



Herefordshire Fungus Survey  
Group

## News Sheet N° 20: Autumn 2010



*Agrocybe rivulosa* – Cwmdu, Powys (August 2010)

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<b>President:</b>	Ted Blackwell
<b>Recorder:</b>	Jo Weightman
<b>Chairman:</b>	Roger Evans
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mike Stroud
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Margaret Hawkins

### Welcome to the Autumn 2010 News Sheet

Firstly, my humblest apologies for producing this News Sheet so late in the Autumn. I have nobody to blame, except myself!

As you will see from the list of HFSG officers, our Treasurer has changed from Steve Rolph to Margaret Hawkins.

Steve has done sterling work in the post since he was elected in 2007 and we are most grateful to him. He has decided to spend more time on tour in his camper van which, obviously, makes it difficult to continue in the role - although he says that he is still hoping to come on forays with us from time to time. We wish him all the very best in this venture and will always be pleased to see him, whenever he can manage to join us.

Margaret has very nobly stepped into the breach and, hopefully, by the time you read this will have been confirmed as the new Treasurer by our AGM. We are very grateful to her.

In this issue, Ted follows up an article on fungal names which he wrote in Autumn 2006 (News Sheet No.12) with



Our new Treasurer, Margaret Hawkins

another look at the subject. With great erudition he explores the derivation of some of our common (and not so common!) Latin binomials.

Jo has written this time on some of the small, fan-shaped fungi, such as those of the *Panellus* and *Melanotus* species, that we are inclined to overlook. With her excellent descriptions and the photographs, we might hope that more of these will find their way into our lists in future.

One of our newer members, Gareth, reports on a 'Bracken Open Day', given by the Society of Biology and the International Bracken Group in Breconshire. He highlights this important association with fungi and draws our attention to the wealth of fungal species that occur in this environment.

Debbie has told us of how she combines her two passions (or should it be 'two of her passions?') of mountain walking and mycology. As always, it is a delightful ramble through a plethora of interesting species, accompanied by some excellent photographs.

Last, but by no means least, Tom indulges us with one of his beautifully idiosyncratic pieces on fungi in art. Who else would go looking for apple scab in a 17<sup>th</sup> century painting? We are delighted to be able to publish this - thank you, Tom.

As I always say, don't forget that the Editor is always looking for **your** contribution(s) to the News Sheet - the deadline for the Spring issue is 20<sup>th</sup> February, please.

Happy reading!

Mike Stroud

e-mail: [mikestroud1@btinternet.com](mailto:mikestroud1@btinternet.com)



To fill in this space, *Macrolepiota mastoidea*, (with its typical umbo), found in our garden at Cwmdu, Powys, August 2010

## RECORDER'S REPORT

This time I am starting with examples of non-foray finds recorded so far this year.

*Boletus satanas* 10.08.10 in Leeping Stocks Reserve, Doward, Cherry Greenway – a new station for this Rare status Red Data and BAP species recorded regularly from this woodland complex since 1973.



*Corynespora cespitosa* 28.02.10, on a fallen birch branch, Orleton. Ted Blackwell. To date there are only 7 other records for this hyphomycete on the national database, (FRDBI) from sites scattered across the UK.

*Disciotis venosa*, 12.4.10, in a garden, Weobley, Jean Wynne-Jones. The only record this year of this large brown, wrinkled saucer-like asco that smells of bleach when broken.

*Geastrum fornicatum* 3.4.10, just south of the Goggin. A remarkable earthstar, which holds its sac aloft on long legs. An example of a species so remarkable that its sites are re-visited and well recorded but this is a new site. Collected by D Purce and identified by Roy Mantle who sent the record.

*Morchella esculenta* 16.04.10, in an empty stock bed, Hampton Court, Hannah Wilks head gardener. Only the eighth vice county record since the first in 1871.

*Phellinus igniarius* 20.2.10 Sutton Walls Stephanie Thomson. A handsome, blue-grey, woody bracket that occurs on willow and poplar.

*Protomyces pachydermus* 24.05.10 on dandelion leaves by roadside, Orleton Ted Blackwell. Only the second Herefordshire record – the first by Ted in 2000, also in Orleton. Subsequently, recorded in June from my Orleton garden also, probably meaning that this is a much under-recorded species, rather than a local treasure. Look for purplish, swollen areas on the leaves and petiole.

*Sphaeropsis visci* 2.3.10, on fallen mistletoe leaves, near Orleton, Jo Weightman. Given the abundance of the mistletoe host, it is curious that this is only the eighth Herefordshire site.

*Taeniolina scripta* 17.4.10, dead hazel branch, Downton coll Jo Weightman, det Alick Henrici. A first VC36 record for this hyphomycete for which there are only a few

records on the FRDBI, widely distributed across England and Scotland. Probably very under-recorded.

