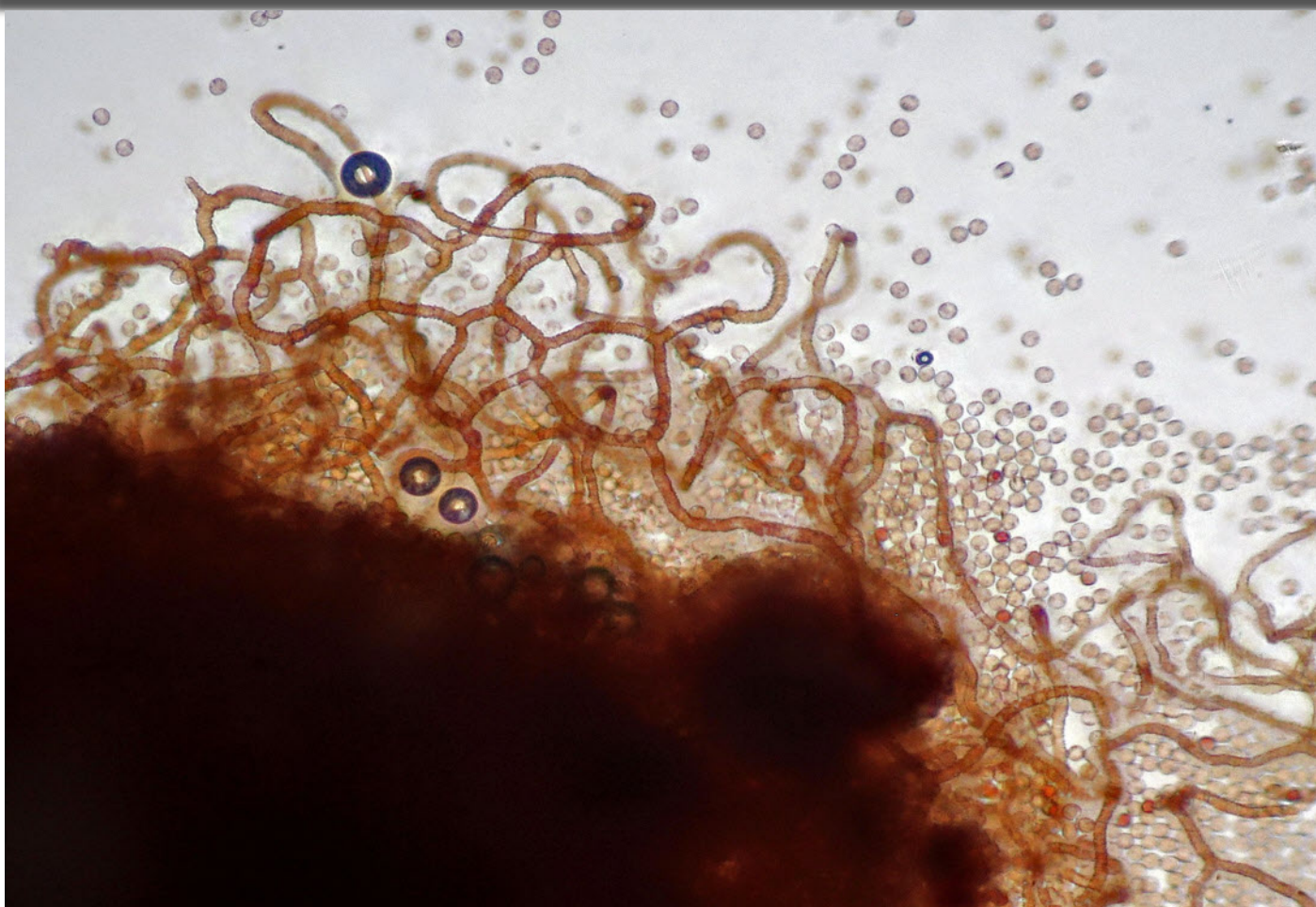


North Eastern Fungus Study Group

Newsletter 68 January 2013



Acyria ferruginea Capillitium and spores

David Smith

Happy New Year... have you heard about the Ash trees?

