB4

Common Sandpipers breed on many rivers and water bodies within the county. The first record of 2013 came from Dolydd Hafren on 30th Mar. A max count there of 24 on 28th Apr was followed by successful breeding on the reserve, with a late, last record on 11th Nov. On the Upper Dyfi Estuary, birds arrived from 13th Apr and breeding was recorded with a max count of 7 on 2nd Sept. A late bird was seen there on 5th Dec. At Lake Vyrnwy a minimum 2 pairs were recorded breeding.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

Gwylan Mor y Canoldir

P3

Once again, Llyn Coed y Dinas held a monopoly on county records with 4 single bird records on seemingly typical dates between April and June.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutes*

Gwylan Fechan

P2

A rare county record of a first winter bird at Dolydd Hafren on 3rd Feb.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Gwylan y Gweunydd

P3/W

This is a scarce species within the county. 20+ were on the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 20th Mar with the only other record there of a few birds on 25th July. Inland there were just 3 sightings at Dolydd Hafren Feb-Mar (max count was 4 on 24th Feb), an immature at Lake Vyrnwy on 29th Aug and a report south of Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain on 13th Nov.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Gwylan Benddu

RB4/W5/P

The breeding colony at Llyn Coed y Dinas numbered approx 230 pairs at the start of May but on 14th May water levels quickly rose after 2" of rainfall overnight and most nests were destroyed. Just 5 chicks fledged. However, the birds re-laid and produced c.450 fledged young. Dolydd Hafren recorded the species in every month of the year with a max count of 500 on 24th Feb. Black-Headed Gulls were also regularly recorded around Llanidloes on the MWT Garden Bird Survey. Away from the Severn however, the species is scarcely recorded inland in Montgomeryshire. 6 were at Llyn Mawr on 19th May and 12th June.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Gwylan Gefnddu Leiaf

RB2/P4/W4

Probably the most widespread gull species in Montgomeryshire, Lesser Black-Backed Gulls can be seen all year round although most records are between March and September. The max count was 100 at Dolydd Hafren on 15th May. A few pairs breed on the Severn Road Industrial Estate, Welshpool from where they commute to predate the eggs and young of the Black-Headed Gulls at Llyn Coed y Dinas.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Gwylan y Penwaig

RB4

Not many Herring Gull records were received. There is a presence (possible breeding at Newton?) along the Severn during the summer months. Max counts were 7 at Llwynderw in June, 6 at Llangurig (17th Mar), Welshpool (19th April), and Pontrobert (18th June).

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

Gwylan Goesfelen

P1

One record from Dolydd Hafren of an adult that stayed for just 10 minutes on 8th Sept.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Gwylan Gefnddu Fwyaf

P3

Occasional but relatively frequent in small numbers on the Upper Dyfi Estuary e.g. 4 on 29th Dec. Inland this is a scarce bird in Montgomeryshire. 3 together was a good record for Dolydd Hafren on 25th June and there were 4 other records there of singletons this year. Elsewhere there were 2 records at Llyn Coed y Dinas (including 2 birds on 25th Mar) and single records from Glaslyn (19th May) and Cefn Coch (15th Feb).

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Gwylan Goesddu

P2

An adult Kittiwake at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 10th March was an excellent inland find.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

Morwennol Bigddu

P2

Llyn Coed y Dinas recorded a single bird on 18th April, as did Lake Vyrnwy on 14th August.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Morwennol Gyffredin

P3

2 on 16th April at Llyn Coed y Dinas followed by a single bird there on 25th April were the only records of 2013.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

Morwennol y Gogledd

P2

Singletons were at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 19 and 24th of April.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Corswennol Ddu

P2

Dolydd Hafren recorded a single bird on 15th May and there was an unsubstantiated Birdguides report of another there on 23rd May.

ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

Colomen y Graig/Colomen Ddof

RB5

Lots of records submitted from a garden near Pwll Penarth (BTO Garden Birdwatch) rather skew the count/distribution of this species. In fact, Feral Pigeon is common in most of the larger urban areas. A max count was 6 in Welshpool on 24th Sept but there are surely more there if anyone has the inclination to count them!

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Colomen Wyllt

RB5

A widespread breeding bird within Montgomeryshire. Highest counts were 40 at Dolydd Hafren (15th Sept), and 30+ at Wern (22nd Jan).

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Ysguthan

RB5/P/W

With over 500 records submitted in 2013 Woodpigeon is clearly a common and widespread breeding bird in Montgomeryshire. Indeed, it was 7th in the list of most common birds in the MWT Garden Birdwatch summer 2013. Woodpigeon are capable of amassing in very large numbers. The flock over Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain on 13th Nov was estimated to be 42000. On the same day c. 35000 were reported flying over Llanfair Caereinion (presumably the same flock?!). A few thousand were observed over Llanfyllin and Welshpool on the same day – most noticeably just after daybreak.

Large post dawn flocks of Wood Pigeon are a fairly typical phenomenon in the autumn across Wales and England. The birds are most likely of local origin (i.e. from within a 30km radius) which form roost and feeding flocks. Some Wood Pigeon populations are migratory e.g. Scandinavian birds move to southern Europe when acorns are in short supply in the north. Whilst the flocks in Nov 2013 may have contained a few continental birds, there were no reported significant influxes of Wood Pigeon from abroad around that time. Given the direction of movement (mostly north) the evidence suggests they were just local birds milling about.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Turtur Dorchog

RB5

Another well reported bird suggesting a widespread distribution and common appearance. In fact it was reported in 62.3% of gardens in the MWT Garden Bird Survey suggesting that wherever Collared Dove inhabits it makes regular appearances. Elsewhere in the UK, Collared Dove is capable of amassing in large winter flocks but the only gathering of note in Montgomeryshire was one of 50 at Llanymynech on 23rd Nov.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

Turtur

(SB)/S1

A bird at Guilsfield that “spent quite a lot of time eating under bird feeders” on 24-25th Apr was a fantastic find during the MWT Garden Bird Survey.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

Paracit torchog

V1

A much less welcome discovery, but a new record for the county nevertheless. A single bird was photographed on feeders at Mochdre on 9th August.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Cog

SB3/P

Cuckoo seems to be favouring higher ground in Montgomeryshire (using Meadow Pipit as a host) but is apparently declining. 14 singing males were recorded at Lake Vyrnwy during 2013 surveying, compared to 38 males on the same survey 5 years previously. Lowland records are becoming very scarce and relate mostly to birds on passage. The earliest report in 2013 was on 12th April at Bwlchyddar. A few days later and a mile down the road, a bird was seen and heard at Llanfyllin on the evening of 18th April. Cors Dyfi reported a bird on 19th April, Dolydd Hafren on 20th and there was a Cuckoo near Llanerfyl on 27th April. A widespread number of sightings were received during May and June with the last record on 31st July in Dyfnant Forest.



