

North Eastern Fungus Study Group

Newsletter 60 January 2011



Melastiza cornubiensis (= *M. chateri*) Canon Eos 40D, 2.8 Macro Lens AV 9.0, exposure Comp +1/3 Paul Forster

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Happy New Year!

So goodbye to 2010, a very mixed year for those with mycological leanings. The general consensus is that we in VC66 enjoyed a long and productive season with the feeling that we made up for the poor year of 2009; but different parts of the country had a very different year. Regardless of your thoughts on climate change, 2010 started and ended with some quite exceptional weather conditions.

The winter snow of 2009/10 was still lingering in January and temperatures stayed low throughout the months of February and March though Spring stuttered into an early start in many areas. Surprisingly, the next talking point was drought!

Even in our own patch there was a lack of early rain, but this was overcompensated for in the very wet months of June, July and August. "Summer" temperatures were not surprisingly lower than we have come to expect but this seemed to have worked to the advantage of the mycological community.

To check this we can now dive into the CATE2 database which has all our records up to the end of 2010. Below are just a few of the statistics comparing our finds over the past two years. The results are not intended to be scientifically definitive as there are many variable other than the weather; membership numbers and enthusiasm have a huge effect on the data!

In 2010 the top 10 finds we recorded were:

4x *Nectria cinnabarina*
3x *Russula cyanoxantha*
3x *Tremella mesenterica*
3x *Mycena galericulata*
3x *Calocera cornea*
3x *Hygrocybe conica*
3x *Trametes versicolor*
3x *Rhytisma acerinum*
3x *Coprinellus micaceus*
3x *Piptoporus betulinus*

In 2009 the top 10 finds we recorded were:

7x *Rhytisma acerinum*
7x *Puccinia caricina* var. *caricina*
5x *Piptoporus betulinus*
5x *Daldinia concentrica*
5x *Stereum hirsutum*
5x *Puccinia punctiformis*
4x *Trametes versicolor*
4x *Hypholoma fasciculare* var. *fasciculare*
4x *Polyporus squamosus*
4x *Bjerkandera adusta*

Hmm? It looks as though we were at our busiest in 2009, but that's statistics for you. Just out of interest, though, what were our TOTAL species counts for the two consecutive years?

In 2009 we clocked up 324 species. In 2010 we managed 191! So what about the RECORDS totals? In 2009 we recorded 478 finds and in 2010 we recorded 254 finds. Put it down to the weather.

TAK

Pot pourri

Members are encouraged to read the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting (November 2010) where it was noted that there is to be another trip to Poland this year. Contact Gordon.

The now not-so-new foray format continues to evolve. It is hoped that we will be purchasing some re-useable "trays" on which to display finds after forays. More details later in the year.

Pluteus aurantiorugosus

A Striking Rarity recently found in Darlington

When, in the 1990s, I was studying the herbarium specimens of the late eighteenth century mycologist, Edward Robson, now housed in the Sunderland Museum, I came across material of *Diatrype* species collected from "Baydales" by Robson's close associate, Thomas Flintoff of Knayton near Northallerton. The specimens had been identified as "*Sphaeria echinata*" and attached notes indicate that they had been sent to the celebrated James Bolton of Halifax whilst at work on the appendix to his seminal work, ***An history of fungusses growing about Halifax.***



"Baydales" refers to the lightly wooded course of the Baydale Beck now on the western fringe of modern Darlington. It is about twenty minutes' stroll from where I live and forms part of a local walk regularly followed by my wife and I. We were walking there on September 4 2010 when brought up short by the unexpected sight of a group of bright vermillion toadstools (left) growing from the very rotten trunk of a long-fallen Wych Elm right next to the path. Material was taken home, photographed and readily identified as of *Pluteus aurantiorugosus* (Trog) Sacc. first described as *Agaricus aurantiorugosus* in 1857. The British Basidiomycete Checklist (2005)

describes it as a genuinely rare fungus, favouring *Ulmus*, which became locally common during the epidemic of Dutch elm disease. The Checklist also describes it as found from Warwickshire southwards with no known British records from outside England.

