

# North Eastern Fungus Study Group

Newsletter 52 January 2009



## *Crepidotus variabilis*

Nikon F80 with Tamron 90mm macro lens, aperture priority, f32

Photo by David Smith

|                                                       |         |                    |
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For further information or if you would like to submit an article or question for the next Newsletter, please contact the Group Consultant: Alan Legg at 36, Carleton Drive, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL3 9QP. Tel: 01325 350834. Membership Sec.: Babs Walton, Stodhoe Farm, Middleton St. George, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL2 1DS. Tel: 01325 332789. Chairman: Gordon Simpson, 2 Coniston Avenue, West Auckland, Co. Durham, DL14 9LL. Treasurer and Newsletter Compositor: Tom Kirby, 4 Bishopton Crossings, Stillington, TS21 1NJ. Tel: 01740 630179. Foray Consultant, Andy McLay, E-mail: amclay@durhamwt.co.uk



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This Newsletter is produced  
with the assistance of Durham  
Wildlife Trust



## **Boletus declivitatum ( Martin ) Watling 2004 one to look out for.**

This species has been peeled away from the very variable Yellow Cracked Bolete which should hopefully help to simplify the identification of this group.



It was found outside my house which is situated in an old Oak wood under the canopy of which I have endeavoured to disguise as a lawn over many years. I had seen it and puzzled over it for several years and couldn't get any further than *Boletus subtomentosus* the Yellow Cracked Boletus although I find this group retains its velvety cap covering longer than others and the yellow cracks are only apparent on older specimens. I acquired a book entitled

**Boletes and their allies.** ( R.Watling & A.E. Hills 2005.) from The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

On being alerted by my grandchildren that there were fungi to be identified on their playground I really got down to it and after managing to negotiate my way through the keys it became plain that it was indeed *Boletus declivitatum* and easily identified by the swollen base of the stem (but only the base) and most of all by the carrot coloured pigmentation in the very base of the stem which is completely diagnostic.

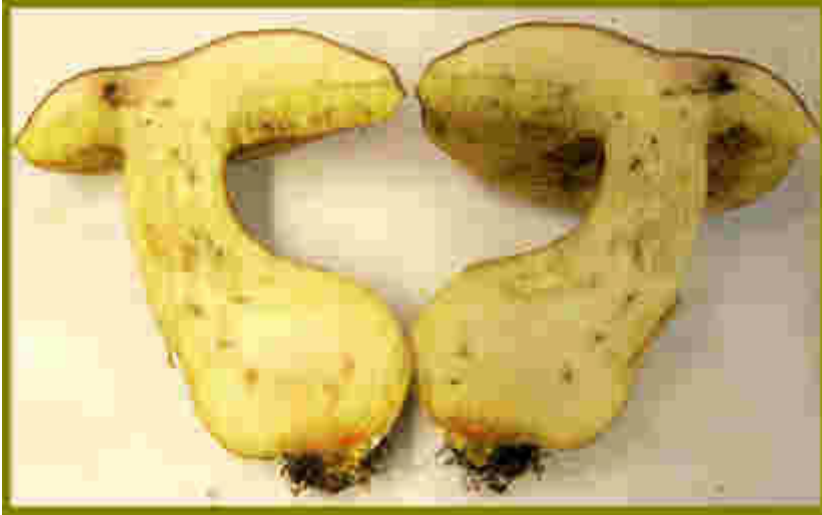
If this had been the first step in the key it would have directed one straight to it. This was confirmed by Alan Legg and sent to Edinburgh where it now rests.

The pictures clearly show the swollen base of the young fruiting body and the carrot colour at the base of the stem but beware that this is reported to be not so obvious when saturated (problems with that this year!).



When very young and before the upper stem narrows it could be mistaken for one of the grossly swollen stemmed species but there is negligible colour change when scratched and no net veins on the stem apex which should help.

There are few British records which is not really surprising as it was only recently more fully understood. It should be looked for earlier than most other Boletes and in parks or open wood-



land etc. generally near oak but recorded with other broadleaved trees.

The pictures show the young fruiting body, the sometimes tufted nature with the stem base adorned with non yellow mycelial threads and quickly becoming infested with maggots but still with carrot colour at extreme base, the sectioned specimen which reveals both the swollen base and the basal pigmentation . Seek and ye shall find!?.

Text and pictures from Doug McCutcheon

### Spotty Amanita from Michelle Appleby

Keith was sent this picture from Michelle with a request to try to identify it. I would like to say at the outset that as always it is impossible to make a safe identification from ANY photograph. So I think it is *Amanita pantherina*! What do others think?

