

Our group of 18 met up on a perfect morning, expecting to enjoy this beautiful woodland even if not much in the way of fungi was to be found. Jesper, who'd kindly done a 'recce' the day before, warned that it was likely to be a day of turning logs and looking for plant pathogens, but as it turned out we found a good selection to keep us interested including several different gilled fungi. Our list of over 60 species is largely the result of the growing skills and experience of those present together with the fact that this woodland is very special for fungi. Our database list for this site now comprises well over 800 species recorded over the last 30 years or so (though no doubt there'll be duplicates amongst them due to name changes); this number surely reflects the amazing diversity of species present and the reason why adding species new to that list is quite a challenge here. Nevertheless today we added another 17, several of which are new to the county also.

Our planned intention to frogmarch directly to lower and hopefully damper ground didn't really materialise - no surprise there! We were soon stopping and finding bits of interest even under the dry Beech dominated parts. Early on a dying but standing Birch trunk sported a cluster of relatively fresh *Pleurotus ostreatus* (Oyster), and sharp eyes noticed an LBJ in some moss which, once upturned, turned out to be *Laccaria laccata* (Deceiver) – both very common gilled fungi but still nice to find today given the conditions and time of year.



Above: *Laccaria laccata* (LR), and above right: *Pleurotus ostreatus* (PC)

Bob Simpson soon spotted something tiny and white sprouting from what he thought was a leaf shroud, but on closer inspection realised it was attached to a mummified larva of some sort. At home the micro-details fitted with *Cordyceps farinosa* (no English name though related to the Caterpillarclub) and a species we've recorded here just twice previously. He also found in this area a clearly poroid species of corticioid which at home revealed distinctive spiny spores which helped to confirm it as *Trechispora mollusca* (no English name).

Below left: *Cordyceps farinosa* (BW), and right: *Trechispora mollusca* (JL)



Around this time an upturned log, probably Beech, revealed generous swarms of little white hairy discs with distinct stems. Clearly one of the white species of genus *Lachnum*, these always need a check with a scope to identify – there are at least four possible white species which favour such logs. At home I made this one *L. brevipilosum* (no English name) though several other superficially identical collections were made, one of which turned out to be *L. impudicum*. Soon after these finds another

interesting corticioid showed up, also on the underside of a log but with distinct cream coloured spines or ‘teeth’. This was later identified by both Claudi and Jesper as *Mucronella calva* (Swarming Spine) - new to the site today.

Left: the upturned log with the tiny white dots of *Lachnum brevipilosum* (plus David’s boot for scale!) (PC), and below: the remarkable teeth of *Mucronella calva* (BW)



A large bracket was found at the base of a Beech trunk; though clearly belonging to the genus *Ganoderma*, to several of us it had a slightly different jizz to the two more common members of this genus regularly on our lists, in fact suggesting the rarer *G. pfeifferi* which favours Beech. However, on applying a flame to the crusty surface it failed to melt and bubble – a feature of *G. pfeifferi* – thus pointing to it being *G. australe* (Southern Bracket). A check of the spores has yet to be made to confirm this, however. Also found, another corticioid with spines and new to the site today though very different in general appearance to the species featured earlier here. Claudi recognised the genus *Mycoacia* in the field but was unsure of the species until he got it home, whereupon on opening the container he noticed a distinctly soapy smell! This pointed straight away to *M. nothofagi* (no English name), which he then confirmed from microscopic features.

Below left: *Ganoderma australe* awaiting confirmation (SJE), and right: *Mycoacia nothofagi* (CVS)



On damp bare rotten wood several examples of an incredibly brightly coloured slime mould were easy to spot and place instantly in the genus *Lycogala* from the familiar rounded shapes and colour. A few years back we'd have had no hesitation in recording this as *L. terrestre* (Wolf's Milk for some), but



following DNA research this species has suffered a fate similar to Heinz 57 soup varieties! Apparently there are now proven to be no less than 54 species, leaving the long-suffering field mycologist with a hopeless task because (you guessed it) they all look extremely similar! Our sample will be dried and given to Jackie Mackenzie-Dodds in the hope that she can identify it to species, but we think it likely that the brightness of colour apparent here points strongly to *Lycogala epidendrum*. However, for reasons which must be obvious it will probably need sequencing.

Left: *Lycogala cf. epidendrum* (LR)

Another gilled species worth mentioning: a few examples of a tiny white virtually stemless species shaped rather like a sea shell were found on rotten wood suggesting the genus *Crepidotus* (Oysterling). From its jizz it could well have been that genus (which needs a scope to determine to species in any case) but both Jesper and I had a feeling this was more likely to be *Clitopilus hobsonii* (Miller's Oysterling), in fact related to the much larger and stemmed *C. prunulus* (The Miller) - a species of grassy path edges. A spore print at home revealed the pink spores of this genus which also have telltale longitudinal ridges (a very unusual feature though often difficult to see convincingly even with staining) but here confirming our hunch. Not that rare, *C. hobsonii* is probably under-recorded and often misnamed as a species of *Crepidotus*.