Cuckoo by Paul Leafe

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Tylluan Wen

RB3

2013 was a catastrophic year for Montgomeryshire's Barn Owls. Deep snow lying for 3 weeks in March killed many birds and those that survived failed to gain sufficient weight to breed. Breeding pairs fell from 36 in 2012 to just 14 in 2013. The 49 chicks they produced were all in the south-east of the county where the snow had been less extreme.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Tylluan Fach

RB3

Now rarely seen in Montgomeryshire, a Little Owl was recorded near Forden on 23rd April and another in nearby Montgomery on a MWT Garden Bird Survey w/c 25th Aug. The latter survey also contributed 1 at Arddleen w/c 8th Sept. The final record of the year came from Caersws on 7th Dec.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Tylluan Frech

RB5

71% of Montgomeryshire gardens recorded Tawny Owl in Summer 2013 (MWT Garden Bird Survey) and many records were received of sightings from across the county. Tawnies had a poor breeding season in 2013 (MDH pers obs.) - probably weather related like Barn Owl.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Tylluan Gorniog

RB2

2 males were heard on territories at Lake Vyrnwy on 17th April but it's thought the heavy snow (still present on the ground) moved the birds on and no evidence of breeding was recorded.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Troellwr

SB4

The species is present on Upper Dyfi Estuary where the first churring male was heard on 19th June. A rare daytime sighting occurred a month earlier (20th May) just along river at Cors Dyfi, with "one perched on a tree at 15:30". Lake Vyrnwy experienced a poor year with just one territory found.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Gwennol Ddu

SB5

The first of the year was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 20th April and the last at Dolydd Hafren on 29th Aug. 100 was the max count at Dolydd Hafren on 12th May.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Glas y Dorlan

RB5

A species known to suffer in harsh winters and none were seen at Lake Vyrnwy until late summer. Nevertheless, Kingfisher is a widespread breeder on the County's water bodies wherever suitable habitat exists to tunnel into banks to nest. Most records come from late summer when juveniles bulk up the numbers. The highest count was 4 together at Pont Rhydygwial on 24th Sept.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Cnocell Werdd

RB4

There still seem reasonably good numbers of the species in the east of the County with regular sightings around Middletown Hill, Llanymynech, Roundton Hill, Llanfyllin, Pwll Penarth, Welshpool, Llanerfyl, Meifod etc. Further west though and Green Woodpecker appears rare. There are exceptions - a breeding pair at Lake Vyrnwy were the first there for a long time and 1 was seen at the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 31st Aug.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER <i>Dendrocopus major</i>	Cnocell Fraith Fwyaf
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RB5

Common, appearing in 88% of gardens (MWT Bird Survey Summer 2013) and in the top 10 of county records submitted overall. Lots of 4's and 5's seen at feeders as parents feed young (late June – August), but the highest count prize goes to a sighting of 7 adults at Llwynderw on 21st April.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER <i>Dendrocopus minor</i>	Cnocell Fraith Leiaf
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RB3

Very scarce but scattered across the county with records from Tregynon (21st April), Bwlch-y-Cibau (13th Aug), and a few sightings at bird feeders on the Upper Dyfi Estuary e.g. 16th Oct.

SKYLARK <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Ehedydd
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RB4/P/W

Breeding on most suitable high ground across the county with 35 counted at Stiperstones on 4th June (29 there on 23rd April) and 20 were seen at Cefn Coch on 19th April. Llyn Mawr, Lake Glaslyn, Y Golfa and Lake Vyrnwy also featured prominently in the reports. The largest flock of wintering birds reported was one of 30 at Llanymynech on 23rd Nov and there were 10+ still there on 4th Dec.

SAND MARTIN <i>Riparia riparia</i>	Gwennol y Glennydd
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SB5

The first records of the year were on 7th April with sightings at both Dolydd Hafren and Cors Dyfi. The last was on 29th Sept at Dolydd Hafren. The max count was also from Dolydd Hafren of 200 on 28th April. A widespread breeder along Montgomeryshire's rivers but with insufficient records to gauge the impact of the weather on the breeding season.

SWALLOW <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Gwennol
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SB5/P

The first were seen near Llangurig on 7th April with the last sighting at Carno on 7th Oct. Peak counts were 100 at Dolydd Hafren on 24th April, 100 at Lake Vyrnwy on 5th Sept and 100 at Llyn Clywedog on 19th Sept.

HOUSE MARTIN <i>Delichon urbica</i>	Gwennol y Bondo
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SB5

The earliest record was on 1st April at Dolydd Hafren and several birds were last seen on 22nd Oct in the village of Darowen. Max counts were a flock of 300 juveniles at Lake Vyrnwy on 14th Aug and 100 at Llwynderw on 23rd Aug.

TREE PIPIT <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Corhedydd y Coed
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SB4/P

This species is certainly underreported as it is seemingly a widespread and reasonably common breeder on recently felled and regenerating hillside plantations (of which there are many in Montgomeryshire). The first record of the year was on 15th April near Llanerfyl.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Corhedydd y Waun

SB5/P

Another underreported species, Meadow Pipit is numerous on higher ground throughout the county. It is the predominant host for Montgomeryshire's cuckoos and an important food source for moorland raptors. Large flocks migrate south through the county in Sept and reasonably large flocks can occasionally form on lower ground to over-winter in the county. The largest count reported was 105 at Stiperstones on 24th Oct but there will have been far larger gatherings than this during the year.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Siglen Felen

SB3

Dolydd Hafren dominated the records of this species in 2013 with the first seen on 18th April and the last on 6th Oct. Successful breeding was recorded and a notable max count of 14 was reported there on 28th April. Elsewhere, there were few, scattered records including Caerhowell Bridge (3rd June), Llyn Coed y Dinas (a juvenile on 6th Sept) and (mostly singletons) from 5 MWT Summer Surveys near Four Crosses, Llanymynech, Machynlleth, Melinbyrhedin and Tylwch.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Siglen Lwyd

RB4/W

Records received were widespread throughout the county and the species is clearly present on any suitable water body.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Siglen Fraith

RB5/P/W

By far the most common Wagtail species within the county and a widespread breeder. The max count was 20 at Dolydd Hafren on 30th June. Records of *M. a. alba* [White Wagtail] are difficult to separate from *M. a. yarrelli* due to 'lumping' of the two on various recording systems. However White Wagtail was reported on passage in the county e.g. at Dolydd Hafren.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulous*

Cynffon Sidan

W4

A few remnant birds from the unusually high numbers recorded in the early winter of 2012/13 with 21 at Ardleen on 14th Feb and 3+ at Welshpool on 24th Jan. See 'Ringing Recoveries reported in 2013' for some impressive recoveries of Waxwing ringed at Newtown in late 2012. There were no records during the second winter period of 2013.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

Bronwen-y-Dwr

RB5

A widespread breeder on all county rivers and smaller tributaries although the extent of the impact on Dippers from the heavy snow in March is unknown.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Dryw

RB5

It might be expected that Wrens would have particularly suffered as a consequence of the snow, and this may well have been the case, although results from the MWT Summer Bird Survey suggest only a slight insignificant drop in garden sightings from 2012 to 2013. Lake Vyrnwy surveyors did report a significant decline in numbers on the moors due to the hard winter.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Llwyd y Gwrych

RB5

Dunnock is the 6th most reported species in the county, a sighting rate no doubt helped by the species propensity to visit bird feeders throughout the year. Highest counts were 12 at Dolydd Hafren on 13th Oct and Llanymynech on 23rd Nov.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Robin Goch

RB5/P

It will be of little surprise that this species is reported even more than Dunnock and indeed, Robin are 3rd in the county records list for 2013. The max count was 20 at Dolydd Hafren on 13th October.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Tingoch

SB4

The first records of the year were at both Stiperstones NNR and Cefn Coch on 19th April with the last sighting at Dolydd Hafren on 21st Sept. Considering the weather, Redstart appear to have enjoyed a good breeding season in the county with widespread breeding recorded. At Lake Vyrnwy one pair apparently even managed to raise two broods. Autumn passage numbers seemed relatively high and/or concentrated e.g. 14 full grown birds were trapped and ringed at Llanfyllin in 4 hours on 8th August.