I have had identification problems on two occasions with this fungus and have written about my inadequacies on both occasions. The articles appeared in NEFSG newsletters, the last article, "Spotty Amanitas", being an attempt to define the species from macro characteristics. If this is the *A. Pantherina* it was most recently recorded locally, according to BMS records as below:

***Amanita pantherina*, on/with *Abies grandis*, soil, coniferous plantation, Alt(m): 170, 2006, England, Durham (VC: 66), FRDBI Record No.: 1209957, Origin of Record: North East Fungus Study Group (Alan Legg/Gordon Simpson).**

The macro features of *A. Pantherina* seem at first to be clear and unambiguous. Oh no. As usual, there are pitfalls. The nearest look-alike is *A. excelsa* (= *spissa*), which is much less rare up here in the north than *A. pantherina*. A little digging will probably uncover a diversion....*A. pantherina* is declared to be



unknown above 60 degrees north but this should not eliminate it from the possibilities, particularly as we are hovering around 50 degrees. It just makes it a little less likely, that's all.

So let's just concentrate on the spots. *A. spissa* has the classical "continent map" look about it. The spots are arranged in large clumps, like a land-mass on a brown sea. Some of the spots will seem to have floated off into little islets, leaving fjords and inlets. Furthermore, the spots are universally described as off-white or dirty-white and not persistent. *A. Pantherina* on the other hand, has clean, white, *separate* spots. These spots are persistent and tenacious. They look like drops of milk, or at the very least powdered milk. Remember, these are MACRO features and their presence or absence is no substitute for microscopic identification.

Generally speaking, such features can change as a specimen matures or increases in size. Most illustrations of *A. pantherina* will emphasise the noticeable cap-edge striations, which are very apparent in specimens where the cap has started to "open". In young specimens, as in the picture from Michelle, these striations are not so obvious. It is also the case that the "ring" may not yet be apparent and so cannot be used in the identification process *from the picture*. There is one further feature which refers to the basal sack from which the fungi emerges. Just above the ruptured outer sack, there often develops a loose ring of floppy tissue. This is often seen spiraling around the stem. Close examination of the picture does appear to show this. Similarly, enhancement of the cap features show what may be the early indications of edge striations and there are canals clearly visible on Mars.



Further information should help, substrate and habitat being the most useful. Sadly, the soil in broad leaved and mixed woodland is where you could find both *A. spissa* and *A. Pantherina*, though the former *favours* conifers and the latter, beech. Unfortunately, you cannot smell a picture...*A. spissa* is said to smell slightly of radish!

There are other candidates which you may come across, *A. gemmata* (left-Kirkel 08) and *A. inaurata*. The former is classed as rare, and I have seen it listed as VERY rare. (*A. inaurata* is just an older name for *A. ceciliae*. AWL)\_ It is also the wrong colour. The latter is uncommon, could arguably be the same colour but has very distinctive bands on the stem. *A. rubescens* has a stem of ruddy hue and is almost impossible to find without

some reddening due to damage or handling. *A. Citrina* ( right. *A.citrina* var. *alba*-Kirkel 08)) and *A. ceciliae* are just not in the running. There may be others but I have searched more than once for "spotty Amanitas" and apart from a very sad looking *A. Muscaria* in the New Forest have found no others which come close.

OK. Where is this going? Well, it only serves to illustrate that pictures do indeed confuse. Nonetheless, I am sticking to my original identification because, to my shame, I have never managed to commit to finding this species locally though in hindsight my confidence has grown. Note that if it IS *A. pantherina* IT IS DEADLY POISONOUS AND SHOULD NOT BE TASTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!



Tom Kirby with permission MA

### **Mykologischer Arbeitskreis Rhein-Neckar-The Visit**

Excellent, terrific, stupendous, wonderful.....words are sometimes inadequate. This was always going to be a "good" event but in truth it was so much more than we all expected that I am only going to write a short report and leave the details to others!

#### **Friday.**

All had arrived at Bab's farm ( except Peter who was a little late with boot trouble, as I recall), still dark at 7:15, when Annie and I turned up in the coach-which-left -on-time. We zoomed off down to Manchester and after an uneventful journey arrived with time to spare. There was a little delay in clearing security as Peter's boots, being copious, were considered to be somewhat suspicious. Complete removal was required (of the boots).

We briskly and excitedly ascended the steps of our aircraft-which-departed-on-time. In Frankfurt, we disembarked from our flight-which-arrived-on-time and we were met immediately by the redoubtable Bernhard, who with great organisational dexterity had secured our hire cars (take your pick from Audi, Mercedes or BMW). Off we we went in close convoy, most of the time, south to Kinkel.

Things were going so well that I was feeling a great sense of trepidation...but no...it only got better!

Our reception was marked by a welcome which is usually reserved for popes or pop-stars! There seemed to be but a milli-second between getting ourselves

established in our rooms, determining the whereabouts of the WC, before finding ourselves outside, a drink in one hand and a firm handshake in the other. Each handshake secured another drink as the whiffs of cooking meat drifted around us. As a gradual drift inside took place we were overwhelmed by hospitality. We collapsed into our seats at the dinner table where we were treated to the deliciously smoky products of an outside barbecue... sausages, pork steaks, and indeterminate meat-balls with sauerkraut, salads, pumpernickel and crisp bread-buns .....oh, and did I say wine?

