



# Herefordshire Fungus Survey Group

## News Sheet N° 40: 2022



*Typhula erythropus* & *Crocioreas dolosellum* Snodhill Castle' Photo © Mike Stroud

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### **Editor's Notes:**

Welcome to Issue 40 of our News Sheet - once again, we have a large number of super pictures and several articles which I hope you will enjoy.

The Recorder's Report by Jo is itself a mammoth item, as it now covers the whole of a year - 2022. We are all very grateful for the time and effort this must involve.

Many thanks as well to all the other contributors to this issue. Without you, there would be no News Sheet.

Very sadly, we also have to report the death of three notable members of HFSG; they will be much missed and tributes to them are included here.

By now you should have all received copies of the Foray Programme for this year and we hope to see many of you at them, when you can manage it. The next issue of the News Sheet will be with us before you know, so get out and find lots of fungi and then tell us all about your experiences!

## Recorder's Report 2022

Jo Weightman

2022 was not the most prolific of years. For a long while it was a struggle to find a fleshy fungus to record at all until rains, late in the autumn, gave fallen wood and litter species a chance. Mycorrhizal fungi in particular had a very poor year. There was scarcely a *Russula*, *Lactarius*, *Amanita* or bolete to be seen in August, September or October and only a few, in small numbers, towards the end of the year.

### Winners and losers

Coarse grassland can be bleak but *Volvopluteus gloiocephalus* (*Volvariella gloiocephala*) and Yellow fieldcap *Bolbitius tibubans* fruited prolifically everywhere. In churchyards and elsewhere Clustered Brittlestem *Britzelmayria* (*Psathyrella*) *multipedata* was often frequent. Conditions were obviously also right for *Agaricus* spp in hill pastures, especially for the Field Mushroom *A. campestris*. A friend commented to me recently that Fool's Funnel *Clitocybe rivulosa* appeared to be in decline – not so in this county – where large rings competed with the Field Mushroom for space. I remember the days when a find of Cedarwood Waxcap *Cuphophyllus*



*russoconiacus* was a highlight – this year it was as common if not more so as Snowy Waxcap *C. virgineus*. Under conifers of all kinds the ground was awash with the False Chanterelle *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca* (Pl. 1).

Pl. 1. *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca* appeared in extraordinary numbers under conifer in 2022. Photographed at Croft Castle © Mike Stroud.

Losers? - mycorrhizals generally - but with the notable exception of the fly agaric *Amanita muscaria* which bucked the trend. Among the other groups, my choice for the commonest absentee is the Stinkhorn *Phallus impudicus*.

## FORAYS

**Ast Wood            SO6738            13.04.22**  
**30 records        16 new site records**

We arrived in rain, forayed in the dry and finally fled from a sudden downpour into a friendly woodshed for our picnic. Fed and restored, we shared our finds outside afterwards.

As this was our third spring foray at this site, we did well to record a high proportion of new to site species. Among them, somewhat surprisingly since we had had a dry spring, was the willow associate Amber Jelly *Exidia recisa*. Another first was *Dichomitus campestris*, an occasional fungus of dead hardwoods, especially hazel. It is cushion shaped with large pores and a black line at the point of attachment. A species on a dead nettle stem, only visible as a tiny circle of dark hairs on a grey patch was identified by Shelly Stroud as *Pyrenochaeta fallax*. 4<sup>th</sup> Herefordshire record of a fungus that is rarely recorded nationally.

The day ended well. As we packed up, Charles Hunter dropped his glasses. Underneath them was *Phragmidium fragariae*, the rust fungus on barren strawberry *Potentilla sterilis*.

**Wallbrook Wood**      **SO5233**      **11.05.2022**  
**27 records**      **17 new site records**

HFSG first visited Wallbrook Wood in 2016, also in May. So far we have only covered a small part of the site so much remains to be surveyed. On this occasion, most of the species seen were useful first finds of base line species.

Less common species found included:

*Phaeangella ventosa*, formerly *Mollisia ventosa*, a small yellow or yellowish disc fungus on rotting wood has only a handful of previous Herefordshire records.

The grand spring pin *Cudoniella clavus* var. *grandis* found by David Williamson is a larger and somewhat cup-shaped version of the spring pin *C. clavus* var. *clavus* which earns its English name because it does resemble a white round-topped nail. Both varieties occur on damp or even wet hosts, often on woody debris in streams. The smaller version is well recorded in the county but the larger one has only one previous record, by Graddon in 1975.

**Queenswood Country Park**      **SO5051**      **15.06.2022**  
**32 records**      **7 new site records**

Most of the group headed hopefully but vainly down the hill on the north side in search of a damp spot where a fungus might have braved the dry conditions. Those who tried elsewhere in the woods fared no better. Most of the new site records were rather humdrum. And the few agarics found were undersized.

Three well-developed and fresh brackets of Cinnamon Bracket *Hapalopilus nidulans* (Pl. 2) were the best thing seen and the rust *Puccinia deschampsiae* on *Deschampsia caespitosa* is a new county record.



Pl. 2. *Hapalopilus nidulans*, a good fresh example seen in Queenswood Country Park in June 2022. Photo ©Mike Stroud.

**Titely Pool**      **13.07.22**      **SO3259**  
**28 records**      **23 new site records**

Dry conditions yet again so fungi – and forayers - were thin on the ground. Clambering around at the muddy edges of the pool was fun and did yield a few specimens. Sadly the surrounding woodland was crunchy underfoot and the few fungi found were desiccated and/or infertile.

In spite of this, we did add considerably to the records of this rarely visited site. Finds included Orange Bonnet *Mycena acicula*, Tuberous Polypore *Polyporus tuberaster* and a few common rusts and slime moulds.

Also present were *Lachnum pudibundum* – a disc fungus with a white to pale yellow apothecia and abundant hairs on the rim and underside occurring primarily on willow spp. In age it becomes pinkish brown. 2<sup>nd</sup> county record.