Redstart by Gavin Chambers

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Crec yr Eithin

SB4

Seemingly a scarce bird in Montgomeryshire with just 10 sighting records received for 2013. The earliest was on 17th April at Dolydd Hafren (the only record for the site in 2013) and the last at Llwynderw on 29th Sept. Whinchat are confirmed summer breeders at Lake Vyrnwy but numbers have declined over the past 5 years.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

Clochdary Cerrig

SB4

Stonechat is more frequently recorded in Montgomeryshire than Whinchat with twice as many records received. However, that there were just 20 records in total suggest this not a common bird within the county although the harsh winter was definitely responsible for a decline in numbers e.g. at Lake Vyrnwy there were just "a few" summer pairs present. Birds were seen all year round in Montgomeryshire with a few in the breeding season suggesting possible breeding at Y Golfa and Stiperstones as well as at Lake Vyrnwy. Breeding was confirmed on the Upper Dyfi Estuary.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Tinwen y Garn

SB5/P5

Widespread records on passage with the earliest at Dolydd Hafren on 9th April and the last also there on 27th Sept. The highest counts were 13 in field at Castell Caereinion w/c 28th April and 7 at Llwynderw on 21st April. There were widespread records in the breeding season, when Wheatear favour sheep grazed uplands. Lake Vyrnwy recorded good numbers of immatures well into August.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Mwyalchen y Mynydd

SB3/P3

No breeding was recorded with sightings restricted to a few passage records at Aberhosan (1st Apr), Dol Fawr (10th Apr), Derwenlas (w/c 14th Apr), Stiperstones NNR (23rd April) and at Lan Fawr (11th July). At Lake Vyrnwy, birds seen between the 15th and 23rd April included 4 males on 19th, but none stayed to breed.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Mwyalchen

RB5/W/P

Over a 1000 county records were received for Blackbird in 2013 which makes it the most reported bird in the county (a few ahead of Blue Tit). Blackbird appears in every garden in Montgomeryshire (according to the MWT Garden Bird Survey). The highest counts were 40+ at Pwll Penarth on 13th Dec, 30+ at Gregynog on 4th April. Many people saw large numbers of Blackbirds at their garden feeders in the deep snow of March with local birds mixing with continental migrants.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Socan Eira

W5/P

Largest counts were 150 north of Llanfyllin (22nd Nov) and 130 at Stiperstones NNR (24th Oct). The final sighting in the first winter period was 30 birds at Dolydd Hafren on 17th April. In the autumn the first birds seen were a flock of 50, also at Dolydd Hafren, on 13th Oct.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Bronfraith

RB5/P/W

Widespread records but not recorded everywhere appearing in about 75% of county gardens (MWT Bird Survey). The max count was 20 migrant birds feeding on Rowan at Lake Vyrnwy on 1st Oct.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Coch Dan-aden

W5/P

Highest counts were of 200 at Llanidloes (1st Apr), Cors y Carreg (12th April) and Dolydd Hafren (13th Oct). The last seen of the first winter period were at Churchstoke w/c 14th April. The first Redwing sightings of the autumn occurred on 11th October when many were reported at various locations indicating a large overnight movement into Montgomeryshire.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Brych y Coed

RB5

Preferring open country to gardens, Mistle Thrush appears in just under half of MWT Garden Bird Surveys. Well reported in the county nevertheless, Mistle Thrush can form reasonably large flocks during the summer and autumn, the largest of which in 2013 were 37 at Lake Vyrnwy on 14th Aug and 16 at Llwynderw on 8th Sept.

CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

Telor Cetti

R1

Dolydd Hafren remains the only place to see this species in Montgomeryshire. Passage birds only were recorded with singletons on 16th & 18th Feb, 2 on 24th Feb and another on 1st April. A late summer sighting of a single bird was made on 21st Aug.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Troellwr Bach

SB4/P

Recorded in good numbers during the breeding season on the Upper Dyfi Estuary but elsewhere in the county, Grasshopper Warbler was rarely recorded. There were just 4 records away from the Dyfi at Stiperstones NNR (19th April), Pontrobert (24th April), near Cefn Coch (19th June) and near Llangurig (17th July). This is most likely a case of underreporting as recently cleared and young plantations offer good breeding habitat within Montgomeryshire.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Teloryr Hesg

SB4

Another species that is regular at its favoured haunts (Dolydd Hafren, Cors Dyfi, Pwll Penarth and Llyn Coed y Dinas) but (perhaps) surprisingly difficult to find elsewhere within the county. Records at Severn Farm Pond (20th Apr), Pant-y-milwyr (10th May), Llyn Mawr (19th May) and Red House (20th May) were exceptions. Even at the favoured sites, Sedge Warbler is not apparently abundant with a max count of 6 at Dolydd Hafren on 28th April and 1st May. The first bird of the year was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 19th April and the last sighting was 21st Sept at Dyfi Junction.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Teloryr Cyrs

SB4

A shortage of suitable habitat restricts Reed Warbler in Montgomeryshire. The only records came from Dolydd Hafren, Cors Dyfi, Pwll Penarth and Llyn Coed y Dinas. The first bird was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 18th April and the last reported from Dolydd Hafren on the 9th Oct. A maximum of 12 were observed at Dolydd Hafren on 28th April.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Telor Penddu

SB5/P/W3

A common and widespread summer visitor and breeder across the county. Max count was 30 at Dolydd Hafren on 25th Aug. A few Blackcap do overwinter: - Dolydd Hafren recorded 3 singletons in November plus one on 1st Dec; Guilsfield (a male 28th Nov plus 1 w/c 1st Dec); Pwll Penarth (a male on two December dates); Welshpool (1st Dec, 15th Dec & 20th Jan); Foel Goch (27th Jan); Montgomery (3rd Feb).