After some pleasantly entertaining speech making and a number of robust toasts we settled down to business and the agenda for the following day.

### **Saturday**

Breakfast was a lavish layout of cheeses, fruit, cereals and hot steaming tea and coffee. Some of us could have spent pleasant day just sitting here eating, you



know who you are, but nature called. We assembled outside in a light mist, but with some warmth in the air and a promise of sunshine later. We set off by a telepathically communicated starting signal, generally sticking together except for Peter who was putting his boots on. Kirkel is a small "castle" town which snuggles up comfortably into ancient woodland. The town is

linked at many points to this huge forest. Tracks and pathways criss-cross the lower slopes which are clad in mixed deciduous and coniferous trees.



Before setting off, we were notified that Saturday dinner was to be a mixed wild fungi meal...if we found enough, and Pizza if we didn't. Leaving Kirkel on a neat ascending lane, we quickly found ourselves in a mycological heaven. The autumn was further advanced inland than it is here in NE England and the broad-leaved trees are well on the turn (left) . Horse chestnuts strewn the paths and the scent of damp moss with a whiff of *P. impudicus* was noticeable

everywhere. The forayers, some thirty or more, disseminated themselves over a large area and quickly we declared ourselves essentially lost. No matter, descend

was what we would do if pushed, so to speak. For now, though, we would foray to avoid the Pizza. We had each been issued with a basket for our specimens,



edibles in one half, collectibles for identification in the other, and this would prove to make this foray method possible. Each collected anything which was fungal for eating or for identification later (left). This made the foray much pleasanter for Horst, our expert on the day, as he wasn't hounded by everyone seeking instant identification! A lesson here, maybe. As we forayed we kept coming across little

groups from our party, notes were compared and finds examined. It was quickly apparent that *Xerocomus chrysenteron* was to be the staple but not for long. Soon there was news of a find of *Boletus edulis*, then *Pleurotus ostreatus* in quantity. I was delighted to gather a goodly crop of *Catharellus tubiformis*, quickly followed by *C. Ci-*



*barius*.

Bernhard, a swashbuckling forayer on home ground, managed to secure some excellent *Helvella crispa* (above) which he apparently eats with relish...and so may I have done later that evening but cannot prove anything. Bernhard reassuringly advises that they have lost no one yet...to his knowledge. In fairness, he spent some considerable time picking over a basket full of *Kuehneromyces mutabilis* (= *Pholiota m.*) to make doubly sure he had not one *Galerina marginata* mixed in with them. Our exemplary hostess and excellent mycologist Dagmar, found *Sparassis crispa*. Everyone contributed something of edible worth. *Stropharia squamosa* was a much photographed late find (left). It was an excellent day.



As we tumbled down from the forest with a promise of cake and tea, some tumbling faster than others, more lethal finds were made. *Amanita phalloides* made a lying-in-state appearance, and I added *A. gemmata* to my arsenal of poisonous records!

We met up at a cleared area just inside town, where a trestle table was laid out with delicious cakes of all kinds and hot tea or coffee on-tap. Quite soon Peter turned up.



After far too much cake we wandered wearily back to our accommodation and set about the processing of our finds. There were absentees from our party during this procedure but it was noticeable that the clinking of glass on glass seemed to be all that was needed for a return to the fold. Peter turned up some time later. The finds were laid out in some kind of species/edible/big/little "order" that quite defeated me until I realised that there was NO order! As more and more specimens were turned out of the collecting baskets another table was procured and all the none-edibles drifted by osmosis on to its red-paper surface (left). Soon we were faced with a huge statistical workload which Horst leapt to, furiously

writing out the Latin names of those unmistakable finds whilst I followed behind writing the common English names on those I knew. This was treated as an enormously entertaining exercise but I feel that the New Wine ( a local specialty, I think ) was beginning to take a hold on my faculties.

That evening...well, I will leave it to others to tell the stories, there are too many (below).



Except to say, the company was excellent, the fungi superb, the singing bawdy, sentimental and fun. The wines, the home-distilled liqueurs, the grappa and whisky, all made the evening memorable...but for me, and I dare presume to speak for all of us, what will endure most is the memory of a great commonality of spirit and views, of friendship and warmth but above all an understated openness and sincerity. Thank you all for an unforgettable visit. You are truly wunder-bar folk.

We never stopped  
enjoying ourselves!  
Thank you all for  
making our visit  
unforgettable,  
Love to all,  
Tom & Annie

**Danke!**

Thank you to all the  
Dogs for being such great  
hosts. It was a most  
memorable weekend  
we will always remember  
you and Dots

Many thanks for a  
great weekend  
Joan Vickers.

