

We were a group of 17 today, the weather was fine and the fungi plentiful – at last fruiting seems to have kicked off ‘properly’ though often by late October things are beginning to tail off considerably. It is clearly an odd season and we’ll keep our fingers crossed that we don’t get early frosts to bring it all to an abrupt halt. We covered only a very small part of this beautiful site today, turning right at the lake and turning back once the *Boletus satanas* spot had been checked (but not found!). Nevertheless as we progressed (very slowly) I was regularly glued to the spot with my notebook for a good ten minutes at a time, then after a few steps glued again with both Derek and I constantly identifying as best we could as specimens were presented to us thick and fast. We amassed a list of 112 species – probably our longest for the site (and for the season) – of which roughly a third were new here. Whether this reflects the dedication and skills of members, our improved identification skills or the odd season, who knows?! Maybe a combination of all those plus a few unknowns – there’s nothing like mycology for producing mysteries.

Where to start! I took no photos myself but received around 50 from members within 24 hours – brilliant! Forgive me if yours are not all included here – clearly space and time are both limiting factors and my aim is to illustrate species not featured in previous reports, both rare and common, to give a flavour of the day and a reminder of some of the more interesting species found.



Our first species of interest was a large Oyster Mushroom found at the base of a small decaying Ash trunk. By process of elimination we ended up with *Pleurotus dryinus* (Veiled Oyster), not that common and usually occurring in wounds (where branches have broken off) often high up on Beech trunks. Though neither Derek nor I could recall having come across it on Ash before, this host is mentioned specifically in one text and it appears that it can occur on many different hardwoods, even occasionally on conifers. I then checked in our database and found two previous records from this site, one of which was found by me on Ash!

Above, *Pleurotus dryinus* on Ash, the cap about 12 cm across. (NF)

In the grassy areas were many patches with *Bolbitius titubans* (Yellow Fieldcap), a common species of grassy areas and when young masquerading as a Waxcap (and fooling several today). However, it has brown spores – not white as in Waxcaps - which as it matures colour the gills and as the cap expands the thin flesh reveals its true identity which is more akin to the *Parasola* Inkcaps.



Right, *Bolbitius titubans* both young and mature. (BW & GF)



Also in the grass near the lake was a clump of tall pale capped mushrooms having a distinct ring on the stem. This was *Agrocybe cylindracea* (Poplar Fieldcap), a species for which we have only a handful of records (and now moved to the genus *Cyclocybe*). It apparently occurs typically on stumps or roots of Poplar or Willow (hence its common name); Poplar is common at Wotton and we know that much felling around the lake has occurred over the years so no doubt this explains why the species was fruiting there though it was new to the site today.

Left, *Cyclocybe* = *Agrocybe cylindracea* (NF)

Beech is a scarce tree here but two species dependent on this as host were found – both new to the site. A miniscule *Mycena crocata* (Saffrondrop Bonnet) was found which strangely had a white stem with no juice, just the telltale saffron colour in part of its cap. Later a larger and more convincing specimen turned up on fallen Beech (and the unlikely smaller specimen also checked out as this at home). We do have a nice photo of another tiny Bonnet sporting a completely orange cap but a yellow stem. *Mycena acicula* (Orange Bonnet) can be confused with *Rickenella fibula* (Orange Moss-cap and also found today) which however lacks the yellow stem and has decurrent gills.

Right, the miniscule *Mycena acicula*, with cap about 5 mm across. (BW)

Below, *Mucidula mucida* on a living Beech trunk. (NF)



© www.barrywebbimages.co.uk



Also on living Beech were some examples of *Mucidula mucida* (Porcelain Fungus), always a crowd pleaser especially when viewed from underneath as shown here with the light filtering through the cap flesh as in porcelain.

On fallen Oak was the Ascomycete *Bulgaria inquinans* (the official rather unimaginative common name being Black Bulgar – eminently preferable is its more traditional name Bachelor's Buttons). If in doubt over its identity – there are other quite similar soft gelatinous black species on fallen wood – a finger rubbed over the black central surface comes away black, this being a diagnostic feature.



Above, the Ascomycete *Bulgaria inquinans* shown at different stages of development. (LS)

In grass near the trees we found a patch of small white 'clubs' which needed identifying at home. I found the spores matched in size with *Clavaria acuta* (Pointed Club) though they seemed obtuse at the tip rather than pointed? I therefore have some reservations about this determination but the spores matched nothing else remotely similar.

Left, *Clavaria acuta*, a species of club much less often encountered than the yellow *Clavulinopsis* species. (CW)



In this same area one large member of the Boletes was found which gave both Derek and me difficulty in the field – nothing unusual about that! The cap colour was, however, very distinctive: rather mottled with a pink orange tinge, it was also strongly blueing in pores and flesh but clearly soft fleshed eliminating the firmer fleshed genera and suggesting *Xerocomus* / -*ellus*. Derek and I decided to take half the specimen each in the hope of determining it, and at home I was quickly convinced this was *Xerocomellus armeniacus* (no common name and now in the genus *Rheubarbariboletus* – what a mouthfull!). The determination was for me confirmed when I checked for and found the plaques on the cap cuticle which stain with congo red. We have just two previous county records so this was a nice find.