Above: our two tiny examples of *Clitopilus hobsonii* (BW)



A final gilled species now - spotted previously by Jesper on his 'recce' and a decent sized mushroom at last. Two specimens were growing out of the sawn end of a Beech trunk and belonging to the genus *Pholiota* (Scalycap). The slightly sticky cap immediately eliminated the common *P. squarrosa* which has a dry cap and forms large tight clusters at the base of many different deciduous trees. At home Jesper was able to identify this collection as *P. adiposa* from spore size amongst other features. Surprisingly this appears from our database to be new to the site though is by no means a rarity. I suspect there has been (and still is) confusion between this species and the very similar (*P. aurivella*).

Left: *Pholiota adiposa* (AS)

Time to wind up but add some remaining photos at the end. We had a thoroughly enjoyable and successful morning resulting in an interesting list of species. I'm very grateful to Jesper and Claudi for leading with me, and our list would have been considerably shorter without the valuable input of Sarah and Stephen, both of whom are becoming expert at identifying the tiny things many of us overlook. Thank you also to the photographers who make my reports so much more valuable and meaningful. In fact, thanks to you all! For more details of what we found see the separate species list.

Photographers

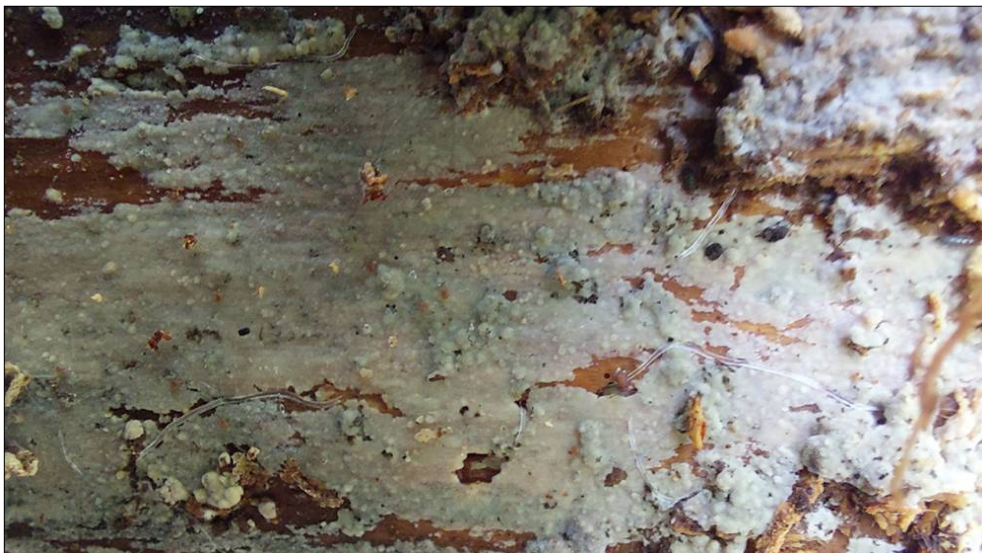
AS = Akhil Seth; BW = Barry Webb; CVS = Claudi Soler; JL = Jesper Launder; LR = Lisa Rock;
PC = Penny Cullington; SJE = Sarah-Jayne Ebdon.



Above left: *Jackrogersella cohaerens* (a Woodward with no English name) liberally coating a dead Beech trunk (SJE), and right: the beginnings of the bracket *Laetiporus sulphureus* (Chicken of the Woods) spotted on fallen Cherry (AS).



Above left: *Orbilia leucostigma*, and right: *Niptera ramincola* (SJE). Neither have an English name and both are tiny, the *Orbilia* found by Jesper, the *Niptera* by Sarah. Both are new to the county list, identified by Sarah.



Left: the corticioid *Peniophorella pubera* (no English name), found by Jesper and identified independently by both him and Claudi, apparently new to the county list!



Left: the mildew *Podosphaera mors-uvae* (no English name) on wild Gooseberry spotted and later identified by Jesper. New to the site and with just one previous county record, this is one of two possible mildews on this host though only this species occurs on both leaves and fruits as here. (JL)



Left: the rust *Uromyces muscari* (Bluebell Rust) searched for and found by Sarah. ((SJE)



Left: the unusual slime mould *Dictydiaethalium plumbeum* (no English name) found by Barry on fallen rotten Birch.



Left: *Diaporthe cryptica*, host specific to *Lonicera* and found on the dead stems by Sarah, then identified by both her and Stephen Plummer. This is a new species for the county list. (SJE)



Left: *Lachnum impudicum*, one of two very similar white discos found today on rotting damp bare wood. (SJE)