A weekend never to  
forget! Good company,  
care and excellent food.  
Missing you already.  
Anticipating next  
time  
The Holmes'

**Danke!**

To our friends in  
Germany. It's been  
a wonderful experience  
We cannot thank you  
enough for your  
kindness  
Catherine & Dave  
XX

Great to see you  
in your natural  
habitat. Val

**A SUBTLE REMINDER.....**

**DO NOT FORGET THE DATE!**

**JANUARY 10th.**

**11 a.m. Rainton Meadows**

**The Annual General Meeting  
Of the NEFSG**

**Have YOUR say!!**

Cropton Forest - Sept. 20 2008

A day of glorious light it came to be,  
A miracle it seemed, a heaven-sent gift,  
Full consolation after all the wet.  
For me to climb the well-known roads of old,  
Emerging on the sun-blessed summit of the moors  
Seemed twice a blessing, and my heart was full.

On such a journey vivid memories  
Could easily have quelled my happiness  
And yet they failed to do so, such the bliss  
Anticipation brought at start of day.

As often happens on such lovely days  
Our meeting was more cordial, it seemed.  
Familiar faces and some new to us  
Brought promise of more bounty from the earth.

A modest haul we had in fact that day:  
No revelations of new treasure startled us.  
But quietly some learned of mysteries  
And others carried home discovery's joy  
To share more widely at some future time.  
These may remember what a day it was,  
Companionship in shared finds reinforced  
By unaccustomed sunshine and bright air.

And as we waved goodbye and went our ways,  
We took from Cropton Forest something grand,  
Different for each yet similar for all –  
A thing to celebrate as I do here.

AWL

## September Jottings 2008

During a recent short break in the Lake District, Ros and I found ourselves walking in Brandelhow Woods, a long-established National Trust property under Cat Bells on the western shore of Derwentwater. The weather was predictably wet and so, as is our wont, we avoided the heights and tottered slowly by wood and water instead. There were plentiful common fungi about but, being beyond the NEFSG pale, I noted only a few, including *Cantharellus tubiformis*, an old favourite of mine, less common in the east. There were also numerous ascomata of both *Helvella crispa* and *H. lacunosa* the strange shapes of which I always find irresistibly intriguing. Many of the former had unusually pallid caps, ghostly in the woodland gloom. Suspecting a fungal contaminant, I collected a specimen and later identified the hyper-parasite as the hyphomycete, *Tilachlidium brachiatum*, known from some agarics but particularly partial, it seems, to *H. crispa*. It was a new record for me.

A couple of days later, walking in South Park, Darlington, we found lots more very short-stemmed specimens of *H. crispa* under a beech tree in a dry site with compacted soil. The fungus is known locally from the West Cemetery and a place not far from our house where a venerable beech tree has recently had to be felled. The South Park site was completely new to me though, the fungi probably reacting to unusually wet weather.

Now a cautionary tale. Also in this park is a group of mature Turkey oaks beside the refreshment hut. We always look there in autumn, especially since I found my first *Boletus radicans* there in 2000. There it was at its usual station but, not far away, I spotted what could have been fallen twigs each with a bunch of moribund leaves. On closer examination, these turned out to be many caespitose clumps of toadstools similar in appearance to the very common *Lycophyllum decastes*. The colours were not quite right though and the flesh not elastic enough. Moreover there was no hint of the usual characteristic smell. When I checked the spore-print later, I found smallish ellipsoid spores, not the usual globose ones. Other characters led me to a toadstool completely new to me and apparently not often collected in Britain, *Lepista ovispora*. I was about to record this as new to County Durham when something prompted me to check the spore-print again. To my dismay I found this unequivocally white, not pink as it should have been for *L. ovispora*. Another look at the fruitbodies showed the gill-attachment to be emarginate, not subdecurrent except for a few gills here and there. More egg on my cheek! It's so easy to make silly mistakes! The fungus is still unidentified though I have dried a few specimens for future reference.

Nearer the end of the month, Ros and I had a day in mid-Swaledale, ambling down from Reeth to Grinton in the morning, having lunch in the pub there, crossing the river and making our way slowly back to Reeth by way of High Fremington. There is a steep climb along a stony, sunken track beyond the latter with few trees in evidence. I was surprised, therefore, to see an extensive group of quite large, pale yellowish toadstools on the right bankside. The gills were a brighter yellow and there was an obvious smell of coal gas identifying the fungi as *Tricholoma sulphureum*. Looking up the slope I could see a single, fairly tall, youngish beech, the tree most frequently associated with these toadstools in my experience. It was very odd though to see them with an isolated, not really mature specimen outside woodland.



