



North Eastern Fungus Study Group

Newsletter No 106 - Autumn 2022

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NEXT ISSUE: The deadline for articles for the Winter newsletter is 24th February 2023
All contributions will be gratefully received!



Seasons Greetings

Forthcoming Events

Sat 18th Feb 2023 - AGM - Rainton Meadows Visitor Centre at 11am.



DIARY OF A SLIME MOULD

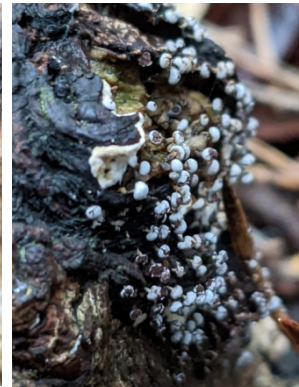
Day 1



Day 3



Day 5



I used a website to identify these tiny fruitbodies, and then checked spores: *Didymium squamulosum*. Very common. Usually found on leaf litter (here on rotten birch). Surface of peridium covered with lime crystals.

Lydia Koelmans

Keldy Castle Foray—Saturday 12th November 2022

A goodly number [in the teens] of members managed to find their way to Keldy Castle and Cabins. I was particularly pleased to see that our past chairman, Gordon Simpson, had arranged a chauffeur for the day in order to revisit a locality close to where he was brought up as a young lad. It brought back memories for him which he describes below. The day was a bit cloudy/misty—but dry. The foraying divided into 2 parts—the morning in plantation conifer [mainly spruce] but with a scatter of deciduous—the afternoon in beech and birch woods down to the only beaver enclosure in North Yorkshire, in year 4 of a 5 year monitored introduction.

First up, in a mown wildflower meadow a couple of slimy yellowish white capped *Stropharias* with dry stem and a ring created uncertainty—microscopy later identified them as *Stropharia albonitans*.

The morning foray soon divided into 2 groups. My group was named by the other lot as the galloping group—quite unfairly. The other lot became known as the renegade group and set up camp in the spruce plantation and refused to move [other than at snails pace] despite repeated whistle blowing to move on.

However, despite all this—or maybe because of it—the total of fungi finds was very healthy, being over 150 species.

In the morning both groups found what used to be called *Cordyceps ophioglossoides* but now basks under a new moniker *Elaphocordyceps ophioglossoides*. Its host is an underground truffle, *Elaphomyces granulatus*. Dom and the group with him also found a large collection of the taller *Elaphocordyceps capitatum* a first for VC62 and Yorkshire and 66th UK record. It's host is the underground truffle *Elaphomyces muricatus*. *Russula* and *Lactarius* species were regularly spotted all day—but all fairly commonly recorded ones.



Elaphocordyceps capitatum

The 2 groups met up again before lunch and admired several clumps of medium-sized white fungi by the pathside. Initial identification was *Lyophyllum connatum*—there were voices expressing doubt but at the time of writing this missive no alternatives have been proffered.

Helvella lacunosa was found by Rhona of the galloping group and *Helvellacrispa* by a member of the renegade group.

After a leisurely lunch at tables back at base camp some called it a day but an intrepid group forayed on in the deciduous woods. Notable finds included several large groups of *Cantharellus* [now *Cratarellus*] *tubaeformis* [delighting in the English name Yellowlegs, and a not commonly seen *Lenzites betulinus* on a fallen birch branch. Down by the beaver enclosure a stump hosted both *Panellus serotina* [olive oysterling] and the less common *Bjerkandera*, *B. formosa*.

Jill found *Crepidotus epibryus* on grasses—an unusual substrate for it. On the way back to the cars a small orange/red *Hygrocybe* [later identified as *H. miniata*] was a surprise find in a patch of open birch woodland, but not far from open fields. All in all a grand day out.

And finally here is Gordon's recollection of days of yore [2nd world war style] at Keldy Castle:

Alan Simkins

Keldy

Before the 2nd World War the fields around the castle were used annually for Cropton Show. I frequently was left sitting on a four- wheeled cart called a rulley just as the road enters the field from the south so that I could listen to Stape Silver Band. Blue and yellow Ryedale coaches transported people to and from the show. The access council road was so narrow the coaches had to use the east side of the road to pass each other. The west side of the road was a high bank. Two large Clydesdale horses were used to extract the bogged coach on the east of the road.

