Foray at Hockeridge Wood on September 27th, 2015

Penny Cullington

Five of us attended today and assembled a list of 83 species with lots of material to keep us busy. Nothing very exceptional was found though 25 species appear to be new to the site. It was good to see the wealth of specimens, also useful to get acquainted with the variation often met with in such common species as *Collybia* (now *Rhodocollybia*) *butyracea* (Buttercap) and *Russula ochroleuca* (Ochre brittlegill), also another species which I've noted often confuses even experienced forayers: *Collybia peronata* (this one now *Gymnopus coronatus* - Wood Woollyfoot). Though the spores are whitish as in all members of what used to be in the genus *Collybia*, the gills in this species are decidedly brown reminding of *Inocybe*, and as the cap is also brown I'm fairly regularly presented with collections of this as a possible *Inocybe* (Fibrecap). Once familiar with its 'jizz' however, the yellowish stem with its telltale hairy stem base should be enough to help one recognise it in the field.

***Gymnopus* (*Collybia) peronatus* showing its brown gills (PC)**

Another much less common member of this genus was found, this one with much more typical pale gills but a lovely bright red silky stem: *Gymnopus* (*Collybia) erythropus* (Redleg toughshank).

Left *Gymnopus (Collybia) erythropus* (PC)

Of the three *Inocybe* species found one under the conifer was a good collection showing the typical Fibrecap features. I hoped this would prove to be a species I particularly wanted to find, but under the scope (nearly always needed for this genus) it turned out to be a fairly common one: *Inocybe flocculosa* (Fleecy fibrecap).

Right *Inocybe flocculosa* (PC)

Lovely material of the attractive though very slimy *Oudemansiella mucida* (Porcelain fungus) was on show up a Beech trunk - always a favourite for photographers especially when one can find specimens with the light showing through the cap as here, thus giving it its common name.

Right, *Oudemansiella mucida* (NF)

A good number of xerocomoid Boletes were about, though most had distinctly yellow flesh when cut open and showed little blueing, also showed the thin pink line around the cap rim – these I named fairly confidently *Xerocomellus* (the new genus name for this group) *pruinatus* (Matt bolete). Less common was a small brown button which instantly turned blue-black on cutting and had yellow pores: *Boletus pulverulentus* (Inkstain bolete), also another Bolete with bright yellow pores but a pale olivey feltlike cap and a fibrous stem with brown streaks, no red or yellow, which was *Xerocomus ferrugineus* – one of just a few species now remaining in this genus.

Above *Mycena metata* in the conifer litter today (NF), the insert showing its microscopic bristly gill cells (PC)

Nine different *Russula* (Brittlegill) species were identified, all fairly common and all either badly eaten or broken. Several *Mycena* (Bonnets) were identified, the most interesting was one growing on the conifer litter and not that often recorded: *Mycena metata* – nothing very distinctive about it in the field though the conifer habitat, the brown nipple on the top of the cap and the bristly cells on the gill edge under the scope are diagnostic.

Right *Calocera viscosa* (Yellow stagshorn) on rotting conifer wood (NF)

I think it's worth including here a photo I took the previous day of *Chlorophyllum rhacodes* (Shaggy Parasol) – a species we found and one which is very similar to the tasty *Macrolepiota procera* (Parasol) though it's wiser not to eat the *Chlorophyllum*. Look out for its smooth white stem which lacks any brown snakeskin markings, then break the stem from the cap and watch for the telltale orange staining in the cap flesh which develops within half a minute or so.

***Chlorophyllum rhacodes* showing the strong orange staining where damaged and the white stem lacking the snakeskin markings. (PC)**

Another species which I find is commonly misidentified is *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca* (False chanterelle). We found both this and *Cantharellus cibarius* (True chanterelle) today, so the opportunity to compare the two was worth taking as again we have one good edible species and one not worth eating, though at least the False chanterelle is not likely to cause any serious problem if comsumed in error. If the underside is studied carefully these two species are not difficult to tell apart, also the False chanterelle is usually found in conifer litter (as today) whereas the True chanterelle occurs under deciduous trees, usually Birch or Beech.

Above left the forking 'folds' rather than gills found in *Cantharellus cibarius*, and above right the tightly packed sharp edged gills of *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca*. (PC)

Another good edible species was found by a young walker who was intrigued by our foraying antics and ran up with a specimen of *Craterellus cornucopioides* (Horn of plenty), always nice to find particularly as this is my favourite to eat!

Right *Craterellus cornucopioides* with *Laccaria amethystina* (Amethyst deceiver) in the Beech litter (NF)

We found a large patch of white growing on rotting bare conifer which was our only slime mould of the day but a very attractive one when viewed up close: *Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa.*

Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa **(NF)**

Lastly to a species which looks extremely like a slime mould, and was growing on a felled Beech trunk in a log pile. With a hand lens the tiny fruitbodies appear rather like a forest of miniscule cotton wool buds with clavate white tips. I didn't recognise it in the field but at home it rang a bell and I remembered being fooled and confused by it on a previous occasion. With a microscope one can find hyphae (long thin cells) having clamps joining the sections - a feature only found in Basidiomycetes (the large group of fungi which includes mushrooms, brackets, jelly fungi and the like). As it dries it develops a persistent smell of curry powder or fenugreek which confirms the identification.

The strange-looking *Phleogena faginea* growing on a Beech log (NF)

Many thanks to Neil for his excellent photos. See the full list for more details of what we found.