Two days later, at the eastern end of the same dale, I smelt the same smell again while on our Richmond foray. This time however, I was merely holding to my nose a very different, much smaller fungus handed to me by Alan Simpkins and originating some distance away in Saltburn Gill. Not many toadstools smell of coal gas so this was quite a co-incidence. This little toadstool is also distin-

guished by blue cap and stem, and lemon yellow gills. It is not often seen in the North East though it has been found in Castle Eden Dene and Ros and I collected it recently along the old railway path which, until even more recently was known by the same name. Alan told me he had found it once before in Saltburn Gill. On this occasion, as is usually the case, the blue cap colours were very faded while those in the stem were as vivid as ever. The fungus is now known as *Cystolepiota bucknallii*.

( Photo TAK Bishopton Crossings 54.36 N, 1.27 W 2006. See March 2006 Newsletter )  
AWL

## Hudswell Woods – Sept. 27 2008

This beautiful National Trust site at Richmond is well known to nature lovers as well as local dog-walkers. I must have visited it at least 50 times over the years so its fungus flora does not hold many surprises for me. I know Gordon will heartily disapprove but, before this foray, I made the decision not to slavishly copy down the names of all the fungi seen but only those of a few regular specialities and any others not actually recorded there previously, common or not. A foray is primarily for pleasure so tedium should not enter into it and I'm afraid that I'm finding exhaustive lists increasingly tedious to compile. You will not, therefore, get a total number of species seen that day and I will here pick out only a few for special mention as is my habit.

It was another lovely Saturday, one to rival that of our trip to Cropton Forest the week before. We were joined for the day by members of the Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club, spending the morning session in the woods to the west of the Round Howe car park and, after returning there for lunch, the afternoon in the sadly neglected meadow to the east. None of the former population of waxcap and other pasture species were seen during the afternoon but we were not entirely without sight of some of these since the wood is one of those comparatively rare cases where a small number of the more common of these grassland species survive quite happily in an alien environment. Examples seen in the morning included *Hygocybe coccinea*, *H. chlorophana* and *Cystoderma amianthinum* as well as the Golden Spindles, *Clavulinopsis fusiformis*.

Site regulars observed included the strong-smelling *Hygrophorus discoxanthus* and the even more aromatic *Inocybe corydalina*. The large *Cortinarius largus* was seen at two stations and the beechwood denizen, *Lactarius pallidus* was also

found. The stalked ascomycete, *Helvella elastica* has become established in recent years so it was a pleasure to find a small group on this occasion.

In addition, 14 species were recorded for the first time. Most of these are common enough in our patch and some of them have undoubtedly been overlooked on previous visits. Nothing entirely new to the leader was seen but there were two site newcomers rarely recorded locally. One was the earth-fan, *Thelephora anthocephala*, known from Darlington West Cemetery and found in recent years at Toy Top by Joan Vickers. The other was collected by Edith Colling, a nice clump of *Lentinellus cochleatus* with distinctive saw-toothed gill edges, very decurrent gills and a strong smell of anise. I have only a handful of records, the first, oddly, dating from my very first visit to Richmond in 1970. This, however, came from a wood on the northern bank of the Swale and at the opposite end of the town on the approach to Easby Abbey.

Apart from an unscheduled space walk, I enjoyed this foray as much as everyone else seemed to.

AWL



### **Where did that come from.....?**

It is not often that my wife spots a fungus. I put that down to a lack of training and take full responsibility for the omission. So I was both surprised and delighted when in mid September, after returning from a dog walk, she notified me of some "big brown shaggy things" in a close by field. I went off immediately to investigate. There, as reported, were these beauties (left). They had the look of edibility about them, pink gills, fleshy appearance, pleasant "mushroomy" smell, slight reddening when cut. There were several large "clumps" all around an old Ash tree. I decided to spend some time identifying them. 48 hours later I

dropped them off at Alan's! I had absolutely no luck with my limited keys. Alan was away, unfortunately, but he did return before they had completely decayed. He managed to pin them down but with a slight question mark. They are then *Agaricus bohusii* (?).

After a little more research I established that this species has been recorded 54 times in the last 150 years but could find no confirmation of its edibility. Alan suggested it was good to eat. I tried a little. Excellent. (I tried a lot, "See Season to taste" Page 16 ). I am still here. TAK

## Season to Taste.....



By the time this Newsletter reaches you we should be deep in winter chill. When the days are cold, nothing can beat a good suet pudding, and this is that. The recipe comes from the excellent Macdonald Linden Hall Golf and Country Club in Northumberland. Though slightly adapted, it is published with the generous permission of the General Manager, Bernard Bloodworth.

Admittedly, my finished product is not a patch on the original recipe, which is very stylishly presented as individual servings, attractively layered mushroom and

tender beef giving a very well constructed appearance. This is a very much more robust and hearty affair, which will satisfy four hungry diners.....oh, and it uses *Agaricus bohusii*, now beat that!

### Slow Cooked Beef and Mushroom Pudding

#### **You will need, for four people:**

2-2 ½ lbs rolled blade of beef. It will reduce in size during cooking. (Northumberland beef for authenticity)

5-6 large (4" caps) *A. Bohusii* ( Oh alright, open cap *A. Bisporus!* )

14 ozs (400 gms) good suet pastry.