In addition to the above, I have received records of common species seen untypically late ie in the New Year, include *Lepista nuda*, *Clitocybe fragrans* and *Hygrocybe virginea* on 2.1.10 and *Lepista saeva* 3.2.10 still in good lick after a long spell blanketed in snow.

Fungi recorded at the Bioblitz held at the Perrystone Estate Ross on Wye 19.06.10 included *Pholiota tuberculosa* and *Scopuloides rimosa*, both on lime.

This year the Biological Records Centre held their annual outdoor recording meeting at Turnastone Court. Again, very dry conditions prevailed. Surprisingly, given the month, *Encoelia furfuracea* was fruiting well on a moribund hazel pole. This species usually occurs in the winter months.

### HFSG Forays

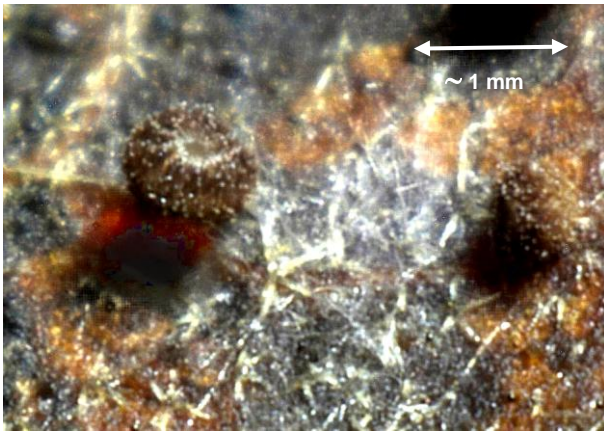
Forays have been held in a range of habitats – managed and unmanaged woodland on a variety of soils, in parkland and meadow – and, despite the very dry conditions that have plagued foraying so far this year, 200+ xxxx fungi were recorded by members overall of which a pleasing 78+xxx were new site records.

#### **DOWARD 24.03.2010**

We concentrated on the Leeping Stocks Reserve. Given the month we were not expecting many agarics and were proved right – just one, *Mycena adscendens* in litter. Most of the 15 lichens recorded were new and a good proportion of the ascos. Among these, *Gloniopsis praelonga* collected on bramble, its preferred host, has only a scattering of records in VC36 despite being described as a common species. The only vernal species recorded was the Scarlet Elfcup, *Sarcoscypha austriaca*, which was new both to the reserve and to the Doward as a whole. It was not a day for rarities but we were able to fill in some notable gaps.

#### **MOUSECASTLE 21.04.2010**

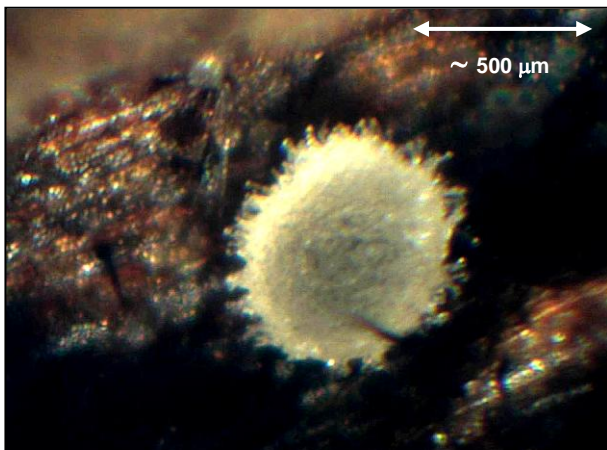
Useful recording again, in an area of broadleaf high forest with oak, ash, beech and hazel. *Hymenochaete rubiginosa*, which normally occurs on oak or sweet chestnut stumps was indeed present where it should be, but was also, unusually, seen on a post. Ted, who stayed at the bottom of the hill, was rewarded with the remains of the previous year's *Handkea utrifomis*. The reddish-purplish-brown patches on dead fallen ash of what we used to be able to call *Hypoxylon rubiginosum*, but must now take more care over (see Field Mycologist 9(2)), proved to be *H. petriniae* – KOH dabbed onto a scraping of the stroma gives a distinct orange stain. Most of the 14 new site records, while not rare, were not run of the mill either. *Chaetosphaeria inaequalis*, however, has only been recorded once before in the vice-county and appears to be under-recorded nationally. A nearly invisible brownish disco on a fallen oak leaf was identified as *Lachnum fuscescens* var. *fuscescens*, ordinary enough to the eye, but under the microscope the transparent end cells of its hairs can be seen to be tipped with large crystals.



*Lachnum fuscescens* var. *fuscescens* - Mousecstle Wood (21/4/10)

**MOCAS 19.05.2010**

With the exception of a few colonizers of leaves (all common) and one parasite on living beech and oak, the fungi recorded on this occasion were all saprophytes on fallen wood or rotting herbaceous stems. Ascus such as *Cistella fugiens*, *Hyaloscypha hyalina*, *Hymenoscyphus vitellinus*, *Mollisia cinerea* and *M. palustris* were found by first seeking out species in residually damp gullies or at the lake edge.



