

BFG

Buckinghamshire Fungus Group

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Newsletter Editor

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IT'S SEPTEMBER ALREADY

I began last year's newsletter with a reflection on the previous few seasons' success or failure rate in terms of abundance or scarcity of fungi, expressing the hope that the autumn of 2005 would produce another bumper crop to delight us, as 2004 had done. And did it? Well, no it didn't! Looking back at my words then, I had observed that "things had been moving pretty slowly through the summer months". So if this trend - i.e. a dearth of fungi in the summer being followed by an equally disappointing autumn - is anything to go by, then we could be in for a pretty dismal season this year too! As I write this at the beginning of August, there's certainly been very little about recently (more about this later), however on a much more optimistic note everyone knows that the one thing you can't do safely with fungi is make predictions. So enough of my pessimism: I'm presuming I'm wrong, and am already much looking forward to our new foray programme, as I hope you are.

Don't get me wrong: last season may not have been up to much in terms of profusion of fruitbodies on the ground, but plenty of really interesting and special things turned up, as you will see from Derek's report. It does often seem to be the case with fungi that some seasons produce quality rather than quantity, maybe be due to different climatic conditions favouring certain species - "some like it hot", after all - but sometimes I wonder if when there is less about to catch the eye one has to search around that much more diligently to find anything, and that's when the more unusual species are noticed. Pure speculation!

What you have just read is the introduction I wrote to the newsletter just after this summer's exceptional heatwave. You are now reading an extra paragraph I felt obliged to insert following our last-minute foray at Dancersend on September 27th, because thankfully I am already having to eat my gloomy words above: we had an amazing foray and found nearly ninety species, including nine mycenas, seven inocybes, five marasmius, several pluteus, lactarius and coprinus. The larger agarics were scarce, yes, with hardly an amanita or russula to be seen, but it was certainly a very encouraging start to the foray season. It seems the August rains have worked their magic and things are certainly stirring at last.

FORAY PROGRAMME

Our new foray programme is included with this bulletin, and contains thirteen events starting with Pulpit Hill and Grangelands on Sept 24th and concluding with Hodgemoor Woods on Dec 17th. I will here flag up several events on the programme which are not just run-of-the-mill forays:-

- Sat Oct 7th - "Mushroom Magic" Public Display. This event is now established as an annual fixture at Aylesbury County Museum, and is always a most rewarding day and very popular with the public, especially children. Its success, however, obviously depends entirely upon a good supply of material, and to this end we have in previous years held a foray the day before. However, not so this time because the BMS Autumn Foray week ends on Fri Oct 6th, so both Derek and I amongst other group members will be tied up. We will hopefully be bringing goodies back with us from Dorset - this year's venue - but local produce will be

desperately needed to boost the display, so all contributions will be most welcome on the day. Do please bring along nice quantities of anything however common, however big or small - visitors like to recognise and see at close hand species they may have noticed on walks - and if you can spare a little time to stay and chat with the public as they wander round, this would be great. Could you aim to arrive at around 10.00 on the day with your specimens, as it does take quite a time to set out and label all the material, and we open at 11.00 continuing through into the afternoon. It would also be fine if it suited you better to deliver any offerings to either Derek (Whitchurch) or me (Amersham) at home the evening before. Let us know if you need directions.

- **Mon Oct 9th - Indoor Identification Session**

This was requested by a few members at our AGM, and is designed to give those of you not so familiar with the delights of using microscopes, colour reagents, specialised books and keys, etc. an insight into this fascinating world, and also an opportunity to see a skilled mycologist at work amidst his very sophisticated equipment. (Derek will, I know, suggest I remove this last phrase, but his reputation and experience is considerable and may not be known to you.) This is an opportunity not to be missed, but do please phone him first if you are going.

- **Sun Oct 15th - Derek Reid Memorial Foray**

Derek Reid, who died earlier this year, was a much revered figure in this field, being Head of Mycology at Kew for fifteen years, also a brilliant teacher and an outstanding field mycologist who inspired many to take up the study of fungi as a serious hobby. The two adjacent venues for this joint Bucks. / Herts. Group / Beds. Natural History Society foray, at Stockgrove Country Park and Kings Wood, Beds, are most appropriate as Derek was Fungus Recorder for Bedfordshire for forty seven years, and both were amongst his favourite collecting sites.. Alan Outen, who took over the Herts Fungus Group at Derek's request and is also a member of ours, was much influenced and encouraged by him in his early years. He will be co-leading this meeting with Derek (Schafer). N.B. Contrary to our normal timetable, you may join this foray for the morning (10.00 start) or afternoon (1.30 start) or stay all day.

- **Sun Oct 22nd – Margaret Holden Memorial Foray**

Margaret Holden was Alan Outen's predecessor as leader of the Herts. Fungus Group, and died in 1998. Also a much respected figure in this field, she was editor of the British Mycological Society's Bulletin and assistant editor of *The Mycologist* for many years. She loved Ashridge, our venue, which straddles the Bucks./Herts. border, and this foray has been held annually in her memory since her death, and is where her ashes were scattered at the first such event. You

may also join this foray for the morning (10.00 start) or afternoon (1.30 start) or stay all day. It will be led by Alan Outen and Kerry Robinson, and is likely to be very well attended (over 100 last year!) as it is joint with the Herts Fungus Group, the National Trust and Friends of Ashridge. If necessary we will divide up into manageable groups with Derek and myself leading as well. There is a £4 attendance fee for all those *other* than BFG and HFG members!

- **Sun Nov 5th - Stowe Gardens Fungi Roadshow**

After last year's success we've been asked by the National Trust to repeat this event but this time with a fee to the public, mainly in an attempt to keep it down to manageable numbers! As before, BFG members who attend will be taking round small groups to collect for a display. The setting is superb and if you enjoy waxcaps then this meeting is a must: the last two years they've been stunning. N.B. **Start time is 11.00 am** and we will be continuing into the afternoon, so bring some lunch.

LIST OF MEMBERS

Also included with this is an up-to-date contact list. We have omitted addresses this year, as it was thought that phone numbers and email addresses are really all that is needed. Please check you are included and that details are correct, and let Derek know of any appropriate changes. As previously this information is circulated solely for the purpose of enabling members to contact one another, and is therefore *not* to be handed out further afield without a member's consent.

GROUP INSURANCE

We continue to participate in the BMS group insurance scheme set up last year, which is free.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership fees become due in 2007 when reminders will be sent out. They remain unchanged at £4.50 per individual and £6 per family.

RECORDS AND RECORDING

At present our BFG database designed by Nick Jarvis is in the process of being updated in line with the new *Checklist of the British & Irish Basidiomycetes* published last year. All our foray records are sent up to the national fungi database, and individual foray lists are available to be sent to members preferably by email but also by post. Just let either Derek or me know at each foray if you would like a copy sent afterwards, or if indeed you would like to receive all foray lists automatically We are well aware that we have been very inefficient over organising this in previous years, and apologise to those who have missed out consequently. We are intending to get our act together with a much better system set up between us once the new improved database is up and running.

AGM

This year's AGM was held as usual at Duck End House on Sunday afternoon, May 21st, and we again made it into double figures! It was great to see some new faces, and the attendance of some exceptionally well-behaved younger members who amused themselves with Jenny's supply of toys was an added bonus. This was the usual very informal affair, with a quick discussion on foray dates and venues followed by an even quicker skim through the prepared accounts for the year. Then on to tea, cakes, and the slide show of fungi photos taken during the year by various participants. The normal light-hearted atmosphere predominated throughout, and thanks are due to Derek and Jenny for their excellent hospitality - a very enjoyable occasion.

REPORT OF THE 2005 SEASON

By Derek Schafer

Although 2005 was not a prolific season in terms of quantities of the larger autumn species, it did provide a very wide variety of interesting fungi. In addition to the main autumn season, we had forays early and late in the year, in spring and one in the middle of summer and I was pleased that a good variety of fungi was found on every foray.

Penn Wood (Woodland Trust) Sunday 20 Feb 2005

Forays early in the year tend to find mainly things that grow on wood or other plant material, rather than the larger agarics and boletes that are common in the autumn. Our first foray produced a good list of 50 species, although nothing particularly rare. Among the bracket fungi were *Phaeolus schweinitzii* (the Dyer's



Fig.1 *Phaeolus schweinitzii*, specimen photographed in Scotland in 2000

Mazegill, Phillips p.302, fig.1), *Gloeophyllum sepiarum* (the Conifer Mazegill, Phillips p.314/5) and *Ganoderma australe* (the Southern Bracket, Phillips p.306). The Ascomycetes were represented mainly by microfungi such as *Lachnum brevopilum* and *Orbilina xanthostigma* (the Common Glasscup), with the larger and much more spectacular *Sarcoscypha austriaca* (the Scarlet Elfcup, Phillips p.366/7, fig.3) putting in the

first of a number of appearances at our early 2005 forays. This species seems to have arrived in Britain around the middle of the 20th century, replacing the almost identical *Sarcoscypha coccinea* in the southern and eastern parts of the country. The newcomer now seems to be very well established, the original *S. coccinea* generally being found only in Wales, Scotland and the rest of the north-west. The new species seems to occur more frequently than the old one and has become quite common in our woodlands in February and March. Other species included *Phanerochaete velutina* (recognised by Penny and confirmed by Nick Legon), *Hyaloscypha auriella* and *Melanomma pulvispyrius* (both identified by Mariko Parslow, having found their way to her courtesy of Ted Brown). The *Melanomma* seems to be quite commonly recorded outside of Buckinghamshire and is one of many "dots on sticks" that increase the length of our foray lists when we learn to recognise them.