1.5 litres of decent Merlot ( or indecent Merlot for that matter)

Good sprig of fresh thyme, 3-4 bay leaves.

#### **Method: 5 hours ahead of serving.**

Put the beef into a deep casserole dish and scatter over the herbs. Pour in the wine to submerge. Cover with tin-foil and put on the lid to seal. Place in a preheated oven at 140 deg.C for 4 hours. Remove, cool, slice beef thinly. Put the liquor into a pan and reduce to a sauce consistency. Check seasoning, avoid too much salt.

#### **1 ½ hours before serving:**

Brush the mushrooms with a light oil (with a few drops of Truffle Oil added!) and place them gills-up on a non-stick baking tray beneath the casserole dish. Cook for fifteen minutes, allow to cool, then slice into 10-12 cross slices to make "discs". Now butter a pudding bowl and grind in some black pepper. Shake to stick evenly to the inside of the bowl. Line with the suet pastry leaving enough for the "lid". Now layer into the bowl sliced beef then mushroom. Aim for 6-8 layers. Put a good tablespoonful of the liquor over the contents. Cover and seal the pudding with pastry. Seal the pudding bowl with cling-film ( and elastic bands or string) and steam for 1 hour in a weight-off pressure cooker (or to your preference). Use plenty of water but make sure the cling film is well tied down. Keep warm until serving.

Serve with a swirl of the liquor and seasonal vegetables.

Roll on chill evenings!

TAK

## **Minutes of North Eastern Fungus Study Group Committee Meeting held at 11am on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008 at Stodhoe Farm**

Alan Bunn attended the meeting as an observer and was welcomed by the committee. Members in attendance were Gordon Simpson, Alan Legg, Tom Kirby, Keith Cunningham and Babs Walton.

### **1. Apologies for Absence.**

None.

### **2. Minutes of Meeting on 26 April 2008.**

Approved

### **3. Matters Arising.**

(a) Mannheim Trip. Tom Kirby reported that the trip was a great success and will be writing about it in the next Newsletter. It is hoped that we will be able to organise a return trip to the North East for the Mannheim group.

(b) Database Records. The deep-rooted problems with our database are being sorted, but will take more time than originally thought. Should lists recorded on forays be requested by anyone, we are able to do this at any time.

(c) Record Sheets. Tom will obtain the agreed sheet from Gordon and it will be attached to the next Newsletter. Copies will also be brought the AGM.

### **4. Suggested Programme for 2009. (All meeting start at 11am unless otherwise stated).**

|                      |                                       |                        |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Jan | A.G.M at Rainton Meadows.             |                        |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Mar  | Open Forum at Rainton Meadows.        |                        |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> Apr | Tunstall Foray.                       | TBA                    |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> Jun | Social Luncheon at Pinchinthorpe Hall | T Kirby.               |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> Jul | Drydersdale Foray.                    | G Simpson.             |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Sep | Kildale Foray.                        | T Kirby.               |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Sep | Derwent Valley Foray.                 | A McLay.               |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct | Loftus Wood (Sunday).                 | A Legg and A Simpkins. |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> Oct | Weardale, Carrs Farm.                 | K Cunningham.          |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Nov  | Castle Eden Dene.                     | T Kirby.               |

### **5 Website Progress.**

This is now up and running but not yet complete. It was decided that a password protection on the introduction page for entry to the Newsletter would be necessary to keep this part for members only. Pages suggested so far are:- Home Page, Forays, Information, Photographs, Articles (with author's permission), Members Page with Newsletters and Links.

### **6. NWFG Residential Foray Weekend at Keswick.**

Gordon Simpson sent a copy of his article on the new British fungi he had found in Cumbria to the NWFG. He has been invited, as a member of NEFSG, to spend a weekend with the North West Fungus Group in October next year. He could not attend but Tom Kirby took up the offer. This should start a liaison between the two groups.

### **7. Poland.**

Gordon Simpson is able to arrange a week's visit to Poland with a very good tour organiser in the autumn of 2010 to see both fungi, wildlife and culture should anyone be interested. He will be writing an article in the Newsletter about this.

### **8. A.O.B.**

(a) Committee Changes. It is hoped that Alan Bunn will join the Committee as the new secretary at the AGM. Alan Simpkins has also expressed interest in becoming a member of the committee.

(b) Hewett Ellis. Christine contacted Alan Legg to let him know that Hewett may shortly be going into hospital for an operation. We wish him well.

(c) Recording of Unidentified Fungi. Alan considered that now the group had been in existence for 10 years members ought to be able to describe an unidentified fungus correctly before it was dried or sent away. Aubrey Colling's description form had prompted him to bring up the subject. Babs Walton will bring copies to the AGM of the one that Aubrey has created.

### **9. Date of next meeting**

11am on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2009 at Low Barns.