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Teloryr Ardd

SB5/P

Less frequently reported than Blackcap but commonly encountered throughout the county. The earliest date was 7th April at Llanidloes and the latest confirmed sighting was at Llanfyllin on 20th Sept. There were 14 at Dolydd Hafren on 8th Sept and 13 at Llangurig on 19th May.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Llwydfon Fach

SB3/P

Reported as a regular visitor to Dolydd Hafren where the species apparently bred, Lesser Whitethroat is very rarely sighted elsewhere within the county, with just 5 other (Apr/May) records received from Llyn Coed y Dinas, Pontrobert and the Breiddon Hills area. The first record of the year was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 18th April.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Llwydfron

SB4/P

Widespread sightings but seemingly a preference for the hills in the east of the county with a cluster of records from Y Golfa (max count 10 on 8th June), Y Figyn, Middletown Hill, Roundton Hill and Stiperstones NNR. Few records were received from the centre or south of the county (Llangurig and Dyfnant Forest) but Whitethroat was confirmed breeding on the western edge (e.g. fledglings from the Upper Dyfi Estuary on 3rd July). The earliest sighting was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 19th April and the latest was at Dolydd Hafren on 27th Sept.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Telory Coed

SB4

A smattering of records were received from woods across Montgomeryshire with Gregynog, Coed Pendugwm, and Lake Vyrnwy all reliable places to hear singing males. The first record of the year was at Cwm-y-Ilwynog on 2nd May and the last at Coed Pendugwm on 21st July.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Siff-saff

SB5/P/W2

The warbler with the most county records in 2013, presumably not just because it's common and widespread, but also because of the distinctive spring song. The highest count was 20 at Dolydd Hafren on 29th Sept. The first record of the year was at Llyn Coed y Dinas on 23rd March (although with Chiffchaff it's tricky to be sure whether the bird has over-wintered in the UK or abroad). Winter records were all from the second winter period (perhaps the first was just too cold) and came from Dolydd Hafren (23rd Nov) and Pwll Penarth (3rd, 7th & 22nd Dec).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Teloryr Helyg

SB5/P

The first record of this abundant species was at Coed Pendugwm on 13th April, and the last was of 2 birds at Dolydd Hafren on 1st Oct. Max counts were 20 at Dolydd Hafren on 27th May and 17 in the Hafren Forest on 19th May.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Dryw Eurben

RB5/P/W

A conifer specialist and consequently widespread and numerous within the county. Max counts were 17 in the Dyfi Forest on 3rd Dec and 14 in the Dyfnant Forest on 19th Nov.

FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapillus*

Dryw Penfflamgoch

SB2

The only record again came from Lake Vyrnwy. A male was heard singing on several occasions and 1 adult and 2 juvenile were seen on 20th July.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Gwybedog Mannog

SB4/P

Records were received from across the county but distribution is patchy. In 2013, 23% of gardens were visited by Spotted Flycatcher (MWT Garden Bird Survey), and whilst some gardens enjoy multiple breeding pairs (e.g. near Llanerfyl), the majority see no Spotted Flycatcher at all. The first record was in the Hafren Forest on 18th May and the last at Cors Dyfi on 19th Sept. Breeding was confirmed at Lake Vyrnwy with 'many' fledged families around in August.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Gwybedog Brith

SB5

A summer visitor to most Montgomeryshire deciduous woodland. Pied Flycatcher's ready use of nestboxes enables studies to give insight into the species breeding season. At Lake Vyrnwy in 2013 the 75 nest attempts were in line with the previous 3 years. The impact of the cold spring pushed back average fledging date by approx 10 days to 23rd June but with no apparent detriment to fledging success. First records of the year were on 16th April at both Llwynderw and near Llanerfyl.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Titw Gynffon-hir

RB5

Widespread, common, and regularly seen in large flocks from late summer into winter. The most notable sightings were 40 at Dolydd Hafren on 6th Oct, 21 at Pwll Penarth on 15th Oct, and 18, also at Pwll Penarth, on 4th Dec.

MARSH TIT *Parus palustris*

Titw'r Wern

RB4

Far more records were received for Marsh Tit than Willow Tit in 2013 which illustrates the relative status of these species. However, Marsh Tit is not commonly seen and most of the records come from garden feeders. Away from feeders the most likely places to see Marsh Tit (judging from records received) are Coed Pendugwm, Gaer Fawr woods, Powis Castle Park, Roundton Hill and Lake Vyrnwy. No more than 2 were seen together.

WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*

Titw'r Helyg

RB3

Scarce within the county but apparently widely distributed. A resident breeder at Lake Vyrnwy (minimum 2 pairs), Willow Tit was also recorded from Machynlleth, Hafren Forest, Bryn-glas, Powis Castle Park and Llyn Mawr (where a max count of 3 was recorded on 19th May).

COAL TIT *Parus ater*

Titw Penddu

RB5

A common visitor to gardens particularly during the winter (the 9th most frequently seen species in the 2012/13 MWT Winter Bird Survey). In the summer the birds mostly return to their preferred habitat of conifers - of which there are many in Montgomeryshire - and there are a lot of Coal Tits too. At Lake Vyrnwy, during the winter, Coal Tit is the most numerous Tit species on the feeders. 24 were caught and ringed there on 19th April and 22 were ringed there on 7th Dec. In total, 111 individual Coal Tit were ringed at Lake Vyrnwy in 2013 and as one observer noted, "that's hardly scratched the surface".

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*

Titw Tomos Las

RB5

The most common visitor and most frequently seen species in Montgomeryshire's gardens in summer and winter (MWT Bird Survey). However, the cold spring affected the breeding season and nest box utilisation was generally low in comparison to 2012 (which itself was a poor breeding season due to the wet summer). However, it's not all bad news – 2014 has been a bumper breeding year!

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Titw Mawr

RB5

Abundant but Great Tit are always lower in number than Blue Tit in the top 10 'most frequent visitors' ranking in the MWT Bird Survey. 2013 breeding was similarly affected as per Blue Tit.

NUTHATCH <i>Sitta europaea</i>	Delory Cnau
RB5 A familiar user of garden feeders and nest boxes and consequently, very well reported. Nuthatch apparently inhabits everywhere in the county where there is woodland. Highest count was 8 at Llwynderw (4 th Aug), with many 6's, 5's and 4's reported.	
TREECREEPER <i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Dringwr bach
RB5 A common bird across the county, the max count was 7 at Gregynog on 4 th April, and at Dolydd Hafren on 17 th Nov.	
GREAT GREY SHRIKE <i>Lanius excubitor</i>	Cigydd Mawr
W3 The only winter record was of a bird in the Hafren Forest observed on 19 th Oct and 24 th Dec. An exceptionally late report of a bird came from Lake Vyrnwy on 3 rd June.	
JAY <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Ysgrech y Coed
RB5 70% of summer 2013 MWT garden Bird Surveys recorded Jay compared to 60% in 2012. Not definitive proof, but it's possible that the general increase in Jay numbers noted in 2012 has continued into 2013. The highest counts were 12 at Dolydd Hafren on 13 th & 21 st Sept, 7 near Aberangell on 14 th July & 11 th Aug, and 6 at Llwynderw on 17 th Mar & 15 th Dec.	
MAGPIE <i>Pica pica</i>	Pioden
RB5 Widespread although more common in lowland areas. A flock of 18 sighted south of Llyn Clywedog on 18 th Feb was a high count given the terrain. There were 15 at Pwll Penarth on 21 st Sept and the highest count of all was 50 at Dolydd Hafren on 3 rd Mar.	
CHOUGH <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Bran Goesgoch
RB2 A pair flew past the hide at Cors Dyfi on 30 th April.	
JACKDAW <i>Corvus monedula</i>	Jac-y-do
RB5/P/W Widespread. The largest counts reported were 121 at Dolydd Hafren (3 rd Sept) and 65 at Machynlleth (18 th Oct).	
ROOK <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Ydfran
RB5/P The least reported of the 6 common species of corvid, with proximity to rookeries clearly influencing the frequency with which Rook are seen and visit gardens. 50 were recorded at Dolydd Hafren on 12 th June, with 20 at Llangurig on 16 th Mar, Welshpool (9 th Apr) and Pwll Penarth (3 rd Dec).	
CARRION CROW <i>Corvus corone</i>	Bran Dyddyn
RB5 Widespread, the most common corvid in the county. Max count was 100 at Dolydd Hafren on 18 th Sept.	