The castle was owned by the Reckitt family. Older people might remember women using 3cm Reckitts blue cubes dropped into the copper with the boiling water and dirty clothing.

Reckitts sold their estate to the Forestry Commission around 1925 and it formed Cropton Forest. Reckitts joined Colmans a mustard firm.

To access Keldy Castle grounds you have to turn north off the Cropton to Newton and Pickering road passing the Roman Camps and 3 bomb craters to the east of the road. The first stage is slightly uphill ending in a cutting. I used to cycle to the cutting to collect the yellow sandstone about the size of an adults hand and place them in a narrow sand bag. The full bag was placed with equal halves on my bike's crossbar. I then had to walk with my bike back to Cropton. The rubbing stone was used to colour the edge of the flat stone slab at the front door of a house or along the front edge of steps once a week. After the cutting the access road descends in stages. On the first descent the road passes a small holding on the west side the road. This is followed by a level stage. On the west side of the level stage there was a sawmill during the 2nd World War employing mainly women. The sawdust heap was huge. The road then descends and crosses a small stream before the gentle uphill rise to the Castle grounds. At the stream crossing look at the east side. The army concreted a short length to the stream and the stream bed. The army used the concreted area to wash their vehicles. Note, there are beavers down this stream to the west. On the straight drive to the Castle grounds there are concrete hut bases in the trees and a sewerage plant constructed for the army hidden on the west side of the road. The sewerage plant is now used for the Keldy holiday cottages.

When the huge army camp was being built an almost continuous convoy of small lorries driven by women passed north through Cropton. The lorries carried building materials for hut etc bases and nissen hut construction. The narrow access road to the Castle carried two way traffic. Empty lorries turned east at the south end of the Castle access road then eventually turned south to Pickering Railway Station.

Once the army camp was completed it was self-sufficient with numerous facilities. There was a cinema called Dreary Lane. The Castle was occupied by officers and there was no maintenance. The Castle was left by the military in a very poor state. The large camp was used by armoured divisions. At one stage the division was Polish.

The tanks frequently turned in Cropton main street and they uprooted the sandstone curbs and damaged the road surface. After the 2nd World War the curbstones and road surface were repaired.

Gordon Simpson

David Miller found Devil's Fingers, *Clathrus archeri* in our region, up to now not recorded north of Nottinghamshire !!



NEFSG Library

The NEFSG library of fungi books etc exists—residing at the home of your Chair. The list of books comprising the library is available to view on the NEFSG Website. The library is mobile and will always be available to browse at indoor meetngs [notably the AGM]. All books are available for loan by members, either directly at indoor meetings, or by request to the Chair at any time in the year [email alansimkins687@btinternet.com tel. 01642 477484]

It is pleasing to note an uptick in requests for book loans this year.

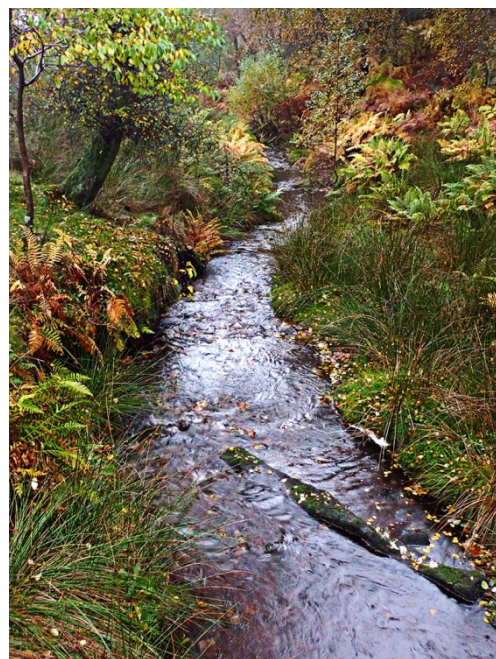
At its meeting recently your committee decided that further book purchases should be made from time to time. One suggestion is to buy the recently published 3 volume set of well illustrated [by drawings not photographs] books by Geoffrey Kibby.