Cudoniella clavus var. grandis

Serpula lachrymans

Blew the wind southerly?

....if you go down in the woods

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

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Happy New year.....have you heard about the Ash trees?

Who hasn't? The story is stirring in the media almost continuously with doomsday scenarios, much beloved of the British, being variously described ; and it's not just the media.

What is going on? Well, there are a whole lot of unknowns but what is certain is that the Ash tree population is under threat in Britain....much as it has been on the Continent (the French... again) for over a decade. The causative agent is a fungus, *Chalara fraxinea* . This pathogen, on completing its reproductive cycle (sexual stage, *Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus*) disperses spores which are, by design, windblown. Unlike Dutch Elm Disease, which decimated the Elm population in the last decade, this blighter needs no beetles to infect its host....the spores carry the fungus over large distances unaided. Though there have been many soothing words regarding "steps taken" there is a general acceptance that whilst the ban on importation of Ash saplings from "abroad" is welcomed, it is too little, too late....and most probably a pointless exercise; except in PR terms.

The fungus was already known to be present in herbarium specimens from Switzerland in 1978 (http://www.forestpathology.ethz.ch/research/Chalara_fraxinea/index_EN) and did not appear to be considered a danger as no damaging symptoms were apparent. There is speculation that a mutation may be causative in creating the current pathogenic character in the endemic form in Britain but it also possible that the fungus has been introduced unknowingly. This would not be surprising as there are records from other European countries, most prevalently from Poland 9 (Kowalski, T. (2006): *Chalara fraxinea* sp. nov. associated with dieback of ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) in Poland). Currently, there is no known published list of precautions which could or should be taken to limit the spread of this infection.... at least not from the expected bodies....but there are some signs that the mycological community is moving. This from Archie McAdam:

Dear Group Leaders

To keep you all in the picture PLINK (Plantlife link) have requested list of fungal species likely to be affected by *H. pseudoalbidus* (*Chalara fraxinii*). Justin, Martyn and Stuart have produced an initial document which has been sent to PLINK apparently at 2 days notice! Stuart and I thought you might find it interesting and may wish to pass it on to your memberships so they too can see what is going on behind the scenes so to speak.

Best wishes
Sheila Spence
BMSRN Co-ordinator

The list is available to members on application (tectak@aol.com) and makes for interesting reading but is not in any sense attempting to reach conclusions. Chillingly, those listed fungal species which may be endangered should the Ash population vanish runs to over 60....though admittedly the major casualty would be overwhelmingly *Daldinia concentrica*.

All, however, is speculative. The erudite Clive Anderson, president of the Woodland Trust, is quoted in the Gaurdian, 25th. November:

" Ash dieback and insects could ravage our forests but they will rise again...."

So that's all right, then.

Happy New Year.

Tom

OUTSIDERS MAKE FIRST FIND UNDER OUR NOSES.....COME ON Y'ALL!

(Apart from: *Cudoniella clavus* var. *grandis*, 16/05/1975, England, Durham (VC: 66), Raby Castle Estate, [SJ3121](#), coll.: anon, id: anon, [Lit. rec.](#), FRDBI Record No.: 132783, Origin of Record: JNCC literature records database ([full record data](#)).)

"Tom,
We obtained your email contact from Michael Jordan.
We were in Teesdale recently and to escape the rain we went to Hamsterley forest. Here we found several fungi including *Cudoniella clavus* var. *grandis*. AS you have a lot of records for this Forest, we thought you might be interested - it is not particularly common and does not seem to be listed at this site on CATE. We will add the record shortly.
We found it near the car park at the end of the Forest Drive - the best estimate is NZ 05xx 27xx. (Full co-ordinates given)
It was growing in vast numbers at the edge of a track under birches.



Best wishes

John and Doreen Bailey"

A great find.... and seriously now, many thanks to John and Doreen for this and for all their work in cleaning the records which we send to the CATE2 database. It is surprising that they have time to come up into our territory and carry out so audacious a raid! TAK



From: Jeffrey, Colin
Sent: Monday, September 03, 2012 1:50 PM
To: info@greatnorthmuseum.org.uk
Subject: Unidentified plant/fungi?