When I checked FRDBI, I found that records of 138 British collections existed, including many from Warwickshire. An unexpected finding was a BMS record made in September 1971 in Gosforth Park, Northumberland but with no substrate mentioned and no collector identified. The lack of detailed information was disappointing but it is highly unlikely that the toadstool was misidentified. This paper record, with no herbarium material known to exist, probably represents the most northerly collection from Great Britain.

Moreover, the specimens collected from Baydale by Ros and I are certainly the first from County Durham. Dried material was sent to Brian Spooner at Kew where its identity was confirmed and where it was accessioned as K(M)166487 and now forms part of the permanent National Collection.

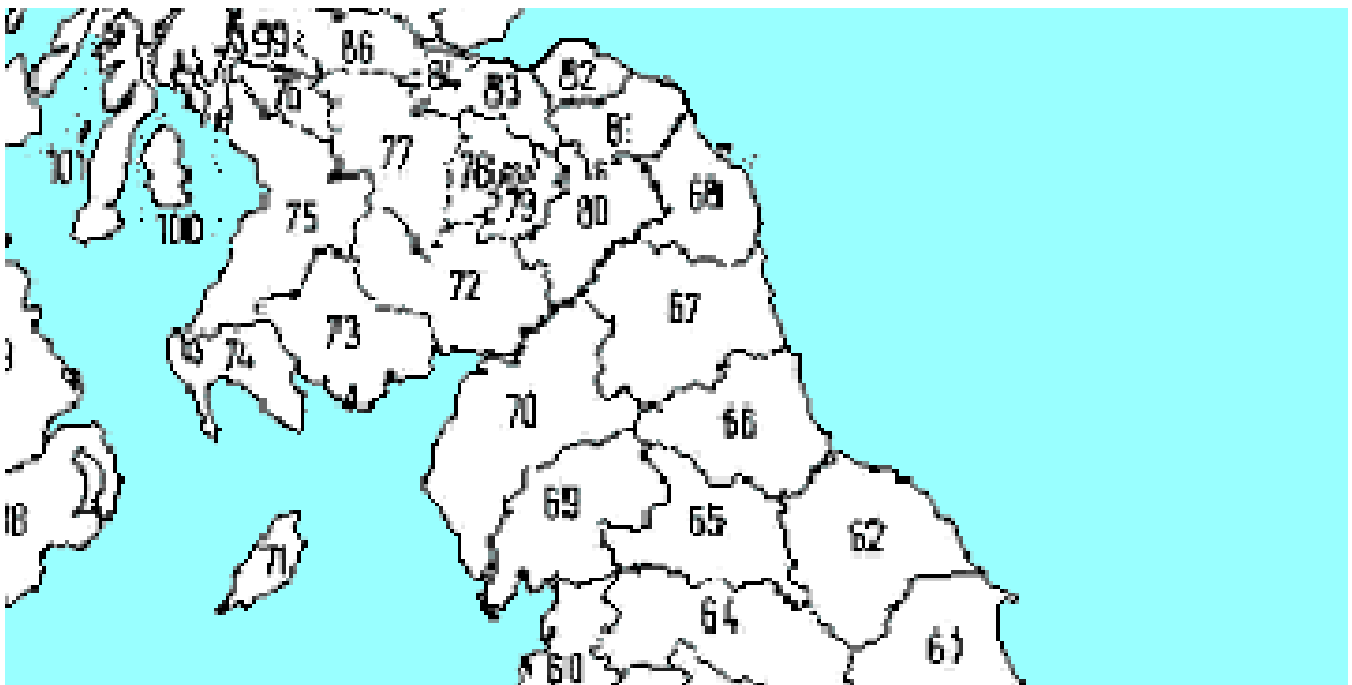


AWL

WATSONIAN VICE-COUNTIES – what are they? why were they introduced? and what is their relevance today?

What are they?

Watsonian vice-counties were introduced in Hewitt Watson's third volume of *Cybele Britannica* published in 1852. Essentially the vice-counties are based on county divisions in the mid-1800s, but a number of larger counties were split up so that each vice-county was more or less equal in area. The section of GB/Ireland map below shows the divisions of the vice-counties. Each vice-county is numbered, Great Britain has 112 vice-counties and Ireland has 40 numbered H1 to H40. As a result of the divisions Yorkshire has five vice-counties :- VC62 N E Yorks, VC 65 N W Yorks, VC 61 S E Yorks , VC 63 N W Yorks and VC 64 Mid-W Yorks; Durham county is VC 66, and Northumberland south part is VC 67 and north part is VC 68.



