

North Eastern Fungus Study Group

Newsletter 56 January 2010



Mycena galopus var. *candida*, Coate Moor Plantation, October 04. Nikon F80 with Tamron 90mm macro lens, aperture priority, f32



Leccinum versipelle, Broughton Bank, September 06
Nikon F80 with Tamron 90mm macro lens, aperture priority, f32

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Alan Legg
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Doug McCutcheon
Alan Bunn (Sec.)
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Tom Kirby

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Kildale Foray 12 Sep 2009

I obtained permission from the Forestry Commission at Pickering to take cars along the forest road from the proposed meeting point at SE605104 towards Captain Cook's monument. The barrier across the forest road is locked but I had been provided with a key. On the 4th. of September I travelled to the area to check on parking and turning places along the forest road and search for fungi. The ridge was dry and fungi were scarce in the predominantly coniferous plantations. No doubt, with more pairs of eyes many more species would be found. I only recorded 25 species before heavy rain commenced.

A fallen, dead Lodgepole Pine *Pinus contorta* had quite a few large groups of *Tremella foliacea* along the horizontal trunk. On the following day I was going on a birdwatching trip to Andalucia, Spain and the return flight to Newcastle airport on the brochure was Saturday the 12th. of September at 0235hrs. This meant I had ample time to travel home, have some food then pack my lunch before driving to Kildale for 1100hrs. Imagine my surprise when part way through the holiday I was told the dates had changed and I would be flying to Newcastle on Sunday the 13th. of September.

Several members turned up on Saturday but there was no guide *. Luckily those who made it stopped at the bottom the hill where the narrow road had been widened to provide ample parking. A path enters the mixed woodland to the west of the parking area and this was used from which a search for fungi could be made. 28 species were recorded most of which were different to the ones I had found on 4 Sep. All 53 species discovered are fairly common species. The rain that fell on the 4th. of September had had little effect on the mycelium so many expected species were not in evidence. G Simpson

* (For which I humbly and profusely apologise. I was offered a choice of death or attending a wedding which I was, apparently, well aware of. TAK.)

Notes on David Smith's Cover Photographs

This month's cover illustrates two things by the use of two photographs.

Firstly, the fine quality of David's work. The submitted pictures are always exceptionally well composed, exposed and lit. It is his dedication to precision combined with an understanding and a love of his subject matter that shows through.

Secondly, the two pictures serve to illustrate in a very clear and simple way the amazing diversity to be found in mycology.

The differences in structure, size, colour, texture and form are exemplified by the comparison of the delicate and elegant *Mycena galopus* var. *candida* with the rugged and sturdy *Leccinum versipelle*.



Information on Forays and Events

There has been a very minor change to the way that the venues for events and forays will be published in future. Due to the often large time interval between the forays/events information published dates and the actual event it has been decided to give details in the Newsletter immediately prior to the venue as newsletters are published as closely as possible to end/beginning of January/February, April/May, August/September and November/December. A provisional list of all events will still appear in the Minutes of the Committee Meeting (see this issue) but it is thought wise to use the Newsletter as a reminder nearer the time.

The Loftus Foray - October 11 2009

This foray was a bit of a personal self-indulgence in an out-of-the-way place so I was glad to see our party reach double figures. Many of my earliest records were made in former childhood haunts here during and after 1970 so I always relish an opportunity to revisit them.

Dry weather preceding the outing caused anxieties for Alan Simkins and Gwen Humble who reconnoitred the route and did rain-dances. Meanwhile I checked my records from a birthday trip here in 2002. Collections made then (a better year for weather!) included my first records of *Pluteus plautus* and *Stagonospora calystegiae* on old browned bindweed leaves. *Coprinus impatiens*, *Inocybe lacera* and *Otidea alutacea* also turned up then but none of these was found this year, I'm afraid.

There had been a little rain in days before the foray so conditions were not quite so desiccated as feared. I tried my hardest to avoid excessive reminiscing and I don't remember too many glazed eyes and yawns! It is always encouraging when forayers decide on lunch before we actually reach the planned lunch-site and it was a delight for me to picnic at the foot of Slater's Banks where I once rolled Easter eggs and enjoyed primary school nature walks.