The one purchase this year—also by Kibby [with Mario Tortelli]--is “The genus Cortinarius in Britain” [150 pages], beautifully illustrated with both photographs and drawings. The genus Cortinarius is acknowledged as being difficult to identify to species level. Kibby breaks his content into 4 subgenera [Cortinarius, Myxacium, Phlegmacium, Telamonia] and has organised species into groups of similar appearance or sharing similar characters.

So please have a look at the list and decide to take a dip into the library. It is here for your use, not to gather dust chez moi—New Year Resolution needed.

Alan Simkins

A wet lunch at Bonyfield Ghyll but beautiful colours along the ghyll.



CALL FOR A MICROSCOPE

Do you have an unused microscope?

A few of our members are looking to take their microscopy skills one step further and learn how to use a microscope to ID fungi.

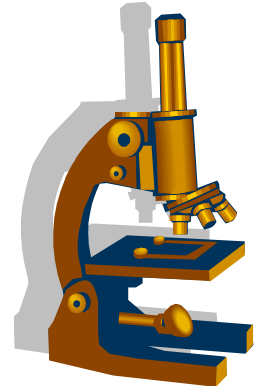
If anyone has a second hand microscope that they would like to donate or sell please let us know.

INTRODUCTION TO MICROSCOPY

Would you like to take the next step in mycology?

We are considering running some microscopy workshops next year. At this point we don't know where they will be based or what form they would take. If you are interested in attending please send your details to sallypattison@hotmail.co.uk.

Please include your name, location, whether or not you have a microscope and experience if any.



Sally Pattison

A Birds Nest

A surprise 'Birds Nest' find at the caravan site in SW Scotland at the end of October - even better when it's an uncommon species - *nidularia deformis*. Growing on rotting wet deciduous branches/twigs at the base of the site cut wood dump. 1cm fruit bodies, x30, scurfy membrane, + numerous lens-shaped, smooth, chestnut brown peridioles embedded in a clear gel.



Jill Cunningham

What *Otidea* is that?

by Ron Golightly and Archie McAdam.

Ron Golightly and some members of the Mid Yorkshire Fungus Group found a group of fruitbodies of an ochraceous *Otidea* in the Nidd Gorge on Saturday 12th November under broadleaved trees at the top a slope high above the right bank of the river next to a footpath. They measured up to 7 across x 3 cm tall with a white stem.

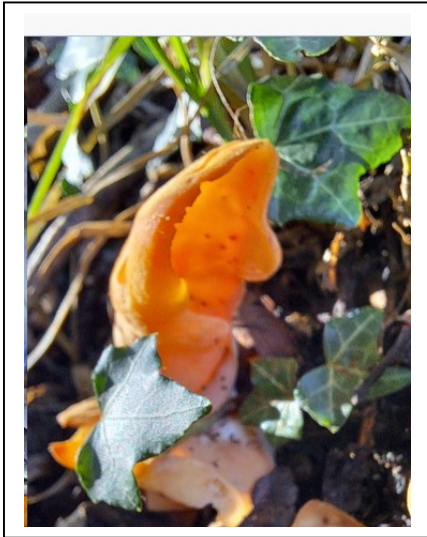


Photo © Katka Trory

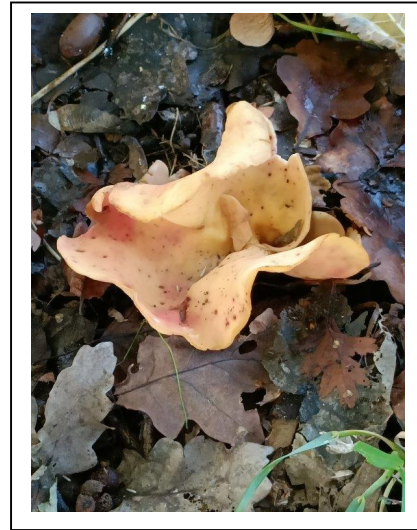


Photo © Jo Prowse

Fig. 1 shows the ear-shaped vertical cup of an *Otidea* Fig 2. shows the pink cast of colour in *O. Onotica*

