



North Eastern Fungus Study Group

Newsletter No 114 - Autumn 2024

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NEXT ISSUE: The deadline for articles for the Winter newsletter is 24rd February 2025
All contributions will be gratefully received!



Forthcoming Events

AGM

The AGM is on Saturday 15th February 2025 at the Durham Wildlife Centre, Rainton Meadows. Meet at 10:30am for an 11am start.



The Mystery, (but not for long), Milkcap.

On a plant gall recording walk at Preston Park in early November I came across an arc of Milkcaps under a Hornbeam tree. What species??? After writing up the gall list at home, whilst I was on the laptop I typed in 'Milkcap with Hornbeam' just out of curiosity and with no expectations. I was stunned - it came up with 'Ringed Milkcap', *lactarius circellatus*, associated with Hornbeams. And yes, a match, trooping, caps 5-10cm + concentric darker zoning, rather like a Beech Milkcap, but



with yellowish to pale ochraceous gills plus a faint spicy smell. Apparently, they are 'uncommon' and 'mainly southern', but there are records in the north - so worth looking under Hornbeams. (Laugh, I've been there so many times and only now seen them!)

Jill Cunningham

Booted Knight

At the end of September this year, I went to stay at my elder son's house for a week, to cat sit while he and his wife were on holiday. Although only fifteen minutes drive away, it's a very different area of Co. Durham to where I live, on the edge of Weardale. (He's in Langley Park.) One rainy day, I decided to have a wander round the woods at nearby Bear Park, a site I had visited occasionally over the years; indeed my first visit was a joint foray with DWT Botany Group and the NEFSG, before I actually joined the NEFSG, and very interesting it was; I remember being shown my first Earpick Fungus. But I digress! After wandering around for a while, I came across an area of pine trees, and spotted some mushrooms at their base. The cap colour was unusual, being a golden orange with touches of green, so I took photos, plus one sample, and posted them on Facebook, as I didn't know what it was. Sally commented that they looked like *Tricholoma focale*, Booted Knight, but when I read up about this species, I thought it was most unlikely, as they are only found in the Caledonian pine forests. Then another expert said they thought it would be worth having it sent away for DNA sequencing. This was getting exiting! I contacted the committee to enquire about the possibility, and they agreed for me to send it down to Brewlab for sequencing. Ron gave me very helpful instructions for packaging, but by this time my sample, despite being put in the fridge after sequencing was suggested, was looking manky to say the least. I decided to go look for a fresher one, and eventually re-found the spot, took another sample, and a grid reference, and sent it away. After about a week, I was contacted to say that the first test had yielded no results, but that they would give it another go. Unfortunately the second test went the same way, so I was disappointed to say the least. Sally reassured me that was quite a common occurrence. Luckily, the lab decided to give it another go, and 3rd time lucky! The results came back, with a 99% match, I could hardly believe it. Now I can't wait for next year, to see if they will reappear.



Lesley Hodgson

Slime Mould on Conifer, Kielder Forest



Lydia Koelmans

Erysiphe ornata on Birch leaf

Mature Cleistothecium, of Powdery Mildew *Erysiphe ornata* on Birch leaf, showing ornamented Appendages, and disgorging Asci containing spores.



