



Poculum Firmum

Hollingside woods

Photo: Keith Cunningham

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Affiliated with The Association of
British Fungus Groups



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Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held at Durham Wildlife Trusts Headquarters at Rainton Meadows on the Saturday 17th January 2004 at 11am. Please bring the agenda below and last years minutes on page three with you.

North Eastern Fungus Study Group **Seventh AGM – Agenda**

1. Apologies for absence

2. Minutes of last A.G.M.

3. Matters arising:

4. Suggested Programme for 2004

Jan 17th – 11.00am – 7th AGM – Rainton Meadows followed by an Open Forum after lunch.[K]

Mar 13th – 10.30am - ‘Twig foray’ Moorhouse Wood & Rainton Meadow [Microscopy][K]

May 8th - 11.00am – Ayton Woods?[T]

June 19th – 11.00am - Group Luncheon – Judges, Yarm?[T]

July 24th - 11.00am – Slit Wood, Westgate?[K]

Sept 11th – 11.00am – Briarwood Banks Nr Haydon Bridge?[K]

Oct 16th - 11.00am – Durham High Wood?[K]

Nov 6th - 10.30am – Chopwell/Winlaton – Microscopy?[G & D]

5. Treasurer’s Report/Windfall

6. Website Proposal

7. BMS/YNU Spring 2004 Foray

8. ABFG Conference

9. A.O.B.

10. Date of next meeting

Subscription Reminder

Subscriptions are due for payment at the AGM in January, but if members are unable to attend could they please sent their subs £6 individual - £8 per couple to Babs Walton, Stodhoe Farm, Middleton St George, Darlington DL2 1DS

North Eastern Fungus Study Group
Minutes of the Sixth AGM – Saturday 11TH January 2003 at 11.a.m.

1. **[a] Apologies for absence:** Christine and Hewett Ellis, Dorothy and Jack Wolfe, Alan Simkins, Gwen Humble, Pat Wood, Gayle Lowe and Andy McLay.
[b] Election of new Chairman: Tom Kirby (Treasurer), temporarily took the chair as Alan Legg had resigned as Chairman at the end of 2002. Gordon Simpson was then elected as the new Chairman and took the chair.

Gordon officially thanked Alan for his chairmanship and Alan gave a brief summary of his five years plus period of office. Gordon referred to two instances on two very different forays last year as examples of the good spirit that has always existed in the group. This positive spirit continued throughout the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the last A.G.M:** Accepted as accurate
3. **Matters arising:** (Item 2) Alan did not receive the invitation to the Group leaders' Meeting in December at Newcastle-under-Lyme until late October. As this was not convenient no representation by the NEFSG was present at that meeting.
4. **Programme for 2003**
 - Sat Jan 11th - AGM at Rainton Meadows.
 - Sat March 8th - Brewlab, Sunderland University
 - Sat April 26th - Elemore Woods
 - Sat June 7th - Social Event to be arranged by Tom Kirby
 - Sat July 19th - Bowlees & Low Force
 - Sat Sept 13th - Minsteracres
 - Sat Oct 11^h - Slacks Wood, Great Ayton
 - Sat Nov 8th - Durham University Botanical Gardens.
Keith Cunningham to contact Phil Gates.

More detailed information of these meetings will be in the Newsletters preceding these events.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** Tom Kirby informed the group that the bank balance was liquid to the figure of £247.30p. He then asked if the group wished the money to be invested or set aside to purchase possible equipment. A discussion ensued and various suggestions floated. At present however it was decided to maintain the status quo.
6. **Recording Sheets:** The new record sheet that Keith Cunningham had produced was examined and a discussion followed. Alan **again** requested that members fill in a record sheet of their finds and submit to him – even if what they find might be incorrectly identified. As much of the information requested on the sheet as the collector is able to give, should be written, and specimens included if possible. He will eventually verify, or dismiss a questionable specimen.
7. **A.O.B.**
 - [a] Members approved of the minutes and the AGM agenda being published in the newsletter as it gave them time to examine them before a meeting.
 - [b] There was also an extensive discussion on insurance. Alan asked Keith to always insert the fact at the beginning of the magazine, that the NEFSG are members of ABFG and that foray leaders need to be individual members of the ABFG. Such individual members will have their NEFSG subscription reduced by £1.20.

The meeting closed at 13.10.

