

A select group of just 7 of us met up today – 4 BFG members, 2 friends and Jeff Short from the Chiltern Society who led us round. It was a warm and sunny morning and the woodland was reasonably damp underfoot despite some dry weather recently, but even so fungi were surprisingly thin on the ground and we were also a bit hampered by the many brambles either side of the paths. The list still ended up at just over 70 species in all, however, and though mainly consisting of fairly predictable and mundane species we also saw some really interesting and special things. The first of these was one which this site is well known for and it didn't disappoint: we found several good examples of *Pseudoboletus parasiticus* (Parasitic bolete) growing on its exclusive host *Scleroderma citrinum* (Common earthball). It was nice to see such large well-developed fruitbodies with caps up to 6cm across as well as the little ones just emerging round the sides of the earthballs – both sizes are visible in the photo here.



A good display of *Pseudoboletus parasiticus* found today. (PC)



*Gyroporus castaneus* - a beautiful collection found today. (PC)

We came across rather few mycorrhizal species despite the good numbers of mature Oak and Birch, but one which was a treat to see and which was fruiting in good numbers under a large Oak was *Gyroporus castaneus* (Chestnut bolete). The contrast in colour between the evenly chestnut cap and almost white pores (which don't blue when bruised) makes this uncommon species recognisable in the field, also when cut lengthways the stem shows small chambers within – these are just visible in the photo in the specimen I sliced in half. This is a species found in the south of the country under Oak and also Sweet Chestnut.

Of the 4 species of *Mycena* on the list 3 of them were distinctive enough to recognise in the field: the common *M. galopus* (Milking bonnet) with white latex exuding from the stem when broken, the equally common *M. leptcephala* (Nitrous bonnet) with a strong smell of bleach, and the least common and most interesting of the day, *M. rorida* (Dripping bonnet) which has lumps of gel or slime visible on the stem with a hand lens. It was growing as it often does on dead bramble stems. All these three species of *Mycena* can be somewhat similar in stature and cap colour but luckily have other characters which with practice one can pick up on quite easily.

For a change we have a reasonable number of Ascomycetes on the list, due mainly to the sharp eyes of John Tyler. One he found which I'd not seen for quite a few years was *Hypocrea gelatinosa* (no common name) – a species consisting of palish soft translucent blobs but with distinctive tiny green spheres visible within the context with a handlens. Once seen never forgotten thought the correct name eluded me at the time! We have just one previous county record of this from Brill Common - probably a reflection of our lack of observation rather than its rarity. It's worth googling an image of this to become familiar with it because it should be quite recognisable in the field.



*Lenzites betulinus* growing on an old birch stump today. (PC)

Worth a mention is a bracket we found which appears to be becoming much less frequent and which was growing on a Birch stump – this was *Lenzites betulinus* (Birch mazegill). (Apologies for my somewhat amateurish insert photo of the mazelike underside.) This species mainly occurs in the south of the country on fallen Birch but can also be found on other deciduous woods.

Towards the end we moved over the road to look at a different area of the Common with mature Beech as well as Oak and soon began to find some different species. The Ascomycete *Helvella crispa* (White saddle) was just emerging through the soil at the road edge. Here also was a good collection of *Geastrum triplex* (Collared earthstar) showing all stages of development including the completely closed-up brown onion-shaped protective covering before it breaks open to form the familiar star-like rays which characterise the genus.



Above, *Helvella crispa* and Right *Geastrum triplex*, both found today. (The *Geastrum* photo, showing both immature and mature specimens, is one I have from Burnham Beeches 2008. (PC)



In a litter-filled ditch we found many clumps of the beautiful and delicate *Ramaria stricta* (Upright coral).

**Left, *Ramaria stricta* growing in quantities in the Beech litter today (PC)**

To finish with, on a mossy bank we found an impressive collection of *Boletus luridiformis* (previously *B. erythropus* - Scarletina bolete).

My thanks to all who attended. For further details of what we found see the complete list.



***Boletus luridiformis* showing the quick colour change from yellow to blue when cut open. (PC)**