

BFG Foray at Hog and Hollowhill Wood
October 4th, 2014

Report by Penny Cullington

This is going to be the briefest report yet! The reason: we found only twenty one species today! After the driest September on record it's not surprising that we should produce the shortest foray list on record, despite the efforts of the nine of us who braved this morning's rain which only served to add insult to injury. For a while I thought the number of forayers (plus two dogs) was going to exceed the numbers of fungi, but we did manage to creep up past that figure – now that would have been embarrassing!



Above: *Ganoderma applanatum* showing the dark brown upper surface and pale pore surface beneath, and below: the pore surface showing the galls of the midge (photoNW)



New member Nick White took some nice photos of two common brackets which I'm including below, but there was really nothing else worthy of comment or photography. We found a *Ganoderma* on a fallen Beech trunk, one of two very similar species (*G. applanatum* and *G. australe*) with which Derek and I often test ourselves by trying to identify in the field, though the only sure way is to measure the spores to split them. The upper surface of *G. applanatum* (Artist's bracket) is thinner than that of the commoner *G. australe* (Southern bracket), thus one can push ones thumbnail into it more readily, whereas *G. australe* is extremely hard. Furthermore, there is an insect, the midge *Agathomyia wankowiczii* which lays its eggs on this species, causing galls on the underside, and it appears that though we humans may struggle to tell the difference between the two species in the field the midge does not, and chooses only to lay them in *G. applanatum*. Thus if you find the little tunnels of the galls on the underside you know you have this species and not the other one. They were indeed just beginning to develop on the bracket we collected, thus proving its identity.

We also found large photogenic specimens of the very common *Piptoporus betulinus* (Birch bracket / Razorstrop fungus) which for the want of anything else to fill the pages with I am including here as well - they are such excellent photos.



Three views of *Piptoporus betulinus*, found at Hog and Hollowhill Wood today. (photo NW)



My thanks to all those who attended, particularly to Nick for his photos and to Richard for his identifications of several interesting things he found on the underside of logs. Let's hope that October brings a more bountiful supply of fungi for us to enjoy.

For details of what we found see the complete list.