Date of next AGM – Saturday Jan 17th 2004

NEFSG COMMITTEE MEETING
Held at Stodhoe Farm, 11am Saturday 15th Nov 2003

Present: Gordon Simpson, Alan Legg, Keith Cunningham, Tom Kirby and Babs Walton.

1. **Apologies:** None

2. **Minutes of last meeting:** Accepted as accurate.

3. **Matters arising:**

5.iii - **BMS** – Alan has written to the BMS but has not yet received a reply. We are, he said, affiliated to them.

4. **2004 Suggested programme:**

Jan 17th – 11.00am – 7th AGM – Rainton Meadows followed by an Open Forum after lunch.[K]

Mar 13th – 10.30am - ‘Twig foray’ Moorhouse Wood & Rainton Meadow [Microscopy][K]

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5. **Foray species:** It was agreed that from 2004 we should attempt to publish a list of collected species in the newsletters following forays. If possible this will be in systematic order as Alan suggests.

6. **Record Sheets:** Tom has produced a computer sheet that can be typed into. Available for anyone who wishes to use it.

7. **Bradford & Bingley Windfall:** It was discussed what we should do with the sum that fell into our coffers after we changed from Bradford & Bingley to Lloyds bank a year ago. Many suggestions were made, but further discussion will take place at the AGM in January.

8. **Website proposal:** Tom broached this subject when it was known we had some spare cash. A discussion with Malcolm Birtle led us to understand that he will be able to organise one free. It will cost of course to maintain. After much discussion Tom & Keith will liase with Malcolm, and it will be discussed again at the AGM.

9. **BMS/YNU Spring 2004 Foray:** This is to take place at Scarborough between May 14-21. Keith will contact Alan for further information to be placed in the newsletter when available.

10. **A.O.B.**

[i] Michael Jordan has co-ordinated sponsorship for group leaders to attend a weekend conference at a Midland University. When dates are known it will be decided who will be able to attend.

[ii] The agenda for the 7th AGM was discussed and agreed upon.

[iii] Tom has ordered two reference volumes on microfungi by Ellis & Ellis for the use of the group.

Joint Foray with NNU at Minsteracres

Alan Legg

It is always interesting to revisit a site at another time of year. After a very enjoyable July foray at Minsteracres in 2002, I optimistically (yes!) predicted “a much wider range of species” the following year. Our September foray was certainly also enjoyable despite the fact that unremittingly dry, warm weather for most of the year put paid to any hopes of a bumper harvest of toadstools. Our numbers were boosted by the White family, new members of the NNU, the youngest of whom proved very good at retrieving fungi.

We followed the same routes as last year, visiting the “Shrubbery” and the lakeside. The dry, crackling vegetation and scorched soil did little to raise our hopes; even the previously boggy areas had all but dried up. It was with some relief and even excitement, then, that we came across a patch of large agarics under oak trees. These were somewhat the worse for wear but the freshest specimen led to an on-the-spot identification of the fishy-smelling *Lactarius volemus*, a toadstool generally agreed to be scarce and becoming scarcer in the U.K. When checked, the National Database had only 110 records, none of which was from Northumberland or Durham. This find lifted our spirits and encouraged us to continue searching.

The lake area produced a few more toadstool records and brownish lesions on *Iris* leaves, at first mistaken for a rust, were later found to be caused by the microfungus *Mycosphaerella macrospora*. This was also newly-recorded for our region, with only 34 records on the National Database.

Our modest count of 48 identified species seemed to some surprisingly high given the conditions. Only 15 of these were toadstools, a much lower proportion than normal for a time of year when 60% is to be expected. Of the 48, however, 30 were unrecorded last July so we now have a site list of 97 species.



Lactarius volemus

Photo: Keith Cunningham

Running Fungus Forays for the Public

Gordon Simpson

Last year I organised eight forays and again this year the number was eight between Sun 21 Sep and Sun 19 Oct. My view is that we who are interested in mycology should impart our knowledge to the public. In this way, through forays, we can publicise our hobby and possibly recruit new members to our society. I am aware this has happened because four members of the NEFSG started at my forays. By the end of the eighth foray I am feeling a little fed up repeating myself to inquisitive young children and 'thick' adults but one has to be patient. After all the main season only last about four weeks. The majority of the public are more interested in edible toadstools but they need to be fairly knowledgeable in order to prevent confusion with dangerous species.