Dear Sir/madam,
I'm not sure if you are the correct people to contact and apologies if you are not. I've got this strange growth/plant that has developed in my toilet. This is the 2nd one we have had, but this time I have taken some photos of it (see attached). I've done a bit of googling and cannot find what it is. I was hoping that somebody with a bit of knowledge could identify it. The picture was taken in Wylam and the growth developed in the two weeks that we were away on holiday.

Regards,
Colin Jeffrey

Great specimen unless it is in YOUR bathroom. Looks like a fine example of *Serpula lachrymans* to me.....any alternatives?

Blew the wind southerly?

In July 2011, I was enjoying an early foray with Ron Pattinson in one of our favourite woods, Allen Banks, near Hexham. There seemed to have been significant felling along the riverside path, and we were muttering about the loss of the trees, when we happened upon some consequent big woodchip piles, where, to our delight, some large wrinkly fungi had appeared.

Photographs were presented to this year's February indoor meeting, with a tentative identification. Dissent was met with, along with a few cries of "*Psathyrella*!" from the back, possibly because I had unfairly neglected to mention the snuff brown spore colour. Subsequent harassment of Alan Legg led to him kindly pointing me in the direction of Kew, so off went the dried specimens. In a remarkably short time, back came the reply from Dr Martyn Ainsworth, confirming that it was indeed *Agrocybe rivulosa*.

This species is big with a yellow-brown wrinkly cap, gloopy when



young, and has a large ring. The wrinkles give rise to the Latin name, *rivulosa*, marked with rivulets; the proposed English name is the Wrinkled Fieldcap. It is a remarkable fungus, first found in the Netherlands in 1999 and only formally named in 2003. It had travelled to the south of England by 2004, and has now been found over most of the country. Martyn Ainsworth said: 'The speed of spread of this fungus in Britain on woodchip still amazes me!'

Geoffrey Kibby has suggested the species is originally sub-tropical. The first find was in Rotterdam, where it may have come in by ship, and its preference for nice, warm woodchip piles may reflect an origin from a more southerly climate. Some have suggested it has spread via imported woodchip, but there are too many accounts, including this one, of it being on fresh local chips. So the answer is - blowing on the wind.

Although the species is now widespread, I was at first most excited. No record for it in Northumberland or Durham was apparent in either the FRDBI or CATE online databases. Was this the most northerly record? But, alas, there are Scottish records and online ac-

counts. So are we suffering from a lack of recording in the north east? Alan Legg is always exhorting us to submit our personal records. But how many do? How many others have found this species in our area? My only consolation is Martyn Ainsworth's comment: 'yours seems to be the most northerly vouchered record that we know about [at Kew]'.

KT

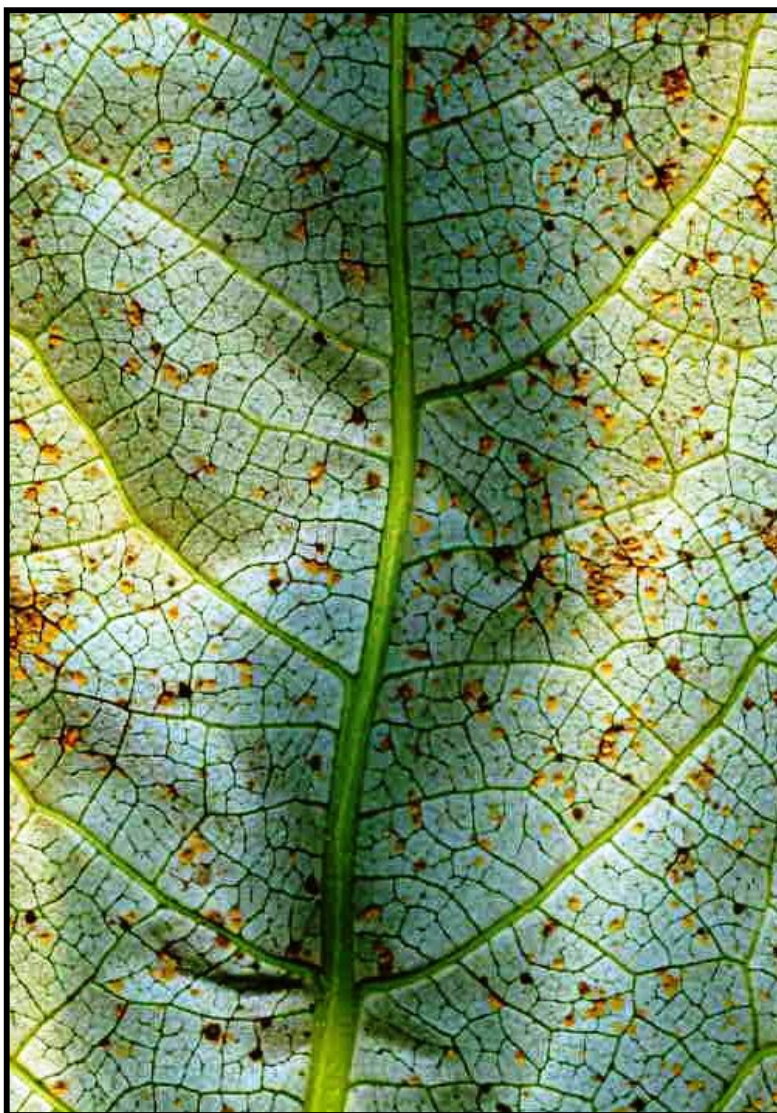
.....if you go down in the woods today.....you will not be surprised