Moccas Hill Wood SO333422 24.08.2022  
53 records 15 new site records

Fungi, few again, but all prized arising as they did from such very dry conditions. This large wood is recovering from the removal of conifers some years ago and the inevitable spread of bracken and bramble is being controlled to some extent by cattle. We forayed along the grassy rides and under a relic beech stand.

Few of us made more than half way along the main track. Those, who went further, reported damper conditions further along and returned a well-formed rosette of Blushing Rosette *Abortiporus biennis* (Pl. 3) a species which has done well this year. The few agarics found were all singletons apart from a sun-bleached troop of Felted Twiglet *Tubaria conspersa* sheltering under the bracken. Most of the fungi found were common but two were out of the ordinary.



Pl. 3. *Abortiporus biennis*, a fine rosette of this species was seen at the Moccas Hill Wood foray in August 2022. Photographed in Powys ©Mike Stroud



Pl. 4. *Polyporus melanopus*, a young fruitbody, Moccas Hill Wood, 2022. Photo © Jo Weightman.



Pl. 5. *Libertella faginea* pushing through the bark of a fallen beech. Moccas Hill Wood, 2022. Photo © Jo Weightman.

*Polyporus melanopus* (Pl. 4) was last recorded in Herefordshire in the 1990s. The specimen found was young and surprisingly fresh, not long emerged through a convenient crack in the host wood. The cap was grey-brown with a velutinous surface. The lower part of the stipe, visible once separated from the wood, was black. Like several other *Polyporus* species it has large, beautiful, angular pores.

Sadly, most members had departed by the time David Williamson found a tangle of twisting orange threads emerging through the bark of a fallen beech. This was *Libertella faginea*, (Pl. 5) the imperfect state of the

pyrenomycete *Quaternaria quaternata* which, in the perfect state, looks totally different. *Libertella faginea* has only three entries on the database under this name but it is probable that some of the entries for *Quaternaria quaternata* refer to the imperfect state. (It is now the rule for imperfect stages to be recorded under the name for the perfect state.)

**49 records    20 new site records**

This was a new site for the Group but we already have a substantial set of records collected by the owner Aaron Woods, so not all the fungi seen on the day were new to site. However, we did record a good number of additional species so we hope that Aaron, who guided our steps all day and provided lunchtime seats in the sun by his wildlife pool, will be well pleased.

The dry conditions continued despite some weak attempts at rainfall so we had to work hard to find any specimens. The least desiccated agarics seen were a *Cortinarius* in the Variable Webcap *C. anomalus* complex and Spectacular Rustgill *Gymnopilus junonius* (Pl. 6). A spined resupinate fungus found in the new wood stained purple with KOH so – *Mycoacia uda*.

We offer our warm thanks to Aaron for permitting us to spend the day recording in his fields and woodland.



Pl. 6. *Gymnopilus junonius*, one of the few fleshy fungi seen at The Leys in September 2022. Photographed at Moccas Park. © Mike Stroud.

**Brockhampton Estate Grid Ref SO 6854    05.10.2022**

**64 records    9 new site records**

The morning soon turned wet. We forayed under the large oaks and beech along the drive and into the park and, in bursts of foraging and sheltering. Sadly those members who had to leave after lunch missed a glorious sunny afternoon and a foray down a wooded track which proved more rewarding.

Mycorrhizal species were few so it was a particular relief to find the beech specialist Pale Milkcap *Lactarius pallidus* as it had not been recorded on the Estate since the nineteenth century. On the whole the standing and dead wood habitat was more interesting than the grassland.

In the litter under the trees Watery Toughshank *Gymnopus aquosus* was an unusual find. It can be confused with the common Russet Toughshank *G. dryophilus* but has a somewhat swollen stipe base and pink rhizomorphs. The only other recent Herefordshire record for this species was made near the pool in Moccas Park in 2012. Prior to that, our only known sightings are from Credenhill and Wormsley, both in 1926. It does seem likely however that this fungus is under-recorded rather than rare.

The grassland had not yet woken up, yielding only Field Mushrooms, the Fairy Ring Champignon *Marasmius oreades* (astonishingly a 'new to site' record) and *Volvopluteus gloiocephalus*.

The best single spot was a moss-covered horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* log which boasted a splendid colony of the Velvet Shield *Pluteus umbrosus*, the Yellow Shield *P. chrysophaeus*, the Glistening

Inkcap *Coprinellus micaceus* and Southern Bracket *Ganoderma australe*. Another log nearby was host to some Lilac Oysterling *Panus conchatus*, a species with only a handful of records in the county. One younger specimen still retained the violet tones characteristic of this species.

**Haye Park Wood, Mortimer Forest**                      **SO 4971**                      **19.10.2022**  
**81 records**                      **5 new records**

At last, we had a day heavy in agarics. And once again with an absence of the big name mycorrhizals, *Amanita*, *Russula*, *Lactarius* and boletes. They were all busy, we trust, growing or surviving underground. We forayed primarily under the conifers on the slopes above the car park, and under the fringing broad-leaf trees finding an abundance of terrestrial fungi including:

Collared Fibrecap *Inocybe cinncinnata* var. *major* - the variety *major* is characterised by a dark edge to the gills. 3<sup>rd</sup> Herefordshire record.

Yellowfoot Dapperling *Lepiota magnispora* - the very large spores of this *Lepiota* separate it from other similar species. 4<sup>th</sup> county record.

*Lichenomphalia* cf *hudsoniana* - Susan Hunter collected a single small agaric with a fluted cap, widely spaced and decurrent gills and clear yellow tones in all its parts. *L. umbellifera* seemed a good match morphologically but the spores best fitted *L. hudsoniana* which would be a new county record. These species are attached to lichen thalli occurring on peaty soils on heaths and moorland.



