

Our group of 14, led round by Mick Jones, had a very busy and profitable morning in this new area of the Dancersend reserve for us. Mick had intended that we focus on an area dominated by mature Oak further along the top of this ridge but there was so much to find along the way that it took us a while to get there. I was kept glued to the spot with pen raised several times and progress was inevitably slow but the slightly drizzly dingy conditions did little to dampen the enthusiasm of this keen band of attendees – a fun morning was had by all.

First onto the list was a singleton of a species we saw also at Naphill Common a few days earlier, *Clitocybe odora* (Aniseed Funnel); then a photogenic group showed up again later in the morning - always a crowd pleaser. Soon after this a cup fungus was found – one which we see quite frequently on the reserve. Similar to the genus *Peziza*, the genus *Otidea* produces quite large fleshy fruit bodies though they have a split down one side rather than forming an unbroken circle of flesh as in *Peziza*. *Otidea onotica* (Hare's Ear) is one of two species which are this pale yellowish buff but it soon develops pink spotting (seen here) which helps to separate the two in the field.



Above left: *Clitocybe odora* (BW) and right: *Otidea onotica* (MJ)

I was pleased to spot an unusual species of *Hebeloma* (Poisonpie) which again turned up recently, this time at Hodgemoor Wood, though I failed to recognise it in the field there. This time it rang a suitably loud bell! Few of this difficult genus can be named without recourse to a scope, but *Hebeloma radicosum* (Rooting Poisonpie) has three redeeming features (all unique within the genus) which make this possible: not only does it have an obviously rooting base but it also has a ring on the stem and a smell of marzipan! (In fact we collected several examples of an *Inocybe* (FibreCAP) today which also has this smell - *I. hirtella* (Bitter Almond FibreCAP) though it is unlikely to be confused with the much larger chunky *Hebeloma*.) Not the most photogenic specimen, but it does show (a) the ring and (b) part of the root extending well below the obvious soil level on the stem here.



Right: *Hebeloma radicosum* (SJE)

It was not long before the number of *Russula* (Brittlelegill) species started mounting. On several occasions out came the FE crystal, the KOH bottle, even Sulpho-vanillin to aid us with ID, and I was very grateful to Mario Tortelli (guest leader and something of a *Russula* and *Cortinarius* specialist) to take the pressure off Claudi and myself. We found two species belonging to the *Xerampelini* group which smell of cooked crab and turn dark green where rubbed with a crystal, one common under Oak and one rare under Beech. This last, *Russula faginea* (no English name) was new to the reserve today though does seem to be having 'a good season' as we've found it several times already this season though only in really mature Beech woodland.



Left: *Russula ionochlora* (SJE)

Much more common is *Russula ionochlora* (the aptly named Oilslick Brittlelegill) which favours deciduous woodland. Imagine a pool of spilt petrol glinting in sunlight and you have the range of colours of this species (though confusingly so do several others!). Again the crystal on the stem turning dull rusty salmon eliminates one of the main contenders but separating this species from *R. grisea* (False Charcoal Burner and also on our list) is not for the faint-hearted - luckily Mario is made of sterner stuff! (Note the pale cream gill colour compared to *R. romellii* below). Incidentally there's a good photo of *R. grisea* in my report on our Hodgemoor walk.

Two rarities now, both of which are new to the reserve. First was *Russula romellii* (no English name), another Beech associate which can be greenish, reddish or a combination of both but has notably orange gills, so coloured from the deep orange spores when mature – one of the darkest in the genus. It is a chunky species and was recognised instantly by Mario, slightly slower by me, and after the photo here was taken we then found an entirely red specimen which looked suspiciously similar to *R. atropurpurea* (Purple Brittlelegill) though the gill colour amongst other features immediately eliminated that species.

Soon after this under the mature Beech we found *Russula curtipes* (no English name), another chunky species though recognisable from its short stocky stem (to which its Latin epithet refers). This has a slightly different colour range with creams and pinks, also the gills (and spores) are deep cream but not as dark as in *R. romellii*. Both these species were notable finds.



Above left: *Russula romellii* (MT), and right: *Russula curtipes* (SJE)

Sadly we have no photo to share of the rarest species on our list, *Russula roseicolor* (no English name). With just 7 UK records, 3 of which are from Bucks, this was recognised by Mario in the field then checked by me at home and is now dried and ready for sequencing. If confirmed the specimen will go the RBG Kew fungarium as probably the only sequenced UK collection.