This year forced me in to areas new, as my regular haunts were suffering badly from the weather...as was I. Open countryside surrounds us here, and whilst fields and pasture with widely spaced copses can yield up many interesting species over the years, the land is essentially arable and is prone to the activities of the farmers as well as being easy victim to adverse weather.

I decided that in 2012 I would make an effort to really explore some local woodlands which provided some degree of shelter from the elements. Just north of the A689 there lies several significant wooded areas which are accessible from the Wynyard Woodland Park (formerly Castle Eden Walkway). I had made several forays into the "Wynyard Plantation" over some twenty years, before large parts of this mixed woodland were sold off in packets by Wynyard Estates. The woodland north of Wynyard Village is known as Newton Hanzard Plantations and is very adequately described as "mixed". Here you will find Larch, Oak, Beech, Sycamore, Poplar, Oak and patches of Rhododendron, Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Birch. There may be other species in areas which are as yet untraversed by me but armed with my trusty GPS navigator I have clocked up some 80 kilometres of bloodied trail, track and *terroir* over the last year....and most enjoyable it has been.

Because of the current interest in the coming problems for the Ash and probably Oak, too, I had been keeping an unusually keen eye on all things tiny on leaves....though my knowledge in this area is very limited. Apart from the appearance of *Cristulariella depraedans* (See article Issue 67) on the living leaves of Sycamore, I was puzzled by the large number of Poplar leaves lying on a long track from east of the Newton Hanzard Plantation and passing through Close Wood, a long finger-like projection with huge numbers of Poplar trees.

Gordon Simpson to the rescue. I was walking through the "Poplar Trials". This was an area of experimental planting in the Fifties and Sixties. I recalled that there had been a long hockey-stick shaped avenue of Italian Poplars (*Populus canadensis*) which had been grubbed out several years ago (the scar is clearly visible on Goggle Earth) just beside the Wynyard Village Roundabout, and I wondered why. Looking around the Close Wood track it was evident that this had been a bad year for the Poplars. Though there were many leaves



on the ground there were very few on the trees....and this in early September....and all the leaves carried signs of an infecting agent. Many of the younger Poplars had been removed from the wetlands south of the track and it was evident that the process was ongoing.....unpopular poplars, indeed.

I took samples of two or three leaves and scanned them. The leaves appear to be of *P. trichocarpa*, (and this fits in with the original planting plan provided by Gordon). The bright yellow/orange patches on the upper leaf were mirrored on the underside. This was a sign of *Melampsora laricis-populina*....and there in the name is another clue. Larix....and there they were, on the other side of the track....Larch by the score!