Why were they introduced and what is their relevance today?

Watson was a botanist and he introduced vice-counties for the purpose of botanical recording. The vice-county boundaries of Watson's system have survived for over 150 years and have remained unchanged despite local government reorganisations. Since Watson's system has resulted in stability of recording areas used for wildlife recording the VC recording boundaries have been used widely for this purpose. Botany and mycology are two major disciplines which use the VC system. Locally, birders have tended to use other boundaries, for example the Tees-mouth Bird Club uses the historical Cleveland boundary which is composed of some of N E Yorks and the southern end of Durham.

Today, because of Watson's foresight in defining VC areas, we are now able to compare historical and modern data for the same geographical area covering about 150 years. AB

Minutes of North Eastern Fungus Study Group Committee Meeting held on 13th November 2010 at Durham Wildlife Trusts Rainton Meadows Reserve

Members present Alan Bunn, Keith Cunningham, Andy McLay, Tom Kirby, and Alan Simkins (Chairman)

1. Apologies for absence: Gordon Simpson and Babs Walton

2. Minutes of last meeting: - Approved

3. Matters arising: From item 4 The Secretary noted that around 10 new members had joined the organisation in the past month or so and it was agreed that the subscriptions they had paid would cover to the end of 2011. The Secretary would send an e-mail to them to inform them of this decision.

From item 5 a) An indoor meeting on 5th February 2011 at Rainton Meadows will include a presentation by Tom Kirby followed by a 'what is it?' photographs from members (max 6 per member).

b) The Treasurer has purchased 2 more books for the library

c) Keith will place a reminder in the next Newsletter for members to send in photographs of fungi for the Newsletter / Web site

From item 8 As Babs Walton and Gordon Simpson had asked to be released from their Committee roles the meeting considered various options as to replacements etc and opinions of the 'targeted' persons would be sought. Hopefully this matter could be resolved before the AGM. Andy will contact Val Standen.

From item 3e The issue relating to records for the BMS/ABFG databases was discussed at length. TK expressed the opinion that the ABFG CATE database was very easy to access and to input data. For the ABFG Michael Jordan had been very helpful in reducing the burden of recording data, in the form of Excel spreadsheets, into CATE. A link from CATE to the National Biodiversity Network, NBN, is being considered and meetings between ABFG and the NBN have taken place to discuss the issues involved. Inputting data to the BMS database appears to be more difficult than to the ABFG database. Currently when a list of species from a foray is recorded into an Excel spreadsheet, usually within a week of the foray, this Excel document can be electronically mailed to members as a "provisional" list. Once thoroughly checked, the list can be sent through for "immediate" inclusion in the CATE dataset. The issue of substrates, associations etc specified on recording sheets was discussed and it was felt that the number of options needed to be reduced. The Chairman agreed to write an article on the issue of recording for the next Newsletter with the hope that more members would collate their records for inclusion onto the CATE &/or BMS databases. Currently the collated data for CATE is sent through TK, the records for inclusion in the BMS database are currently dealt with by AL/GS/ Babs. Andy McLay offered to help inputting records to the various databases. TK agreed to contact Gordon S. with the objective of agreeing a suitable list of substrates for the Excel based recording form.

4 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer issued a financial statement which showed we were over £441 in credit and currently with an increasing membership. There would therefore be no need to increase the membership fee.

Cont'd.

5 Future Management of Forays

The new format introduced for the way forays were organised has been used on this year's events and although not ideal in all cases, it was felt that within the methodology there were benefits for group members. The need for a suitable table/ room for sorting and identifying species was discussed. As a result TK agreed to provide a 'portable table' with appropriate labelling on it so that species could be sorted more efficiently. The fact that a list of species found on forays is issued to members with e-mail very quickly was considered a big plus for the new foray format.