## October Jottings – 2008

October tends to be rather busy, not only with forays but with the lab and paper work associated with them. I also find these days that, when the weather is cold and wet, I am less easily persuaded into the countryside than I used to be and it is often up to Ros to get me off my backside even for short expeditions. If she hadn't applied this pressure I doubt whether I would have found enough to make this item worthwhile.

### ***Pluteus umbrosus***

October 2<sup>nd</sup> found us walking along the south side of the Tees between Egglestone Abbey and Rokeby, a favourite pottering ground of ours in recent years. Probably the most satisfying find was *Pluteus umbrosus*, with its cap covered in a pattern of felty brown tomentum. This is always a lovely find and seemingly becoming more common in recent years in these parts. Bruce Ing and I found a big group of lovely specimens on an old, very rotten beech trunk in the grounds of Traquair House in the Borders in October, 1999. This year's find was the fifth I have made since then, including two others along the Tees and one at Richmond. They like substantial quantities of well-rotted wood lying in deep shade and have a strong reference for beech.

### ***Cyathus striatus***

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, returning from my 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations in Beverley, we made a short stop to stretch our legs at Rievaulx Terrace near Helmsley. There are numerous well-established beech trees along the inner edge of the Terrace and, under one of them, Ros spotted a quite conspicuous group of bird's nest fungi. The small sample she collected showed them to be the least common of the three frequently found species, *Cyathus striatus*, with its beautiful externally corrugated cups. I have seen this collected in Mid-Wales but my only previous personal collection was from Blackwell on the edge of Darlington in 1991. Gordon Simpson also collected it in 2004 whilst leading a foray in the otherwise mycologically rather boring Dinsdale Wood, also near Darlington.

### ***Ramaria stricta***

In contrast to the common *Clavulina* species, *Ramarias* don't turn up very often in the North East. Of the ones that have been found, Only *R. abietina (ochraceovirens)* with conifers, and *R. stricta*, with broadleaves, are at all frequently found. To my knowledge, we do not have any of the rather beautiful thick-stemmed species and, of the slighter ones, apart from the two mentioned, it is usually very difficult to identify what you've found. I've watched Alick Henrici having problems with them.

*Ramaria stricta* was found on an NNU foray in Elemore Woods, VC66 in October 1997 on the famous occasion when Babs collected *Mycena adonis* by the unorthodox method of falling and rolling over in the undergrowth. Ros and I also found *R. stricta* by the Tees in 2006 on the walk from Abbey Bridge mentioned above.

This October it came through the post, sent by a non-member who had found it in Jesmond Dene, Newcastle, and whose wife had managed to track down the correct identification.

We need more members like this!

### ***Cortinarius bolaris***

This is one of the few biggish dry-capped species of *Cortinarius* distinctive enough to be identified by the relatively inexperienced. I have one 1979 record from Darlington West Cemetery where it must have been growing with a mature beech but the fruit-body had emerged a distance away amongst the litter of a *Sequoiadendron* no doubt providing the relatively acid soil conditions it seems to like. Otherwise, my only collection was from near Glencoe village in 1987 where old beeches and pines grow together.

On October 18<sup>th</sup>, Ros and I had a walk in Hardwick Park and found a single specimen of *C. bolaris*, apparently with birch but on acid soil under *Picea* beyond the new lake. Apart from my Cemetery record, this seems to be the only one from VC66.

### ***Tricholoma sciodes***

Beginners tend to have problems with the rather large group of grey-capped *Tricholoma* species. Apart from *T. cingulatum*, these have neither ring nor volva, are rather sturdy and have greyish or whitish gills. A few have scales but most are merely fibrillose. Older keys make much of whether the taste is mild or bitter. This is a somewhat dicey character but once you've sorted it out to your own satisfaction and checked whether or not the smell is mealy, the microscope is really not much use. With *T. sciodes*, often not mentioned in elementary books, the decisive feature is the *black flecks along the gill-edges*. It is most often found with beech-trees like all eleven of my records, but then several other similar species also have a preference for beech.

On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ros and I did a walk from Bowlees in Teesdale to High Force and back and enjoyed the spectacle of the falls (including the lesser northern cataract) in full spate. On the outward journey, taking the old road via Dirt Pot, we found a line of beeches close to this hamlet and came across a group of *T. sciodes* with these trees. The fungus is not at all uncommon with beech in our area. We had seen it at Lockwood Beck Reservoir just a few days beforehand.