I did not hope for rarities but it was very satisfying to find a plentiful supply of the beautiful *Chlorociboria aeruginascens* in Lower Middle Gill Wood along with some attractive brackets of *Inonotus radiatus* on its usual host, a living trunk of Alder.

As we crossed the pasture on our way to Rosecroft Wood, we found a rich crop of the common orange discomycete, *Coprobria granulata* on middle-aged cowpats. This may have been new to a few members who were possibly not aware of the hundreds of fungal species that specialise in colonising this kind of rich habitat.

Rosecroft Wood did provide material of the not very common *Pleurotus pulmonarius* here growing on a living oak trunk. Oak wood also furnished us with small examples of *Mycena haematopus* with freely bleeding stems, which should not be confused with the much smaller *M. sanguinolenta* often found on woodland litter. Pale and grossly distorted material of the common *Laetiporus sulphureus* confused even Tom who is well-used to devouring normal earlier fruiting examples.

I would have liked to have had time to examine more dead herbaceous stems lying on the ground. As it was, I had to be content with the common *Hymenoscyphus scutula* with spores characterised by terminal spines. Other

small discos included the common *Bisporella citrina* and *Leptotrochila ranunculi*, often found on browned patches of creeping Buttercup leaves.

In a year of more normal weather we would not have been content with a mere 61 identified species but, for 2009, this seemed a pretty respectable harvest.

The Castle Eden Dene Foray – November 07 2009

A lift from Tom helped greatly in getting me to this foray and home again, as never having had much stamina for travelling, I find I have less than ever now.

Accompanied by Natural England Staff, we followed the standard route from the Visitors' Centre on the northern margin down to the Burn and then clockwise below the Castle and back across the high bridge to our starting point. The weather was reasonably fair for November and the pickings not bad for a late season outing.

It was gratifying to find that some of our well-established members are adding to their knowledge between forays and, doubtless, other, newer ones are benefiting from this bank of information. Nothing of startling unexpectedness was found but there was certainly enough to keep everyone busy and happy until mid-afternoon.

The day began with a useful elementary lesson in distinguishing between the flabby gelatinous *Crepidotus mollis* on worked wood and the superficially similar *Pleurotus ostreatus*. Both tend to be plentiful in late autumn. It was good to see that at least some of our tinier species were not being ignored. Neither *Marasmius epiphyllus* nor *M. setosus (recubans)* are new to this site but not always are they distinguished from each other.

Late season wet weather often encourages examples of fungicolous fungi and we had plenty of the startlingly orange *Hypomyces aurantius* colonising the hymenium of soggy Dryad's Saddles. Another such parasite to look out for earlier in the year is the duller cinnamon *Hypomyces spadiceus*, formerly misnamed *Peckiella lateritia*, often entirely replacing the hymenium of members of the *Lactarius torminosus* group – especially that of *Lactarius pubescens*. You have to turn over apparently healthy toadstools to find this but please don't ruin too many in your zeal, common though these may be with young birches! *Hypomyces lateritius* is now said to be restricted to the *L. deliciosus* group but I have never seen this.

Babs Walton had a lovely specimen of *Helvella crispa*, small but perfectly formed, and a tiny orange cup-fungus collected by Gwen Humble turned out to be immature *Aleuria aurantia*. As usual on forays we hadn't time to look at many microfungi and the few found, such as *Hymenoscyphus herbarum*, are actually extremely common. Gordon and I found a late flowering Red Campion but it was Gordon who spotted that it was infected with the common smut, *Microbotryum violaceum*, usually found much earlier in the year. *Neobulgaria pura*, found by Tom, is well-known from this site though not a common fungus in the North East.

We normally expect to find well in excess of 100 species here but the total of 72 was very reasonable for a November foray.

AWL

***Baeospora myosura*-A Casual Observation**

I have had occasion to visit Pinewoods in VCs 66, 67 & 68 during late October and November and feel that I must comment on the occurrence of *Baeospora myosura* at all three sites visited.



Baeospora myosura on cone of *Pinus sylvestris*

Normally this species is encountered sporadically and often singly, growing from buried or half buried Pine cones. This year has seen a veritable explosion in its abundance in at least three widespread locations in the North East of England. It has been seen often in relatively large clusters as in the above photograph and quite a lot of the cones don't appear to be in any great state of decay. What this means I have no idea but thought that the observation should be brought to attention.

Doug. McCutcheon

Notes on the above article.