Salmon Salad *Guepinia helvelloides* (Pl. 7) - when found in 1972 just over the county boundary on Titterstone Clee Hill in Shropshire, this jelly fungus was new to Britain. I can recall the awe in Dr Reid's voice when he talked about it a few years later. Although recorded now further afield, its centre of distribution remains in Welsh Border country. I have seen it several times in Mortimer Forest, usually on conifer debris and especially in areas where cut poles have been stacked for several years. It is very distinctive being large, pink and coiled into a cone which often interlock. The lucky finder this time was Cog Bowyer.

Pl. 7. *Guepinia helvelloides*, a spectacular jelly fungus seen in October 2022 in Haye Park Wood. It is a regular at this site on conifer debris and brash. Photo ©Mike Stroud.

**Snodhill Castle**                      **SO SO3240**                      **26. 10. 2022**  
**91 records**                      **45 new site records**



Despite the on-going dearth of mycorrhizal species, this late October visit more than doubled the few existing records for the site. Recording in the rough grassland and scrub around the Castle kept us fully occupied, so we never reached some woodland nearby as hoped. The long-awaited rain had triggered an abundance of common *Mycenas* and other litter-inhabiting species while the damp mossy base of standing trees now supported the grey-blue Steely Bonnet *Mycena pseudocorticola* (Pl. 8). Clearance of trees encroaching on the ruins had left plenty of dead wood and stumps for fungi to colonise. Jelly fungi such as Small Stagshorn *Calocera cornea* and Crystal Brain *Exidia nucleata* were found here. Of particular interest were:

Pl. 8. *Mycena pseudocorticola*, a photograph taken in Wales showing the blue tones of this species recorded at Snodhill Castle in October 2022. Photo ©Mike Stroud.

*Calycellina leucella*, a tiny white cup with a dark band at the top of its stem. It occurs on fallen leaves. 5<sup>th</sup> county record, three from Graddon in the 1970s and one from Shelly Stroud in 2017.

A Glasscap *Orbilina delicatula*, another tiny asco, has semi-translucent yellowish cups that occur in swarms on fallen wood.

Holly Parachute *Marasmius hudsonii* on the other hand is a minute agaric restricted to dead holly leaves. It should be looked for after drenching rain. Usually a single dead leaf bears two or three fruitbodies, each topped with up-standing hairs - but elsewhere and a few days later I saw a leaf bearing 40 and counting.

**Kentchurch Court SO 423258 09. 11. 2022**  
**146 records 46 new site records**

Once again, a splendid list of finds from the lawns, garden, paths, hedges and woodlands at Kentchurch Court.

The unimproved lawns had their usual rich mix of specialised agarics, clubs and earth tongues. Many of the records for these areas were contributed by Shelley Evans and Peter Roberts who have a particular interest in this group.

We didn't have quite the full set of waxcaps that the lawns are known to produce but those present were mostly in plenty. Two waxcaps were new to the site. One was the brown and cream Toasted Waxcap *Cuphophyllus colemannianus* which has a good number of sites in the county. The second, *Gliophorus sciophanus*, a dark brick-red species with (or without) olive tones has recently been separated from *G. perplexus* and *G. euoperplexus* and could well be the first Herefordshire collection.

Less obvious among the mainly vibrant waxcaps were a number of the more modestly tinted Entolomas including *Entoloma rhombisporum*. This species has been recorded only once before in the county, at Moccas Park, Mitchel 2012. It is a yellow-brown species immediately recognisable under the microscope by its spore shape – rhomboid as the name says. It is uncommon nationally.

*Hodophilus* is the latest name for *Camarophylloopsis*, a genus broadly similar to the waxcaps with thick widely spaced gills, often decurrent gills and muted colours. A dull grey species collected in the walled garden was determined by Peter as *H. phaeophyllus*. It was close to *H. micaceus* but lacked the yellow colours of that species. This could be the first British collection.

Also in the lawns were a range of club fungi, simple or branched, yellow, white or pink, and others in more subtle shades. The pink one was *Clavaria incarnata*, (Pl. 9) an uncommon species, regularly recorded here but known from only two other locations in the county, Wofferwood Common and Birchwood. The simple clubs may occur singly or in small clumps. The pale *Ramariopsis tenuiramosa* and *R. minutula* were collected in the walled garden opposite the cottage. Both live up to their names. The first is yellowish to pale brown with slender, sparingly forked branches. This is the second Kentchurch record for a club only otherwise known from the Brockhampton Estate. *R. minutula* is a diminutive, white coralloid fungus only 15 mm tall. This is the first Herefordshire collection of a species that is rarely recorded nationally.

The wooded areas reached also produced several interesting fungi including a good colony of the blackening Ethereal Domecap *Lyophyllum eustygium* (Pl. 10) under beech, Tripe Fungus *Auricularia mesenterica* (Pl. 11) on a Poplar stump and Elastic Saddle *Helvella elastica*. *Hydropus subalpinus* was new to site and the twelfth county find with a very restricted national distribution.



Pl. 9. *Clavaria incarnata*, a group seen on the lawn at Kentchurch Court, November 2022. Photo © Mike Stroud.



Pl. 10. *Lyophyllum eustygium*, one of several in the genus that bruise black, Kentchurch Court, November 2022. Photographed in Kent © Jo Weightman.



Pl. 11. *Auricularia mesenterica*, fully engorged and showing the pale margin to the very hairy cap, Kentchurch Court, November 2022. Photographed near Orleton © Jo Weightman.

**Long Wood and Stockton Ride      SO 5161      23. 11. 2022**  
**102 records    90 new site records**

Long Wood comprises mature broad-leaved woodland, on a west-facing slope. Stockton Ride passes through an adjoining strip of woodland on the plateau and was probably once part of the main wood.

This is a new site for the Group and we were able to make a good start on compiling records. Most fungi were on fallen wood or litter but there is every reason to expect that, in another year, Russulas et al will be present.

