SMELLS AND FUNGI – THE ANSWERS

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In the latest BFG Newsletter just circulated to members (August 2011) there is an article entitled 'Smells and fungi - a challenge'. Here is the list of 40 smells given there, complete with the species with which they are associated. Common English names are given as well where they exist.

Fruit, flowers and veg: aniseed: *Clitocybe odora* (Aniseed Funnel), and to a lesser extent *C. fragrans* (Fragrant Funnel) and a few species of *Agaricus* (Mushroom); coconut: *Lactarius glyciosmus* (Coconut Milkcap); cucumber sandwiches: *Macrocystidia cucumis* (Cucumber Cap) (though I've also given this species for cod liver oil which to me is much more appropriate); garlic: *Micromphale perforans* (Stinking Parachute); lupins: *Mycena inclinata* (Clustered Bonnet) (though this species is often described as smelling farinaceous, i.e. of flour); mandarins: *Hygrophorus eburneus* (Ivory Woodwax); overcooked cabbage: *Micromphale brassicolens* (Cabbage Parachute); pear-drops or overripe pears: *Inocybe pyriodora*, also *I. corydalina* and *I. erinaceomorpha*; peas: *Lyophyllum connatum* (White Domecap); *Pelargonium/Geranium* leaves: several possible answers here, *Russula fellea* (Geranium Brittlegill) (though I've also given this species for stewed apple which to me is much more appropriate) and *R. pelargonia*, five *Inocybe* species including *I. pelargonium*, *Cortinarius flexipes* (still as *C. paleaceus* in most texts) (Pelargonium Webcap); potato peelings: *Amanita citrina* (False Deathcap), in fact its smell is one way to help separate this common species from the deadly *Amanita virosa* (Destroying Angel) with which it is sometimes confused (*A. virosa* is rare in S. England with no County records though occasionally recorded from Oxfordshire); radishes: several possible answers here too, many species of *Hebeloma* (Poisonpies) so a useful way to help recognise this genus, but the commonest species are *Mycena pura* (Lilac Bonnet), *M. rosea* (Rosy Bonnet) and *M. pelianthina* (Blackedge Bonnet); stewed apple: *Russula fellea* (Geranium Brittlegill).

Other food: bubble gum: *Entoloma ameides*; burnt sugar: several *Hebeloma* species, the commonest being *H. sacchariolens* (Sweet Poisonpie); camembert or ripe cheese: *Russula amoenolens* (common) and *R. sororia* (Sepia Brittlegill, rare) together with several other species within this group of Russulas often affectionately referred to as 'the smellies'; cheap coffee: *Lactarius subumbonatus*; cocoa: several species of *Hebeloma* (Poisonpie); cod liver oil: *Macrocystidia cucumis* (Cucumber Cap), also *Inocybe bongardii* var. *pisciodora*; cooked crabs or shrimps: another group of Russulas known as the *xerampelina* group – these all turn dark green rather than the normal rust colour on the stipe where rubbed with a crystal containing ferrous sulphate; curry powder: *Lactarius camphoratus* (Curry Milkcap) and *L. helvus* (Fenugreek Milkcap); flour: *Clitopilus prunulus* (The Miller), also *Calocybe gambosa* (St George's Mushroom), also several species of *Tricholoma* (Knight), *Clitocybe* (Funnel), *Mycena* (Bonnetcap) and *Entoloma* (Pinkgill), i.e. a very common smell in fungi; honey: *Hygrocybe reidii* (Honey Waxcap) (though you often have to seriously bruise the gills to get the smell), also *Inocybe cookei* (Straw Fibrecap); marzipan/bitter almonds: *Inocybe hirtella*, also *Hebeloma radicosum* (Rooting Poisonpie), also to some degree a few species of *Agaricus* (Mushroom); chip pan (rancid oil): *Tephrocybe rancida* (Rancid Greyling); sherry (as in old wine casks): *Russula adusta* (Winecork Brittlegill), a mainly northern species with just a few County records.

Chemicals: amyl acetate (nail varnish remover): *Entoloma icterinum*; chlorine (bleach, swimming pools): several species of *Mycena* (Bonnetcap), the commonest being *M. leptocephala* (Nitrous Bonnet) and *M. aetites* (Drab Bonnet), also *Entoloma niderosum* (this species sometimes split from *E. rhodopolium* (Wood Pinkgill) by its smell); iodoform: several species of *Mycena*, the commonest being *M. arcangeliana* (Angel's Bonnet) (though specimens need time in a sealed container for the smell to develop); skatole (dung, faeces): *Coprinopsis picacea* (Magpie Inkcap).

Miscellaneous: bed bugs: *Lactarius quietus* (Oakbug Milkcap); cheap soap (harlots!): *Tricholoma saponaceum* (Soapy Knight); coal gas: several species of *Tricholoma* (Knight), the commonest being *T. sulphureum* (Sulphur Knight), also *Cystolepiota bucknalii* (Lilac Dapperling); goat moth caterpillars: *Hygrophorus cossus*; hen houses/wet feathers: *Clitocybe phaeophthalma* (Chickenrun Funnel); ink:

Agaricus xanthodermus (Yellow Stainer); mouse droppings: *Entoloma incanum* (Mousepee Pinkgill); rubber: *Lactarius subdulcis* (Mild Milkcap); Russian leather: *Hygrocybe russocoriacea* (Cedarwood Waxcap); semen (spermatic): many species of *Inocybe* (Fibrecap), thus the smell can be a useful way to help separate this genus from other similar 'LBJ's (little brown jobs) such as *Cortinarius* (Webcap).

If anyone can think of other familiar smells met with in fungi which I've missed off the list above, or can trace the species which possess the following smells, do please let me know: disused elevator, nurse's blouse, plasticine, sow on heat, sweetcorn, otter dung!