Common Wood (Tylers Green Residents Society) Sunday 20 Feb 2005

A small group of forayers took part in the first visit in the early part of the year by BFG. We named 26 fungi, including *Phaeolus schweinitzii* (the Dyer's Mazegill, fig.1) and *Nectria episphaeria* (fig.2), a tiny relative of the Coral Spot fungus that grows on certain other fungi - *Hypoxylon fragiforme* (the Beech Woodward, Phillips, p.376) on this occasion.



Fig.2 *Nectria episphaeria* on an old *Hypoxylon fragiforme* fruit body. The *Hypoxylon* is somewhat less than 1 cm in diameter. Photograph taken in 1998

The February appearance of the agaric *Melanoleuca cognata* (Phillips p.98) might merit a place on Penny's unseasonally early list, although its common name, the Spring Cavalier, reminds us that it is often found early in the year as well as in the autumn.

Little Linford Wood (BBOWT) Sun 6 Mar 2005

The spectacular *Sarcoscypha austriaca* (the Scarlet Elfcup, fig.3) was also found on this foray along with



Fig.3 *Sarcoscypha austriaca*, Photograph taken at Rushbeds in 2006

37 other wood and plant inhabiting species, ranging from *Leptosphaeria acuta* (Nettle Rash) on nettle dead stem to *Daldinia concentrica* (King Alfred's Cakes, Phillips p.374) on an Ash log. A resupinate fungus (i.e. one that grows flat on the wood, or other substrate, with its fertile surface facing outwards), but with pores, *Physisporinus sanguinolentus* (Bleeding Porecrust, B&K2 p.300) was found on very rotten wood. Agarics included *Flammulina velutipes* (Velvet shank, Phillips p.115), which favours the colder months, *Mycena*



Fig.4 *Hemimycena tortuosa*. Microscope photo of cystidium

polygramma (the Grooved Bonnet, Phillips, p.81) and the tiny *Hemimycena tortuosa* (the Dewdrop Bonnet, C&D p.220), so called because of the water droplets that form around corkscrew-shaped cystidia on the cap and stem (fig.4). Another agaric found on the foray, *Tubaria hiemalis* (B&K4 p.358) is an example of the problems of putting names to our fungi. It is distinguished by some mycologists (based on microscopic differences and the time of year it appears) but is included as a synonym of *Tubaria furfuracea* (B&K4 p.358) in the 2005 checklist. Other finds included *Hypocrea pulvinata* (Ochre Cushion, B&K1 p.254), an *Ascomycete* that grows on old fruit bodies of the Birch Polypore (*Piptoporus betulinus*, Phillips p.306/7) and two *Myxomycetes* (slime moulds), *Metatrachia floriformis* and *Trichia scabra* consisting of stalkless orange/yellow blobs with amazing spiny spiral elaters (internal threads).

Salcey Forest (Forest Enterprise) Sunday 6 Mar 2005

Salcey is a magnificent woodland not far from the morning's foray with a good pub en route. There is a corner of the Forest that we have been led to believe is in VC 24, although there is no reason why we need restrict ourselves to recording in that Vice County. It turns out that probably none of the Forest is in VC 24 (despite the said corner having been incorporated into the latest computerised maps), presenting something of a problem when entering the records. Of more immediate concern, I had forgotten to note that 6th March is Mothers Day in the UK, so the pub was unable to provide any meals to visitors that hadn't booked and we had to manage with peanuts and pork scratchings! Apologies to my fellow forayers.

Anyway, we found about 30 fungi. *Physisporinus sanguinolentus* again, as well as another resupinate fungus, *Peniophora limitata* (B&K2 p.148, fig.5),



Fig.5 *Peniophora limitata* on Ash. Material from Great Hampden in 2002

which is more or less restricted to Ash as a host. The two slime moulds found in the morning were also there (*Metatrachia floriformis* and *Trichia scabra*). Penny added to the list with some microscopy on "dots on sticks", adding *Phoma camplanata* on dead hogweed

stems, *Bertia moriformis* - with tiny blackberry-like fruit bodies and 40 micron long spores - and *Lasiosphaeria spermoides* both on hardwood. The Ascomycete *Encoelia furfuracea* (the Spring Hazelcup) was found on a dead attached Hazel branch (there is a nice article about this fungus in the first issue of *Field Mycology* "A Winter's Trail, by Jo Weightman FM 1(1) p.9, 2000). A number of polypores were noted, including *Phellinus pomaceus* (the Cushion Bracket, B&K2 p.266) on Blackthorn and *Daedalea quercina* (the Oak Mazegill, Phillips p.314) on an Oak log. *Clitocybe fragrans* (the Fragrant Funnel), a white *Clitocybe* with a sweet aniseed smell, was the only agaric.

Pulpit Hill (National Trust) and Grangelands (Bucks. County Council) Saturday 30 Apr 2005

Spring forays are the time to look out for interesting Ascomycetes and this visit did not disappoint. The rare *Cordyceps gracilis* (B&K1 p.310), a member of a genus that parasitizes insects among other things, was found on a dead caterpillar and is a new County record. *Verpa conica* (the Thimble Morel, Phillips p.359) and *Xylaria carpophila* (Beechmast Candlesnuff, Phillips p.370/1) were among 16 Ascomycetes recorded.



Fig.6 *Gastrum fimbriatum* from Pulpit Hill 2005 ©Penny Cullington

Among the Basidiomycetes, two earthstars were found - *Gastrum triplex* (the Collared Earthstar, Phillips p.335) and *Gastrum fimbriatum* (the Sessile Earthstar, Phillips p.334, fig.6) with a small number of agarics,

including *Psathyrella spadiceogrisea* (the Spring Brittlestem, B&K4 p.286) making up the day's total of 36 species.

Wotton House Sunday 31 Jul 2005

The grounds of Wotton House include ancient woodland and some very ancient Oaks and have been managed with natural biodiversity in mind for many years. The nearby nature reserve of Rushbeds Wood was originally part of the estate. After some fairly moist weeks of summer, we were hoping that Wotton, a new site for the Bucks. Fungus Group, would provide an interesting range of fungi and we were not disappointed.

Peter Bugg, who knows the site well, very kindly agreed to lead us around the estate. I was amazed at the numbers of *Coprinus s.l.* (Ink Cap) fruitbodies that we encountered, including some excellent material of *Coprinopsis cortinata* (fig.7) and what turned out to be



Fig.7 *Coprinopsis cortinata* at Wotton House 31 Jul 2005

no fewer than 10 different species. Most exciting of these was a single fruitbody of *Coprinus heterothrix*. This is not uncommon elsewhere in Europe but, surprisingly, had not been recorded before in Britain. I had seen it once before on the British Mycological Society foray to Normandy in 2001.

Among the other agarics, the rarely recorded *Mycena corynephora* (B&K3 p.266), new to the County, was notable. Others included four species of *Psathyrella* and *Pluteus romellii* (the Goldleaf Shield, Phillips p.166).

We found good material of one of the Bird's Nest fungi, *Cyathus striatus* (the Fluted Bird's Nest, Phillips p.337, fig.8), which had a good year in 2005 turning up on a number of subsequent forays. The find at Wotton, however, seems to be the first Buckinghamshire record, somewhat surprisingly since it has been recorded a number of times in each of Hertfordshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Also new to the County was *Steccherinum fimbriatum* (B&K2 p.178), a resupinate fungus with distinctly fringed edges.



Fig.8 *Cyathus striatus*. Material photographed from Salcey Forest Sep 2005. The cups are somewhat less than 1 cm across the top

Mousells Wood and Moor Wood Saturday 24 Sep 2005

We were joined by the Frieth Natural History Society for these two forays, our first of the autumn season, arranged by Alan Gudge. Elsewhere, the signs did not seem to suggest an outstanding season. However,



Foraying at Mousells Wood on 24 September. BFG is certainly a fungus recording group that doesn't operate a "no dogs" policy.

Mousells Wood in the morning surprised us with an array of many varied and unusual fungi. This is all the more surprising since our subsequent forays in 2005 mostly did not provide an overwhelming quantity of fungi, although finding unusual things was the general pattern. Noteworthy finds at Mousells Wood included a large number of *Inocybe* species, including *Inocybe erinaceomorpha* (C&D p.312, fig.9 and see BFG Newsletter No.6 p.2), some colourful *Cortinarius* species such as *Cortinarius olearioides* (Phillips p.174) and *Cortinarius bulliardii* (the Hotfoot Webcap, Phillips p.198), *Hebeloma aestivale*, *Hygrophorus penarius* (the Matt Woodwax, C&D p.164), *Russula acetolens* (C&D p.394), *Russula faginea* (C&D p.390),

and *Clavariadelphus pistillaris* (the Giant Club, Phillips p.340, fig.10) all of which are rarely recorded. The total number of species found was 90.



