

# Foray at Naphill Common on Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup> 2016

Penny Cullington

This event has now become an annual meeting of friends of members Jackie and Justin together with BFG members and was held for the first time at this venue which provided us with excellent indoor facilities as well as good foraging for a large number of attendees – in excess of 70



people. We divided into three groups, one led by natural history celebrity Richard Fortey supported by Jackie, one by top field mycologists Geoffrey Kibby and Mario Tortelli, and the third by Derek and myself. All the groups were guided round the three planned separate routes by members of the Friends of Naphill Common, who we can't thank enough for making us so welcome and giving us their most valuable support throughout the planning and the actual event.

Left, forayers assembling at the start (UL)

Searching for fungi towards the end of the autumn fruiting season (as this was) is always unpredictable to say the least: in some years it can be excellent and in others very unrewarding. The somewhat dry conditions over the past few weeks had certainly slowed things up, but luckily the lack of frosts meant that we were still able to find a good number of species fruiting in reasonable condition. By the end I think everyone was getting familiar with the various guises of *Hypholoma fasciculare* (Sulphurtuft), the genus *Armillaria* (Honey Fungus) and *Russula ochroleuca* (Ochre Brittlegill), also were able to recognise the genera related to *Boletus* with their spongy pores beneath the cap in place of the gills found in most Agarics (mushroom-types).



Above right, *Hypholoma fasciculare*; below left *Armillaria mellea*; below right *Russula ochroleuca*; all were common today and found by all three groups of forayers. (PC)





Those BFG members who visited this site just two weeks ago were shown a beautiful collection of *Aleuria aurantia* (Orangepeel Fungus); luckily it was still fruiting just as impressively and hopefully most people managed to see it today. It's worth including Nick's lovely photo again here in case some of us missed it.

Right, *Aleuria aurantia* growing in disturbed soil today. (NS)

The three routes we took round the Common were planned so that everyone had a chance to see a very beautiful and rare fungus. Those of us who saw it on our previous visit were quite happy to have another opportunity to admire *Hericium erinaceus* (Bearded Tooth) growing as it was in several places on an ancient Beech tree which had collapsed into the Dew Pond. This species is listed under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 BAP. The Friends of Naphill Common are rightly proud to have such a special fungus fruiting here and we hope it will continue to thrive and maybe spread now the host tree is in this state of decay.



*Hericium erinaceus* fruiting most impressively on a massive Beech tree today (JW)

The combined lists of the three groups resulted in a list of 90 different species – some common and some more interesting and not regularly recorded. 16 species proved to be new to the site; of these three were new to the county – something likely to occur when we are lucky

enough to have foray leaders who have different areas of expertise from Derek and myself. Thus newly recorded were an unusual species of *Cortinarius* (a genus Geoffrey and Mario excel in), also an unusual species of *Psathyrella* identified in the field by Geoffrey and Mario and later checked with a microscope by me, and finally a rare corticioid fungus (one found more or less flat on wood looking not unlike a splodge of white paint) identified later by Richard as a species of *Hyphoderma* with only 28 UK records.

We all met up afterwards for tea, biscuits and – once all our specimens had been sorted and displayed - a light-hearted and informative ‘Show and tell’ session given by Geoffrey, Richard and Derek.



Above and below, attendees assembled afterwards for the ‘Show and tell’ session (PD)



I'd like to thank the many people without whom this event would not have been possible: firstly Jackie and Justin for their enthusiasm and organisation; the Friends of Naphill Common for hosting the event and especially Peter Davis for his endless patience and help; Richard Fortey, Geoffrey Kibby, Mario Tortelli and of course Derek for giving up their time to share their expertise with everyone today; the photographers who are listed below; last but not least all of you who attended and made this event such an enjoyable and memorable one for everyone.

For further details of what we found see the separate complete list of species.

Photos: PD = Peter Davis; JL = Justin Long; CR = Claudia Rutherford; NS = Nick Standing; JW = Justin Warhurst



Above, our esteemed leaders Geoffrey Kibby and Richard Fortey holding forth at our 'Show and tell' session (CR), and below two extra photos worth including: the delightful Daisy displaying her impressive mushroom jumper, and the wonderful mushroom cake which delighted attendees at Jackie and Justin's party afterwards – what a triumph! (JW)