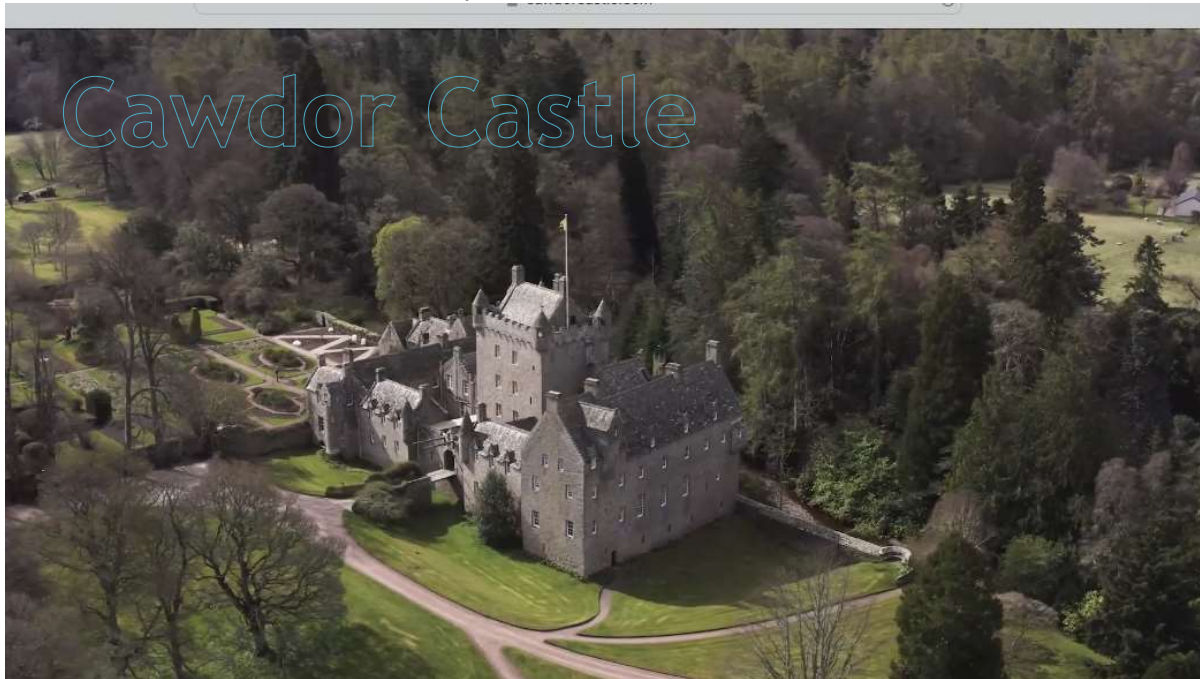
Lydia Koelmans

Saturday 20th - Thursday 25th September (5 nights 6 days) Nethybridge Hotel

Cost £89.00 per person per night for dinner bed and breakfast for those sharing a twin or double room and £100 per person for all single rooms for dinner bed and breakfast.

Therefore the cost is £450 per person for those sharing and £500 for singles.

Following a successful trip this year NEFSG are delighted to invite you to a 5 day stay in Scotland with fellow fungal enthusiasts including our friends and fellow mycophiles from MAK in Germany. There will be facilities for microscope work , social activities and organised Forays in the beautiful Caledonian pine forests and surrounding woodlands.Plus a free day to relax or enjoy nearby attractions such one of the many castles or distilleries.



Nethybridge is situated in the heart of beautiful Strathspey area in the Highlands of Scotland, within easy reach of all corners of the Cairngorms National Park, it is the perfect centre to enjoy the countryside of the glorious Scottish Highlands.

The village of Nethy Bridge - often affectionately referred to simply as “Nethy” has been a holiday destination since Victorian times yet it remains unspoilt ,Nethy has had a long and close relationship with the Abernethy Forest and as a result of this has taken on the mantle of ‘The Forest Village’.

Rare and unusual Wildlife and Fungi

The forests around Nethy are full of interesting wildlife from Red Squirrels, Crested Tits, Crossbills and Capercaillie, to the rarely spotted Pine Martens and even rarer Wild Cat. There are also rare flowers like the sweet-scented Twinflower and a tiny orchid called Creeping Ladies Tresses. Last but by no means least not forgetting the rare Hydroid Fungi and the huge variety and abundance of other fungal species.



Bookings will be taken from January until March for NESFG and MAK members.
From March until the end of May any remaining places will be allocated according to availability.

Tales of a Weekend in the Caledonian Pine Forests

Our chairman Alan led the first Foray on Friday for the early birds from the hotel towards the visitor centre, however once there he somehow managed to exceed his reputation of losing the rest of the group and lost everyone before they set off!

Despite this he and the other early arrivals had a good Foray in nearby Dell Woods and surrounding area recording and finding a large variety of species.

On my arrival at the Hotel fun was had by many of us arranging and then rearranging tables in the small room allocated for Microscopy, it was like a slide game!

This was partly due to the number of people with microscopes and books with them and the room being too small to fit everyone in.

It was great to see so many people enthusiastic about Microscope work and sadly we were unable to accommodate everyone, the hotel has since promised to set aside the much larger event room for our use for next year.

After dinner we all met in the bar and following some very interesting introductions to each other, we had a short and very diverse Fungi quiz with some trick questions which was ably won by Lydia.

Next morning after our breakfast we met outside the hotel to car share and set off for a very short drive to Loch an Eilein. It was a beautiful day and the dew on the cobwebs sparkled in the rising sun with Pink-footed geese spotted by Gordon on the journey there.

Loch an Eilein was a very popular spot and when we were all finally parked, we set off in the sunshine through the woods to the edge of the loch where people were already preparing to wild swim in the morning sunshine, Rachel Richards bravely joined them later when we had all left to pack up well done Rachel!