The reserve is rich in *Mycena* (Bonnet) species and today we collected 9 different types, 2 of which appear to be new to the reserve. I was pleased to spot some tiny caps in the leaf litter which had a decidedly pink tinge; suspecting they were *M. smithiana* (Pink Oakleaf Bonnet) I collected them and Sarah then confirmed the ID at home later. Only found on fallen Oak leaves, this pretty little species has been recorded from just 7 previous county sites (sorry, no photo). We also had a singleton of *Mycena amicta* (Coldfoot Bonnet) presumably collected from conifer wood



which it favours, though it was a case of identifying it from microscopic characters because it entirely lacked any signs of blue even at the stem base to which its English name refers. (See good images of this species in my report for Hockeridge Wood a few weeks ago.) So those two were new, but here's a photo of *Mycena metata* (no common name) which I spotted and looking a different colour from the many examples of *M. arcangeliana* we saw today. Not that common, it has been found here previously.

Left: *Mycena metata* (BW)

Another extremely small 'Mycenoid' cluster caught our attention on the end of a log, and as Barry offered to take the photo I had a go at identifying it though Sarah suggested at the time that it might be *Marasmiellus ramealis* (Twig Parachute) - now apparently moved to the genus *Collybiopsis*. I dismissed her thought at the time as the species is commonly on small twigs, bramble stems and other vegetation stems, but at home the fine details matched perfectly proving her correct.



Above: *Marasmiellus ramealis* (BW)



Another fresh cluster was collected, this one larger with caps up to 3 cm across and clearly a species of *Psathyrella* (Brittlestem) – they typically have white stems like this. It looked a good match for *P. piluliformis* (Common Stump Brittlestem) though was not collected from fallen wood, its recognised substrate but from woody debris in soil. This prompted me take it to check because the distinctive veil remnants still attached to the edge of the cap are not that common a feature in the genus though do occur in *P. piluliformis*. Sure enough at home the very small spores together with other cells confirmed it had to be that species despite the obvious lack of a stump as substrate!

Left: *Psathyrella piluliformis* (SJE)

The highlight of the morning for some was Mario's find of *Tricholoma basirubens* (no English name) – a species he'd not come across before. Dancersend is a good site for this genus and we've seen the very similar *T. orirubens* – another somewhat uncommon species - here before. Both are grey capped species and favour mature Beech but differ in the colour change at the stem base though this

sometimes take time, even after collection, to develop. *T. orirubens* develops pinkish red on the gills but blue patches at the stem base whereas today's species does the same in the gills but develops red patches at the stem base. The national database shows 100 records of *T. orirubens* but only 19 of *T. basirubens* though we do have 2 previous county sightings. So this was a nice find and another new to the overall Dancersend list.

Left: *Tricholoma basirubens* (MT)



I'll sign off now but add a few more images below. So our list easily topped 100 today with several interesting and rare things found - new to Dancersend which is one of our regular and well recorded sights. Thanks to you all for making it such a fun morning, to the photographers who made this report possible, also to Mick for leading us round, and to both Claudi and Mario for their valued assistance. (Claudi and Mario stayed on and visited another area with Mick in the afternoon, finding a nice *Cortinarius* featured below.) For more detail of what we found see the separate species list.

Photographers

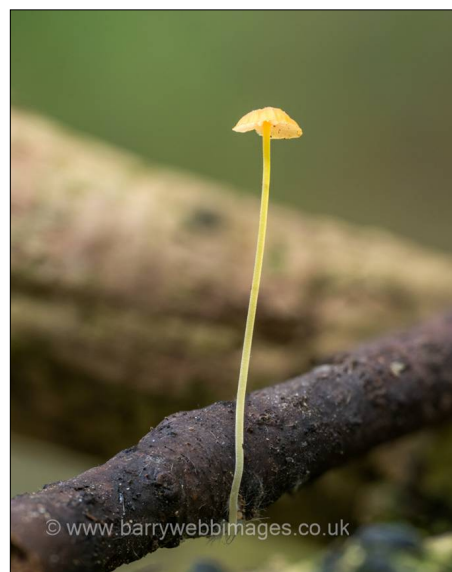
BS = Bob Simpson; BW = Barry Webb; CVS = Claudi Soler; MT = Mario Tortelli; MJ = Mick Jones; SJE – Sarah Ebdon.



Left: *Chlorophyllum olivieri* (CVS)

Left below: *Grifola frondosa* (CVS)

Below right: *Mycena acicula* (BW)



© www.barrywebbimages.co.uk



Above left: *Postia caesia* (BS), and right: the slime mould *Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa* (BW)
Below: *Cortinarius vulpinus* (MT), and below that: our group in action (MJ)