It is unusual to find *Baeospora* in such profusion. The fungus is common enough on cones of Scots Pine and Corsican Pine in the late autumn but usually with no more than a couple of toadstools on the odd cone. Note this is the *only* British conicolous toadstool found in autumn-on cones of a variety of genera in addition to Pine.

Remember not to confuse it with any of the three British species of *Strobilurus* appearing in spring. *Strobilurus tenacellus*, virtually restricted to pines, is easily the most common in our neck of the woods. Then comes *S. Esculentus* found almost exclusively on spruce-cones. Finally, *S. stephanocystis* also occurs on pine-cones but far less often *S. tenacellus*. Its cap is usually lighter in colour but the only reliable way to tell these two apart is by the gill-edge cystidia. For this picture-books are inadequate so you need a book with a decent key and drawings of cystidia-and, of course, your microscope

AWL

Minutes of North Eastern Fungus Study Group Committee Meeting Held on 28th November 2009 at 4 Bishopton Crossings, Stillington

Members present Alan Bunn, Keith Cunningham, Alan Legg, Andy McLay, Tom Kirby, Gordon Simpson (Chairman), Alan Simkins and Babs Walton

1. Apologies for absence: None
AGM NOW MARCH 6TH AT RAINTON MEADOWS

2. Minutes of last meeting: - Approved

3. Matters arising:[a] Database. Gordon reported that he had finished the modifications. Tom wholeheartedly congratulated Gordon on his achievement.

[b] Tom reported on the October NWFSG foray meeting he had attended. He noted that the NWFSG had members, around 150 in all, mainly from the Manchester area and that the foray was divided between two territory types: upland and grassland. The forays were over two days and each were from 8-30 am to 5-30 pm. As the foray was residential it did allow more opportunity for more concentrated and thorough studies. (see November 2009 Newsletter for photo of portion of the specimens collected, sorted and labelled.)

[c] The Chairman reported that the proposed Polish trip he was organising now has only one vacancy.

4 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer reported on the Group's finances which were healthy with ~£970 in the Account which will reduce to ~£590 when necessary expenses have been paid. Tom thanked Andy McLay for his generous donation of £100 received as his fee for leading a local foray.

5. Committee issues for consideration at the AGM.

As the Chairman had indicated at the 2009 AGM in January that he wished to retire from this role at the 2010 AGM we sought a replacement. Additionally we checked whether other existing members of the Executive Committee were willing to seek re-election. As a result of these discussions the Executive Committee proposed for election at the AGM is: Chairman Alan Simkins, Treasurer Tom Kirby, Secretary Alan Bunn plus other Group members: Keith Cunningham, Alan Legg, Babs Walton and Andy McLay

Alan Legg agreed to write an article for the Newsletter detailing his role as Identification Consultant; Andy McLay as Foray Consultant can be contacted: - e-mail andymclay@ymail.com and mobile phone 07929713350

It was agreed that dates/venues etc for Forays, Indoor meetings and Social Lunch would be included in the AGM Minutes and subsequently publicised in the Newsletter published just before particular events. Newsletters will now be published in January, April, August and November. The April Newsletter will publish the finalised list of all forays and events for the coming year, the August copy will publish foray details for the Autumn season, the November issue will be published after the November Committee meeting and will provide an outline of the proposed events for the coming year, and the January issue will be published after the AGM. If you have any comments on these proposals make the Committee aware- it is your Newsletter.

6. Proposed programme of Forays and other events (final programme to be ready for the AGM meeting on 9th January)

Prior to planning a programme for meetings we addressed the concern that the geographical distribution of forays resulted in long journeys to attend some forays. After much discussion on this issue the Committee agreed to target 3 geographical regions: - North of the Tyne, Tyne to Tees & North Yorkshire and for each year's programme we would have 2 forays in each region. Any remaining forays would be organised with locations dependant upon volunteers coming forward to lead a foray in their local patch or by Committee decision.