It was good to record Poplar Fieldcap *Cyclocybe cylindracea* (*Agrocybe aegerita*) (Pl. 12) which was making its usual large clump on poplar. It is an occasional find in the county. Other records included.



Pl. 12. *Cyclocybe cylindracea*, a rather uncommon species that clumps on poplar or willow, Long Wood, Stockton, November 2022. Photographed in Kent ©Jo Weightman.

*Myochromella* (formerly *Tephrocybe*) *boudieri* - a smallish species with a brown cap and a dark stipe covered with white fleecy scales and a strong smell of cucumber. It has only been recorded once before in the county, in Barnett Wood 2004. *Tephrocybes* do not often feature on our lists but this time we had two. The second was the grey, 'rooting' Rancid Greyling *Tephrocybe rancida* which has a very strong mealy smell.

*Tarzetta scotica* (Pl. 13) – *Tarzettas* are small terrestrial fungi with a pale cup that has a crimped or crenate margin. They occur on soil under deciduous trees. We have just a handful of records for this species - but it is very easily overlooked as it is only 5mm or less in diameter.



Pl. 13. *Tarzetta scotica*, collected at Long Wood Stockton November 2022. Photo ©Mike Stroud.

*Aleurodiscus aurantius* –Known perhaps rather confusingly as Briar Disco, the name refers to its initial growth in small discrete patches. It occurs on willow and blackthorn as well as blackberry and rose. The surface is felty and pale pink with orange tones. 1<sup>st</sup> Herefordshire record but the species has over a hundred records nationally.

At the end of the meeting I was passed a small crepidotoid fungus on a piece of bark. As the cap was brown and the gills a dazzling Persil white, this was not a *Resupinatus* (grey gills) or a *Melanotus* (brown gills) or a *Crepidotus* (whitish or pink gills). It proved to be *Hohenbuehelia cyphelliformis*, a 2<sup>nd</sup> county record (previously seen at Kentchurch Court in 2018).

Almost in the next breath I was passed a handful of a floppy, contorted mass that had been collected from a tree. Once straightened out, a fungus with a grey cap and pale buff, narrow gills was revealed. The hand lens revealed a dense grey tomentum on the upper side over brown gelatinous layer 2-3mm thick. Metalloids

characteristic of *Hohenbuehelia* species were visible under the microscope. This collection appears to be the Woolly Oyster *H. mastrucata*, a species very rarely reported in Britain and a long way from its other known sites in W. Kent, Hampshire, Berkshire and Huntingdonshire. Dried material has been submitted to RBG Kew for DNA analysis.

**Broadmoor Common SO 6036 07. 12. 2022**  
**74 records 44 new site records**

Broadmoor Common comprises both grassland and broadleaf, mainly oak, woodland. We last visited in October 2019 and have just a handful of records from other years, but nothing earlier than 1996. Mycologists must have been so engrossed in the nearby acres of Haugh Wood that the Common nearby was overlooked.

The day got off to a good start before we had left the village hall car park with a find of Field Blewit *Lepista saeva* and several Mycenas along the lane. Once on the Common we spread out. The first collection was on the edge of the grassland - a Scarlet Caterpillar Club *Cordyceps militaris* (Pl. 14) complete with larva – a good if gruesome start. The December date meant that several grassland fungi were added to the list including Cedar Waxcap *Cuphophyllus russocoriaceus*, Mealy Pinkgill *Entoloma prunuloides* and the clubs Yellow Club *Clavulinopsis helvola* and Apricot Club *C. luteoalba*.



Pl. 14. *Cordyceps militaris* seen at Broadmoor Common in December 2022. Photographed in Wales © Mike Stroud.

In the fringing woodland recent rains had nicely plumped jelly fungi such as Yellow Brain *Tremella mesenterica* and White Brain *Exidia thuretiana*. Also on dead wood was the bright yellow disc fungus *Hymenoscyphus calyculus* (Pl. 15). Unlike the very similar Lemon Disc *Bisporella citrina*, it is distinctly stalked.



Pl. 15. *Hymenoscyphus calyculus* Broadmoor Common, December 2022. Photo © Mike Stroud.

There were even a few common Russulas and two *Lactarius* species, Birch Milkcap *L. tabidus* and Watery Milkcap. Until recently this dark brown species would have been called *L. subumbonatus* but it has now been absorbed into the paler *L. serifluus*. Both have a pleasant oily smell and watery milk.

## STUDY DAY NOTABLES

*Pluteus aurantiorugosus* (Pl. 16) a brilliantly coloured agaric occurring on fallen timber, occasionally found deep inside hollow reunks. Hellens, 28.10.22.



Pl. 16. *Pluteus aurantiorugosus*, the most brightly coloured of the *Pluteus* species, Hellens, October 2022. Photo © Mike Stroud.

Jewelled Amanita *Amanita junquillea* (formerly *gemmata*) Hergest Croft, 22.10.22. (Pl. 17). A second occurrence at this site. Only two other Herefordshire locations are known for this yellow Amanita.



Pl. 17. *Amanita junquillea*, an uncommon *Amanita*. One of the few *Amanitas* recorded in 2022, Hellens, 2022. Photo © Mike Stroud.

## OTHER FIRST HEREFORDSHIRE VICE COUNTY RECORDS

It was interesting to pick out all the first 2022 records in VC36 in addition to those found by the Group during forays. And there are 8! Three of them are predictably from Ray Woods who leaves a trail of first records for spots on leaves wherever he goes. He was at Downton on the Rock on 26.06.22 and recorded:

*Ramularia chaerophyllii* on *Anthriscus sylvestris*, FRDBI 2 records  
*Puccinia calcitrapae* on *Wetted Thistle Carduus crispus* 1<sup>st</sup> record on this host.  
*Peronospora tomentosa* on *Cerastium glomeratum*.