Fig.9 *Inocybe erinaceomorpha* at Mousells Wood on 24 Sep 2005

Moor Wood in the afternoon produced just over 40 species, of which *Lactarius pterosporus* (Phillips p.61), with pink milk and spores with large distinct ridges, *Hebeloma aestivale*, again, and *Conocybe rugosa* were among the less commonly recorded finds.



Fig.10 *Clavariadelphus pistillaris* from Mousells Wood 29 Sep 2005 © Penny Cullington

"Mushroom Magic" Exhibition at the Bucks. County Museum, Aylesbury Saturday 1 Oct 2005

This event is organised by member Mike Palmer, Keeper of Natural History at the Museum, and has become a regular and popular event with visitors to the

Museum, as well as our members. Indeed, this year fungi, including the British Mycological Society's fungi models, will be the subject of a permanent display there to run throughout the autumn.

At the 2005 event, members brought in a wonderful selection of fungi and spent time with visitors explaining about the exhibits. Many thanks to all who participated. The display included books on fungi and member Nick Jarvis's beautiful photographs, which will also feature in this year's permanent autumn display.



Attendees at the "Mushroom Magic" Exhibition at the Museum 1 Oct 2005

Hampden Common joint foray with the Bucks. Archeological Society Natural History Section, Sunday 2 Oct 2005

The woodland fungi were not too plentiful, but our small group of forayers, led by Jim Stott, found some notable fungi on the open field at the beginning of the foray. These grassland fungi included several waxcaps (brightly coloured species that indicate unimproved grassland potentially important for fungi) and some unusual *Entoloma* species. Waxcaps found at the foray, *Hygrocybe chlorophana* (the Golden Waxcap), *Hygrocybe glutinipes* (the Glutinous Waxcap), *Hygrocybe psittacina* (the Parrot Waxcap, Phillips p.74, fig.xx) and *Hygrocybe reidii* (the Honey Waxcap, named after its characteristic smell, Phillips p.76/7)) often appear later in the year, so the site would be worth revisiting in November. *Entoloma ameides* is another species recognisable from its smell - a characteristic fruity smell, reminiscent of some brands of bubble gum. *Entoloma sericeum* variety *cinereoopacum* was another rather uncommon find.

Collecting samples of Horse manure in plastic pots is all part of the normal round for mycologists like me, interested in *Coprinus s.l.* species, but it did cause a little surprise (alarm?) among one or two of those new to foraying! The collection on this occasion had a tiny species on it, later determined as *Parasola miser* (as we now have to call it, previously *Coprinus miser*) one of the more common dung species, more usually associated with cow dung. A few days later I noticed



Fig.11 *Coprinopsis bicornis* new to Britain. On dung from Hampden Common

another species growing on the dung as it sat in its pot on my workbench in Whitchurch. On examination under the microscope, the fungus turned out to be *Coprinopsis bicornis* (fig.11), whose distinctive microscopic features make it easy to recognise. It is, however, extremely rare, not having been found before in Britain and the recent (2005) publication on the genus says "very rare in the Netherlands, known from two localities only. Not yet recorded from elsewhere in Europe".

Burnham Beeches "Walk and Talk" Saturday 8 Oct 2005 Tutored by Martyn Ainsworth

This was an all day event consisting of a morning talk followed by a walk through the Beeches in the afternoon. Martyn Ainsworth has been exploring the



Fig.12 *Ceriporiopsis gilvescens* at Burnham Beeches 8 Oct 2005

use of carefully chosen fungal species as indicators of how important ancient woodland sites are for fungal conservation. His recent investigations at the Beeches suggest that it is a site of national and arguably international importance. We were treated to an excellent illustrated talk and the woodland cooperated by provided an array of fresh specimens of the species described during the morning. These included *Ceriporiopsis gilvescens* (Phillips p.318, fig.12), *Ganoderma pfeifferi* (Phillips p.305, fig.13), *Hericium cirrhatum* (the Tiered Tooth, Phillips p.327, fig.14) and



Fig.13 *Ganoderma pfeifferi* at Burnham Beeches 8 Oct 2005

Laxitextum bicolor (B&K2 p.120, fig.15).

The afternoon also provided a good range of other finds, a total of 126 species in all, including *Pluteus thomsonii* (the Veined Shield, Phillips p.166, figs.18-20) with remarkably wrinkled cap bearing cystidia with long pointed extensions, with similar ones on the gill edge.



Fig.14 *Hericium cirrhatum* at Burnham Beeches 8 Oct 2005

Common Wood (Tylers Green Residents Society) Saturday 15 Oct 2005

This was our first autumn foray here, and was pleasingly well supported, although the fungi were sadly somewhat thin on the ground. Conditions seemed to be favourable, with rain a few days earlier, but as we have found elsewhere this season fruiting appears to be very inconsistent and unpredictable in this area, with mycorrhizal species in short supply. *Amanita muscaria* (the Fly Agaric, Phillips p.140) was plentiful, however, under the birch, and lovely specimens of *Cortinarius delibutus* (the Yellow Webcap, Phillips p.172, fig.16) were collected, looking like a set of Russian dolls. Two species of *Hebeloma* were identified and also of note was the rarely recorded *Psathyrella spintrigeroides* growing in moss. This species was originally described by Peter Orton in 1960 from material collected in Surrey, and there are only a handful of records since

then. The 2005 checklist includes it with some doubt about its distinction from another (apparently equally rare) *Psathyrella* but Penny, who collected and identified it, feels that the microscopic characters are very characteristic and distinct.



Fig.15 *Laxitextum bicolor* at Burnham Beeches 8 Oct 2005



Fig.16 *Cortinarius delibutus* photo from Scotland 2005 © Penny Cullington

Dancersend (BBOWT, SSSI) 16 Oct 2005. Joint Foray with the Hertfordshire Fungi Group

This was a very well attended foray with around 30 attendees including many of the most experienced mycologists from both Groups. A good variety of species was identified. *Marasmius bulliardii* on Beech litter (B&K3 p.235) is rarely recorded and easily mistaken for the more common *Marasmius rotula* (the Collared Parachute, Phillips p.118/9, which differs by being a lighter shade of pale, slightly larger and having more gills). Kerry Robinson, sharp eyed as always, took some specimens that didn't look right for *Marasmius rotula* home and checked them out. Another *Marasmius*, *M. torquescens* (B&K3 p.244) was found. This has distinctive pointed thick-walled hairs (*setae*) in the cap and stem (fig.17).

Other agarics included *Amanita phalloides* (the Deathcap, Phillips p.144), providing newer forayers with an opportunity to recognise this deadly poisonous fungus, *Hebeloma mesophaeum* (Veiled Poisonpie, Phillips p.216/7), *Stropharia coronilla* (the Garland Roundhead, Phillips p.249), *Pluteus romellii* (the Goldleaf Shield, Phillips p.166) and *Pluteus thomsonii* (the Veined Shield, Phillips p.166, figs.18-20). Five *Inocybe* species were found by Alan Outen, the leading British authority on this genus, including *Inocybe erinaceomorpha* (fig.9) and *Inocybe haemacta* (C&D p.312). Kerry found (and identified on sight!) *Coprinus cortinatus* (*Coprinopsis cortinata* as I am now calling it) and I was pleased to find for the first time *Psathyrella pygmaea* growing, as it often does, alongside its look alike *Coprinellus disseminatus* (the Fairy Inkcap, Phillips p.260).



Fig.17 *Marasmius torquescens* stem setae under the microscope. Specimen from Mousells Wood in Sep 2005

Kerry added numerous micro and corticioid fungi records to the list, with *Septoria cornicola* (on Dogwood leaves), *Hymenoscyphus salicellus* (on a Willow twig), *Ramularia fraxini* (on Ash leaves), *Scopuloides rimosa*, *Stypella dubia* and *Henningsomyces candidus* among the less commonly recorded species.

Figs. 18, 19 & 20 *Pluteus thomsonii* showing wrinkled cap bearing cystidia with elongated extensions



Fig.18 Specimen from Burnham Beeches 8 Oct 2005

Angling Spring Wood and Prestwood Holy Trinity Church Yard. Joint meeting with Prestwood Nature and the Conchological Society Saturday 22 Oct 2005

Angling Spring Wood is one of the Prestwood Nature's local sites and is one of the places where the rare Slender Slug is found. This is known to feed on fungi (Russula species have been suggested as its favorite nibble), so Tony Marshall, a BFG member and leader



Fig. 19 Specimen from Dancersend 16 Oct 2005



Fig. 20 Specimen from Dancersend 16 Oct 2005. The line in the centre of the photograph is probably a spider's silk thread.

of Prestwood Nature, and Liz Biles of the Conchological Society organised the joint foray to Angling Spring Wood. Along with some 59 fungi, the slug itself was found in several places. I found it munching a corticioid fungus and, although I generally avoid trying to identify corticioids, took this one back home and it turned out to be *Tomentella sublilacina*. Having formulated the theory, on this rather flimsy evidence, that the *Tomentella* was the slug's favourite nibble, I was interested to see a paper in the journal *Mycologia* on this very same fungus using various fungus-eating arthropods to disperse its spores. Other fungi found on the foray included five *Inocybe*, eight *Mycena* species, *Hebeloma helodes* (B&K5 p.120 as *H. pusillum*), *Ripartites tricholoma* (the Bearded Seamane, Phillips p.233) and a range of other typical Chiltern Beechwood species. Two Myxomycetes, *Arcyria denudata* and *Dictydiaethalium plumbeum*, were also found.