Currently a major issue is the lack of information on the recording sheets which are used to record species etc. for individual specimens. Keith Tulip's recording sheet was brought to the meeting by the Chairman. This included substrate options so that a simple underline or circle would indicate the preferred option. It was agreed that Keith's sheet was an improvement and would reduce the time to produce a record sheet for each specimen. In order to hopefully improve this issue i) Tom agreed use Keith's sheet as a model and seek to improve the record sheet and he would e-mail a version of the recording sheet so that members could print their own sheets to use on forays and ii) Andy Mc. agreed to write a Newsletter article to explain why there was a need for more information on the foray labels.

6. Forays and Indoor meetings end 2010 & 2011

The following events were provisionally agreed and would be confirmed by the AGM on March 5th at Rainton Meadows.

Details of locations etc will be included in appropriate Newletters prior to the events.

Saturday 5th February –indoor meeting at Rainton Meadows

Saturday 14th May – Spring foray at Gibside NT (AMcL)

Saturday 30th July – Social lunch at the Pub at Hudswell, Richmond – very local of Babs.

Saturday 20th August – Havannah/Three Hills north of the Tyne – (Dominique Colback organising)

Saturday 10th September – Milkwellburn Wood, south of Tyne (KC)

Saturday 24th September Raven Gill, Comondale, N York Moors (AS)

Saturday 8th October – Sunnyside Farm, Weardale (TK)

Saturday 22nd October – Mulgrave Woods on coast north of Whitby (AB/Paul Forster)

Saturday 5th November – Bowlam Lake, Ponteland nr Wallington Hall (AMcL)

If any members wish to organise additional forays to the above, please send details to Tom Kirby asap so that the forays can be added to the above list.

The Secretary proposed that, in addition to the above forays, he would like to encourage members to consider organising less formal 'Come and Find' forays on their local patches with publicity etc. sent out to members living nearby by e-mail. These types of foray would not only increase the number of records but could allow more flexibility on the time and day.

The Indoor meeting of the 20th November has been publicised in the recent Newsletter and it was hoped that many members would attend either to learn more regarding microscopes and or to share their expertise in this area.

Cont'd.

7 Items for consideration at 2011 AGM

See previous items included in Matters Arising from previous Minutes.

It was agreed to ask Paul Forster to give a presentation of his photographs of fungi etc after the AGM for about 20 mins plus time for questions.

8. Website Development

Keith reported that it was now possible to obtain data on the number of 'hits' on the website and the Secretary reported an increase in requests for membership applications from people who had found the foray list on the website. .

9 Any Other Business

a) Gordon Simpson wishes to publicise another fungus trip to Poland in mid-September 2011 – members interested should contact Gordon directly tel. 01388 832155. TAK to mention in the Newsletter.

b) The Secretary will seek to get more members to produce Pen Portraits for inclusion in the Newsletters.

c) Course notes from a Fungus Identification course are now available and will be used as and when appropriate. Initially these will probably be included on the website.

d) Tom K. raised the issue of the presence of non-members on NEFSG forays and whether or not they were covered under our insurance. After some discussion it was clear that we needed some clarification on this issue and Tom agreed to seek further advice. Additionally the Secretary was asked to determine or investigate the position regarding our affiliation to the BMS.

e) The Chairman regretted the lack of educational articles in the group's Newsletter, for instance publication of identification keys and other topics. Following some discussion on this topic it was agreed to attempt to increase the amount of educational material. The Secretary agreed to write an article on the reasons that we record our foray species under Vice-County headings.

f) Andy Mc. noted that Michelle Appleby, amongst other members, had also found a specimen of *Spathularia flavidula* and it would seem that this rare species has been more common this year in our area. Andy felt that members should be encouraged to report unusual finds in the Newsletters.

g) Alan S. noted that in our Constitution one reason for the existence of the group was to 'promote the education and enjoyment of our members' with which Alan S. totally agreed, but wondered whether we should be attempting to educate other organisations on the world of fungi.

10. Date and venue of next Committee meeting

Saturday 7th May 2011 at 11-00 at Rainton Meadows Reserve.

Alan Bunn

Hon. Sec.

Fungi photos for the website

Some of you have expressed the wish to have your photos on our website.

No doubt we all have some excellent photos that we would like to share with the world. I have several thousand myself!