Cherry Greenway had two 'new to county' finds, both from her garden. The first was *Crepidotus versutus* seen on New Year's Day and the second Celandine Cluustercup Rust *Uromyces dactylidis* on Goldilocks *Ranunculus auricomus*. 13.04.22. This rust is very common on Celandine and some of the buttercups but this is the first county record on this host and only the second nationally (Birks of Aberfeldy 2018).

The others, in chronological order are:

*Strossmayeria basitricha* on ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, a 0.5mm, white to amber disc fungus, Hall Wood, Much Marcle, Shelly Stroud, 22.06.22.

*Golovinomyces cichoracearum*, a powdery mildew that is common on *Asteraceae* but a first host record on *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Haugh Wood 17.10.22.



Red-belted Bracket *Fomitopsis pinicola*, (Pl. 18).  
New House Wood, Ed Fox, 26.11.22. Host uncertain but probably spruce *Picea*. A large, woody bracket, found mostly in Scotland but known from some English counties.

Pl. 18. *Fomitopsis pinicola*. found on a fallen conifer, probably spruce, in New House Wood. November 2022. Photo © Ed Fox.

## OTHER INTERESTING VICE COUNTY RECORDS



Winter Brownie *Meotatomyces dissimulans* (Pl. 19) (formerly *Pholiota / Hemipholiota oedipus*). This winter fruiting fungus has now been recorded seven times on just four sites in the county – once in the nineteenth century from Cleehonger, once from Humber in 1996, four times from Durlow – unattributed but almost certainly thanks to our former Treasurer Ray Bray and now from Wigmore Rolls, Jo Weightman 06.02.22. It occurs in litter especially under ash – cap brown fading to grey, viscid, stipe with white floccules. Kibby says it is common! – so more winter walks needed.

Pl. 19. *Meotatomyces dissimulans*, a winter species occurring on fallen ash leaves, Wigmore Rolls, February 2022. Photographed in Kent © Jo Weightman.

Magenta Rustgill *Gymnopilus dilepis* (Pl. 20) - Mario Tortelli passed on news of this find made by a friend who had seen it while birding at Bodenham Lake on 04.05.22. Armed with directions, I went hotfoot to see it .It was still there, in large clumps on a wood chip pile, its usual host, but sadly its moment of glory had passed. When fresh the caps would have been clad in red-purple scales, the stipe purplish and the gills golden. 2nd Herefordshire record. FRDBI 35 records. Never pass a woodchip pile without looking.



Pl. 20. *Gymnopilus dilepis*, part of a large colony on a wood chip pile. Bodenham Lake. Photo © Jo Weightman.

Oyster Rollrim *Tapinella (Paxillus) panuoides* was seen at a botany meeting in Lyndalls Wood. Cap dry, felty, brown, sometimes purplish at the base, laterally attached, gills golden. An uncommon species occurring on coniferous wood. Jo Weightman, 01.06.22.

Scarlet Bonnet *Atheniella (Mycena) adonis* (Pl.21) – a pink Bonnet that occurs on woody or leafy litter, uncommon in Herefordshire, The Leys Wofferwood Common, Aaron Woods , 06.10.22.



Pl. 21. *Atheniella (Mycena) adonis*, an unusual pink *Mycena* that occurs on leafy and woody litter, Wofferwood Common, October 2022. Photo © Aaron Woods

Moss Navel *Arrhenia rickenii* reported by David Williamson from his drive, Putley, 16.10.22. . 4<sup>th</sup> site for a species of dry, gravelly or sandy places.



Mauve Bonnet *Mycena meliigena* (Pl. 22) – a small species that occurs in moss on broad-leaved trees. Cap dark violet-brown, stipe white-pruinose. The Leys, Wofferwood Common, Aaron Woods, 09.11.22. 2nd Herefordshire record, first seen on Dinmore Hill in 1978.

Pl. 22. *Mycena meliigena*, a species with unusual violet tones. Wofferwood Common, November 2022. Photo © Aaron Woods.

*Stropharia albonitens*, a very uncommon, milky white grassland species with violet-grey gills, Mowley Wood, Jo Weightman, 10.11.22. 3<sup>rd</sup> Herefordshire record. FRDBI 28 records.

It was a delight to see the clump of *Pterula multifida* (Pl. 23) that Robbie Ledlie brought to the Kentchurch foray as I had not seen this uncommon coral-like tuft for many years. 9.11.22. The threadlike tufts were whitish but when fresh would have been yellow. Robbie told us that it was growing in sheets in her polytunnel. 3<sup>rd</sup> Herefordshire record.



Pl. 23. *Pterula multifida*, part of a large colony in a polytunnel, Hereford, November 2022. Photo © Jo Weightman.

FRDBI 32 records.

Tongues of fire *Gymnosporangium clavariiforme*, a rust that forms conspicuous horns on hawthorn leaves in the aecial stage which was seen by David Williamson . Juniper *Juniperus communis* the telial stage host which bears the fiery tongues was found nearby. Durlow, 25.7.22. 4<sup>th</sup> Herefordshire record.

### And some Ascos

Anemone Cup *Dumontinia tuberosa* – a small brown goblet that arises from wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* corms. A particularly welcome record as not many spring species were recorded in 2022. Bradnor Hill, Sarah Cadwallader, 19.04.22.

*Morchella esculenta* - the only morel of the year, recorded in a private garden in the Leintwardine area, 28.04.22.

Yellow Fan *Spathularia flavida* (Pl. 24), Cefn Common, Ed Fox, 16.10.22. Pale yellow fans on a thick stipe. An occasional species, not seen every year with just 17 records in the county since 1871.



Pl. 24. *Spathularia flavida*, Cefn Common, October 2022. Photographed in Scotland © Jo Weightman.

*Pezizella alniella* - a 0.5mm, cream to yellow disc that grows on old alder cones. The Leys, Wofferwood Common, Aaron Woods, 26.11.22. Recorded only twice before, in 1959 and 1975 by Graddon.

### FOLLOW –UPS

Sandy Stiltball *Battarrea phalloides* - Docklow site, 2 fruitbodies confirmed, Will Watson, 21.02.22.

