Homes for endemic invertebrates on Montserrat

Montserrat is a UK Overseas Territory in the Caribbean. It is sometimes known "The Emerald Isle of the Caribbean" as it resemble the coast of Ireland and Irish ancestry of many of its inhabitants. The island has had a troubled past, when on 18 July 1995 the previously dormant Soufrière Hills volcano erupted and eruptions continued between 1995 and 2000. As a results two-thirds of the island's population was forced to flee. The volcanic activity continues mainly effecting the southern part of the island.

Montserrat has a rich and diverse flora and fauna, with a high level of invertebrate endemism. There have been some studies on island particularly on beetles, but many invertebrate groups still remain seriously understudied. Based on current understanding there are around 243 invertebrate endemics on Montserrat but many more endemics remain undiscovered.

A partnership project 'Homes for Wildlife' between Montserrat National Trust, UK Overseas Territories Forum and the Species Recovery Trust, funded by the UK government's Darwin Initiative, is working with local communities to manage sites for biodiversity. On this project the Species Recovery Trust is support monitoring and habitat management of the invertebrates. We have designed a simple monitoring method, to record the different invertebrate group present on site, and enable interpretation of these results into management advice. David Clements an entomologist volunteering for SRT went to Montserrat and provided training and outreach, as well as new records for the island – see photo of Texas wasp moth *Horama panthalon*. Additionally, SRT has been collating invertebrate records for the island and has collated these into a central list, this is giving useful perspective of diversity and endemism of the invertebrates of Montserrat. We are also working with specialists on island to develop materials to support identification of groups such as butterflies.

Texas wasp moth *Horama panthalon* (c) David Clements