Digital photography has given us the ability to produce good quality images that were previously only possible for the skilled with very good equipment.

If you are going to send photos you will need to provide good quality, in-focus images taken from different angles showing at least caps and gills, some text describing the specimen, Latin bi-nomial, where it was found, what it was growing on and/or with and a grid reference if considered appropriate.

If there is any doubt as to the identification then the photographs will not be able to be shown on the website.

As the photos will be going on they will need to be reduced in size. There is a lot of free software on the web, such as Piccasa3, which can do this.

We will be creating a photos page on the website for this. Our website person, Lucy Hollingworth, does the work for us very cheaply but cannot dedicate too much of her time to it, so please do not expect instant results when you send your photos in.

Send your photos to me initially at kcunn@talktalk.net and I will then pass them on to the various experts for verification.

As this is a new venture it will probably take some time to get a format that works well, so please be patient.

If you have any suggestions, let me know.

KC



Picture TAK *Hygrocybe pratensis* reproduced at 96dpi

Season to Taste...

This month has probably seen off the hardy over-wintering Blewitts but there is always next year! If you are very lucky you may still find the odd specimen pushing through in early spring....it is not uncommon in the sheep pastures mid-winter around here in January.

Jon Bemrose treated us all to a sample of his excellent "Blewitt Pate" on the Hamsterley Microscopy Day and has kindly sent in the recipe for your delectation. I have made it and can confirm that it will delight the palate and leave you wishing for more.

Blewitt Pate

Ingredients:

500g Blewitts
1 small onion finely chopped
1 medium hot chilli finely chopped (no seeds)
25g butter
About 50gms ricotta or mascarpone cheese.
Sprig fresh thyme
Juice of half lemon

Method:

Soften the onions and chilli by frying in the butter. Do not burn. Add the mushrooms, garlic, and thyme then continue to heat through until the water has practically gone and the mixture just starts to fry. Again, do not let the mixture burn. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Once cool, estimate the quantity and add half as much of ricotta cheese or mascarpone. Mix well, season with salt and pepper then chill before serving.

JB



This is a DOUBLE rarity. A beautiful example of *Mycena rosea*, AND taken by Alan Legg! (Collected 28/09/10 at Aysgarth Lower Falls)

It's a very simple thing.....

Now look `ere....

Our illustrious founder and currently Consultant : identification (Alan Legg) is mildly miffed as in the six years since penning his request for NEFSG members to send him their recent /past fungus identification records, things have not significantly improved.

Those of you with elephantine memories will not need reminding of Alan's article in the January 2004 newsletter issue 35.

Life is a lot easier now as we have the added benefit of an updated recording sheet (see April 2009 newsletter) appended for your benefaction– oh joy! (See next page)

The procedure is amazingly simple. Individual member's records should be sent to Alan W (address on every Newsletter) along with good quality specimens where necessary . Alan checks and verifies, and then sends a copy to Tom Kirby who enters the records on to the ABFG data base and forwards copies to Babs, Gordon or Andy McClay for inputting to the BMS database.

When this was discussed in our November committee meeting one member opined that people may not have the relevant map or are perhaps unsure of calculating the grid reference for the geographical location of the record. "Poppycock!" said I, (our members are very clever people) but just in case, a site location name would suffice.