"*Melampsora laricis-populina* belongs to the Basidiomycota (Pucciniomycotina ; Pucciniomycetes ; Pucciniales ; Melampsoraceae). It requires a *Populus* and a *Larix* host to complete its life cycle. The rust overwinters as teliospores on dead *Populus* leaves on the ground. These spores germinate in the spring, producing windborne basidiospores, which results in infection of larch needles. A few days later, masses of yellow orange aeciospores are produced on needles of the coniferous host. They serve as inoculum for infection of live *Populus* leaves during the spring. Ured-



iniospores (in yellow-orange pustules) are then produced on *Populus* leaves, serving as inoculum for rust epidemics on *Populus* throughout the summer. In late summer, teliospores (the overwintering spores) are again produced on *Populus* leaves, completing the rust's life cycle. *Melampsora laricis-populina* is a close relative of other economically important rusts (Pucciniales), including *Puccinia* and other cereal rusts. Besides its commercial importance, *Melampsora* shares a long co-evolutionary history with *Populus*, with a constant interplay of resistance and pathogenicity. An improved understanding of the defense mechanism in poplar leaves may help to reduce the damage in plantations of the economically important poplar species and provide basic insights on the evolutionary biology of host-pathogen interactions. " (Published with kind permission of JGI (Joint Genome Inst. <http://jgi.doe.gov/Melampsora>)

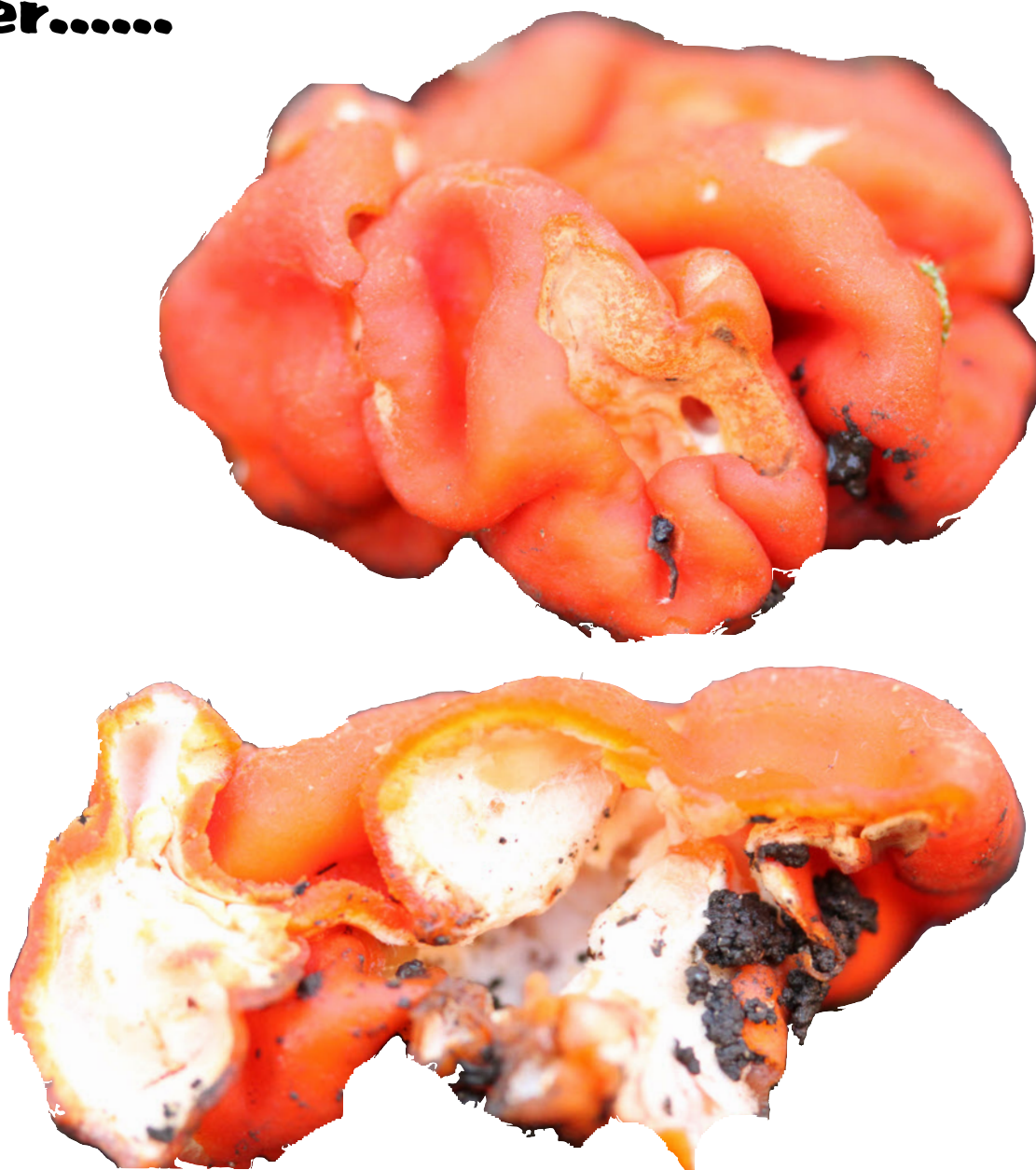
And so we could confirm, not surprisingly, that there is a constant and waging battle between trees and pathogens. Resistance to infection is evolutionary, as evinced by the unarguable anthropic reality that the trees we see are here because they **are** here.....they have survived.