The number of participants ranges from three to 150 or 200. The large number that constantly attend the Hamsterley foray, now approaching its 20th year, is due to the Durham Countryside Rangers preparing three barbecues in split 40 gallon drums whilst the three guides search for fungi in the forest. There are advantages in the size of the group but 50 is my maximum for one guide. Usually the more pairs of eyes the greater the number of species found and identified in the field. With a small group it is easy to keep the participants together. With a large group I keep to a well defined path and send the participants out to search for toadstools. They return to the path periodically but I often have to repeat descriptions of species. This year due to the long, dry summer fungi were scarce. Often only one specimen was found and in some instances the fungi had shrivelled before fully expanding making identification difficult. A good excuse is to class it as a LSJ (left shoulder job according to the late Willis Bramley). Other excuses include it is past its sell by date or it is difficult to identify in the field.

My first foray started on 21 Sep at Thrunton Woods and many fungi fruits had not emerged. On the way through the woods to the start I found a poor Chanterelle, *Cantharellus cibarius*, *Exobasidium vaccinii* and *Macrolepiota rhacodes*. There was nothing exciting during the foray except 3 young motorcyclists that received standard fines from the police for riding illegally on CC roads and in the forest spoiling the peace of our foray. Some very small brackets of Velvet Top Fungus *Phaeolus schweinitzii* on a Scots Pine stump had me baffled for a while. *Peziza badia* was common on the sandy rides.

My next foray was run for Learning Choices, Rothbury on 26 Sep again at Thrunton Woods. With only three participants, all retired people, and lots of time we wandered through the trees until noon. Several new species had emerged during the last five days. At last one specimen of the rare *Boletinus cavipes* was located. *Tremella foliacea* was bursting through the bark of a dead Scots Pine branch. Plums and Custard *Tricholomopsis rutilans* was emerging from a conifer stump. After lunch the group agreed to drive through the forest. At one stop I found a group of *Suillus bovinus* so I could explain the difference between a Mushroom and a bolete. On turning the specimen upside down I was surprised to find *Gomphidius roseus* underneath. This is only the third time, as far as my memory can recollect, that I have seen this small toadstool which appears to be associated with the bolete on dry sandy heathland soils near Pine. It is small, up to 3cm diameter, with a red cap and white very decurrent gills. This find is the second site in these woods. So far on two forays I had not found sufficient to feed one person.

On Sunday 28 Sep I was a guide at Hamsterley. With 3 guides and lots of people we only found 58 species. Beef Steak Fungus *Fistulina hepatica* turned up, the first record for this forest. Wood Hedghog *Hydnum repandum* was another find, a very good edible so it went into the frying pan with the Beef Steak Fungus. The Milkcap

Lactarius hepaticus, that is the colour of liver, was used to demonstrate that its milk turns linen, my handkerchief, yellow. The colourful and small *Pholiota flammans* was discovered as was *Panelus serotinus* both first records for the forest. One specimen of an Eyelash Fungus was identified as *Scutellinia subhirtella* by Colin Stephenson. One of the guides brought in a fungus for identification. I identified it as *Hygrophorus agathosmus* with a smell of bitter almonds. I asked for details as it is uncommon and discovered it had been found in Weardale at Bollihope. Not many species but some interesting finds.

My next foray was at Ladycross, Slaley Forest where three people turned up. There was a good flush of fungi in the forest opposite the quarry entrance. The Peppery Bolete *Chalciporus piperatus* was found growing with the Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria*. This is an association I have noticed several times this year. The Saffron Milkcap *Lactarius deliciosus* was growing with Scots Pine but nobody was confident enough to try to grill it with a knob of butter, a truly delicious toadstool as the latin implies. I was pleased to find *Taphrina amentorum* tongues sticking out of Grey Alder fruits, my first record on this species of tree. One 'guinea pig' would try the milk of the Rufous Milkcap *Lactarius rufus* and it numbed his tongue. Why did he refuse the Saffron Milkcap?