Right, *Xerocomellus armeniacus*, an unusual Bolete having soft fleshy peachy pink orange cap and pores and flesh which turn blue when exposed to air (and a large brown slug enjoying the stem flesh!). (LS)



This site often produced a good number of Inkcap species and today Derek identified 9, of which we have photos of 2 to share with you – one very common and one much less so.



Above, *Coprinopsis atramentaria* (Common Inkcap) which is one of the larger Inkcap species. (DJS)



Left, *Coprinellus truncorum* (having no common name), a rare species but closely related to the very common *C. micaceus* (Glistening Inkcap) though differing microscopically. (DJS)

We came across a tall fine specimen of the common *Xerula radicata* (Rooting Shank) displaying its typical wrinkled brown cap surface and widely spaced white gills but these also sporting a dark gill edge, quite an unusual feature known to occur but apparently with no significance with regard to speciation.

Right, *Xerula radicata* showing its diagnostic features: the wrinkled brown cap and the widely spaced white gills which here have a dark edge. (gills: NF; cap: LS)



Another quite common species was just starting to fruit at the base of a deciduous trunk. This was the striking *Pholiota squarrosa* (Shaggy Scalycap). A typical member of the genus, it fruits in tight clusters on many deciduous trees and when fully developed has rusty gills and a ring on the stem (features not yet showing here).

Right, an immature cluster of *Pholiota squarrosa* (BW)





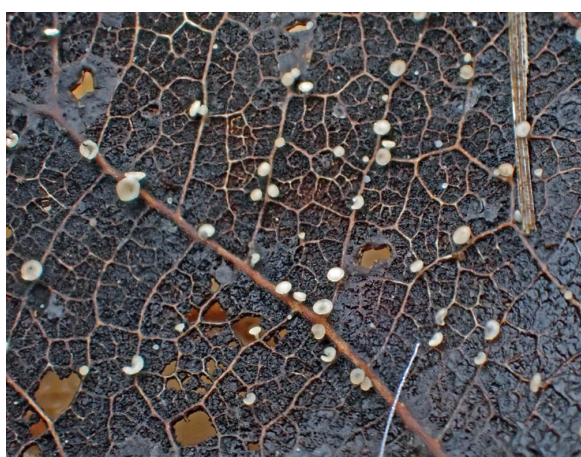
Two other members of the genus *Pholiota* are on our species list, neither of which appear remotely similar to *P. squarrosa* shown above. *P. tuberosa* (no common name) is small and rusty yellow, occurs occasionally on fallen wood in ones or twos and I suspect is often misidentified as the very similar *Gymnopilus pentrans* - also on our list. I found and checked one specimen today but sadly we have no photo to share. One we do have, however, is *Pholiota gummosa* (Sticky Scalycap), not that unusual but again not an easy species to recognise as belonging to this genus. The cap is cream with a greenish tinge, sticky and lacks much in the way of scales and it occurs on submerged roots often appearing in paths or soil where no wood is obvious.

Left, *Pholiota gummosa* just emerging. (NF)

On a Spruce cone this pair of tiny Mycenoid fungi were found which at first baffled us, but when a cone with some larger specimens was handed in the penny dropped (forgive the pun) and both Derek and I recognised the genus *Strobilurus* – one with just three species, all of which occur on cones. *Strobilurus esculentus* (Spruce Conecap) occurs only on that substrate (as does one other much rarer species so one always has to check it at home), whereas *S. tenacellus* occurs only on Pine cones.



Right, two tiny fruitbodies of *Strobilurus esculentus* on a Spruce cone. The yellow stem is a useful pointer to the genus. (BW)



A sharp eyed member found some tiny cups on a fallen Aspen leaf which at home I was able to identify as *Hymenoscyphus immutabilis*, a species only found on leaves of trees related to Poplar and one which appears to be new to the county.

Left, the miniscule cups of *Hymenoscyphus immutabilis* on an Aspen leaf – the veins of the leaf giving a sense of scale. (NF)

Two pristine specimens of a small *Pluteus* (Shield) were found, their caps about 3cm across and having a rather grainy texture with the brown filaments splitting to reveal white flesh beneath. This was later determined by Derek as *Pluteus ephebeus* (no common name) – quite an uncommon species.



Lastly as we returned we checked the summer house roof and as in previous years the thatch was covered in little Bonnets. A couple were collected to identify but sadly at home they got lost amongst the myriads of other Bonnets in my pots! However, checking back I discovered my record for *Mycena filopes* (Iodine Bonnet – also collected earlier in the morning) in 2013 which includes my comment ‘carpeting the summer house roof’! I hope I was correct.

Thanks to all for coming. We had a *really* good morning – thoroughly deserved after the rather disappointing outings earlier in the season. A big thank you to all those who so promptly sent me their excellent photos, this is *much* appreciated. For more details of what we found see the complete list.

Photographers

BW = Barry Webb; CW = Claire Williams, DJS = Derek Schafer; GF = Gill Ferguson; LS = Linda Seward; NF = Neil Fletcher.



The summer house thatched roof adorned with Bonnets! (CW)