In the afternoon, part of the group visited Prestwood Holy Trinity Church Yard, which yielded a number of

unimproved grassland species - eight *Hygrocybe* species including *Hygrocybe calyptriformis* (the Pink Waxcap, Phillips p.74, fig.24), *Hygrocybe punicea* (the Crimson Waxcap, Phillips p.75) and *Hygrocybe citrinovirens* (the Citrine Waxcap) along with six club & coral fungi such as *Clavulinopsis helvola* (the Yellow Club, Phillips p.342/3, fig.21) and *Clavaria fumosa* (Smoky Spindles, fig.22 - the colour can vary from whitish smoke-gray, as shown, to ochre-brownish as illustrated in B&K2 p.344 or Phillips p.341, although this appears to have become a little yellower than the same picture in the earlier edition).



Fig.21 *Clavulinopsis helvola* specimen from Bernwood in 2002



Fig.22 *Clavaria fumosa* at Prestwood Church Yard
22 Oct 2005 © Penny Cullington

Margaret Holden Memorial Foray Ashridge joint foray with Herts Fungi Group and NT 23 Oct 2005

With 101 participants and four separate groups, a good list of 182 species was achieved despite apparently unpromising conditions. Finds included *Pluteus pellitus* (the Ghost Shield, C&D p.283), *Inocybe brevispora* and *Russula aurora* (the Dawn Brittlegill, C&D p.392) as well as *Amanita eliae* (C&D p.276, fig.23) at its only known Hertfordshire site. Penny has found it at several sites in Buckinghamshire and it is otherwise only known from Kent and Sussex.



Fig.23 *Amanita eliae* photo from Bradenham 2003 © Penny Cullington

Bradenham (NT, SSSI) and Naphill Common (SSSI) Sunday 30 Oct 2005

This is one of the richest areas of the Chiltern Beechwoods, for flowering plants as well as fungi. We recorded 85 species including *Fistulina hepatica* (the Beefsteak Fungus, Phillips p.304/5), *Gyroporus castaneus* (the Chestnut Bolete, Phillips p.287), *Craterellus cornucopioides* (the Horn of Plenty, Phillips p.274), *Mutinus caninus* (the Dog Stinkhorn, Phillips p.338) and *Cantharellus cibarius* (the Chanterelle, Phillips p.272). *Mycena rosea* (the Rosy Bonnet), *Mycena Diosma* (C&D p.231) and *Mycena pelianthina* (the Blackedge Bonnet, Phillips p.82/3) were found and are all in the same group of *Mycenas* as the much commoner *Mycena pura* (the Lilac bonnet), which was also found. It seems to be a characteristic of the richer, long-established sites that closely related and, in the wider world much rarer, species become established. Finding four of the five members of this *Mycena* group is a good illustration of this. Other less commonly recorded fungi included two *Lepiota* species - *Lepiota subgracilis* (B&K4 p.202, as *L. kuehneriana*) and *Lepiota clypeolaria* (the Shield Dapperling, C&D p.243).

Penn Waxcap Foray Thursday 3 Nov 2005

It is remarkable how many fungi can be found on a cold November day as one travels the 400 metres from Penn Church to the Squirrel Pub. Even with such a warm and welcoming attraction, we stopped and collected some 63 species of fungi. The waxcaps were much in evidence, 13 different species in all, including *Hygrocybe calyptriformis* (the Pink Waxcap, Phillips p.74, fig.24), *Hygrocybe flavipes* (the Yellow Foot Waxcap, Bon p.103), *Hygrocybe irrigata* (the Slimy Waxcap, Phillips p.73). Penny and I independently took home and studied specimens of a fungus not quite right for *Clavulina* and each made it *Ramariopsis kunzei* (the Ivory Coral, fig.25), Penny's specimen confirmed at Kew. Other finds included four species of



Fig.24 *Hygrocybe calyptriformis* photographed in Derbyshire in 2004 © Penny Cullington

Clavulinopsis, *Stropharia inuncta* (the Smoky Roundhead, C&D p.354), *Bovista plumbea* (the Grey Puffball, Phillips p.331) and *Paecilomyces marquandii* on *Hygrocybe virginea* (the Snowy Waxcap). There is an interesting description and discussion this "fungus on a fungus" in Alick Henrici's "Notes and Records" section in the January 2002 issue of Field Mycology (3(1), p.28) with a photograph by Alan Outen.



Fig.25 *Ramariopsis kunzei* from Penn Churchyard 3 Nov 2005 (the rather strange background is my plastic briefcase).

Stowe Landscaped Gardens (NT) Sunday 6 Nov 2005

This public foray has become one of our regular events and in 2005 we organised it as a "roadshow" with smaller groups led by members of the BFG collecting specimens and bringing them to one of the splendid Palladian buildings for identification and display. This format worked well and we counted a total of around 96 species for the day.

Stowe, like Penn and the occasional Churchyard, is one

of the rare Buckinghamshire unimproved grassland sites where *Hygrocybe* and other fungal species characteristic of such habitats thrive. We found a total of eleven *Hygrocybe* species, including magnificent material of *Hygrocybe punicea* (the Crimson Waxcap, Phillips p.75), *Hygrocybe calyptriformis* (the Pink Waxcap, Phillips p.74, fig.24), and *Hygrocybe irrigata* (the Slimy Waxcap, Phillips p.73) again. Other finds included two *Geastrum* species, *Psathyrella multipedata* (the Clustered Brittlestem, Phillips p.254/5) and *Ramariopsis kunzei* (the Ivory Coral, fig.25) again. The anamorphic fungi *Calcarisporium arbuscula* on *Hygrocybe pratensis* (the Meadow Waxcap, Phillips p. 72) continued the "fungus on a fungus" theme.

Bernwood (Forest Enterprise) Sunday 18 Dec 2005

Our last foray of the season provided a very enjoyable walk through delightful woodland and a worthy, if not overwhelming list of 30 species. Fungi included *Cantharellus tubaeformis* (the Trumpet Chanterelle, Phillips p.273), *Hydnum repandum* (the Wood Hedgehog, Phillips p.323), *Ischnoderma benzoinum* (the Benzoin Bracket, Phillips p.308 as *I. resinosum*), *Mycena flavescens* (Phillips p.85) and *Strobilurus esculentus* (the Sprucecone Cap, C&D p.232) on a buried Spruce cone.

Other Interesting Finds during 2005

I have tried to give a flavour of our activities during the year but without listing all of the many records made. These are available in the form of lists for each foray and will also be available to members in the form of a comprehensive database of Buckinghamshire fungi when the current work on the database is completed. In addition to the main events in our 2005 programme, there were many other records made during the year. I

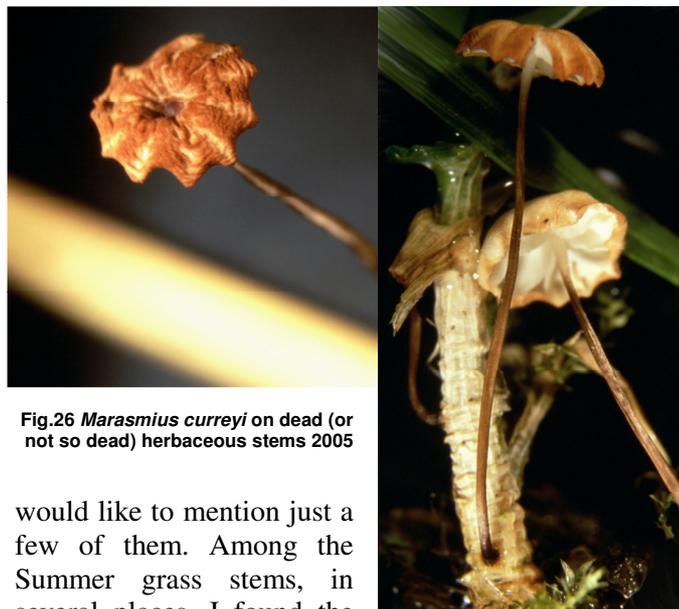


Fig.26 *Marasmius curreyi* on dead (or not so dead) herbaceous stems 2005

would like to mention just a few of them. Among the Summer grass stems, in several places, I found the tiny *Marasmius curreyi* (C&D p.214, fig.26). Later in

July, Tony Marshall took me to see what I identified as *Boletus satanoides*, which I understand is what the 2005 checklist names as *Boletus legaliae* (C&D p.437, fig.27). This was under Oak at the side of a road near Prestwick. My photographing (see fig.27) was bordering on the not legaliae, taken as it was with my tripod set up in the narrow carriageway with cars rushing past!

At a BBOWT foray I was leading at Rushbeds on 9th October, I was presented with a large agaric that looked something like a *Lepista* or *Clitocybe nebularis*. My response to the demand for a name was "doesn't compute" and I took it home. There, it turned out to be the *Rhodocybe gemina* (C&D p.303, fig.28) that featured in the *Field Mycology* article of April 2005



Fig.27 *Boletus legaliae* under Oak at roadside near Prestwick 15 July 2005

(6(2) p.65) by Graham Mattock and that Penny had found in Hodgemoor Woods in 2004. Previously rare, this does seem to be establishing a widespread presence.