Long live the Ash, the Oak and the Poplar.

I will be up a Larch tree in spring.

TAK

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



Peter Manuel came across this excellent find at Havannah Three Hills and got Dom considerably excited. This is *Paurocotylis pila*, the Scarlet truffle by some. This species is rarely recorded here or, indeed, Great Britain generally. A total of 23 records appear in FRDBI going back to the earliest, 1990.

This species was, allegedly, introduced to these islands after being tossed into a gravel heap by a tourist, presumably having returned from foreign parts. It is, uniquely, a non-ectomycorrhizal species amongst the Pyronemataceae, and is the only species in the genus.

Paurocotylis pila, on/with *Coniferae* (as *Coniferae* / *Musci*), lying free, 04/11/2004, England, Durham (VC: 66), Darlington, West Cemetery, [NZ2713](#), coll.: A.W. Legg, id: A.W. Legg, **FRDBI Record No.:** 1220977, **Origin of Record:** North Eastern Fungus Study Group (Alan Legg/Gordon Simpson) ([full record data](#)).

.....it is now!

Fungal Records Database

Date: 13/01/2013 19:51:11 GMT Standard Time

From: dandh@f2s.com

Reply To:

To: dandh@f2s.com

CC:

BCC:

Sent on:

Sent from the Internet (Details)

Internet Address Card Attached

To BMS group contacts

Delighted to say that my first message of the year brings good news.

Paul Kirk has cleared the backlog of data entry to the Fungus Records Database of Britain and Ireland. Just to give an indication of the effort involved in this, Paul advises that

Record sets sent in 2007 or before OR for 2007 - 25,645 records added
Record sets sent in 2008/2009 OR for 2008/2009 - 15,356 records added
Record sets sent in 2010 OR for 2010 - 34,731 records added
Record sets sent in 2011 OR for 2011 - 61,018 records added

Paul has also provided a summary of the records submitted by BMS groups and some individuals to date (copy attached), and advises that he is ready to receive 2012 records and any earlier ones you still hold.

He adds....."perhaps also a word that numbers are not everything, especially as the groups differ in size and skill level, and that all records are most welcome. Soon I will work on (first) getting the UK data into the GBIF portal so the rest of the planet can see it and use it and (second - hopefully without too much extra work) updating the dataset in the NBN".

Whilst I know this has been a long (and sometimes frustrating) wait for all of us, I hope you join with me in thanking Paul for his substantial effort in bringing the FRD up to date.

A second point on a different matter: just a reminder that Sunday October 13th is UK Fungus Day and that groups are encourage to include a mycological event or activity on or close to the date. There will be a briefing note issued shortly which will provide more information from a BMS perspective.

Best regards,

David

PUT IT IN YOUR DIARIES!

**February 16th 2013: indoor meeting at Rainton Meadows-
Mycena identification led by Malcolm Greaves.**