

## FUNGI WALK at IVINGHOE COMMON, ASHRIDGE on Sept 23rd 2018

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Considering the good soaking we had to put up with today, we were a good sized group of around 12 which included not only several new members but also an Ashridge ranger together with 4 of his volunteers - all most welcome. In accordance with the somewhat slow start to the season this year, fungi were not in great numbers but were thankfully plentiful enough to give a good introduction to the subject and to hopefully whet the appetite of those just beginning to get to grips the commoner species such as *Hypholoma fasciculare* (Sulphurtuft) and *Paxillus involutus* (Brown Rollrim).

Conditions dictated that photography was somewhat curtailed today but a couple of things persuaded me to get the camera out. Early on we found a fallen Beech which provided several



species of interest including very sodden *Bulgaria inquinans* (Black Bulgar / Bachelor's Buttons – I know which name I prefer) and *Stereum hirsutum* (Hairy Curtain Crust) but someone noticed some brownish caps just emerging and which I was unsure of at the time. This turned out to be nothing more unusual than the early stages of *Pleurotus ostreatus* (Oyster Mushroom) – one of the few edible species in evidence today - this quite possibly due to previous foragers who'd been reported in the area.

Above, rather wet *Pleurotus ostreatus* just emerging from a Beech trunk today (PC)

Nearby Paul spotted some clustered orange yellow 'buttons' just developing on another fallen branch. This I was happy to name as a *Pholiota* (Scalycap) but knew that it wasn't the common *P. squarrosa* ((Shaggy Scalycap) which has a dry cap – these were extremely glutinous though the stems were dry. Checking at home I made it *Pholiota adiposa* (no English name) and include here a photo taken by member and photographer Nick White (who sadly died a few years ago).

Right, *Pholiota adiposa* looking very similar to today's specimens though not as glutinous. The photo was taken at Pulpit Hill in 2015 by Nick White.





Of the brackets we saw today there was one which is well worth a mention: a northern species which grows on Birch but which now appears to be spreading quite rapidly in the south. This was *Fomes fomentarius* (Hoof Fungus / Tinder Bracket). I've not seen it in the county before though both John (who located it today) and Ed (Ashridge ranger) were familiar with it here. There were a good number of 'hooves' to be seen, both on the trunk and on the fallen log behind it, also later on during our walk we found a huge specimen which had fallen to the ground - clearly a species which is thriving here.



Above, the unmistakable hoof-shaped brackets of *Fomes fomentarius* (PC)

Six species of *Russula* (Brittlegills) were found today though this very large genus was not that numerous for one which can be really prolific here at this time. Four were red-capped species, one of which (*R. vesca* -The Flirt) I featured in last week's report (see Hodgemoor Woods Sept 15<sup>th</sup>). Another today was the equally common *Russula atropurpurea* (Purple Brittegill) and I include a previous photo which serves to demonstrate just how varied the cap colour can be



though the almost black cap centre is a useful feature to help separate it from other red species.

Left, a collection of *Russula atropurpurea* made at Bradenham Woods (2004) with a remarkable selection of colours. The yellow rims are unusual but the purplish red colour with almost black centre is the character to look out for. (PC)



Ten species of *Mycena* (Bonnet) were recorded, mostly needing a microscope to identify later at home, though only a couple of species really caught the eye: ***Mycena galericulata*** (Common Bonnet) lived up to its English name with several clusters showing quite nicely on fallen Beech logs. This species can get quite large for the genus and roots firmly into fallen deciduous



wood. The feature to look out for in the field often needs a x10 lens to see clearly: the gills tend to have 'cross ridges' in between.

The bigger and more mature the specimen the easier this is to see.

Left, *Mycena galericulata* with the inset above showing a close-up of the anastomosing gills. (Hodgemoor Woods '07 PC)

The other *Mycena* we saw and which is worth a mention because of its easily recognisable cap colour was ***Mycena rosea*** (Rosy Bonnet). This is not a typical Bonnet, bigger and chunkier than most and with a very distinctive sharp smell of radish. It's common and grows not on fallen wood but in deciduous litter, particularly under Beech as it was today, and the pale pink to white stem typically tapers upwards.



Right, *Mycena rosea* showing its typical features – a common species of Beech litter. (Cambridgeshire '13 PC)

There may be a few things missing from our modest list of 60 species – the soggy conditions made recording somewhat of a challenge. My thanks to all the stalwart attendees, especially to John and Paul who valiantly scouted round to find things to show to the less experienced group today. For more details of what we found see the complete list. For more images to help to cement species which may be new to you in your mind, try the 'Find a fungus image' page on our website at [www.bucksfungusgroup.org.uk/image\\_list.html](http://www.bucksfungusgroup.org.uk/image_list.html), alternatively click on Images then google the Latin name of your species for a whole range of photos. (Please bear in mind, however, that as in many things found on the net there are many errors out there!)