Fig.28 *Rhodocybe gemina* from Rushbeds Wood 9 Oct 2005

References are to the following: Phillips = *Mushrooms*, Roger Phillips, Macmillan 2006 (the new edition); C&D = *Mushrooms & Toadstools of Britain & Europe*, R. Courtecuisse & B. Duhem, HarperCollins 1995; B&K1-4 = *Fungi of Switzerland*, J.Breitenbach & F.Kränzlin, Verlag/Edition Mykologia, 1984-1995; Bon = *Mushrooms & Toadstools of Britain & North Western Europe*, M.Bon, Hodder & Stoughton 1987.

Photographs are © Derek Schafer unless indicated otherwise.

BMS COPRINUS WORKSHOP

In May some thirty enthusiastic members of the British Mycological Society attended a residential weekend workshop at Green Park Conference Centre in Aston Clinton. A few were BFG members but most hailed from much further afield, as far flung as the wilds of the West Country and Aberdeenshire. Laden with microscopes, specimens, reference books and note books, all had come to learn from the country's most experienced *Coprinus* specialist, his reputation both in the field and in the lab. being well known. His name - have you guessed yet? - was Dr Derek Schafer, yes, your very own BFG leader! How many other local fungus groups can aspire to a figurehead of such mycological renown?!

We were not to be disappointed, and by the end of the session all felt much more knowledgeable and capable of tackling this tricky genus (although with *Coprinus* you do have to get your skates on to avoid your specimen ending up as a pool of black soup before you've got it home to look at!). Hand-outs accompanied the lectures, which also were amply illustrated with projected photos of the salient features magnified for our amazement, and a brand new key to the genus together with a supply of dried material to work on completed the picture. The food was copious, the weather was wonderful, and in fact the weekend was in atmosphere more like a reunion of old friends, the only down side being the time scheduled for the two foray sessions (6.30am on Sat and Sun morning!) and the apparent need to grasp yet further fungi name changes - nowadays a permanent thorn in the struggling amateur mycologist's flesh! *Coprinus*, it seems, is about to be hit more than most by this disease, being split up into no less than four different genera: *Coprinus* - as we know it now applying to only two species, *Coprinopsis*, *Coprinellus* and *Parasola*. Yet more confusion ahead, then, and even the updated edition of Roger Phillips's much acclaimed fungi book just published is already behind the times before the print has dried!

By the way, such workshop events are by no means for BMS members exclusively, and are open to all. There are usually one or two held each year, normally on a specific genus or group of related genera, and they are an excellent way to introduce the keen amateur to the techniques required to study fungi in more depth. No more are planned this year however, but do ask Derek or me if you would like to consider participating in similar events in future, and we will let you know when more information becomes available.

THOSE YELLOW RUSSULAS!

For the 2003 newsletter (my first as editor) I wrote an article on the three common green-capped species of *Russula*; it seemed popular and was then included in the magazine *Field Mycology*. (Do you take it? If not you're really missing out.) So this year I thought I'd have a go at the three common yellow ones, in order of commonness *R. ochroleuca*, *fellea* and *claroflava* (English names: ochre brittlegill, geranium brittlegill and yellow swamp brittlegill). However, I am here reminded of Delia Smith who in one of her cookery programmes carefully demonstrated how to boil an egg - after all, **everyone** can identify *Russula ochroleuca*! Yes, but how often are the other two of this trio either missed or misidentified?

The main thrust of my argument previously was the fact that although it is well nigh impossible to split the green trio safely by comparing cap colour, you can do it with relative ease by using a ferrous sulphate crystal, because the reaction when rubbed on the stem is (a) bright salmon in *heterophylla*, (b) dirty orange brown in *aeruginea*, or (c) nil to pale green in *cyanoxantha* var. *peltereaui*. Sadly a crystal isn't going to be of much help with the yellow trio which all react similarly - just the usual boring dirty orange brown found in the majority of *Russulas*.

However, there is another much under-rated colour reagent which works a treat here. You may remember an article in *Field Mycology* (2004 vol. 5(3)) by Mario Tortelli on Guaiac, a gum which can be very useful when working on this genus. It is a sticky brown fluid which when placed on the stem shows either a negative reaction (staining like weak tea after 4 minutes), a strong reaction (going bright blue-green within 10-30 seconds), or some reaction between the two. Now, as luck would have it, this reagent is extremely helpful with sorting out the yellow trio because *ochroleuca* has a very strong reaction whereas *fellea* and *claroflava* both have a negative one. This may not at first seem that advantageous as it's not going to split *fellea* from *claroflava*, but in practice these two are not the ones people confuse. I've heard many a discussion in the field as to whether a specimen is *ochroleuca* or *fellea* - indeed, I suspect the photo of *fellea* in B&K vol.6 may well be *ochroleuca* just to add to the fun - and I've heard even more heated debates over *ochroleuca* and *claroflava*, but never over *fellea* and *claroflava*.

O.K. so you don't possess a bottle of Guaiac, and certainly don't want to be bothered with taking one on forays with you! So let's make a proper comparison of the species involved.

As everyone knows, *R.ochroleuca* is a very common woodland species - probably the commonest *Russula*. It is of medium stature; the cap is ochraceous to greenish yellow and the cuticle (skin of the cap) peels to 2/3^{rds};

the gills are white when young then pale cream, but always distinctly contrasting with cap colour, also fragile; the stipe is white but tends to grey when old or soggy; the taste is mild to acrid, not hot, and the smell is hardly detectable. Significantly, this species is amazingly host-catholic, i.e. the opposite of host-specific - I'm not sure this is an accepted mycological term, but I like it - growing happily with both broad-leaved trees and conifers. (All *Russula* species are mycorrhizal, by the way.)

R. fellea is common but not nearly as frequent as *ochroleuca* unless you are under Beech, with which it is host-specific in the South. Thus if your specimen is growing with no Beech present you can safely eliminate *fellea* from the equation. It's also usually a smaller species, the cap colour tends to be of a softer buff-ochre with an orange tinge, and it peels much less readily - only to 1/3rd. The gill colour is the give-away for me with this species, being concolorous with the cap and stipe, which incidentally doesn't grey with age. Finally, the taste is burning hot and the smell is distinctive, being of geranium leaves (thus its English name) or - for me more aptly - of freshly stewed apple. Clear differences here, then.

R. claroflava is not that common in the South and grows exclusively under birch, preferring damp areas often with sphagnum (thus its English name), although in Hodgemoor Wood it occurs in a much drier area. Again, therefore, noting the host tree with your collection is essential. Stature is similar to *ochroleuca* and the cap peels to 2/3^{rds} also, but the colour is a much more uniform intense bright yellow, not ochre or orange, and only a specimen of *ochroleuca* in tip-top condition and under birch should be confusable, but this does occur! The gills are whitish when young but soon become palish-ochraceous, clearly darker than in mature *ochroleuca*, and are also soft and not fragile. So a quick rub across the gills with a finger to see if they crumble or not could be a useful indicator here. The stipe is white, but give it a scratch with your fingernail and then keep your eye on it in your basket as you foray on, because this species belongs to a group of *Russulas* which tend to blacken when damaged, and this applies to gills and cap as well. Yes, *ochroleuca* may have a greyish stipe when old and swollen with moisture, but the fruitbody never darkens to the extent shown in *claroflava* when it's damaged.

A quick word here on comparing spore print colour - always a useful way to confirm or reject your determination of any *Russula* species, although it does mean a few hours' wait for the result. (For the best method for doing this see Derek's article following this one. It's advisable after removing the specimen to leave

the print to dry off for a few minutes before scraping the spores together in a pile with a razor blade or knife for a good concentration of colour). *R. fellea* is the palest of our trio being virtually white; then comes *ochroleuca* which is pale cream; *claroflava* is the darkest, being pale ochre. If you're an enthusiast like me, you'll keep old spore prints from year to year to facilitate quick checks that your identifications match previous finds for that species. Considering how cap colour in most *Russula* species can vary enormously from specimen to specimen, it is quite amazing how consistent the spore print colour for each species is, and also how it resists fading with time.

Before summarising this trio in tabular form, I felt I should briefly mention the existence of further yellow *Russulas* which may be found in our area, but which are neither as common nor likely to be confused with our three. Here a quick tour with diagnostic features highlighted:-

R. violeipes: medium stature; cap a pale greenish, violaceous or lemon yellow, cuticle hardly peeling at all; **stipe yellowish white but with varying amounts of violet or purple**; taste mild; guaiac negative; host-catholic; not that common.

R. risigallina: a small species; cap colour apricot-orange, **cuticle almost entirely peeling; gills deep saffron**, spore print orange-ochre; taste mild; guaiac negative; fairly common with broad-leaved trees. (*var.*

acetolens = *R. lutea* is very similar, but cap egg yellow and not nearly as common.)

R. solaris: similar again to *R. risigallina* but a rare species; cap colour a softer yellow, almost *fellea*-like, with a grooved margin and cuticle peeling only to halfway; gills as cap, not as dark as *acetolens*; spore print also not as dark; **smell similar to *fellea* but taste acrid, not burning hot; guaiac positive**; grows with Beech. (I would love to find this species.)

