

## Foray at Keep Hill Wood on Saturday, October 24th

Penny Cullington

A group of nine of us spent a rather drear and damp morning at this promising wood - a new site for BFG and one that to our knowledge has not been forayed before. Attendees were mainly from the Wycombe Wildlife group with sadly only myself, Claudi and Roger representing BFG, but we managed a list of 75 species, mostly fairly common things but with a few exceptions. The weather was not conducive to photography so few were taken.



It was strange that no specimens of the genera *Amanita*, *Russula* (Brittlegill) or *Lactarius* (Milkcap) were found as we were mainly under Beech and Oak where one would expect to turn up at least some of these. However, contrary to other local woods recently, quite a few *Mycena* (Bonnet) were in evidence, though surprisingly not the striking *Mycena crocata* (Saffrondrop bonnet) a species normally abounding in Chiltern Beechwoods. 9 species were identified.

We did find good quantities of an unusual small *Clitocybe* (Funnel) which has a distinctive smell of tomato leaves especially when the gills are squashed a bit. This was *C. houghtonii* (with no common name as yet) which can be recognised in the field by the cap's rather wavy outline when mature and the clear pink coloration particularly of the gills, as well as its characteristic smell. It took me several attempts to get the group to pick up the scent but I think they were convinced in the end! We found it growing in Beech leaf litter, also on a Beech stick and on Beech nuts.



Left and above, *Clitocybe houghtonii* found today (PC)

Being particularly interested in the genus *Inocybe* (Fibre-cap) I was richly rewarded today. A few weeks back I collected what appears to be an albino specimen of the common *I. asterospora* (Star fibre-cap) - a phenomenon I was unaware existed and can find no mention of in the literature. I was delighted when Claudi presented me with what I suspected were two more specimens today, and on checking at home afterwards this proved to be correct. At the least I think this is likely to be a variety of *I. asterospora* not previously described, and it may possibly prove to be a new unknown species if and when the DNA is checked. So the material will be dried with the aim of getting testing done at some stage. *I. asterospora* normally has a reddish brown cap with a concolorous stipe apart from the white marginate bulb at the base. We found a good number of 'normal' specimens as well today, and I include photos below of a collection from a different site together with the 'albino' specimens we found today.

Below a collection of normal brown *Inocybe asterospora* specimens to compare with the almost pure white specimens which were found today. (PC)



Another Fibrecap I was pleased to find was *Inocybe erinaceomorpha*, a rare species and one of the few which has a fruity smell of peardrops. This has only been recorded from three other



Bucks sites, with very few records elsewhere in Britain, so it was nice to find it fruiting in several different places in Keep Hill Wood today. We also found another more common Fibrecap which has this smell, *I. fraudans* (Pear fibrecap) which looks very different with a pale yellowish cap and a tendency for the flesh to redden where damaged. In comparison *I. erinaceomorpha* is unmistakable with its dark brown scaly cap.

Left a photo of *Inocybe erinaceomorpha* taken at Kings Wood, Tylers Green – another rare species we saw today here. (PC)

Yet another rare Fibrecap turned up – just a singleton, unfortunately but one I've never encountered before: this was *I. pseudoreducta*. So all in all a really good collection of different species of this tricky genus which mycologists tend to steer clear of due to the many species which appear in the field to be extremely similar. Under the microscope they have very interesting features, however.

Rather a short report, I'm afraid, and time restrictions meant that a few collection were not named – for this my apologies. My thanks to all who attended and to Roger for suggesting our visit - a wood clearly worthy of more attention from BFG, and I hope we'll be back another year on a weekend when we have only one foray arranged which might increase the number of attendees.