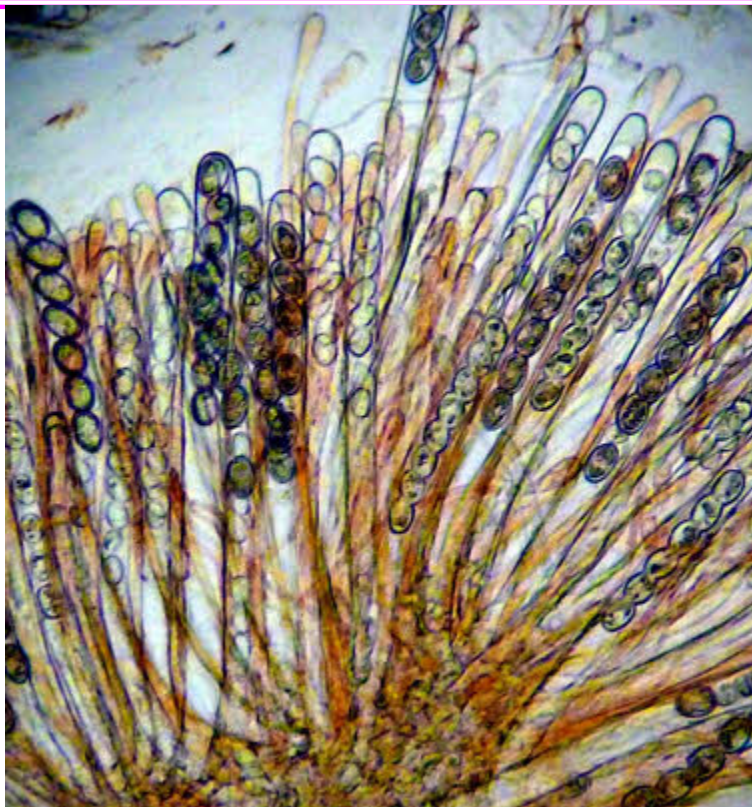
Being of a fawning, grovelling nature, as I write this article, I am in the middle of writing up my own fungus records for 2010, mainly (but not only) for Saltburn Gill where I am attempting a multi-year fungus survey.

Now seems a good time of year to catch up on your recording, always assuming you made the appropriate site notes in the field.

Now, wouldn't it be wonderful, if together, we NEFSG members could make this a rapturous and gratifying year for Alan by each sending him one fungus record sheet (at least).

Resolve to do it please.

A. Simkins (Chairperson)



Miniature Digital Cameras

It will come as no surprise to anyone that the rise in popularity of the current generation of Compact Digital Cameras has opened up some tremendous opportunities for extending photographic techniques.

The small lenses on these cameras means that it is quite easy to view through a microscope eyepiece and allow the camera auto-functions to do the work.

There are "adaptors" available to secure the camera (avoid those that secure the LENS) above the microscope, permitting good quality photographs for very little outlay. Cheaper still is to just HOLD the camera in the ideal position. An example of the asci and paraphyses of *Scutellinia scutellata* is shown left, taken with a hand-held LUMIX camera. No stain was used for this

picture but it has been enhanced using Adobe Photoshop CS5.

TAK

RECORDING SHEET

Conf = Confirmer

Association

Subst

[illegible]

The GREAT WINTER COMPETITION 2010

Well. That was difficult! In fact, I have to confess to difficulty in finding all eight and I had the answer all along. The TOP100 list is based on the BMS FRDBI and the species omitted from Alan's list are:

Heterobasidium annosum, *Hypoxylon fuscum*, *Lactarius tabidus*, *Lactarius turpis*, *Leccinum scabrum* var. *scabrum*, *Stereum hirsutum*, *Stereum rugosum* and *Boletus chrysenteron*.

