

## Foray Report – Rushmere Estate – 11-November-2012

It was a beautiful morning - bright and sunny, but rather cold on this, the group's second visit to the Rushmere Estate, the previous foray being two years ago.

Around 20 keen souls attended on the day (the numbers boosted by Penny's recent appearance on 3 Counties Radio) and included a good number of new faces and younger forayers.



As with all good forays, the foraging started before we had left the car park (and I am sure some drive-by identifications were carried out from moving cars even before we parked up too). One such car park specimen was *Trichaptum abietinum*, the Purplepore Bracket demonstrating its wonderful colours.

We moved off slowly into a large field where we spent some time pondering which species had caused the large dark rings apparent in the short grass. The prime suspect was of course *Marasmius oreades* and this did eventually turn up, albeit with a very atypical appearance, most likely due to the cold.

In fact it would be generally true to say that most of the larger fungi found were a little past their prime, there having been a fairly heavy frost the night before and some of the fungi were completely frozen through!

Moving on to a section of the Christmas tree plantation, which covers a fair amount of the Rushmere Estate, large numbers of *Lactarius deterrimus* were found under the young trees.

Here we visited what could be described as an alleyway between the fir trees, the floor of which was short grass and a variety of moss species. Several interesting fungi turned up here, not least *Hygrocybe miniata*, pictured.

Also found here were *Clavulinopsis luteoalba*, *Clavulinopsis helvola*, *Hygrocybe conica*, and *Collybia erythropus*, all displaying their fine colours.



In addition to the above were some very interesting *Hebeloma* species which are still requiring some investigation and confirmation, but may possibly turn out to be something quite special....?

Moving on under the pines we turned up, appropriately enough, *Hygrophorus hypothejus* - the Herald of Winter – a portent of things to come no doubt.

It was also here that one of our new recruits found a nice example of *Baeospora myosura* – the Conifercone Cap growing on a pine cone .

And then of course there was the ubiquitous Butter Cap - *Collybia butyracea* in all its myriad forms confusing most of us at one stage or another!

At this point we had only just managed to circumnavigate the car park, and had covered only about 10% of the planned route. This was a good thing though as it demonstrated how abundant the fungi were this year. The previous visit to Rushmere was a much drier affair and fruitbodies were much harder to find. At some places this time round one could hardly take a few steps without finding something new.

So we moved on to an area of broad leaved trees, turning up some nice *Lactarius* species under the oaks, and a fine, albeit a little late in the season specimen of *Phallus impudicus* in its prime. I wonder whether it managed to attract many flies to do its bidding for it this late in the year?



By this stage, the cold had begun to take its toll and we said goodbye to a few of the group. The rest of us continued on down the hill, not turning up very much of interest, but then happened upon an old oak festooned with fungi, from about half-way up the trunk all the way up to the high branches. Derek's initial suggestion was that this could be *Mycena haematopus*, but there was only one way to find out for sure...

With a bit of a team effort and a few helping hands (literally), this proved to be the case. Perhaps we should just have trusted Derek's assumption in the first place!

And so, with Derek's basket of specimens for confirmation already bulging, and most of the forayers increasingly feeling the cold of the day – especially in the shade under the trees, we decided to head back to the cars.

There was time however on the way back up the road for Joanna to discover a very fine specimen of *Sparassis Crispa*, some very smelly *Tricholoma sulphureum* and I believe the last item to be added to the list, *Lactarius deliciosus*.

Thus ended what had proven to be a very successful foray which has hopefully stirred a lasting interest in fungi within some of our new friends, and may just have turned up a very rare specimen indeed.

Watch this space...