RAVEN *Corvus corax*

Cigfran

RB5

A widespread breeding bird and a commonly seen species within the county. 59% of MWT summer Gardens Bird Surveys recorded Raven (presumably overhead!). The largest counts were 64 at Dolydd Hafren (25th Aug), 27 at Cefn Coch (15th Feb) and 26 at Stiperstones (23rd Sept).



Raven by Ed Cottell

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Drudwen

RB4/P5/W5

A few breeding records, but Starling is predominantly observed during the winter months as illustrated by a count of Montgomeryshire casual records received for Starling in 2013 :

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
35	29	28	12	2	7	2	0	1	5	32	24

The data above excludes the MWT Bird Survey but the pattern here is similar with 82% of gardens recording Starling in the winter compared to 44% in summer. Peak counts were 5000 at Cefn Coch on 30th Jan, and 1000 at both Pontrobert (26th Feb & 12th Mar) and Llwynderw (30th Oct).

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Aderyn y To

RB5

As a check on the Starling count data above, the same exercise was run for House Sparrow and each month showed almost identical numbers of records received for House Sparrow – perfectly illustrating the sedentary behaviour of the species. In fact, House Sparrow was the 7th most recorded bird in 2013 which might surprise those people who don't have House Sparrow in their gardens. The species does not wander much, preferring to stay at the breeding colony, so some locations have them, and some don't. The largest count was 60 at Llangurig on 17th July.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Golfan y Mynydd

RB3

This is clearly a scarce species within the county with a small and scattered population seemingly confined to the eastern edge of the county. Tree Sparrow were recorded from Clun Forest (14th Mar) and a small flock was seen feeding on cereal fields near Montgomery on 20th July. Just two sightings were made at Dolydd Hafren (21st Sept and 27th Sept) and there were other similarly infrequent records from MWT Garden surveys along the Severn valley.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Ji-binc

RB5/P/W

Very common with highest counts of 200 at Dolydd Hafren (16th Jan, 24th Feb & 1st Dec) and 105 from a BTO Garden Birdwatch Survey near Aberangell on 20th Jan. Chaffinch seems particularly abundant at Lake Vyrnwy.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Pincy Mynydd

W4

The cold winter at the start of 2013 produced good numbers of Brambling dispersed across many garden feeders throughout the county. The max count was 50 at Pentre'r beirdd on 17th Feb. In the second winter period of 2013 fewer records were received and most of the birds that were present in the county seemed to remain in relatively large flocks feeding on beech mast e.g. a flock of 200 were near Pentre between Oct and Feb and there were 30-40 at nearby Dolfor on 29th Oct. A flock of 12+ feeding on beech mast at Lake Vyrnwy on 4th Nov increased to 120 on 20th Dec. There were some impressive foreign recoveries of ringed birds reported from Montgomeryshire in 2013 (see 'Ringing Recoveries reported in 2013')

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Llino Werdd

RB5

Present in approx 80% of gardens (MWT Bird Survey) and with the same number of reports received in 2013 as Goldfinch, this species is widespread within the county. However, no large flocks were reported (unlike 2012) with the maximum just 30 at Dolydd Hafren on 29th Dec.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Nico

RB5/P

Compared to Greenfinch, marginally more frequently seen (MWT Garden Bird Survey) and possibly more widespread across the county. Max count was 50 at Dolydd Hafren on 1st Sept.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Pila Gwyrdd

RB5/P/W

It is during spring passage (Feb-April) that most Siskin are recorded as birds stop off at garden feeders on their return from continental Europe before dispersing into Wales or continuing north. 54% of Montgomeryshire gardens recorded this species (MWT Winter Bird Survey 2012/13) but this figure does not reflect the abundance of Siskin as a breeding species anywhere near conifers (of which there are plenty in Montgomeryshire) e.g. there were 100's of breeding pairs in the Lake Vyrnwy area.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Llinos

RB5/P

Widespread across the county although not reported as frequently as other 'common' finches presumably because Linnet does not often visit gardens (actually recorded from about 13% of MWT survey gardens in summer and 6% in winter). The biggest counts were at Dolydd Hafren where there was a regular flock of 50+ during winter months, the biggest count being 200 on 10th & 24th Feb, 21st & 25th April and 5th May. Elsewhere the largest count was 35 at Llanwnnog on 7th Feb.

LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis cabaret*

Llinos Bengoch Lieaf

RB5/P/W

Similar to the Siskin in that presence is most often recorded in gardens during spring passage with birds then continuing north or dispersing into Montgomeryshire (and Wales) where Lesser Redpoll breed (but in much smaller numbers than Siskin). Max count was 11 birds in a garden near Aberangell on 12th May.

COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Gylfin Groes

RB4/P/W

This species might be seen anywhere in the county especially where there are conifers. Probably under recorded, scattered records were received with 20+ at Leighton on 24th Jan, 2 at Carno on 24th Sept, several flocks on the Ceri Forest on 15th Nov and a few around Pentre in Dec. The only summer record came from Melinbryhedin w/c 23rd July. No singing birds were heard at Lake Vyrnwy in 2013 and therefore no breeding was thought to have taken place there. 23 Crossbill were seen in the Lake Vyrnwy Centenary Hide conifers on 28th Nov & 11th Dec.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula pileata*

Coch y Berllan

RB5

Widespread records and some reasonably large flocks were reported e.g. 18 at Ceri Forest (15th Nov), 16 at Pwll Penarth (4th Dec) and 15 at Stiperstones (20th Nov).

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Gylfinbraff

RB3

Almost certainly underreported due to the secretive nature of the species, just 2 Hawfinch were noted at Powis Castle on 3rd Feb.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citronella*

Melyn yr Eithin

RB4

Breeding and wintering records were received from an area stretching along the south eastern side of the county to the north eastern edge. Other records came from the western side of the county around Machynlleth, Commins Coch and the Dyfi Estuary (where small numbers are recorded on winter bird feeders). Max count was a flock of 30 in stubble fields at Llanymynech on 23rd Nov.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Bras y Cyrs

RB4/P/W

The winter snow produced a few more garden bird feeder records than normal for this species (e.g. 1 bird at Wern on 1st Jan and 6+ there on 27th Mar). Regular sightings came from Dolydd Hafren (max count 44 on 13th Jan), Llyn Coed y Dinas, Pwll Penarth, Llyn Mawr, Llangurig and Cors Dyfi.

Places to Visit – The Flash, Welshpool by Paul Leafe

The Flash is a small natural lake situated to the north of Welshpool behind the leisure centre (SJ233083). As well as waterfowl being attracted to the lake, there is also a good sized reed bed which acts as good cover for some species in the winter and a great nesting habitat in the summer.

The Flash doesn't have access all the way round, but it can be viewed by either parking in the leisure centre car park and walking towards the play area, or by following the public footpath which SJ23480854 to SJ23130825.

Although the Flash doesn't boast a massive list of species, what it lacks in quantity it makes up for in quality considering its size.