Whimsically, the list below is the CURRENT NEFSG Records TOP100

122	Hygrocybe virginea	43	Inocybe geophylla var. geophylla	32	Puccinia punctiformis
101	Hygrocybe conica	43	Hygrocybe coccinea	32	Phragmidium violaceum
90	Trametes versicolor	43	Gymnopus peronatus	32	Lactarius tabidus
83	Hypholoma fasciculare	43	Bjerkandera adusta	32	Lactarius glycosmus
80	Paxillus involutus	42	Lycoperdon perlatum	32	Exidia glandulosa
78	Xylaria hypoxylon	42	Clitocybe fragrans	32	Calocera pallidospathulata
77	Hygrocybe pratensis var. pratensis	41	Tremella mesenterica	32	Bisporella citrina
76	Mycena galericulata	41	Pholiota squarrosa	31	Tricholoma fulvum
74	Rhytisma acerinum	40	Mycena galopus var. galopus	31	Mycena arcangeliana
69	Hygrocybe psittacina	40	Dacrymyces stillatus	31	Marasmius oreades
69	Auricularia auricula-judae	39	Tricholomopsis rutilans	31	Lepista flaccida
68	Laccaria laccata	39	Gymnopus confluens	30	Marasmius rotula
65	Hygrocybe chlorophana	39	Flammulina velutipes var. velutipes	30	Lactarius turpis
63	Piptoporus betulinus	39	Coprinellus disseminatus	30	Erysiphe alphitoides
62	Pluteus cervinus	39	Armillaria mellea	29	Laccaria amethystina
59	Stereum hirsutum	38	Rhodocollybia maculata	29	Coleosporium tussilaginis
57	Russula cyanoxantha	38	Lactarius blennius	29	Chondrostereum purpureum
57	Amanita rubescens var. rubescens	38	Hypoxylon fragiforme	28	Psathyrella candolleana
55	Nectria cinnabarina	38	Clavulinopsis corniculata	28	Gymnopus dryophilus
55	Coprinellus micaceus	37	Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca	28	Diatrypella quercina
54	Rhodocollybia butyracea	37	Daedaleopsis confragosa	28	Clavulina coraloides
54	Polyporus leptoccephalus	36	Rickenella fibula	28	Amanita fulva
54	Lepista nuda	36	Polyporus squamosus		
54	Daldinia concentrica	36	Mycena pura		
53	Clitocybe nebularis	36	Leccinum scabrum		
53	Amanita muscaria var. muscaria	36	Ganoderma australe		
52	Russula ochroleuca	36	Calocera cornea		
48	Tubaria furfuracea var. furfuracea	35	Xylaria polymorpha		
48	Lycoperdon pyriforme	35	Trochila ilicina		
48	Coprinopsis atramentaria	35	Lepista saeva		
47	Lactarius quietus	35	Heterobasidium annosum		
47	Hebeloma crustuliniforme	35	Coprinus comatus		
46	Russula nigricans	35	Ascocoryne sarcoides		
46	Calocybe gambosa	34	Xerula radicata		
46	Boletus chrysenteron	34	Leptosphaeria acuta		
45	Lepiota cristata	34	Calocera viscosa		
45	Cystoderma amianthinum	34	Boletus badius		
44	Phallus impudicus	33	Stropharia semiglobata		
44	Bolbitius titubans var. titubans	33	Lactarius subdulcis		

Please note that in this list, species variations have been omitted where spacing so dictated.

.....but now for the important bit! **The winner of the 2010 Great Winter Competition is, by a short head, KEITH TULIP.**

Keith managed to find seven of the missing species but suggested *Russula fellea* to make up the eight, having noticed that the Collins Guide did not include *B. chrysenteron* but does include *B. cisalpinus*. (See Dave Champion Agony Aunt article, The Forayer vol.6 issue 4)

Well done Keith. The £25.00 is yours. The cheque is in the post!

Forays & Events

In an attempt to give information on events as near as possible to the date, the next events are listed below. Please note particularly the date of the AGM at RAINTON MEADOWS.

5th of MARCH, please be there.

Usual starting time 11:00 hrs.

Saturday 5th February –indoor meeting at Rainton Meadows including a Power Point Presentation of the Fungi of Poland by TAK.

More events will be confirmed in the APRIL newsletter. If you have contributions for the APRIL issue, please send them to TAK as soon as possible. Closing date for articles, pictures, comments is, not surprisingly, APRIL 1st!

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

Encouraged by Gordon, here follows the learned comments of some eager forayers, recorded on dictaphone over the years. There are more!

In no particular order:

Russulas are funguys made of paper. (My own Godson aged 5 years, to his mother, after intense instruction by me)

Giant puff balls blow around in the wind to spread their spores and there are so many every time you breathe in there are enough in your lungs to bury you up to fifty miles deep. (Told to a parent, by a reporting 6-7 year old girl, breathlessly, at Rievaulx Abbey foray 2006)

Collybia is where Colonel Gadafty lives. (Otherwise smart 9-10 year old on foray for Tunstall Hills Group)

If you had honey fungus you would be a dead tree but you would have lots of bootlaces. (5 year old with a large clump of "bootlaces" at Castle Eden, now Wynyard Country park 2001)

I don't know what your celium is, but mine is above my bed and my sister has one. (same as above!)

If this is a what you said but I can't remember it so it's lucky I have found another AND its different! (George at Plessey 2010)

A shaggy in cap is sometimes better after a haircut. (Enthusiastic learner enjoying the Common English names at Hart-Haswell 2006. He had very long hair for a 7 year old as did his father)

TAK