

FUNGI WALK at STOKE POGES MEMORIAL GARDENS, May 6th 2026

Penny Cullington

It's many years since one of our walks was attended by only six people, but that was the case today though it used to be the norm! This was our first official BFG visit here though all present know the site well and I've been leading walks for Friends of SPMG for over 20 years. We were treated to a beautiful morning in this equally beautiful place with colour and scent supplied by the stunning azaleas and rhododendrons and surely one of the best displays of wisteria one could wish to experience. Fungi? Well, it was hard work which came as no surprise considering how dry it's been, but on our shortish list of 36 species roughly 80% are new to the site, several of those also new to the county – also no surprise considering the skills and specialism of our select band! It should also be born in mind that the over all species list for the site prior to this visit was around 350, of necessity reflecting my personal areas of skill favouring gilled basidios – a further reason why having others present today who favour ascos was such a useful exercise. Two Inkcaps and an *Agrocybe* were the only gilled species found, so probably for the first time in the group's history the asco list easily exceeds that of the basidios! Sarah and Stephen were kept busy with plant pathogens, tiny spots and dots and even an aquatic species, Barry and Gill had a tough time of it finding slime moulds, Jesper added some corticioids and a truffle, and together he and I provided back-up from our general know-how and experience – all in all we had a delightfully relaxing and thoroughly enjoyable time. I'd noted under 20 species in the field but this rapidly expanded as scopes and reference books provided answers over the next couple of days.

So in a break from tradition I'm going to shorten the text and focus on photos which tell their own story, and can't thank our group enough for their invaluable input today. Sarah stands head and shoulders above the rest of us, however, as can be seen by the number of records accredited to her in the detailed list. See the complete list for more detail of what we found.

Photographers

BW = Barry Webb; GF = Gill Ferguson; JL = Jesper Launder; PC = Penny Cullington;
SJE = Sarah Ebdon; SP = Stephen Plummer.

Below left: *Agrocybe praecox* (Spring Fieldcap) found in woodchip, with ring still in tact and covering the gills (JL)
Below right: *Coprinellus domesticus* (Firerug Inkcaps) found on a log with its orange 'mat' of ozonium also present (PC)
..... and below that: *Parasola leiocephala* (Bald Inkcaps) found in woody debris down by the lake (PC)





Above left: *Amylostereum laevigatum* (Yew Duster) found on a Yew trunk, and right: *Phanerochaete sanguinea* found in the churchyard (thus not included in the site list) (both photos JL)



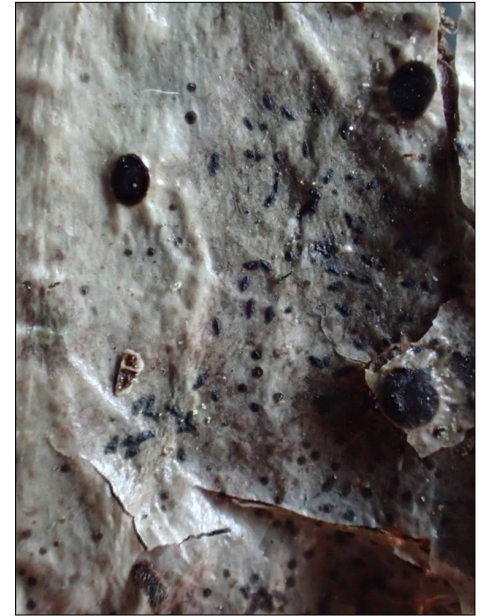
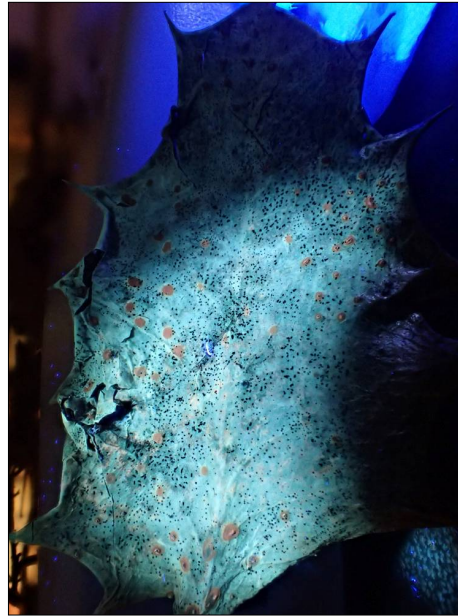
Above and left: *Puccinia lagenophorae* (Daisy Rust) on Groundsel.