What to look out for:

Spring/Summer: As spring arrives, so do the summer migrants. Reed and Sedge Warbler are the most abundant amongst the Warblers, but others such as Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler and Blackcap are also present. Reed Buntings also breed in good numbers, and Water Rail probably breed here too. On the water, Mallard, Coot and Moorhen breed annually, with Little Grebe and Tufted Duck attempting most years. With lots of raptors breeding in the area, it's worth keeping your eyes to the skies too. Peregrine, Goshawk, Red Kite, Buzzard and Sparrowhawk have all been seen here, while Hobby and Osprey pass through nearby. Little Owl used to breed here, but is now sadly a rare visitor.



Jack Snipe by Paul Leafe

Autumn/Winter: As ducks start to move away from their breeding grounds, numbers on the lake increase. Mallard and Tufted Duck make up most of them, but it's always worth checking through them as other species such as Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler, Gadwall, Pochard, Goosander etc can be present. Common and Jack Snipe winter here every year in reasonable numbers using the reed beds for cover during the daytime, but some years they can reach treble and double figures respectively. 4-5 Water Rails also use the cover of the reeds. The Alder trees to around the southern end can attract good numbers of finches. Regular flocks of Siskin, Goldfinch and Lesser Redpoll can be seen. During Waxwing 'invasion' years, the car park and surround berry trees are worth checking as they usually feed on them. Good numbers of winter thrush can also be present in these trees.

Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust Garden Bird Survey Summer 2013

Background

For the past 20 years or so, the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust (MWT) has operated a survey that asks interested members to record the birds they see in their gardens.

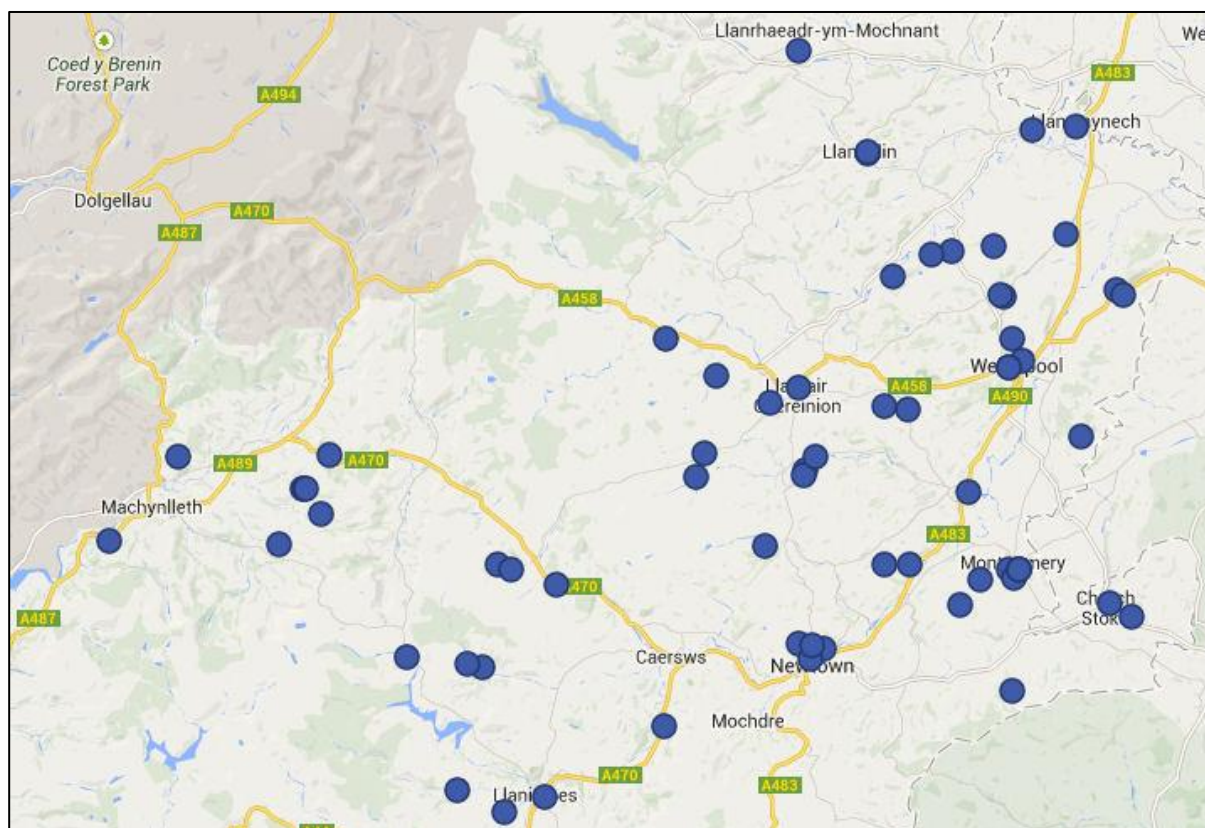
There are two surveys a year, the 'Winter' survey spans October to March and the 'Summer' survey covers April to September. The observer enters a 'frequency score' for each species seen per week (blank=none; 1=single bird once or more than once; 2= more than one bird seen on one or more occasions; 3 = more than 10 birds seen on one occasion).

The MWT Garden Bird Survey provides an insight into garden bird presence across the county and the relative frequency of each species seen. The 2013 sightings data received from the Surveys is already contained within this County Report. However, the MWT Survey merits a closer look in its own right. Whilst not claiming to be a definitive scientific study; it does nevertheless have the potential to give an *indication* of the state of Montgomeryshire's garden birds.

The 'Summer' 2013 survey is reviewed in more detail below. It is of most relevance to this County Report as it is wholly within the annual time period.

Summer 2013

A total 69 surveys were returned from which 101 species were accepted for the County Record. Blue dots on the map below show the location of surveys completed.



Species Presence and Frequency

The top 10 list of species recorded as present in the MWT Garden Survey during summer 2013 (recorded at least once in each garden) is as one might expect (Table 1).

Table 1: Most widespread species in MWT Garden Survey Summer 2013

Species	Surveys	Frequency	% Surveys
Blue Tit	69	3126	100.0
Blackbird	69	2799	100.0
Great Tit	69	2724	100.0
Buzzard	69	2037	100.0
Magpie	69	2025	100.0
Robin	69	2015	100.0
Chaffinch	68	2718	98.6
Woodpigeon	67	2428	97.1
Carrion Crow	64	2477	92.8
Coal Tit	64	1391	92.8

Buzzard scores highly, but then it is an easily recognisable species and only needs to be seen once overhead in the whole of the summer to register a presence. This table is unlikely to change much year on year, although Coal Tit was 18th in the Summer 2012 list (present then in 84.9% of gardens). An increased visibility of this species in summer 2013 could be a legacy of high Coal Tit numbers within Britain during winter 2012/13 and/or the harsh extended winter of 2012/13.

A 'Frequency' score is derived from totalling the MWT Garden Survey weekly column scores of blank, 1, 2 or 3 (refer to 'Background' above). The species with the highest frequency scores are the most abundant birds.