R. farinipes: an occasional smallish species; cap colour between *fellea* and *ochroleuca*, **cuticle not peelable, flesh thinnish and flexible, elastic**; gills paler than cap, slightly decurrent and quite widely spaced; stipe hard, rigid; taste burning hot, smell fruity; guaiac negative; under broad-leaved trees, oak in particular. (I've found this once in Burnham Beeches.)

R. grata (= *laurocerasi*), *foetens* and *subfoetens* have caps some shade of ochre or honey, but they tend to be largish species and have a **sulcate cap margin** (grooved) not present in the trio; they also have distinctive strong smells - rancid or of almonds. Guaiac strongly positive. (These species belong to a group often affectionately referred to as "the smellies".)

R. lepida var. *lactea*: as *R. lepida* - which has a bright red cap with a matt surface, not peeling, and **solid flesh in the cap and stipe**; (taste is said to be of cedarwood pencils!). This variety has a pale yellow-cream cap.

<p><i>R. ochroleuca</i> Stature medium, cap to 10cms. Cap ochraceous to greenish yellow Cuticle peels to 2/3^{rds} Gills white then pale cream Gills thin and crowded, fragile Spore print pale cream Stipe white, greying when damp or old Taste mild to acrid, not hot; smell not distinctive Habitat host-catholic Guaiac positive *Dermatocystidia & fuchsinophile hyphae both absent, but cap hyphae end cells golden yellow in KOH</p>	<p><i>R. fellea</i> Stature smallish, cap to 8cms. Cap buff-ochre with orange tinge Cuticle peels to only 1/3rd Gills ± concolorous with cap Gills unremarkable in texture Spore print white Stipe ± concolorous with cap Taste burning hot; smell fruity, of geranium leaves or stewed apple Habitat host-specific, with <i>Fagus</i> Guaiac negative *Dermatocystidia abundant but fuchsinophile hyphae absent, no golden end cells in KOH</p>	<p><i>R. claroflava</i> Stature medium, cap to 10cms. Cap a uniform intense bright yellow Cuticle peels to 2/3^{rds} Gills cream then pale ochraceous Gills flexible Spore print pale ochre yellow Stipe white, but whole fruitbody blackening where damaged Taste mild; smell not distinctive Habitat host-specific, with <i>Betula</i> Guaiac negative *Dermatocystidia absent but fuchsinophile hyphae present, no golden end cells in KOH</p>
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*If you use a microscope, examining a sliver of the cap cuticle will firm up your identification - as you can see from the table above differences between the three are quite distinct - but you do need sulphuric acid, hydrochloric acid and vanillin crystals as well as KOH and congo red to see all features convincingly. Do please ask me if you'd like more details about method

for this, or alternatively contact Geoffrey Kibby (FieldMycol@aol.com) for a copy of his synoptic *Russula* key which includes all the information you need on microscope techniques for this fascinating genus, of which there are so far known to be 150 species present in this country.

PRACTICAL TIPS - HOW TO MAKE A SPORE PRINT

Derek Schafer

Spore prints are important in identifying fungi for a number of reasons. They show the colour of the spores in mass, an important identification character for identifying genus and within many genera, e.g. *Russula*. The print provides mature spores for measuring their size under the compound microscope, compared with gill tissue, which includes immature, usually smaller spores. And the print is a useful addition to a herbarium specimen for future reference.

Spore prints are best made on to a smooth, colourless waterproof surface to avoid contaminating the spores and to aid in judging colour. A glass microscope slide is almost ideal - I say almost because they do occasionally break. To make a print, we need to place the mushroom with its cap resting on the slide. If we use two slides on top of a plastic cup, the mushroom can be placed with its stem in the cup and there is no need to cut off the cap. Cutting off the cap usually works OK, but we may want to keep the mushroom whole (to re-photograph) or cut it horizontally (to examine gill attachment) and is unnecessary.



Stropharia coronilla spore print

The problem with two slides at the top of the cup is that they fall off (believe me, no matter how careful you are, they fall off). The solution (see photos) is a piece of cardboard with a slot in one side. The slides sit on top of the cardboard on top of the cup with a space for the stem and the mushroom sits on top with its stem in the cup. The arrangement is much more stable and after



Agrocybe rivulosa spore print

a few hours, we have a good thick spore print. Dipping the stem in water does NOT improve the result, but a second (see-through) plastic cup over the cap helps avoid drying out and keeps out air currents.

A note about cardboard. I use a plastic-coated cardboard which is white, at least on one side, and can be washed. This is obtained by buying certain drink or food products that are sold in cardboard cartons. The cartons have a plastic-coated surface inside and can be cut up when empty. Unfortunately, some of these are lined with foil, so you have to find a product with the appropriate white inner surface. Another example, like margarine pots, of mycologists diet being dictated by the containers the food comes in!

Incidentally, the second photograph shows a species collected whilst writing this in August 2006. It appeared on my woodchip pile and seems to be the species discussed in the article by Camilla Lovatt in *Field Mycology* (7(2), April 2006, p.47), first described from the Netherlands in 2003 and from one site in Britain in 2004. I need to have it confirmed but if truly this species, then it is really on the move!

IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME!

It was suggested at the AGM that I might write a sequel to last year's article on Latin names and their meanings, and to this end I've recently acquired the book "Botanical Latin" by William Stearn. This weighty tome was written as an aid to assist botanists to create good descriptions for newly discovered plant species in Latin - this is a mandatory requirement for

all things natural, including fungi, which are new to science. Much of it makes fascinating reading if you have an interest in words and their derivation, although only a small part is specifically relevant to mycological names and terms; however, the section on Greek word elements, prefixes and suffixes used in botanical Latin really caught my attention.

Last time I treated Latin suffixes together with the colours, quoting examples from familiar fungus names; so I've decided here to put together a list of pertinent Greek word elements, in the hope that you will find it as interesting and enlightening as I did. I do find it helps when committing a new fungus name to memory if you have some idea why it was so named. I must admit that although some words are obviously familiar, I was hitherto unaware of how much Greek went into the construction of our "Latin" fungus names, and it appears that many names are in fact either a combination of Latin and Greek, or just "Latinised" versions of the Greek. In most instances below it soon becomes fairly obvious why a word was chosen to form a particular fungus's name, but please note that these are purely my own personal interpretations and a certain amount of guesswork has gone on - I may not necessarily be correct. Sometimes, however, the link between the Greek and the fungus name remains a complete mystery to me! These I've marked with a "(?)", and I'd be grateful if anyone can shed further light on the connection. So here goes:-

a-: not, without, -less. *Otidea alutacea*: not yellow; *Conocybe aporos*: spores with no germ pore; *Lactarius azonites*: cap with no zoning.

calo, calli: beautiful. *Calocybe* (see also under *cybe*); *Boletus calopus*: with a beautiful stipe (see also under *pus*); *Inocybe calospora*: with beautiful spores.

carpos: fruit. *Xylaria carpophila*: fruit-loving ie grows on beech nuts (see also under *phila*); basidiocarp: mushroom fruitbody.

caulos: stem. Caulocystidia: cells found on the stipe (see also under *cystis*).

cephale(us): head. *Amanita echinocephala*: spiky cap (see also under *echinos*); *Coprinus leiocephalus*: smooth cap (see also under *leios*).

chaete: loose flowing hair, mane. *Hymenochaete* and *Phanerochaete* are corticioids with hairs present (?).

chalco: copper. *Chalciporus*: a genus of bolete with pores thus coloured.

cheilos: lip. Cheilocystidia: cells found on the gill edge (see also under *cystidia*); *Cheilymenia*: a genus of discomycete (?)

chloros: greenish, greenish-yellow. *Hygrocybe chlorophana* (see also under *phana*); *Russula chloroides* has a greenish ring of colour at the stipe apex.

chryso: gold. *Xerocomus chrysenteron*: gold within; *Lactarius chrysorrheus*: containing gold latex (milk).

cyathos: ladle, cup. *Cyathus*: basically a gastromycete in a cup; *Pseudoclitocybe cyathiformis*: goblet-shaped.