AWL

## Blanchland October 25<sup>th</sup> 2008.

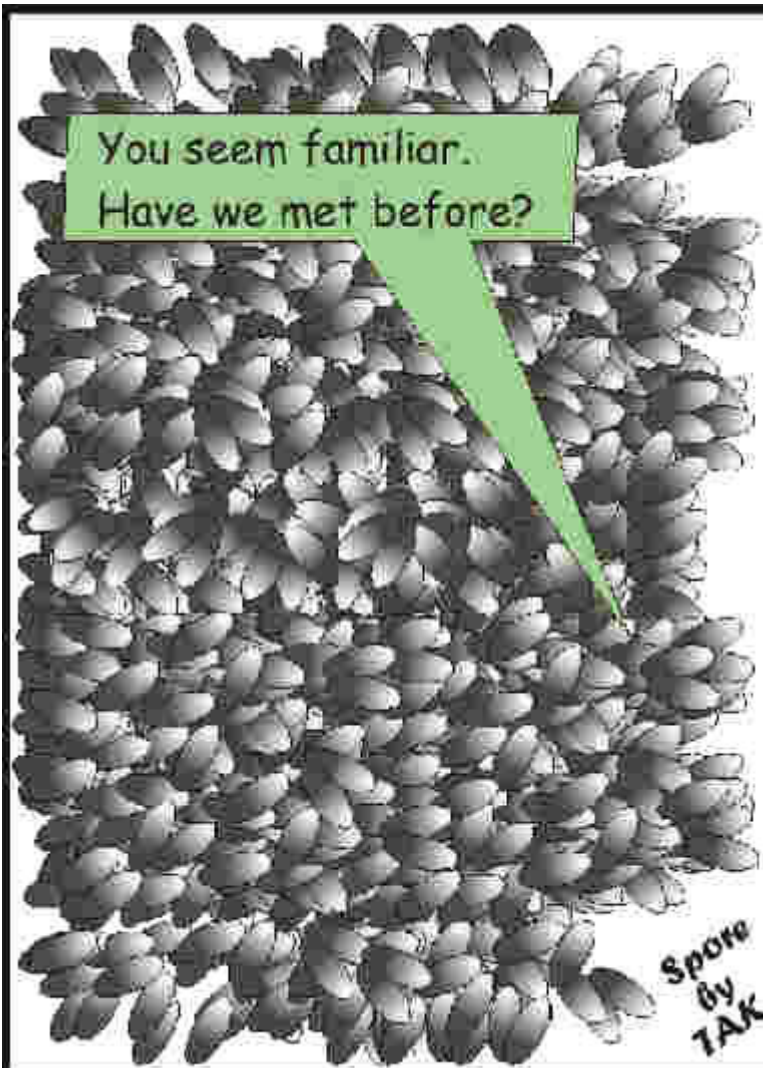
I always find it especially pleasing to foray in Northumberland as it is historically the least well covered of our north eastern Counties. Largely because of our efforts, Durham has become comparatively well-forayed in recent years and North Yorkshire has a long history of YNU forays going back into the nineteenth century. This means that any expedition north of the Derwent is likely to turn up new discoveries.

Unfortunately, bad weather, including high winds and heavy rain, had been forecast all week. As it turned out most of the rain failed to cross the Pennines, but we did have to contend with some fairly vicious wind which produced temperatures seemingly lower than they actually were. Keith Cunningham, who lives locally, had carefully prepared a route that took in a range of habitats whilst keeping the forecast well in mind. Even so, much of the pleasure of the hunt was reduced by cold and blustery conditions. Before mid-afternoon, I had to give up and take a short cut back to the car. In doing this, I must have missed some of the later finds from the interesting open area which covered upland turf wax-caps along with pasture dung fungi and woodland species mycorrhizal with single trees of various kinds. As a consolation prize, I did, however, stumble across a specimen of the rather scarce *Stropharia inuncta*.

Discounting any I did not see, There were records of 63 species, including what seem to be new VC67 records of *Agaricus augustus*, *Clitocybe fritilliformis*, *Cortinarius purpurascens*, and *Stropharia inuncta*. There were also second vice county records of both *Otidia onotica* and, rather surprisingly, *Stropharia pseudocyanea*. The third VC 67 record of *Tapinella atrotomentosa* also caused some excitement. None of these fungi are really rare but scarce enough on recording sheets to indicate how much work remains to be done north of the Derwent and the Tyne.

There is certainly more scope for extra forays in this part of the region. I have long advocated a weekend foray somewhere in Northumberland but arrangements for such an extended outing would have to be made possibly with the assistance of Northumberland Wildlife Trust at a suitable small-scale residential centre. Any suggestions, anyone?

AWL



### Just when you thought it was all over....

....it isn't., though sadly we have to release Babs back into the wild after ten years of captivity at the hands of the NEFSG committee!

Ten years is a long time and Babs has applied herself in a quite remarkable way being at one time Treasurer, Recorder and latterly Secretary/membership secretary. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of us all, to thank her for her time, generosity and influence over the term. It would not go amiss to thank John, her (allegedly) long suffering husband for tolerating the countless meetings, events, extended phone calls and impromptu visits from other committee members. Thank you both for your time, patience and kindness. You are irreplaceable.

Alan Bunn replaces Babs in the New year....so an advance thank you from all of us!