Devil's Fingers *Clathrus archeri* - Tregate Castle, Llanrothal site, 3 fruitbodies confirmed, Pete Bryden 23.10.22.

### OUT OF COUNTY RECORD

In January 2022, John Bingham found an intriguing agaric in the Wyre Forest in Shropshire on a steep bank under oak woodland, with scattered heather and bilberry. His collection was sent to Dr Martyn Ainsworth at Kew who sent it off for sequencing. The result has just arrived. *Hygrophorus marzuolus* (Pl. 25) - a new British record!!!



Pl. 25. *Hygrophorus marzuolus*, found on a bank under oak in the Wyre Forest. A first British record. Photo © John Bingham.

And John ended the year with another rarity, *Artomyces (Clavicornona pyxidata) pyxidatus*, this time in Worcestershire.

**MARGARET HAWKINS**  
(1936 - 2022)



Margaret was a quiet, friendly but modest person, never seeking the limelight but always keen to have the specimens she collected on our forays identified. She was a very regular attendee at forays, as evidenced by there being some 300 records in our database with Margaret as the named collector. However, she didn't just collect on our forays but enthusiastically sent in some 133 records from her garden. She was fascinated by the strange ways of fungi and an avid reader of books describing fungal phenomena.

As well as attending forays, Margaret played her part in the running of HFSG; she was a very efficient Treasurer and was a supportive committee member for several years. She did not limit her interests in the natural world to fungi, for she trapped moths and spent time identifying and recording them before releasing them the next night.

It came as a surprise to many of us that Margaret's love of wildlife resulted in her travelling widely in Europe, Central and Southern America, Africa and Borneo but she never boasted of her travels, or even drew them to our attention.

Wildlife was not the limit of Margaret's interests, as she loved building miniature models of period houses together with their contents. She was a great lover of cats, supported Cats Protection and over the years inherited many strays. Her garden was another special interest for her. So it is evident that Margaret was always busy.

She was doubtless supported by her children Lorna and David and of course by her husband Kingsley who often accompanied her on forays.

Though quiet and unassuming, Margaret was a very loyal member of our group and will be greatly missed by us all.

Roger Evans  
Chairman HFSG

**CHRIS ADAMS  
(1945 - 2022)**



Chris had been a member of HFSG since 2016. When forays recommenced following the Covid restrictions he did not return and we learnt the sad news that he was terminally ill.

He was an enthusiastic member of the Group and always keen to learn more.

He regularly attended forays and had taken part in one of Jo's Introduction to Fungi courses and a microscope workshop organised by Shropshire Fungus Group.

In a typically kind gesture in his final weeks, Chris offered his microscope and his impressive collection of books on fungi to members of the Group.

His widow Margaret has kindly agreed to us including a tribute video in this piece which was

shown at his funeral and can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGvwcu1d1Us>

It is a touching insight into Chris' life outside the Group and a fond memory for those of us who knew him and will very much miss his company.

Chris Silkin

**GEORGE SPENCE  
(1934 - 2023)**



George was one of the original members of HFSG and a regular forayer with the Group. He belonged to several local fungus groups and was known as an ace spotter due to his ability to find specimens that other people had passed by. Eventually, foraying excursions became limited due to his mobility problems but he retained his interest in nature and, in particular birdwatching, which he could do from home.

He developed a love of nature whilst out with a local walking group and that was how he met his wife Sheila. He wanted to learn more about the natural world around him and started to get interested in the world of fungi. Over the ensuing years his knowledge grew rapidly. Eventually, he became an integral part of the British Mycological Society's outreach team, taking a stand at the Malvern shows and helping at Tatton Park and the Chelsea Flower Show too. In 2005 he was part of a team putting together the Herefordshire Festival of Fungi,

culminating in the prestigious award of the Berkeley Medal the following year.

George was born in January 1934 in Wood Green, Middlesex and, after finishing school, went to the Ford Motor Company on a scholarship course. This was the start of his 'petrol-head' years and he stayed with the Company for 38 years, including 4 years in the States. At one period he was sent on secondment from Ford to work with Young Enterprise for two years as Regional Director for West England and Wales - a large area stretching from Merseyside to Ross on Wye and Rugby to Anglesey. This is when he moved from Essex to Herefordshire.

As a Research & Design Engineer he travelled across Europe as well as America, eventually accepting early retirement in 1988.

He was a keen motor racing enthusiast and travelled the country, racing at such places as Brand's Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton and for the most part, Silverstone. He continued doing so until 1960.

George was a loving husband, father, grand-dad and great-grand-dad. He will be sadly missed by all of us who knew him and our deepest sympathy goes to Sheila and all George's family.



## EPICHLÖË SPP: A SURPRISING SYMBIOSIS OF FUNGUS AND FLY.

Ted Blackwell

In early July 2022, Cherry Greenway reported finding a fungus known as "choke" (*Epichloë typhina*) on cocks-foot grass (*Dactylis glomerata*) in her Herefordshire garden. This fungus is an Ascomycete (*Clavicipitaceae*) and, due to some complex inter-relationships that may be surprising, is of more than ordinary interest.

Not a simple parasite as may at first seem, but an obligate symbiont<sup>1</sup> of cool-season grasses of the subfamily Pooideae, having a mutualistic relationship with grasses, occurring systemically as an endophyte<sup>2</sup>.

The fungus mycelium initially grows internally within the leaf sheath and meristems<sup>3</sup> without any visible external symptoms, but confers a number of important and mainly beneficial advantages on the host. Infected grasses are usually drought-resistant, and are more robust and vigorous with enhanced resistance to insect feeders and livestock grazing due to the production of distasteful alkaloid compounds by the fungus. The fungus survives the winter in the shoot base. In due course the mycelium forms a white-to-yellow mould-like stroma surrounding the culm, which encloses the grass stems above the highest node. The fungus is heterothallic, which means in order for Asci and Ascospores to form it must outcross with an opposite sexual mating type. The young stomata initially produce spermatia<sup>4</sup> necessary for cross-fertilisation of different mating types, the process being somewhat analogous to cross-pollination in dioecious plants.