-cybe: head. *Agro-*, *Calo-*, *Clito-*, *Cono-*, *Dermo-*, *Ino-*, *Psilocybe* etc.

cystis: bladder. Cystidia: swollen cells; *Anthracobia macrocystis*: with large gill cells; *Cystoderma*: with swollen cells in the cap skin.

dasys: shaggy, hairy. *Dasyscyphus*: an ascomycete covered in hairs.

derma: skin. *Dermocybe* (skinhead!); *Ganoderma* (?)

echinos: hedgehog, sea-urchin. *Lycoperdon*

echinatum: a very spiny puffball; *Amanita*

echinocephala: with a spiny cap (see also under *cephale*).

epi-: upon. *Epichloe*: an ascomycete which grows upon grasses (*chloe* (Gk : young green corn or grass); *Mycena epipterygia*: grows with fern (see also under *pteris*).

erythros: red. *Collybia erythropus*: with a red stipe (see also under *-pus*); *Coprinus erythrocephalus*: with a red veil on the cap (see also under *cephale*)

gaster: belly. **Gastromycete**: stomach fungus; *Melanogaster* : a blackish hypogeous gastromycete (see also under *melano* and *hypo*).

glossa: tongue. *Geo-*, *Lepto-*, *Micro-* and *Trichoglossum*: genera of earthtongues; *Calocera glossoides*: tongue-shaped.

gramma: stroke of a pen, line. *Mycena polygramma* and *Melanoleuca grammopodia* both have a stem with many lines/grooves; *Inocybe grammata* (?)

gymnos: naked, stripped. *Gymnopilus* (?); *Gymnosporangium* (?)

gyros: ring, circle. *Gyroporus*: a genus of bolete with rounded pores; *Gyromitra*: an ascomycete with a rounded head.

haema: blood. *Inocybe haemacta*: with reddening flesh; *Mycena haematopus*: with red juice in the stem.

helodes: frequenting marshes. *Hebeloma* and *Russula helodes* are both found in this habitat.

hyalos: glass. *Hyaloscypha*: a translucent ascomycete; hyaline: a cell not taking up stain, colourless.

hydro: water. *Hydropus*: a genus with watery juice in the stem (see also under *-pus*)

hygro: wet, moist. *Hygrocybe* (see also under *-cybe*); *Hygrophorus* (see also under *-phorus*).

hypo: below. *Hypoxilon*: a genus which grows within the wood; *Hygrophorus hypothejus* (?)

ion: violet. *Calocybe ionides*: with cap and stipe thus coloured; *Russula ionochlora*: with cap coloured with mixed violet and greenish-yellow (see also under *chlora*).

lagos(ros): a hare, lanky. *Coprinus lagopus*: like a hare's leg or foot.

leios: smooth to touch. *Coprinus leiocephalus* and *Inocybe leiocephala*: cap smooth. (see also under *cephale*)

lepis: scale (of fish, snake). *Agaricus xantholepis*: with a scaly cap and yellowing flesh (see also under *xanthos*); *Lepista* (?)

leptos: fine, thin, slender, weak. *Mycena leptocephala* (?); *Inocybe leptocystis*: with thin-walled gill cells.

leuco: whitish, pale. *Leucoagaricus* and *Leucocoprinus*: genera akin to *Agaricus* and *Coprinus* but with whitish spores; *Hebeloma leucosarx*: with white flesh (see also under *sarx*)

limon: moist grassy place. *Cortinarius limonius*: prefers this habitat.

lithos: a stone. *Pisolithus*: a gastromycete which looks like a stone.

-loma: hem, fringe, border. *Hebe*-, *Hyph*-, *Tricho*-(?); *Ripartites tricholoma*: cap with a hairy fringed margin (see also under *tricho*).

macros: large. *Macrolepiota*: a genus of large Lepiotas; *Macrocyttidia*: with large gill cells; *Agaricus macrosporus* & *macrocarpus*: with large spores & large fruitbody.

malacos: soft to the touch. *Cortinarius malachus* (?).

meas: big, large. *Megacollybia*; *Mycena measpora*.

melas, **melano**: black, blackish. *Inocybe xanthomelas*: with a yellowish cap but fruitbody blackens when dried (see also under *xanthos*); *Melanoleuca melaleuca*: flesh blackens (in the stem) (see also under *leuca*).

meli: honey. *Armillaria mellea*: honey coloured(?); *Russula melliolens*: smells of honey.

mesos: middle. *Conocybe mesospora* (?); *Hebeloma mesophaeum*: cap centre is dark (see also under *phaeo*)

meta: changed. *Clitocybe metachroa*: cap changing colour when dry or wet, hygrophanous; *Mycena metata* (?); *Metatrichia* (?)

micro: small. *Micromphale*: a genus with a cap having a small navel (see also under *omphalos*); *Otidia micropus*: having a small stipe (see also under *-pus*).

nanos: dwarf. *Russula nana* and *Pluteus nanus* are both very small examples of their genus.

ochros: pale, wan, sallow, pale yellow. *Russula ochroleuca*: cap colour (see also under *leuca*); *Cortinarius calochrous*: cap a beautiful pale yellow (see also under *calo*)

odont: relating to teeth. *Sarcodon(tia)*: genera with teeth-like tubes instead of gills; *Hyphodontia* (?).

oligos: small. *Oligosporus*: a bracket genus with small spores.

omphalos: navel. *Omphalina* and *Micromphale*: genera with caps thus shaped; *Lactarius omphaliformis*: having a cap with a navel.

opsis: aspect, appearance of. *Bolet*-, *Clavulin*-, *Hygrophor*-, *Tricholomopsis*, etc.

pachys: thick, stout. *Coprinus pachyspermus*: with fat spores; *Amanita pachyvolvata*: with a very large volva. **para**-: beside, near. *Russula parazurea*: cap colour near to *R. azurea*; *Boletus parasiticus*: grows beside (in fact on) its host.

phaeo: dark. *Phaeocollybia*: like a dark *Collybia*; *Clitocybe phaeophthalma*: fruitbody looking dark.

philo: fond of, loving. *Russula sphagnophila*: grows in sphagnum; *Conocybe coprophila*: dung-loving (copro (Gk): dung); *Psathyrella ammophila*: sand-loving (ammo (Gk): sand).

phlebo: vein. *Pluteus phlebophorus*: cap veined; *Phlebia*.

phyllon: leaf. *Marasmius epiphyllus*: grows on leaves (see also under *epi*); *Clitocybe phyllophila*: leaf-loving (see also under *phila*).

platys: broad, wide. *Megacollybia platyphylla*: grows with broad-leaved trees (see also under *phylla*).

pleura: rib. *Pleurocystidia*: cells found on the gill side rather than the gill edge (see also under *cystis*); *Pleurotus*: a genus with decurrent gills, thus ribbed on the stipe.

poly: much, many. *Xylaria polymorpha*: with many shapes (morphus (Gk): shape); *Polyporus*: with many pores.

psammos: sand. *Cortinarius psammocephalus*: cap sandy-coloured (see also under *cephale*); *Tricholoma psammophilum*: sand-loving (see also under *philo*).

psilos: bare, stripped of hair, smooth. *Psilocybe*(?) (see also under *cybe*)

psittacos: parrot. *Hygrocybe psittacina*: cap thus coloured.

pteris: fern. *Mycena pterygena*: grows on fern stems.

pteron: feather, wing. *Lactarius pterosporus*: with winged spores.

-pus: foot. *Boletus erythropus*: with a red stipe (see also under *erythros*); *Mycena galopus*: with milk/latex in the stipe (gal (Gk): milk).

pyr: fire. *Lactarius pyrogalus*: with fiery-tasting milk/latex; Pyrenomycete ie a group of fungi which look blackened as if burnt.

rhacodytos : ragged, tattered. *Macrolepiota rhacodes*: cap with this appearance.

rhiza: root. Mycorrhizal fungi are those growing attached to plant roots; *Rhizopogon*: a gastromycete with beard-like roots (pogon (Gk): beard).

sarx: flesh. *Hebeloma leucosarx*: cap with whitish flesh (see also under *leuco*).

spathe : a broad flat blade. *Spathularia*: a genus thus shaped; *Calocera pallidospathulata*: with pale flat fruitbodies.

stephanos: surrounding, encircling. *Strobilurus stephanocystis*: with gill cells encircled with crystals.

stigma: mark, spot. *Diatrype stigma*: with little dots.

strobilus: ball, pine cone. *Strobilurus*: a genus which grows on pine cones. *Amanita strobiliformis*: is thus shaped while fruitbody immature(?)

thele: teat, nipple. *Thelephora*: bearing nipple-like projections; *Dendrothele* (?)

trachys: rough, shaggy. *Trachyspora*: with spores thus **tricho**: hair. *Trichaptum*, *Tricholoma*, *Trichoglossum*; *Cortinarius hemitrichus*: the outer

half of the cap is hairy; a **trichoderm** describes a cap with cuticle cells which are elongated, hairlike, rather than globose.

tylos: callous, lump, swelling, knob. **Tylophilus**: a bolete with a knobby cap; **Tylospora**: a corticioid genus with lumpy spores.

xanthos: yellow. **Agaricus xanthodermus**: with yellowing skin; **Orbilia xanthostigma**: an ascomycete appearing like little yellow spots (?) (see also under *stigma*).

xeros: dry. **Xeromphalina**: having a dry navel (!?) (see also under *omphalos*); **Xerula** (?), **Xerocomus** (?).

xylon: wood, timber, log. **Xylaria**: grows on wood; **Hypoxylon**: grows under the surface of wood (see also under *hypo*).

Apologies for the length of this - I got a bit carried away! Talking of length, during my searches for examples to quote I came across this fungus name which made me gasp: *Parapleurotheciopsis inaequiseptata*! That's 36 letters in all. Can anyone top this and find a longer one?!

(I can't improve on Penny's longest name unless you include varieties, in which case *Leucocoprinus lilacinogranulosus* variety *subglobisporus* is my best offering. DJS)

(Sorry, not acceptable - no varieties allowed! PC)

BOOKS

I've already briefly mentioned "*Mushrooms*" by Roger Phillips which is hot off the press, this to replace his standard classic "*Mushrooms and other fungi of Britain and Europe*" which we all know and love. Published by Macmillan, RRP £18.99, (but only £14 from Amazon) with an additional 350 species making over 1,250 in all, and also updated to follow recent changes in nomenclature (but see article above!) and with Liz Holden's English names also included, it looks a superb volume and is definitely a must for every naturalist's bookshelf.