We slowly forayed around the loch finding many interesting species including *Sarcodon squamosus* and the often overlooked grey veiled *Amanita*, *Amanita porphyria*.

We made slow progress around the loch as there was so much to find and 98 species were recorded thanks to our experts on hand and some serious microscope work.

Loch Garten was the next foray and many of us hardly left the car park! there were so many interesting Fungi to see, more *Amanitas*, lots of beautiful *Angel's Wings*, *Pleurocybella porrigens*. Then a bit further on a huge cluster of Jelly Tongue *Pseudohydnum gelatinosum* which I had never seen before!

Cameron, , Sally ,Carolyn and others that were able set to work confirming some species in the microscope room and 76 species were listed by Mike .

After supper a few of us set out with UV torches and head torches to explore and see if we could find any fluorescent fungi. Although we didn't find any fluorescent species it was very interesting to see how different everything especially the lichens and moss looked under the UV lights and Joanie took some fantastic photos.

Apart from scaring the locals, looking at times like a UFO landing the red head torches were very welcome in order to see where we were going and stay together!

Last but by no means least was the final foray of the weekend on Monday at Culbin Forest, with lots more interesting finds including huge numbers of the Yellow Knight *Tricholoma equestre*, the Pine Bolete, Bolet *uspinophilus* and finally Devils Tooth *Hydnel lumpecki*.

In fact at one point I recall Sally announcing that she felt she was in Fungi heaven !

We would have liked to go further, but had to leave the Forest early as most of us were travelling home although could have easily stayed there for days exploring.

Culbin Forest is next to the coast and was once a thriving estate belonging to Lord Kinaird, comprising of a large manor house, a church, 16 farms and many crofters' cottages.

The sands protecting the estate became increasingly unstable possibly due to crofters using the marram grass as thatch and fuel. Then in 1694 - only 320 years ago the laird became a pauper almost overnight as huge storms blew sand onto the estate burying many of the farm's fertile lands and buildings and it was later abandoned in 1695.

Scots pines were planted in the 1850s in an effort to stop further erosion, however in 1922 using horses and carts the Forestry Commission started to plant trees and more marram grass to stabilise the sand, although the ruined estate still remains buried underneath. These pines were taken from the Caledonian Pinewoods thus introducing the wonderful fungi there .

Generally, we couldn't have picked a better centre than the Nethy bridge Hotel, it was reasonably priced and in a great location, the staff were very helpful and friendly and did everything they could to accommodate our needs.

I am aware that a few of the rooms were not as clean or good as others which surprised me as mine and many others were large clean and airy, hopefully we can iron out these issues in advance next year!

Thanks to Cameron for his suggestion of a notice board blackboard to inform everyone of times to meet and any changes, this is a suggestion that I will gladly take up next year!

Food at the Hotel was variable, however breakfast was excellent with a huge choice from a hot and cold buffet, and they even obliged with vegetarian sausages!

Plain packed lunches could be ordered from the hotel also, but a shop just a few minute's walk also offered a range of sandwiches and picnic items and it was only a short drive to Aviemore for those that wanted something more exciting.

The evening meals were three courses and there was a choice of fish meat and vegan dishes and although not spectacular it was adequate.

Many craved chips with their fish one night which the hotel provided but charged extra for!

Next year we will ask for a few favourites in advance and have a special meal out one night also.



Finally, I would just like to say a huge thanks to everyone who booked to go on this trip, without your support it would not have been possible, you were great company, and I hope you will join in again next year.

Catherine Gillie

Lichen Lookout

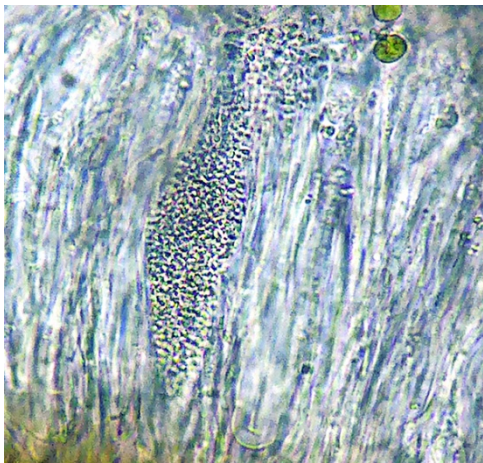
A closer look at *Acarospora*. Two that you might come across are *A. fuscata* which is commonly found on nitrogen enriched walls and stonework and *A. smaragdula* which is less common and is found on siliceous rocks and where there is run off from metal.



Acarospora fuscata



Acarospora smaragdula



Acarospora smaragdula ascus showing the tiny spores.