Next day I was at Kielder Castle. On my preliminary visit on the Friday I found 6 good specimens of The Cep *Boletus edulis* and arranged for the café proprietor to fry them on the foray day. Imagine my disgust when I arrived on Sunday to find Red Squirrels had devoured the lot. I asked the Wildlife Ranger to shoot the squirrels but he rightly refused. *Chroogomphus rutilans*, *Lactarius mitissimus* and *pyrogalus* were seen in the Castle grounds. The rare *Hygrophorus pustulatus* was reasonably common under the older Norway Spruce trees. *Lactarius vellereus* formed a large group near the old Beech trees. The slimy Porcelain Fungus *Oudemansiella mucida* was growing on a fallen Beech branch. A week later I was at Chopwell Woods. 61 species were identified in the field. My first Orange

Peel Fungus *Aleuria aurantia* of the year turned up. Again *Chalciporus piperatus* was found with *Amanita muscaria*. Winter Fungus *Flammulina velutipes* was much earlier than usual. One specimen of *Helvella lacunosa* was well camouflaged on a heap of wood chips. One bush of Goat Willow appeared white due to the mildew *Uncinula adunca* var *regularis*.

My penultimate foray was on the Castle Eden Walk. I was on standby, at Babs' request, in case Tom could not make the appointment. At one point I stole Tom's copyright so I had better keep quiet. Dare I mention that I found *Phyllactinia fraxini* under an Ash leaflet and the rare rust *Puccinia distincta* on Daisy leaves.

The last foray was at Sidwood in Falstone Forest. Sometimes at the late date around 19 Oct the frost has damaged most fungi. On my preliminary visit little was seen but on the day many eyes saved the situation. At the starting point I had found several Saffron Milkcaps. I described the toadstool and its culinary properties but nobody was convinced of my identification. The reason was that one book advised keeping clear of the similar Woolly Milkcap *Lactarius torminosus*. I went through the former's features and the differences of the latter. Luckily somebody found a Woolly Milkcap nearby. Now I could demonstrate the differences. Suddenly each couple picked a Saffron Milkcap to try at home. A small Cep was seen nearby and I advised the finder to slice and dry it on a radiator unless he fancied it for an evening meal. Many people were amazed when I pointed out a small, white toadstool *Clitocybe fragrans* and asked somebody to smell its aroma. Aniseed was the answer. The question was how did I know. Well I had seen the group a few days earlier but I did not let on. Experience was my answer which is fairly correct. I saw a group of *Lactarius vietus* under Birch and Scots Pine. This Milkcap, which I seldom see, has a mealy edge to the greyish cap. An orange slime fungus on a dead Norway Spruce turned out to be *Tubifera ferruginosa*.

Do we mycologists want another dry year in 2004 or do we pray for rain?

Slacks Wood Foray – 11th October 2003

Babs Walton

This NEFSG foray was unique in two ways: it was the first foray since the group was formed six years ago, by Alan Legg, that the man himself was not in attendance! It was, however, attended for the first time by Archie and Helen McAdam, our Skipton members of many years – plus their children and grandchildren whom they were visiting.

Having three pretty little girls who were excellent forayists [You are doing a good job Granddad and Grand mum], and lacking our strict disciplinarian leader to keep us on the strait* and narrow, we romped about this haven of damp woodland with what can only be described as gay abandon, well- not exactly, but you know what I mean.

It was a good turnout and Tom Kirby and Gordon Simpson were in fine fettle. Also Andy, whose knowledge of fungi - and communications skills on the subject are excellent in one so young [well compared to the rest of the group he is]! Chris and Gayle Lowe were there and I swear Gayle is blooming, whilst I feel I've started to wilt! It was good to see Pat Wood and Pat Scurfield. Pat Wood cannot always make a foray when she has a long distance to travel, but her company is always appreciated when she does make it; and Pat Scurfield wrongly thinks she will never get to grips with all the diversity, though she displayed knowledge that showed she had been working very hard at trying to, so her interest is obviously strong. She enjoys the subject and the search, the rest will follow and her knowledge will expand. Well that's what I keep telling myself! Joan Vickers, Mel Sly, Malcolm Birtle and Peter Manuel, always there when they can make it. Quiet contributors, who always manage some good finds. John Wright and Pam Tucker, finding us, as they usually do, well into the walk. Last, but not least there was Keith Cunningham, who makes sure we all find the place with the production of this excellent little newsletter which is brightened by his excellent photography and reproduction of Dorothy Wolfe's wonderful drawings [paintings]. Dorothy & Jack had sent their apologies, they were unable to attend as Dorothy is preparing to go into hospital for her second hip replacement. By the time this newsletter is out, hopefully she will be feeling a lot better.