Also in the pipeline is the much delayed reprint of Marcel Bon's "*The mushrooms and toadstools of Britain and North-western Europe*". This really excellent pocket guide first published in 1987 has been out of print for, I guess, over ten years. It covers over 1500 species, with 1200 illustrated in colour, is fully keyed and also has spore drawings of all species - a unique feature in a book of this sort. Another "must have" reference book. RRP £14.99 but again cheaper on the net, this is now due out in Feb '07 subject to change!

I'm much indebted to Richard Iliffe for telling me about a fascinating read entitled "*Mr Bloomfield's Orchard*" by Nicholas P. Money. This delightfully written and entertaining book covers a wide range of

mycological topics, introduces one to the world of biology and fungal research, and puts our tiny world of field study into perspective with the rest of the natural world, really illuminating fungi's vital role in the way our planet ticks. Not amusing subject matter then, I hear you say. Wrong! It had me chuckling on many occasions, and the author's sense of humour is never far from the surface, although as a complete non-scientist I did have to concentrate hard at times to follow his drift. I really enjoyed this book, and bought my copy from Amazon. (I met Nick Money at the Nottingham BMS meeting after I had read the book. He is provocative and idiosyncratic in his views but uses that and other brilliant techniques to grip the reader when writing about complex subjects. For my money, he is one of the best writers of technical prose anywhere. DJS)

Finally, another non-reference book which I would bring to your attention is "*Fungi*" by Brian Spooner and Peter Roberts, now available on Amazon at under £18 in softback, and maybe considerably cheaper if you're lucky. This book - I quote - "takes a broad look at the extraordinary variety of fungal species", and I found particularly interesting and useful the way it provides lists of fungi found specifically in certain habitats in this country - an approach which I've always thought could be further explored in reference books. It's lengthy, nearly 600 pages, but I read it from cover to cover with much interest and would recommend it to anyone with a serious interest in mycology.

UNSEASONALLY EARLY RECORDS

A little while ago I contacted some members asking for records of any local early finds of common things, as I thought it might be an interesting exercise to see just how much can be recorded out of the normal autumn season - in fact, we could make a competition of it, I thought! Of course, that was before the hottest month for this country on record, and as we all know, the spring drought has continued. So have I rightly or wrongly assumed that the decided lack of response received is due to the dearth of fungi caused by the conditions rather than your lack of enthusiasm to participate?!

Anyway, not being one to give up without a fight, I have a few of my own records to bring you, and just a couple of others from the faithful few.

Can you beat any of these with an earlier date?

1st **agaricus**: 30th Apr, Coombe Hill, BFG foray. (see Derek's foray report for more information.)

1st **amanita**: 3rd June, Penn Wood - *A. rubescens*.

1st **boletus**: 26th May, Penn Churchyard - *B. (was Xerocomus) chrysenteron*; however, two days later

Steve Kelly found *Boletus edulis*, *B. erythropus*, *B. aestivalis* and *B. pruinatus* at Ashridge!

1st **collybia**: 27th May, Penn Wood. *C. dryophila*.

1st **inocybe**: 28th May, my garden! *Inocybe phaeocomis* var. *phaeocomis* exactly where it appeared last October.

1st **lactarius**: 17th Aug, Penn Wood. *L. subdulcis*.

1st **Laetiporus sulphureus**: 29th May, a suburban garden in Slough (Simon Hill)

1st **lepista**: 26th Feb!, Joanna Dodsworth's garden. *Lepista nuda* (wood blewit)(Joanna Dodsworth)

1st **Megacollybia platyphylla**: 22nd May, Penn Wood

1st **russula**: 6th July, Burnham Beeches. *Russula melzeri* – a new county record.

Also of note was the appearance of *Boletus* (was *Xerocomus*) *porosporus* on 13th July and *Russula atropurpurea* on 14th July in Hodgemoor Wood; *Boletus erythropus* on 23rd July, Penn Wood; and *Collybia fusipes* fruiting all through July in Hodgemoor Wood.

If you find the contents above at all worthy of interest, do please participate next year by supplying me with information about any unusually early finds. I feel sure sooner or later we'll have another bumper year for early records - this has certainly not been one - and who knows how significant our observations may become as global warming tightens its grip on our climate. Change is in the air as never before, accelerating at a frightening speed, and along with all living things, who knows which fungus species will show the first affects or have the most tolerance to whatever this planet is about to throw at us? Who knows Who knows

FUNGUS FEASTING!

As I suggested last year, I intend that this topic should become a regular feature of the newsletter, where members can air their views and share their recipes. I am very grateful to Joanna Dodsworth who has supplied the recipes below, and hope this will encourage others to follow her good example and contact me with their contributions, otherwise we won't have an article!

Last year, Derek provided an extremely apt and informative piece entitled "Cautionary thoughts on eating fungi". Rather than repeat it again here, I would ask those of you who didn't receive last year's newsletter to contact us for a copy: his summary of the various poisonous fungi out there and their effects should be read by everyone who chooses to dabble in eating wild mushrooms.

On the same cautionary note, Jacqui Darby has brought to my attention an example illustrating one of Derek's points: that not all so-called "edible" fungi

agree with everyone. She is a very keen collector and consumer of good edibles, but has found that St George's Mushroom - *Calocybe gambosa*, which appears in April around St George's Day and is prized by many for its distinctive flavour – quickly brings on serious heart palpitations and makes her feel extremely unwell. So you have been warned! Go carefully when eating any wild fungi.

Now over to Joanna for those recipes, if I haven't succeeded in putting you right off the idea!

Some useful fungus recipes

Joanna Dodsworth

Here are some of my favourite fungi recipes: the first is ideal for dealing with that basket made up of two or three specimens each of five or six edibles, with not enough of any one to make it a dish on its own. This recipe - a simple roasting - preserves the individual flavours and textures beautifully, much better than the more usual mixed fry-up. Even a handful of small *Laccaria amethystina* caps (the stems are tough and to be discarded) adds a flavour and texture different from any other. Typically my Autumn basket from the local woods will have one or two boletes, some hedgehogs, *Lactarius deliciosus*, a few small puffballs, some *Cantharellus tubiformis*, and some of the *amethystinas*.

Roast fungi

- Clean and prepare the fungi, cutting the bigger ones into halves or quarters so that they all end up roughly the same size.
- Pour some olive oil to cover the bottom of a roasting pan, and put in the fungi. Sprinkle more oil on top, some salt and pepper, and some garlic chopped with parsley if you have it, and turn the fungi about in the mixture to coat.
- Put in a hot oven (I use the top shelf of the hot oven of an Aga, but use whatever setting you use to roast a joint of meat) for fifteen to twenty minutes. And that's all!

The second is good for a large basketful, with more than you are able, or want, to eat at one go. This Italian method of preserving fungi in oil means that they keep for months, and they also make a good present - a change from home-made jam or marmalade. Use as an *antipasto*, on toast, or as an accompaniment to cold meats or cheese. It may seem an extravagant recipe with all that olive oil, but it soaks into the toast deliciously, and any leftover oil can be used in salad dressings.

Fungi preserved in oil

For 2 kg fungi (or *pro rata* for smaller quantities!) cleaned and cut up according to size. You can use any mixture of fungi, or all of one kind.

- In a large pan put 1.5 l. each of water and white wine vinegar, 1 tbs. salt, a few fresh bayleaves and a few cloves. Bring to the boil, and add the fungi. Allow to boil for 5-7 mins. They will shrink alarmingly.
- Drain them immediately, and spread them out on a clean tea-towel to cool and dry out for an hour or two.
- Meanwhile put some jars and a large metal spoon into a large saucepan, cover them with cold water, and boil for 10 mins, then remove to cool and drain. It is better to use small 500 g. jam-jars rather than fewer large ones, as once opened the contents should be used within a week or so (store in a fridge after opening).
- When cool, and using the sterilized spoon, spoon the fungi into the jars a few at a time, pouring olive oil over each layer and stirring gently to eliminate air bubbles. Fill the jars and make sure the oil covers the fungi at the top. Close the lid tightly and leave for a month before using.
- Clean the mushrooms, cut up the larger ones, and rinse thoroughly with cold water (hedgehogs are one of the few fungi you can wash thoroughly without adverse effects).
- Put them in a saucepan with a little water (it does not need to cover them—one-third of the depth of the mushrooms is quite enough). Put them firstly on high heat to come to the boil, and then turn down to medium to boil lightly until cooked—about 10 to 15 mins. You will find they shrink tremendously. Drain them thoroughly in a sieve, pressing down lightly to remove excess moisture.
- Meanwhile make a vinaigrette of 2 tbs olive oil, 1 tbs wine vinegar, 1 tbs tomato puree, a small onion or shallot chopped finely, salt and pepper, and, if you have it and like it, a little chopped anchovy – or make your usual vinaigrette dressing. I recommend the addition of some anchovy, it does add that bit of zing. When the hedgehogs are cool, mix in the vinaigrette,

Salad of Hedgehogs (*Hydnum repandum*)

Usually when you find one or two hedgehogs you find hundreds, and this is the way to make a delicious salad of them. Quantities are for 300 g (or *pro rata*, as before) of hedgehogs.



Forayers at Hampden Common

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