The proposed 2010 programme is: -

March 6th Indoor meeting at Rainton Meadows (and AGM. Note! Subs. due by this date! Be there for David Smith's talk, entitled Kindom of Lilliput straight after AGM. 11:00 start)

May 8th or 15th Spring Foray at Foxglove Covert at Catterick Camp (Andy McLay to arrange)

Jun 12th Social Lunch at Alnmouth (Tom OIC)

July 24th Stanhope Burn (Andy McLay to arrange)

Sep 11th Kiplin Hall Woods, nr Northallerton (Gordon S. to make arrangements)

Sep 25th Plessey Woods (GS plus local mycologists)

Oct 9th Cockfield Fell (Alan B. to contact Rachel Richards re: arrangements)

Oct 23rd Rothbury (Gordon S. to arrange)

Nov 6th Gibside, National Trust (Andy McLay to arrange)

Nov 20th Indoor Meeting/Open Forum at Hamsterley

It was proposed that we ask David Smith, a NEFSG member, to give the March indoor meeting his talk entitled Kingdom of Lilliput – secretary to arrange.

7. Website Development

The way forward for our website was discussed thoroughly and several important decisions made which it is hoped would improve the look and access to the site. The very large number of species/site records (see under 3a above) will, if possible, be placed on the website, in addition these records would sent to the Association of British Fungi Groups (ABFG) to be included in their CATE database.

At this stage a purely photographic section would not be created, although photographs as part of articles are to be encouraged.

Many other Fungus Groups have a more developed Website than ours, however, it was felt that much of content of these websites is of a similar nature to that included in our Newsletters. For this reason it was agreed to include unrestricted access to material in past Newsletters, this would result in three consequences i) the password/user name access for members will become unnecessary and will be deleted from the log-on procedure asap ii) our website will be accessible by fellow mycologists, both within the UK and worldwide and iii) contact details for the Committee members will be removed from the front cover of all previous Newsletters. So that this information is not lost to members in the future it was proposed that we issue a membership card containing a Group logo, Committee contact data the year's events programme.

8. Any Other Business

a) Christmas cards idea – not supported so idea dropped.

b) The use of Green plastic baskets on forays. The principle whereby all finds are sorted and labelled remains an objective and its usefulness has been very well illustrated to members involved on the Mannheim trip, the Secretary's FSC course last year and Tom's visit to the NWFSG foray. However, to operate such a procedure we require more time spent on each foray, perhaps some residential forays and more expertise to sort and name specimens.

c) Red data list for fungi. The British Mycology Society produced a Red list, but the feelings expressed at the Committee meeting were that not enough was known to achieve a suitable list.

d) The Treasurer proposed that some of the money in our Account be used to buy some more books and perhaps a microscope. This topic raised an interesting discussion and it was suggested that members bring any unusual/specialist books to the March 2010 indoor meeting so that other members can evaluate for purchase by themselves or perhaps propose purchase by the Group. As an example of this type of evaluation relates to the new Collins fungus book which seems to have some good features, but only a couple present at the Committee meeting had seen the book. If a copy had been available at the meeting a more wide evaluation would have been possible.

Specialist books and other purchases by the Group will be considered after the March indoor meeting, probably at the April 2010 Committee meeting.

e) Recording sheets for members and submission of records. The current form was printed as page 14 in the April 2009 Newsletter. Gordon agreed to re-issue the recommendations for correctly recording the data in the appropriate columns – it's not as obvious as it seems in some cases!

9. Date and venue of next meeting

Saturday 17th April 2010 at 11-00 at the Durham Wildlife Trust's Low Barns Reserve

What is certain is that it is green...or is it?

Some time ago Paul Forster submitted a photograph (below) of the Green Elfcup, named as such in Roger's Mushrooms and by others. The Green Wood Cup is also offered up as an alternative "common" name by several authors.

Though there is little chance of confusion by the use of descriptive names "Elfcup" or "Wood cup", to fix the species in the mind's eye, I believe we all accept that the more definitive Latin Genus/species



binomial is preferable; and so we haltingly mutter the incantation *Chlorociboria aeruginasce..esce...er...osum...osa* whenever we find this lovely species, or is it just me? In any event, that's just fine because we all know what we mean and certainly, when found on a foray, we know exactly what to expect to see when the find is presented to us. However, a little little digging around throws up some interesting controversies surrounding such an apparently easy to identify species. To begin at the beginning then; the spelling of the binomial is not that clear-cut. Names DO change in mycology and so there is no surprise in this but the name change is usually the result of a re-classification. I can recall confidently calling this species *Chlorosplenium aeruginascens* for years -it is an impressive act of recall; nowadays, though, I am often corrected and am fostering the name *Chlorociboria aeruginascens* still impressive! The BMS accepts this as the current name and ties it to the Green Elf Cup. That's that then, except that