Ron brought a specimen to Archie and we wrestled with the id, coming to different species, *O. bufonia* and *O. onotica*. We found them illustrated in Roger Phillips, Peter Thompson, Læssøe & Petersen, RWG Dennis and Breitenbach & Kränzlin but we just could not resolve the id to our satisfaction till we came across the free download of a monograph on *Otidea* at this address

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Otidea-bufonia-a-b-Apothecia-c-spores-d-paraphyses-e-ectal-excipulum-f-basal_fig19_274717917

Here we downloaded *A Monograph of Otidea (Pyronemataceae, Pezizomycetes)* by Ibai Olariaga, Nicolas Van Vooren, Matteo Carbone and Karen Hansen who introduce the genus with these words, 'the easily recognised genus *Otidea* is subjected to numerous problems in species identification. A number of old names have undergone various interpretations, materials from different continents have not been compared and misidentifications occur commonly.'

The authors state that apothecial (fruitbody) colour and shape and spore characteristics are important. To get a firm id we also need shape of paraphyses, ectal excipulum (outermost surface) structure, the types of resinous exudates on the cells of the ectal excipulum and their reactions in Melzer's and KOH, tomentum and basal mycelium colours and exudates. The KOH reaction of excipular exudates and basal mycelium are introduced as novel taxonomic characters in this monograph.

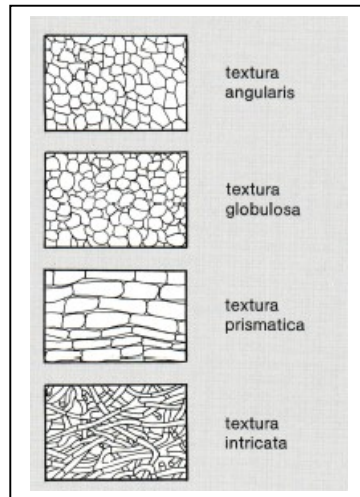


Fig. 3 These images of the structure of the supporting tissue (trama) of the cup are copied from Swiss Vol 1 p 21

So what is an *Otidea*?

The authors conclude their section on the taxonomic history of *Otidea* with the definition of an *Otidea*. They tell us that *Otidea* can be recognised by the non-amyloid asci, in combination with at least two of the characters shown here (except in the case of *O. subterranea*):

a) spores with two guttules; b) hooked or bent paraphyses as are shown here

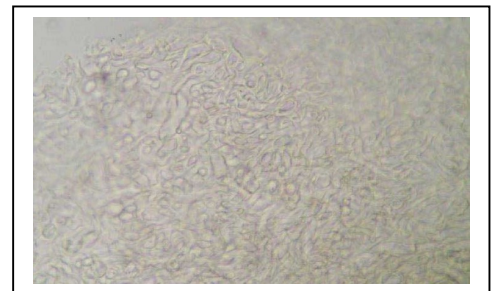
Fig. 4 shows both features a) and b)



c) medium-large split apothecia (which is shown in Figs 1 and 2);

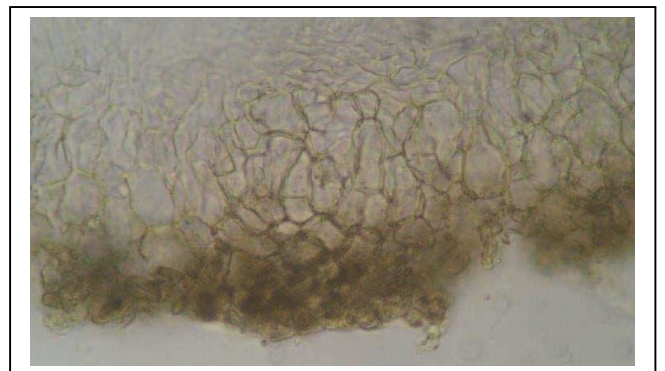
d) a medullary excipulum, which underlies the outer surface of the apothecia, of textura intricata. Under our microscopes this looks like a chaotic muddle of hyphae pointing in many directions, seen best by focussing up and down and impossible to show properly in a single snap as we have tried to do here

Fig. 5 shows d) textura intricata



and e) an ectal or outermost surface excipulum of textura angularis or textura prismatica. Ours had two surface layers of cuboidal cells – textura angularis. The inner of clear cells lying on the t. intricata and the outer coloured by brown exudates which have differing reactions to KOH and Melzer's reagent.