*Epichloë typhina* on *Dactylis glomerata* Photo Jo Weightman

Adding to the complexity, the fungus also has another mutualistic relationship with *Botanophila* flies (Diptera: *Anthomyiidae*), specifically *B. phrenione*. The young stroma attract *Botanophila* flies which when feeding on the stroma ingest spermatia. These pass through the gut intact before being deposited incidentally during egg laying, by which process spermatia may be transferred to another stroma of an opposite mating-type. After fertilization, perithecia\* with asci and ascospores are formed submerged in the stroma.

*E. typhina* mycelium can also be transmitted with the seeds. In the case of cocks-foot, this rarely occurs, as affected plants seldom develop mature panicles and therefore produce only a few seeds. Red fescue *Festuca rubra* on the other hand, produces seeds despite an infestation with choke. Here, transmission of the disease by seed is an important factor in the spread of the fungus.

*Until relatively recently Choke was regarded as a single plurivorous species. However, based on a study of the fungus in England, two further species have since been recognised, which, unlike E. typhina, seem to be strictly host-limited, E. baconii on Bent Grass, Agrostis capillaris, and E. clarkii on Holcus lanatus, Yorkshire Fog / Tufted Grass / Soft Meadow Grass. In contrast, Epichloë stromata have been reported or collected on a wide range of host grass genera and species, but the full host range and distribution of Epichloë species is yet to be fully defined. (Twenty-eight species of host grasses are listed in the Host list given in the paper by Spooner & Kemp cited in references below).*

The fungus acquired the name choke because the emerging inflorescence is overcome or choked by the proliferation of fungal hyphae. The choked stems are either unable to produce seed, or the yield is reduced. The fungus is sometimes otherwise known as "asphyxiation mould". Appropriately, the scientific generic name *Epichloë* means "on grass", while the specific epithet *typhina* (according to a description by Linnaeus) means "The branches are rough like antlers in velvet".

\*The perithecia are 300-600 x 250-300 µm in size. The asci (100-200 x 6-11 µm) are elongated and each contain 8 filamentous, multicellular ascospores (50-120 x 1-1.5 µm).

#### REFERENCES:

Spooner B.M. & Kemp, S.L. *Epichloë* in Britain. The Mycologist. Vol. 19 part 2. May 2005. pp.82-87. This paper also contains a synopsis of British species of *Epichloë*; together with a Host list of Grasses, plus a Key to British species of *Epichloë*.

Spooner, Brian, & Roberts, Peter. FUNGI. New Naturalist Series, Collins. 2005. pp.100-1, & 116-7.

#### NOTES

**1. symbiont:** A symbiont is an organism that lives in a close relationship with a (usually larger) organism, to their mutual advantage, for example, in lichens, an alga may be the symbiont partner of a fungus; an **obligate symbiont** is one that depends completely on the host for its habitat, nourishment, reproduction, and survival. Without the host, obligate symbionts cannot exist independently by themselves as they cannot live outside their host tissues. This means that *Epichloë* is unlikely to be found on any other host plants other than grasses, nor in a free-living state.

**2. endophyte:** An endophyte is an endosymbiont, often a bacterium or fungus, that lives within a plant for at least part of its life cycle without causing apparent disease.

**3. meristems:** plant cells capable of division and growth.

**4. spermatium:** a micro-conidium sex cell (+ or -).

## AN eDNA SURVEY OF GRASSLAND FUNGI IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

Jon Dunkelman

This article summarises the surprising results from a study of soil samples in Monmouthshire sites in Spring 2022 that was investigating the presence of grassland fungi DNA.

### The Site

I live on The Narth, in the Wye valley south of Monmouth. The house is surrounded by eight acres of sloping land, over half of which is unimproved grassland managed as meadows with aftermath grazing. In 2011 when we moved here I found that the fields were a rich source of grassland fungi and over the years I have recorded 54 CHEGD species here.

The photos here are of species that were found through DNA in the survey, which I have also recorded on site.

### CHEGD fungi

For those unfamiliar with the CHEGD measure, it is a count of species that are either C (Clavarioid), H (Hygrocybe), E (Entoloma), G (Geoglossum) or D (Dermoloma), and the overall score is a measure of the importance of the site for grassland fungi. The original definitions have expanded and changed somewhat so that H now includes all of the Waxcap genera such as *Cuphophyllus*, *Porpolomopsis*, *Gliophorus* etc. Similarly, D includes *Fanvaults* (*Hodopilus* / *Camarophylloopsis*) as well as *Crazed Caps* (*Dermoloma*) and the C and G also now include more than one genus.

### The Process

I was approached by Andy Karran of Gwent Wildlife Trust in early 2022 as they had obtained funding from the Welsh Government Rural Development Programme to undertake some eDNA testing. The 'e' stands for Environmental meaning that the genetic material is obtained from samples of soil, water, air or other environmental sources. The use of eDNA surveys in regard to fungi is seen as useful to help identify valuable sites that might otherwise be overlooked because of the ephemeral nature of fungus fruiting and the difficulties of identification. Thirty grassland sites in Monmouthshire were selected for the fungi element of the testing, which included my fields.

The method was to take soil samples using a small corer from an area 30m by 30m, to a depth of about 10cm. The samples from one site were combined and sent to Aberystwyth University where there is the expertise and technology to extract DNA and identify the species present.

### The Results

The results were amazing. The headline for me was a further 20 CHEGD species present here which I had not recorded. What is more, this is from just two 30m by 15m areas, 900 sq metres in total, from meadows totalling about 2¼ hectares (about 5½ acres).