Table 2: Most Frequent (abundant) species in MWT Garden Survey Summer 2013

Species	Surveys	Frequency
Blue Tit	69	3126
House Sparrow	61	2896
Blackbird	69	2799
Great Tit	69	2724
Chaffinch	68	2718
Carrion Crow	64	2477
Woodpigeon	67	2428
Buzzard	69	2037
Magpie	69	2025
Robin	69	2015

The Frequency table (Table 2) illustrates that where House Sparrows are present they are, as expected, present in large flocks. However House Sparrow does not exist in every garden (it is 13th in the list of most commonly present species). The opposite is true of summer Coal Tits. Ranked at 10th in presence (Table 1) they were only 17th on frequency, indicating that, although the Coal Tit was present in 92.8% of gardens, not many Coal Tits were visible throughout the summer.

Table 3 shows the largest change in Frequency for the 59 'continuous' survey gardens (i.e. those taking part in both Summer 2012 and Summer 2013 surveys).

Given the small size of the survey and the fact only 2 years are being compared, no scientific conclusion can be drawn from this analysis but the 'losers' do contain some worryingly familiar species of conservation concern.

Table 3: Changes in Frequency 2012-2013

Species	% change	Notes
Winners : Common species more frequently recorded in 2013 compared to 2012		
Grey Wagtail	57.94%	20 gardens recorded this species in 2013 compared to just 9 in 2012. Wet summer of 2012 reduced numbers/visibility in that year?
Blackcap	30.81%	Wet summer of 2012 reduced numbers/visibility in that year?
Mallard	23.20%	Same number of gardens (13) in both years
Garden Warbler	21.85%	Wet summer of 2012 reduced numbers/visibility in that year?
Tawny Owl	19.39%	
Lesser Redpoll	17.54%	Could be that the late cold winter 2012/13 caused more sightings in April 2013 than 2012?
Losers : Common species less frequently recorded in 2013 compared to 2012		
Green Woodpecker	-106.52%	Observed in just 8 gardens in 2013 compared to 14 in 2012
Spotted Flycatcher	-76.92%	In 14 survey locations both years but presumably less birds in 2013?
Treecreeper	-52.87%	
Pied Wagtail	-50.66%	Seen in fewer gardens (39 in 2012 compared to 33 in 2013)
Bullfinch	-45.83%	Seen in fewer gardens (37 in 2012 compared to 30 in 2013)
Song Thrush	-22.59%	

MWT Garden Survey data from before 2012 is not yet computerised so more extensive analysis of larger sample sizes is not currently possible.

Places to Visit – Breidden Hills by Simon Boyes

The Breiddens are a group of three prominent hills in the east of Montgomeryshire, forming an easily recognized landmark between Shrewsbury and Welshpool and visible for miles around. Each hill is different in character and so must be described separately. The correct pronunciation is 'Br-eye-then.'

Best known of the three is **Breidden Hill**, the most northerly in the group. On top (365m) sits the monument Rodney's Pillar - a popular destination for hikers. The habitat on top is a mix of sheep pasture and mature parkland with many fine oaks. Redstarts and Tree Pipits sing here in May and June. Raptors include Buzzard and Sparrowhawk (common), Peregrine and Kestrel (regular) and occasional Red Kite and Goshawk. Most visitors park by Criggion Village Hall (SJ295149) and walk up through the Forestry Commission conifer plantation. Another access starts at SJ285136 and ascends (less steeply than the usual route) also through spruce. The west flank of Breidden Hill is being steadily eroded by a huge quarry. South of Rodney's Pillar is Breidden Forest, a large area of commercial coniferous forestry. Here Crossbills are regular but unpredictable, and there is suitable habitat for Nightjar since areas are regularly cleared and replanted. Woodcock visit in winter.

To the south-east of Breidden Hill is **Middletown Hill** (367m). Almost treeless, this is the least interesting of the three for birds, although the views over the Shropshire plain are spectacular. Parking by the pub (The Breidden Inn) in Middletown village at SJ302125, a climb takes you up the southern slopes on public footpaths through many warbler territories in spring. (Also look out for the rare Pearl-bordered Fritillary on warm days in May; and for Adders sunning themselves on the footpaths). There is a closer car-park to the summit, along the minor road at SJ297130, a spot frequented by Mistle Thrush and Green Woodpecker (in any month) and Common Whitethroat (in spring and summer).



Moel-y-Golfa in winter by Simon Boyes

The jewel in the Breidden crown is **Moel-y-Golfa** (403m). Most of the hill is clothed in a magnificent mature forest of oak, beech, larch, and pine, especially on the southern slopes. Redstarts, Pied Flycatchers and Nuthatch nest in spring, though it is some years since the Wood Warbler disappeared as a breeding bird. Nevertheless, it is worth checking for their trilling song in the tall beeches to the east of the Gypsy Monument (on the summit) in spring. Ravens nest, and Fallow Deer (descendants of escapees from Loton Park, Alberbury) can often be seen.

Unfortunately, this hill is less well served by public footpaths than the other two. The best parking area is at SJ283118, where the minor road from Trewern village turns to the left. Heading through a conifer plantation, the path joins another public footpath. Turn left (and steeply uphill), and eventually the oaks give way to stunted larches and rocky outcrops as the summit is neared. On a clear day the Berwyn Mountains and Cader Idris can be seen to the west.

The energetic visitor can combine these three hills in a single visit, if armed with a good map showing the network of footpaths. The Breidden Inn in Middletown serves good Chinese meals!


Ringling Recoveries reported in 2013


Unfortunately it is not possible to produce a definitive list of birds ringed in Montgomeryshire in 2013 because the county boundaries of Montgomeryshire are not recognised by the BTO Ringing Scheme. However, ringing recoveries from Clwyd and Powys which are within the Montgomeryshire boundary have been manually selected from the BTO online ringing reports and are shown below.

Reports of birds ringed or found ringed in Montgomeryshire

Source : British Trust For Ornithology (<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>)

Mute Swan			
U4925	Nestling Female	15-09-1993	Brookside, Telford: 52°38'N 2°26'W (Shropshire)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	29-08-2013	Aberbechan, Newtown: 52°32'N 3°16'W (Powys) 57km W 19y 11m 14d
ZY0234	Nestling	03-09-2009	Aberbechan, Newtown: 52°32'N 3°16'W (Powys)
	Sick (domestic animal)	26-07-2013	Altrincham: 53°24'N 2°22'W (Greater Manchester) 114km NNE 3y 10m 23d
Red Kite			
AJ56290	Nestling	07-07-2007	Site Confidential (Powys)
	Freshly dead (hit by car)	08-03-2013	Penegoes, Machynlleth: 52°35'N 3°49'W (Powys) 4km 5y 8m 1d
Coot			
GR51270	First-year	11-02-2012	Farnworth: 53°33'N 2°24'W (Greater Manchester)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	26-01-2013	The Flash, Welshpool: 52°40'N 3°8'W (Powys) 110km SSW 0y 11m 15d
Woodcock			
EX42413	Adult	24-02-2011	Nant-Y-Gwrdur, Llyn Clywedog, Llanidloes: c. 52°29'N 3°40'W (Powys)
	Long dead (shot)	15-11-2011	Ambleteuse: 50°48'N 1°36'E (Pas-de-Calais) France 409km ESE 0y 8m 22d
Barn Owl			
GC32342	Nestling	03-07-2007	Llety Perygwl, Harlech: (Gwynedd)
	Freshly dead (in building)	17-04-2013	Llangynog: 52°49'N 3°25'W (Powys) 46km E 5y 9m 14d
Blackcap			
POL A311307	First-year Male	20-10-2010	Mexilhoeira Grande, Faro: 37°9'N 8°37'W (Algarve) Portugal
	Caught by ringer	19-08-2012	Llanfechain: 52°47'N 3°15'W (Clwyd) 1,787km NNE 1y 9m 30d
Blue Tit			
Y724278	Second-year Female	04-06-2012	Nantyfyda, Machynlleth: 52°33'N 3°45'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	09-02-2013	Lake Vyrnwy: c. 52°45'N 3°28'W (Powys) 30km NE 0y 8m 5d
L412904	Nestling	18-06-2013	Cefn Llwyni: c. 52°45'N 3°19'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	29-11-2013	Llanfyllin: 52°47'N 3°16'W (Clwyd) 6km NE 0y 5m 11d
Starling			
NLA L359851	Nestling	07-05-2012	Scholten Linde, Rossum: 52°22'N 6°56'E (Overijssel) The Netherlands
	Freshly dead	21-02-2013	Rhiwhirieth, Llanfair Caerineion: 52°38'N 3°22'W (Powys) 698km W 0y 9m 14d