As always, group interaction was excellent as everyone gets on well. The search was enhanced by springs which keep this area damp, though it was a beautiful clear and very dry day. We picnicked in a sunny clearing before scrambling back to the road through some 'lumpy' areas scattered with springs. I lost sight of the children at this point but I hope they enjoyed the 'adventure' of that woodland as much as I did. Thank you Tom.



Slack's Wood Forayer's at Lunch

Photo: Babs Walton

Fungus list for Slacks Wood Foray

Armillaria bulbosa, on a broadleaved dead stump

Ascocoryne sarcoides, on dead fallen branch of Ash

Bisporella citrina, on dead fallen branch of Ash

Chlorosplenium aeruginascens, Green Wood-cup, on dead, rotting Ash branch

Clitocybe geotropa, on soil under Ash

Coprinus atramentarius, on dead, buried broadleaved wood

Coprinus micaceus, on dead broadleaved stump

Coprinus plicatilis, on soil under broadleaved trees

Daldinia concentrica, Cramp ball, on dead fallen Ash

Diatrypella quercina, on dead, fallen branch of Pendunculate Oak

Heterobasidion annosum, Conifer Heart Rot Fungus, on dying stump of Hazel

Hypholoma fasciculare, Suphur Tuft on dead, standing Pedunculate Oak

Inocybe geophylla, on soil under broadleaved trees

Lactarius pyrogalus, on soil under Hazel

Lactarius quietus, Oak Milkcap on soil under Pedunculate Oak

Lycogala terrestre, on dead stump of Ash

Marasmius epiphyllus, on dead, fallen leaf of Beech

Mycena galericulata, on dead fallen branch of Ash

Mycena polygramma, on dead fallen branch of Ash

Oligoporus subcaesius, on dead fallen branch of Ash

Panellus serotinus, on dead fallen branch of Broadleaved tree

Pholiota squarrosa, on live standing Ash tree

Pholiota gummosa, on dead fallen branch of Broadleaved tree

Phragmidium violaceum, a Rust under leaf of Bramble

Phyllactinia fraxini, under leaf of Ash

Phyllactinia guttata, under leaf of Hazel

Pluteus cervinus, on rotting stump of Broadleaved tree

Polyporus varius, on dead fallen Broadleaved tree

Puccinia glechomatis, a Rust under leaf of Ground Ivy

Resupinatus applicatus, on dead fallen branch of Broadleaved tree

Rhytisma acerinum, Tar Spot on fallen leaf of Sycamore

Sawadaea bicornis, a Mildew on living leaf of Sycamore

Sphaerotheca fusca, a Mildew on living leaf of Dandelion

Stropharia aeruginosa, on soil under Water –avens

Trametes versicolor, on dead fallen branch of Ash

Xylaria hypoxylon, Candle Snuff on dead stump of Ash

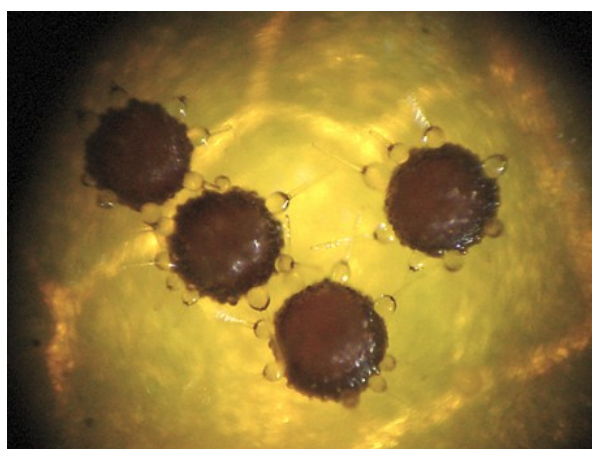
Xylaria polymorpha, Dead Man's Finger on dead fallen branch of Ash



Chlorosplenium aeruginascens



Clitocybe geotropa



Phyllactinia fraxini x 100 approx

November Foray and Microscope session

Alan Legg

Thanks are again due to Keith Cunningham for his careful organization of our outing to the Durham University Botanic Garden. We were allowed not only free use of the car-park but free entry to the Garden and use of tables and electricity in one of the temperate greenhouses for setting up our microscopes. We are very grateful to Michael Hughes the Head Gardener for the use of these facilities.

As usual during November meetings, we spent the morning foraying and collecting specimens, this time from the mature beech and oak woodland just across Hollingside Lane. What could be handier? We are hoping to revisit these woods for a full day's foray earlier in the autumn next year.