From a personal point of view I am pleased that no Waxcaps were detected that I had not yet recorded! My daily checks of the fields ensure that none of these generally colourful fungi are missed.

For the other CHEGD species it is a different story.

The most surprising results were the Clavarioids. The eDNA results revealed 13 species. I had previously detected 8 species here, but only 4 species appeared on both lists. That takes the number of Clavarioid species here to 17. Some are species I had not heard of, such as *Ramariopsis avellaneo-inversa* which apparently has only been recorded as a fruiting body in New Zealand and Italy. It is entirely possible that the difficulty of identifying Clavarioids accounts for some of the unrecorded species. For example, I might have overlooked *C. falcata* by assuming that it was another clump of *C. fragilis*. However looking at the overall results across

Monmouthshire I see (for example) that DNA from *R. avellaneo-inversa* was found at 29 out of the 30 sites tested.

Similarly for the G part of CHEGD. I recorded my first Earthtongue, *Trichoglossum hirsutum*, here only last year, during the Gwent Fungus Group foray in November. The eDNA survey yielded 5 more Earthtongue species!

Lastly Pinkgills, which sometimes stump me but I have, over the years and with a lot of help, recorded 15 species here. DNA of 5 Pinkgill species was found in the sample, 3 of which I had not recorded - although I have seen one subsequently. The 3 I had not found were *E. ameides*, which is described as rare by Laessle and Petersen; *E. Henrici*, described as being 'known from only a few localities in Switzerland, UK and Eire' by Noordeloos and is not even included in Collins Fungi Guide (Buczacki et al); and *E. asprellum*, which is the species I have since found .

### **My Conclusions**

Making the assumption that the inclusion of genetic material found by the processing is a firm indication of a living mycelium, then there are just three possibilities as to why I do not see some fungi despite searching for species most days in the season.

Either they don't fruit, or they are not seen when they fruit, or they have not been identified when they have been seen.

I have certainly failed to confirm some Pinkgill identifications and I suspect I have made assumptions about some Clavarioid specimens. Therefore some fruiting bodies have been seen but not identified, or perhaps mis-identified.

Specimens not being seen must also occur but it is difficult to imagine that five species of Earthtongue have avoided my gaze for the ten years I have been here. It is however true that the only Earthtongue found here was not found by me, so I guess these tiny fruiting bodies could be missed.

The fruiting aspect is something I know little about. I have noticed that some fungi don't fruit here in some years, so fruiting is not necessarily an annual event and I understand that some fungi may not fruit for decades. This seems to me to be the most likely explanation for the number of CHEGD species recorded here by eDNA but not seen by me to date. This is supported by the results elsewhere.

### **The Wider Monmouthshire Results**

Looking at the results from the full survey, it is astonishing to find that eDNA of some rare species was also found in many other survey sites in Monmouthshire. Most of the sites were chosen because they were expected to be of particular interest as far as CHEGD species are concerned, so we would expect that a number of them would produce some interesting and uncommon species, but the results are surprising to me . The table below shows the results for some of the lesser known and lesser recorded species found, with the last column indicating in how many of the thirty eDNA test sites it was detected. The only one of these species that I have recorded anywhere is *C. flavipes*!

<b>Scientific name</b>	<b>English name</b>	<b>Sites out of 30</b>
<i>Clavaria flavipes</i>	Straw Club	29
<i>Ramariopsis avellaneo-inversa</i>		29
<i>Camarophyllopsis atrovelutina</i>	Dark Velvet Fanvault	24
<i>Camarophyllopsis schulzeri</i>	Matt Fanvault	17
<i>Ramariopsis crocea</i>	Orange Coral	23
<i>Dermoloma magicum</i>	Black Magic	16
<i>Hemileucoglossum aff alveolatum</i>		25
<i>Trichoglossum walteri</i>	Short-spored Earthtongue	21
<i>Glutinoglossum pseudoglutinosum</i>		21

*With thanks to Andy Karran and Gwent Wildlife Trust for conducting the survey and Aberystwyth University for processing the DNA.*

Clockwise from top right:  
 Meadow Coral, *Clavulinopsis corniculata*  
 Crazyed Cap, *Dermoloma cuneifolium*  
 Scarlet Cap, *Hygrocybe coccinea*  
 Parrot Waxcap, *Gliophorus psittacinus*  
 Citrine Waxcao, *Hygrocybe citrinovirens*  
 Fibrous Waxcap, *Hygrocybe intermedia*  
 Yellow Foot Waxcap, *Cuphophyllus flavipes*



**IN THE GARDEN - 5**  
**Shelly & Mike Stroud**

Autumn and winter is always the time when we cut back a lot of dead ferns, which make good mulch and also insulation for some of the more tender perennials in the garden. In recent years we have often been rewarded with the appearance of the beautiful little *Mycena*, *M. pterigena*, revealed on the decaying fern stems. This year has been no exception.



*Mycena pterigena* (Cwmdu, Powys)

As you can see, it is not very large (cap 1.5 - 3(5) mm diameter and stipe only 10 - 30 mm high). It is, however, very distinctive and easy to identify, with the pinkish colours on the stem, cap and gill edges. Well worth looking out for!

In her Recorder's Report Jo has mentioned that, at the foray at Brockhampton on October 5th, the Group found the unusual Watery Toughshank, *Gymnopus aquosus*. Unfortunately, Shelly and I could not go on that foray - we were isolating with Covid - but decided to walk along one of the green lanes near our house (known locally as Gypsy Lane).

We came across this toadstool on a twig lying under the hedge, with a cap diameter approx. 20mm and a tough, brownish stipe.



*Gymnopus inodorus* (near Cwmdu, Powys)

It also turned out to be an unusual Toughshank - must have been a good day for the genus! This time it was *Gymnopus inodorus*, distinguished by the fact it grows on wood and its distinctive cheilocystidia. It is well described in Geoffrey Kibby's book, *Mushrooms and Toadstools of Britain and Europe, Vol 2* (p. 80).