

## Rushbeds Wood 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Report by Derek Schafer

A small group of six of us took part in this foray: Nick and Toni Standing, Joanna Dodsworth, Sue Benenson, Jenny Schafer and me. It was colder and cloudier than when we left home but otherwise excellent conditions for finding fungi after quite a bit of rain in the previous week or two.

Our total of 61 species would have been significantly higher had Penny been with us to deal with many *Mycena*, *Inocybe* and other finds that travelled home in my basket but didn't make it to the naming cut. Nevertheless, assisted by Joanna who named a number of *Ascomycetes* and Slime moulds, the list includes some interesting and unusual or at least intriguing finds.

*Schizophyllum amplum* (figs.1,2), recommended English name 'Poplar Bells' is a red data list species (status 'near threatened') that I recognised having been shown it by Martyn Ainsworth at a BMS (British Mycological Society) spring foray in Huntingdonshire two years ago. One of only two species in that genus in Britain, it lacks the strange gill-like structure of the other one, *S. commune*, the Splitgill, but actually shares the white hairy upper surface and edge and pinkish-brown fertile underside of that species.



fig.1 Schizophyllum amplum (DJS)



fig.2 Schizophyllum amplum (NS)



A dramatic and large specimen of *Peziza micropus* (fig.3) was found on a log near the end of our walk close to *Scutellinia subhirtella*, one of a group of "Eyelash" species of this one occurring on muddy soil.

*Mycena pseudocorticola* (figs.4,5) is a rather attractive, tiny slate-grey to blue fungus that likes to fruit on mossy branches. Under the microscope it is also distinctive with strange looking cystidia topped with large numbers of finger-like protuberances, typical of many *Mycena* species. There are two forms: one has two-spored basidia; the other is less common but was the one we found at Rushbeds and has four-spored basidia.

fig.3 *Peziza micropus* (NS)



fig.4 *Mycena pseudocorticola* (DJS)



fig.5 *Mycena pseudocorticola* (NS)



fig.6 *Rhodocybe gemina* (from Rushbeds in 2005, DJS)

*Rhodocybe gemina* (fig.6) is a large, gilled fungus with unusually shaped pink spores. It turned up close to where it was found the last time I had seen it, ten years earlier.



fig.7 *Agaricus xanthodermus* (DJS)



fig.8 *Agaricus cf. benesii* (DJS)

Two *Agaricus* species were found. One was a group of very attractive looking fruitbodies (fig.7). Cutting the base of the stem revealed the bright yellow colour of the yellow-stainer, a somewhat poisonous mushroom. The smaller (for an *Agaricus*) size of fruitbodies led me to wonder if it was another species in that group but, on checking, it seems to be the very common *Agaricus xanthodermus*. The other *Agaricus* (fig.8) stained red when cut and, with cheilocystidia in chains and rather small spores, seems to key out as the very rare *Agaricus benesii*. However, the reddening was perhaps less dramatic than described for that species and the fruitbody was a very young one, so I regard it as *cf. benesii* until further study or additional finds can confirm or deny it. *Agaricus* species, despite some being very familiar as commercial or well known edibles, can actually be quite difficult to tell apart.

Joanna identified *Hymenoscyphus fructigenus*, found by Sue, (fig.9) and the *Myxomycetes Didymium squamulosum* (fig.10) and *Stemonitis fusca* (fig.11), though the material was too immature to be completely sure of the determination.



fig.9 *Hymenoscyphus fructigenus* on an old Hazel nut (JD)

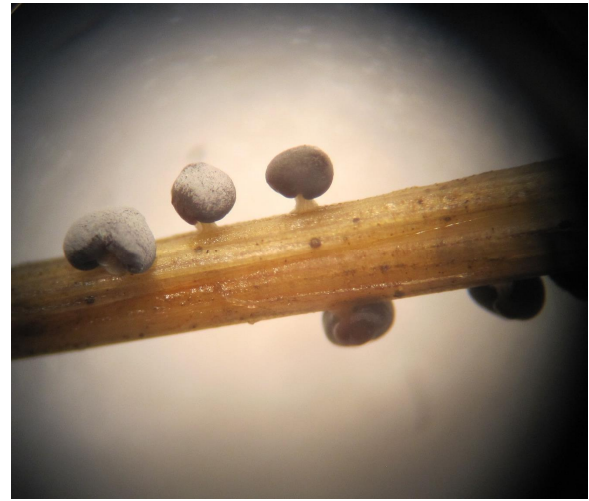


fig.10 *Didymium squamulosum* on dead grass stems (JD)

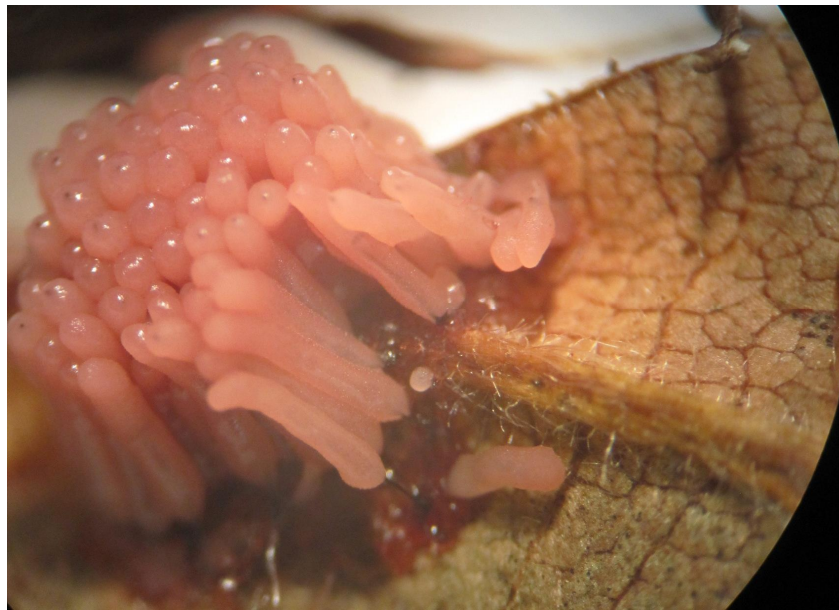


fig.11 *Stemonitis fusca* ó immature material (JD)

A number of Inkcaps were found. One small, fully autodigested specimen was a *Coprinellus* in the *Setulosi* section. With its gill cystidia dissolved away, not all the characters in the key were available but using a computer-based synoptic key, it could be named as *Coprinellus subimpatiens*. Another, growing on a rotting pile of grass cuttings, was named as *Coprinopsis patouillardii* ó one of a small group of species whose right to be distinguished as separate species (or to be included in the genus *Coprinopsis*) is a matter of debate among the few mycologists who care. *Psathyrella laevissima*, a close relative of *P. piluliformis*, was also found.

Photo credits: DJS = Derek Schafer; JD = Joanna Dodsworth; NS = Nick Standing