I am still troubled by world views and note that there is a spelling variation, quite common in current literature, *C. Aeruginescens*. The latin binomial uses "**aerug**-" to mean blue-green, and "*ascens*" which is with some latitude best translated as "becoming". This makes sense and so is good enough for me. Just to end on a cliff-hanger, there is the small matter of the very similar *C. aeruginosum* (or is that *C. aeruginosa*?) A line has to be drawn and so back to the BMS database.....and the winner is....by a slightly larger spore...*Chlorociboria aeruginosa*.

I hope that has clarified matters.

TAK

The GREAT 2009 competition...we have a winner!!

After a flurry of late entries and some undignified and futile disputes with the judge, we now have a WINNER in the Great 2009 Competition. It was a close run thing with most entries detecting the number of differences within the correct order of magnitude (though not all; you know who you are). In the final analysis, annoyingly, a "draw" was required resulting in several begging phone-calls to the recently unemployed Terry Wogan who through his now embitt-



tered agent declined to accede to my request to carry out the draw. Accordingly, plan "B" was brought into operation and on the evening of the 2nd of January 2010 our dog was encouraged (by the presence of a Malteser) to sniff around inside a pillow case containing the correct entries. I am please to announce that the individual whose name stuck to the dog's nose was.....

ALAN BUNN

There were ELEVEN created differences in the two photographs though disputes were bound to occur regarding forensic anomalies in the paper surface. Congratulations Alan. The £25.00 is yours. A cheque will be forthcoming in the near future.

Where did that come from....?

Stillington Forest, that's where. Full marks to Wynyard Woodland Park Environmental Trust for setting up and managing this little oasis in what was once a very industrial setting. The use of the term "forest" is perhaps a little premature but as this land, previously a waste and fly-tipping area, was planted up with a mixed selection of trees in 1994/95 it has gone from strength to strength.



Beside the main pathway there is a well established copse of Silver Birch as well as Aspen, Willow, Field Maple and Alder. Hawthorn and Blackthorn thickets shelter the park from the north and east. Summer sees an explosion of insect life due in no small measure to the three ponds which have always been a feature since the earlier days of industrial use.

From 1983 until 1993 I (occasionally) thrashed my way about in the swamp, mire, gorse and briar finding little to commend the place except for some very fit rabbits. After the "conversion" I kept scant record of my mycological finds, recording only anything new.

After ten years I had recorded a total of two species and so it was with some surprise that in September of 2009 I clocked up my third find! There is no point in hiding the truth...at first glance I thought I had stumbled across a little known *Armillaria Sp.* as the beige/grey/tan sporophores seemed almost

certainly to be growing on the Silver Birch roots or old buried wood (above left), and there was that darkening in the cap centre made up of little "scales" so indicative of Honey Fungus (below left).

A spore print confirmed and strengthened my belief, spores white *en masse* but hyaline under the microscope; but I had deluded myself.....again.

Taking a little more care in observation (below, right) led me to commit hesitantly to a *Tricholoma Sp.*



as my initial belief weakened in a weekend. Another attempt at spore-gazing was a complete flop as the spores coalesced before my eyes looking more like cauliflower florets than anything mycological. Time for the plain brown paper bag and a deposit on AWL's doorstep. He was out when I called but I can imagine his first words when he returned and saw the bag....where did that come from?

Thank you Alan... *Tricholoma scalpturatum* it is.

Tricholoma scalpturatum (Name often spelt incorrectly as *T. Scalpuratum*.) (Fr.) Qué. Yellowing Knight. Cap 4–8cm across, pale grey or grey-brown to almost white. Cuticle often with scales leaving the cap paler in colour; often yellowish-tan at the cap centre. Stem 40–80 x 6–12mm, pale to white or faintly flushed with the cap colour. Flesh white in cap, off-white in stem. **Taste and smell mealy.** Gills emarginate, pale but becoming spotted dirty yellow especially when old. Spore print white. Spores 5–6 x 3–4µm. Habitat in pine or beech woods, though in this case with Silver Birch. Season early summer to late autumn. Occasional. Edible by some (Rogers Mushrooms). TAK