Fig. 6 Ectal excipulum e) on a layer of textura intricata



Why is it *O. onitica*?

The special features of our specimen which take us to a diagnosis of *O. onitica* (which is near *O. buffonia* in the key - our confusing other *Otidea*) are the pink cast over the ochraceous hymenium (see Fig 2) and the yellow staining of the basal mycelium, together with the red spots in the hymenium (Figs 7 and 8 below).



Fig. 7 shows the yellow staining of the basal mycelium by KOH

Fig. 8 shows the characteristic red spots scattered over the hymenium

Conclusion

The authors describe in detail the necessary steps in id and give an exhaustive key to the genus including 33 species. This key includes all the 9 species of *Otidea* known in UK with more than 4 records. One other species in the UK list, *O. cochleata* is considered an ambiguous name and does not feature in key or in Index Fungorum.

We hope this little paper will be of help to others studying an *Otidea*

References

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- Læssøe, T. & Petersen, J. H. (2019) *Fungi of Temperate Europe*. Princeton University Press, Princeton and London.
- Phillips, R. (2006). *Mushrooms*. Macmillan, London
- Thompson, P. I. (2013). *Ascomycetes in Colour*. Xlibris Bloomington, Indiana

UK Fungus Day

"Oh come all ye fungi!"

The North East Fungus Study Group celebrated UK Fungus Day at Morpeth on the 15th of October.

This was a free public event and the intention was to introduce people to various aspects of fungi in all its glory.

We had a lovely bunch of group volunteers on the day - Mike Cruse, Cath Gillie, Sheila Lillie, Ron Pattinson, Lydia Koelmans, Doug McCutcheon, Gabi Recknagel, John Robinson, Richard Thompson and Dominique Colback. Without the help of which, the day could not have happened. We also had several family members and friends who provided the non-expert help at various stalls.





The public were welcomed into the event by a fantastic fungi garden - clumps of clustered, crocheted mushrooms congregated around the bottoms of the trees and filled the flower beds. Giant painted canvases highlighted interesting fungi facts. Leaflets and booklets, provided by the British Mycological Society,



were available to take away, along with free BMS gifts like bookmarks and rulers.

There was a photographic gallery set up around the hall with some spectacular photographs from the late David Smith. The Image of *Phallus impudicus* drew many eyes, especially the men's breakfast club who were utilising the hall before our event!



There was a specimen table in the centre of the hall which proved popular. We had some absolutely stunning fungi on display, along with expert information about the specimens from some of our members.



Our secret weapon, on the day, was the Newcastle Fungal Group who came along to support us.

Simon Whitehall, Janet Quinn and Yasmin Ahmed

worked hard to put together an incredibly informative table, offering information on their work in cell biology and fungal disease. There was interactive play with model yeast, balloons and playdough, as well as an enlightening powerpoint which was incredibly interesting.

The BMS loaned the group some stereoscopes so that we had the opportunity to introduce the public to the microscopic world of fungi.

John, from Microscience, also provided a stereoscope on the day, along with some

fantastic specimens that went down a treat.

Lydia said that she watched peoples eyes light up as they saw things down the lens which they had never seen before and the scopes appealed to young and old alike.



The craft stall, organised by the Borders Fungus Group, was a big hit. Sheila had worked hard to produce some wonderful hand-made items which perfectly highlighted the colourful beauty and diversity of the fungi kingdom.



Four of our members ran morning and afternoon forays into the woodland nearby and everyone who attended came back enthused and excited about the fungi on their doorstep.

There was a tombola stall, with fungi-themed prizes, including several books donated by the BMS, as well as a canteen which proved popular with the volunteers and was an area where people could gather and chat about the day.

The NEFSG have decided that we would like to hold this event again in 2023 and will be putting together a team to organise the day, which will be on Saturday 7th of October. If you would like to get involved, please email sallyvpattison@hotmail.co.uk

Beacon Hill – Easington Colliery

I'm based at Beacon Hill, Easington Colliery on the Durham coast at the moment and naturally I've been trying to get to grips with the grassland fungi here, albeit as a beginner. There's a really good range of fungi but so far I've perhaps not found the riches of CHEGD species that I'd like. Perhaps I'm greedy. It seems to be a good site for the fungi of woodchip and dung. Here are a few species of interest from this autumn, if I have the identifications right.