Waxwing			
		<div></div> <div>Waxwing at Newtown by Phil Owen</div>	
NW66103	First-year Female	01-12-2012	Newtown: c. 52°30'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	15-12-2012	North Seaton: 55°10'N 1°33'W (Northumberland) 319km NNE 0y 0m 14d
NV56097	First-year	01-12-2012	Newtown: c. 52°30'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	26-12-2012	Lewes: 50°52'N 0°0'W (Sussex) 293km SE 0y 0m 25d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	09-03-2013	Petit-Saconnex, Geneve: 46°13'N 6°7'E (Geneve) Switzerland 977km SE 0y 3m 8d
NW66140	First-year Male	09-12-2012	Newtown: c. 52°30'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	06-02-2013	Onslow Village, Guildford: 51°14'N 0°37'W (Surrey) 234km SE 0y 1m 28d
NV56100	Adult Female	01-12-2012	Newtown: c. 52°30'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	19-12-2012	Royston: 52°3'N 0°2'W (Hertfordshire) 230km ESE 0y 0m 18d
	Freshly dead (hit building)	27-04-2013	Upton: 51°32'N 0°1'E (Greater London) 253km ESE 0y 4m 26d
NW66084	First-year Male	25-11-2012	Newtown: c. 52°30'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	02-02-2013	Strensall: 54°2'N 1°2'W (North Yorkshire) 229km NE 0y 2m 8d
NW66127	Adult	09-12-2012	Newtown: c. 52°30'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	13-04-2013	Pandrup, Brønderslev: 57°13'N 9°40'E (Jylland) Denmark 982km ENE 0y 4m 4d
Pied Flycatcher			
L699165	Nestling Female	14-06-2012	Allt Forgan, Lake Vyrnwy: 52°48'N 3°33'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	07-06-2013	Wythop Hall, Bassenthwaite Lake: c. 54°38'N 3°14'W (Cumbria) 205km N 0y 11m 24d
Chaffinch			
T935963	Full-grown Female	23-04-2010	Willow Garth: 53°44'N 1°11'W (North Yorkshire)
	Freshly dead	26-11-2013	Churchstoke: 52°32'N 3°4'W (Powys) 184km SW 3y 7m 3d
Y495243	First-year Male	14-03-2012	Llanfyllin: 52°46'N 3°16'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	28-07-2013	Lake Vyrnwy: c. 52°45'N 3°28'W (Powys) 14km W 1y 4m 14d
L412640	First-year Male	07-04-2012	Plas-Du, Penybontfawr: c. 52°49'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	02-03-2013	Mynydd Llandegai: 53°10'N 4°6'W (Gwynedd) 65km NW 0y 10m 23d

Brambling			
		 <p>Brambling at Welshpool by Chris Townsend</p>	
L965972	Full-grown Male	05-02-2013	Welshpool: 52°40'N 3°9'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	16-10-2013	Ny Lundensgard: 57°16'N 11°1'E (Laeso) Denmark 1,037km ENE 0y 8m 11d
D384015	Full-grown Female	05-03-2013	Welshpool: 52°40'N 3°9'W (Powys)
	Caught by ringer	03-05-2013	Moen, Gran: 60°25'N 10°33'E (Opland) Norway 1,200km NE 0y 1m 28d
NOS 4E35322	First-year Male	10-09-2012	Dividalen Fs, Malselv: 68°47'N 19°40'E (Troms) Norway
	Caught by ringer	17-12-2012	Welshpool: 52°40'N 3°9'W (Powys) 2,161km SW 0y 3m 7d
	Caught by ringer	14-03-2013	Welshpool: 52°40'N 3°9'W (Powys) 2,161km SW 0y 6m 4d
Y598852	Adult Male	30-03-2013	Hanwood, near Shrewsbury: 52°40'N 2°51'W (Shropshire)
	Caught by ringer	27-12-2013	Bryn Picca, Dolfor: 52°27'N 3°23'W (Powys) 44km WSW 0y 8m 27d
Goldfinch			
L412128	Adult Male	11-12-2010	Plas-Du, Penybontfawr: c. 52°49'N 3°20'W (Powys)
	Alive (in net or cage)	13-06-2013	Mullacrew, Louth Village: 53°56'N 6°33'W (Louth) 247km WNW 2y 6m 2d
L980117	First-year Male	12-02-2012	Redditch: 52°19'N 1°56'W (Hereford & Worcester)
	Caught by ringer	13-04-2013	Llanfyllin: 52°46'N 3°16'W (Powys) 104km WNW 1y 2m 1d
Y154458	Adult Male	25-01-2012	Llwynmawr: 52°55'N 3°10'W (Clwyd)
	Caught by ringer	24-01-2013	Llanfyllin: 52°47'N 3°16'W (Clwyd) 17km SSW 0y 11m 30d
Siskin			
D099325	First-year Female	31-03-2013	Llanfyllin: 52°47'N 3°16'W (Clwyd)
	Caught by ringer	24-04-2013	Tarbet, Cnoc, Loch Lomond: c. 56°12'N 4°42'W (Strathclyde) 391km NNW 0y 0m 24d
BLB 13137012	First-year Female	07-04-2013	Veerle: 51°4'N 4°59'E (Antwerpen) Belgium
	Caught by ringer	21-04-2013	Llanfyllin: 52°47'N 3°16'W (Clwyd) 597km WNW 0y 0m 14d
Lesser Redpoll			
L736899	First-year	03-02-2012	The Flash, Welshpool: 52°40'N 3°8'W (Powys)
	Alive (ring read in field)	10-12-2013	Woodford Green: 51°37'N 0°0'W (Greater London) 244km ESE 1y 10m 7d
D170453	Full-grown Male	17-03-2013	Beeston, near Sandy: c. 52°6'N 0°18'W (Bedfordshire)
	Caught by ringer	28-04-2013	Llanfyllin: 52°46'N 3°16'W (Powys) 215km WNW 0y 1m 11d