On this occasion, as anticipated, heavy leaf fall probably obscured a number of ground-growing toadstools some of which were undoubtedly missed - an unavoidable fact of mycological life in November. There was, however, plenty to find even on the dry upper slopes of the wood, so much, in fact, that when lunchtime came, we were surprised to find that we had hardly penetrated the wood at all! The total of 57 identified species would have pleased a certain soup-manufacturer but included no rarities and no new county records. We were not short of interesting finds, though. For example, Babs was quick to find the greenish yellow patches of *Fusidium aeruginosum* on newly-fallen oak leaves as well as the delicate, long-stemmed toadstool, *Mycena capillaris*, which soon colonises the current year's fallen beech leaves. Several people found beautiful specimens of *Armillaria ostoyae*, easily distinguished from other species of honey fungus by dark flecks on the conspicuous veil. This character was so marked on the first, immature specimen I was shown that I was in some danger of misidentifying it as a *Lepiota*! It was lovely to

see more than one collection of the brown golf-tees of *Poculum firmum*, restricted to fallen oak branches. Tom's post-foray examination of the Centre lawn produced a small specimen of the whitish fairy-club which we now have to call *Clavaria falcata* (sigh!). Many of us have long known this fungus as *C. acuta* but even I have to admit that there is nothing acute about the almost invariably rounded, blunt apex. This is not uncommon in woods as well as grassland but is easy to miss. It grows singly rather than in the much more noticeable fasciculate clumps of the pointed White Spindles, *Clavaria vermicularis*.

A little light drizzle and a chilly breeze precluded a late-season picnic but, with the cars so handy, this was no problem. After lunch we had plenty of time for a useful session of microscopy in the greenhouse. Most effort was expended in examination of the spiny spores and intriguing nettle-hair marginal cystidia of a *Melanoleuca* (later identified as *M. cinerascens*). We also looked at two representatives of other groups, the ascomycetes in the form of a mature *Xylaria* and the hyphomycetes represented by *Fusidium aeruginascens*. It was shown that any confusion arising from ambiguous collections of *Xylaria polymorpha/longipes* can easily be resolved by examining spores under the microscope. *Polymorpha* has large spores measuring 20-32 x 5-12 microns whereas our examined specimen had much smaller spores, within the range 11-17 x 5-7 microns, and was therefore *longipes*.

Much enjoyment was gained from both parts of the day and people felt they had learned quite a lot from the indoor session. Please don't feel excluded or stay away from such sessions if you have not yet acquired a microscope. Those of us who have will be delighted to let you peek into the fascinating micro-world of fungi so often essential in identification.

The Great Winter of 2004 Competition.....

Here it is....the competition you have both (you know who you are!) been waiting for! Exciting, frustrating, exhilarating....and, with the promise of a fine bottle of Chablis PLUS a superb bonus of a bottle of Merlot to the winner (s) who can get the bonus question correct! The NEAREST to a correct solution WINS and the bonus question is NOT compulsory. Entry is free, but you have to be in it to win it...so look closely at the small photographs following and using skill, judgement and LUCK, identify the fungi shown. Each picture has a number, 1 to 20, so first of all list them all. For the bonus prize try to get the sentence from the letters in the names. The letters to use are counted from the first letter of the WHOLE name and so if you think picture number 2 is *Amanita verna* and the letter number is 2, then you would use "m". The sentence describes this puzzle and the fill-in box is below!

The top row contains the picture number and the second row the letter number. "s" indicates a space where the picture is NOT used. Fill in the sentence is the bottom row.

Get your answers back to me by February 1st, 2004!

This is the competition **anyone** can win.... It is not going to be possible to identify ANY of the fungi, with certainty, from the photographs and so luck will help those who don't have the skills.....whilst bad luck will thwart those who do! Nonetheless, I have tried to include small clues in each photograph, so good luck to all who enter!

Judge's decision is final!! (It is my wine, after all!)

Replies by e-mail to tectak@aol.com or by post to me at:

4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	1	s	3	3	8	10	s	11	17	5	5	20	10	s	1	6	10	9	6	19

Bishopton Crossings, Stillington, Stockton on Tees, TS21 1NJ.

Regards,
Tom

1	2	3	44
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
1313	14	15	16
17	18	19	20