On 24th October I came across a single specimen of what looked like a stinking fanvault to me. I passed my photos by Steve Kindle, the National Trusts grassland fungi specialist, and he has replied that it appears to be *Camarophyllopsis schulzeri* Matt Fanvault. He also relayed that there are only two accepted species of *Camarophyllopsis* in Europe now with four others being *Hodophilus*, which includes the *foetens* group. Steve also sent me a reference photo of the Matt Fanvault.

On the 22nd October I first came across one of the scarcer inkcaps *Coprinus macrocephalus* around the edge of some woodchipped trees, near to the White Lea Farm house. It was a small clump which lasted for a few days.

On the 10th November I came across a single specimen of what appears to be *Psilocybe merdaria*, on cow dung on Beacon Hill.



Camarophyllopsis schulzeri Stinking Fanvault SH



Coprinus macrocephalus



Camarophyllopsis schulzeri Matt Fanvault.



Psilocybe merdaria

David Miller

“There are old mushroom hunters and there are bold mushroom hunters. But there are no old bold mushroom hunters” Fancy your chances with these fungi?

<https://www.mushroomdiary.co.uk/mushroom-season-uk-annual-calendar>

EDIBLE

Bay Bolete (Aug-Nov)
Bearded Fieldcap (Apr – Sep)
Beef Steak Fungus (Jul-Oct)
Blusher (Jun-Oct) – Edible after cooking
Cep (Aug-Nov)
Chanterelle (Jun-Nov)
Charcoal Burner (Aug-Nov)
Clouded Agaric (Sep-Nov)
Common Puffball (Jul-Oct)
Common Yellow Russula (Sep-Nov)
Deceiver (Aug-Nov)
Deer Shiled (April-Nov)
Field Mushroom (Jul-Oct)
Giant Polypore (Sep-Nov)
Giant Puffball (July-Sep)
Glistening Inkcap (March – Nov)
Grisette (Jun-Nov) – Edible after cooking
Hedgehog Fungus (Aug-Nov)
Hen of the Woods (Jul-Oct)
Honey Fungus (Aug-Nov)
Horse Mushroom (Aug-Oct)
Jelly Ear (All year)
Macro Mushroom (Jun-Nov)
Meadow Puffball (Jul-Oct)
Parasol (July-Oct)
Poplar Fieldcap (Summer/All Year)
Prince (Aug-Oct)
Shaggy Inkcap (July-Nov)
Shaggy Parasol (July-Oct)
Saffron Milkcap (Aug-Oct)
Slippery Jack (Sep-Oct)
Trumpet Chanterelle (Sep-Nov)

INEDIBLE/POISONOUS

Birch Milkcap (Sep-Nov)
Brown Roll Rim (Aug-Nov)
Butter Cap (Sep-Nov)
Common Earthball (Sep-Nov)
Death Cap (Aug-Sep) – Deadly
Destroying Angel (Aug-Sep) – Deadly
False Chanterelle (Aug-Nov)
Fly Agaric (Aug-Nov)
Fool's Funnel (Aug-Nov) – Deadly
Funeral Bell (Aug-Nov) – Deadly
Hare's Foot Inkcap (Jun-Nov)
Ivory Funnel (Aug-Nov) – Deadly
Magic Mushroom/Liberty Cap (Sep-Nov) – Hallucinogenic
Magpie Inkcap (Aug-Nov)
Panther Cap (Aug-Nov)
Poison Pie (Aug-Nov)
Shaggy Scalycap (Sep-Nov)
Sickener (July-Oct)
Sulphur Tuft (All year)
Sweet Poison Pie (Aug-Nov)
Yellow Stainer (Jun-Oct)
Angel's Bonnet (Sep-Dec)
Tawny Funnel (Sep-Nov / sometimes Jan & Feb)

NEFSG Committee meeting held at 29 Albert Street, Durham, 11am 19th November 2022

Present: Alan Simkins (chair), Jill Cunningham. Jo Scott, Sally Pattison, Mike Cruse, Val Standen (sec).