Right: *Cumminsella sanguinea* (Mahonia Rust) on Mahonia leaf (both photos SJE)

Below left: *Elaphomyces muricatus* (Marbled Truffle) found by Jesper under Red Oak, in situ surrounded by acorn cups (PC), and right: once dissected showing the distinctive inner pinkish marbled layer of this species (SJE)





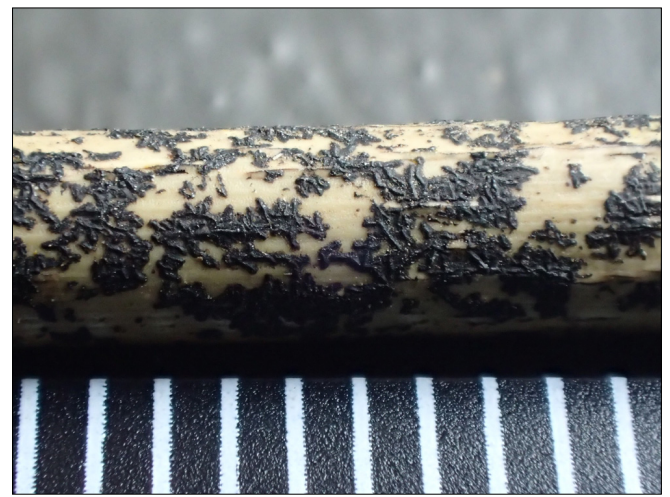
Above (and below): the results of Sarah spending many hours studying dead Holly leaves at home! Above left: the large black splotches are the common *Phacidium lauri* but the much smaller black dots visible there are not immature specimens but a different fungus altogether. She discovered that *P. lauri* is biofluorescent and with a UV torch fluoresces orange (see centre) proving the smaller black dots were clearly different. Further examination showed the longer thin tiny dashes to be *Aulographum hederae* (see right) – not a real rarity but new to the county, so a species previously overlooked here. The species apparently occurs on Ivy but also on both Holly and *Rhododendron* (SJE)

Below left: the miniscule furry *Corynespora smithii* which occurs on dead attached Holly twigs, and right: *Oidodendron flavum* – the swarm of even tinier yellow specks seen here in the centre, found on a dead Holly leaf stem and identified by Sarah. This is not only new to the county but appears to have only two previous FRDBI records. (SJE)



Below: Stephen suggested a search on dead Bamboo stems might prove interesting, and this resulted in two more species new to the site, the second also new to the county with only eight FRDBI records.

Left: *Apiospora montagnei* (SP), and right: *Morenoina phragmitis* (SJE)





Above: a little light relief from tiny dots! (GF): This is Stephen collecting foam from some running water in order to search for aquatic fungi. This entails observing their often amazingly shaped spores trapped in the foam – no fruitbodies! The result: *Clavariopsis aquatica* – a single spore seen on the right – a species for which we have just two previous records, the last in 2000 though it is apparently by no means rare. (SP)

Below left: the slime mould *Craterium minutum* – a single fruitbody found on a leaf, though later Sarah reported finding a large area of woodchip liberally covered with this beautiful and delicate tiny species (BW).

Below right: the mildew *Podosphaera amelanchieris* found by Jesper who recognised the tree *Amelanchier* which has a range of English names including June Berry. New to the county with around 30 UK records (JL)





Left: we ended with a quick check by the office buildings for the leaf spot *Venturia oleaginea* which occurs on Olive – two trees of which grow in pots there. The fungus was discovered there by Jesper last year. (SJE)

Right: concentration needed to photo the truffle! (PC)



Below: no caption needed! (kindly taken by a passer by)