Apologies: Ron Pattinson, John Robinson

Minutes of committee meeting of 21.1.2022: Minutes were read and accepted as a record of the last meeting.

Matters arising not already on this agenda: VS to continue scanning back issues of the Newsletter to be added to the website.

Membership: 72 email addresses are on the membership list. If new members haven't paid by March they will be removed from the list.

NEFSG Finances: The treasurer reported (via email) a balance of £1,404 in hand.

Beginners microscope workshop: Proposed by Sally as several people had asked about the possibility at the Morpeth Fungus Day. Possible venues discussed were in Durham or Newcastle. Sally to write a note for the Newsletter to get some idea of how many people might attend and in what locality. Possibly charge a fee (£10 for a day) to cover costs.

UK Fungus Day 2022: The committee congratulated Sally for organising this successful event. She reported that it was a lot of work but worthwhile. If it is to be repeated a group of people would be needed to cover activities such as a photo competition, craft stall, specimens, membership, a foray and Mycology. Possible organisers would be Sally, Mike, Cath Gillie, Alan, Ethan Henderson. Durham was suggested as a possible venue. The 2023 Fungus Day is 7th October. Sally to write an article for the Newsletter.

Newcastle Fungus Group: A group researchers at Newcastle University (including president of the BMS) will be holding a conference next year and some of our members will help out.

Proposals for use of NEFSG funds: RP suggests - guest speakers and workshops. For example Alan and others could give an account of the Waxcap workshop they attended and Gordon Beakes to speak on aquatic fungi. It was also proposed that more books could be purchased. A list of books already in the library held by Alan is on the website. Further suggestions to be requested and members to be invited to write reviews.

Visit to Germany in 2023: The visit is arranged for 12-17th October 2023. So far ten NEFSG members will be attending and the cut off date to join is Jan 31st . CG has been asked to continue with travel arrangements.

Return visit to UK in 2025: Several members investigated sites and venues in the Caledonian forest area in September. AS will get details of costs, when to book and availability of a work room from the Grant Arms Hotel. There will be no need to foray beforehand.

Any other business:

AGM to be held on Sat 18th Feb at Rainton Meadows starting at 11am. Alan will give a presentation on the Waxcap workshop and project. Sally will prepare a 'Fungus personality' quiz.

Alan reminded the committee that he will step down as Chair next year and VS also advised that she would step down from the committee at the AGM.

PROVISIONAL NEFSG FORAY LIST 2023
(Subject to change of dates and venues)

Sun April 23 rd	Jo Scott Lichen/fungi meet tba
Sun May 21 st	Mike Cruse Chopwell
Sat July 1 st	NEFSG Lunch tba
Sat Aug 19 th	Doug McCutcheon Normans Riding Wood , Winlaton
Sat Sep 2 nd	Mike Cruse Stobswood
Sun Sep 3 rd	Joint foray with BFG Howick
Sat Sep 9 th	Lydia KoelmansLonghorsley Moor
Sun Sep 17 th	Alan Simkins Low Barns
Sun Sep 24 th	Jenny Connor Dalton Moor Farm , Seaham
Sat Sep 30 th	Richard Thompson Thrunton Woods
Sun Oct 1 st	Doug McCutcheon West Hills Farm , Rothbury
Sat Oct 7 th	UKFD venue tba
Sun Oct 8 th	UKFD linked foray tba
Tue Oct 10 th - Sun	Oct 15 th Germany trip ,Grasellenbach
Sun Oct 22 nd	Cath Gillie Rokeby , Barnard Castle
Sat Oct 28 th	Rachel Richards , Cockfield Fell
Sun Oct 29 th	Lydia KoelmansSwarland
Sat Nov 4 th	Alan SimkinsBransdale
Sun Nov 5 th	Rhona Sutherland NYMNP areatba
Sun Nov 12 th	Lesley Hodgson Baal Hill , Wolsingham

Lichen Lookout

Lichenicolous fungus to look out for.



Illosporioropsis christiansenii

This lichenicolous fungus is parasitic on *Physcia* sp. It is very easy to spot because of its bright colour.