*Hyaloscypha hyaline* - Moccas (19/5/10)

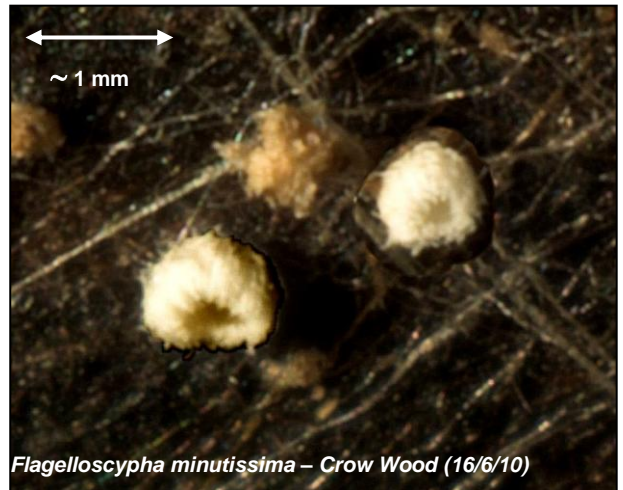


*Hymenoscyphus vitellinus* - Moccas ((19/5/10)

Fallen branches buried in undergrowth supported the likes of *Datronia mollis* and an occasional very common agaric such as *Pluteus cervinus*. We did add 4 new species to the site records.

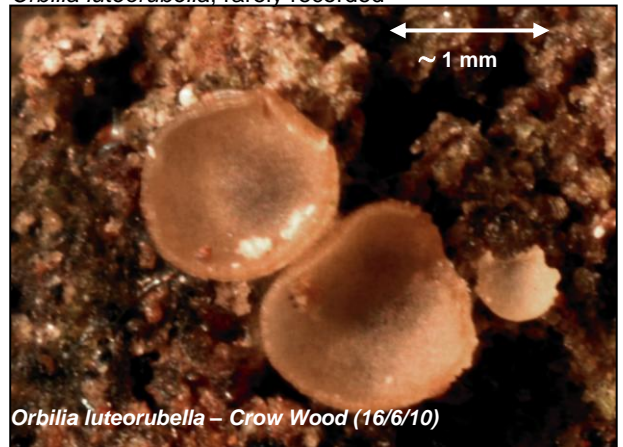
**CROW WOOD AND MEADOW 16.06.2010**

The group forayed here in the autumn of 1999 and a spring foray was, therefore, complementary to this. Conditions were still dry and so finds inevitably were limited, but nearly all were new site records. On the whole, the meadows were unproductive although early finds of *Conocybe lactea* and *Entoloma conferendum* were encouraging. Most recording was done in a belt of wood pasture above the meadow and in scrub and woodland along the streams. The most notable species were: *Flagelloscypha minutissima* which resembles a hairy cup fungus but which is actually most closely related to agarics.



*Flagelloscypha minutissima* - Crow Wood (16/6/10)

*Marasmius bulliardii* an under-recorded species which arises from stiff black horse-hair-like threads in leaf litter. *Orbilbia luteorubella*, rarely recorded



*Orbilbia luteorubella* - Crow Wood (16/6/10)

*Resinomycena saccharifera* a very small white species found in rotting grass. The cap is densely covered in fine granules making it look sugared. Usually found in marshy situations. *Synchytrium taraxaci* is a rust look-alike occurring on dandelion leaves, Ted's second record this year for what is probably a common but rarely recorded species. Last recorded in Herefordshire in 1913!

**MAINS WOOD 21.07.2010**

Since 1955 when the records for Mains Wood start, there have been two periods of foraying activity. The first was prior to 1970 and the second, after a lull of some 20-30 years, coincides with regular visits by the Group. To date there are 1661 records for approaching 500 species. This

year 5 additional species were added of which the diminutive *Marasmiellus vaillantii* and *Melanotus phillipsii* (see also News Sheet No. 13, Spring 2007, p13) were the most notable.

**Out-of County** records from Mike and Shelly Stroud at Cwmdu,

*Trichophaea woolhopeia* 1/8/10 on a Gro-bag in a greenhouse I.D. Ted Blackwell & Brian Spooner. Probably a species that enjoys a rich feed but normally found in the open.

*Agrocybe rivulosa* 17/8/10 on some (homemade) chippings in the garden (see front cover). This large very

wrinkled agaric has swept the country in the last few years on woodchip piles. Have you seen it yet?

*Leucocoprinus cepistipes* 25/8/10 in the Indoor Garden at Aberglasney (Carmarthenshire) Shelly and Mike Stroud - confirmed by Peter Roberts). An alien species usually recorded from greenhouses.

Records wanted.

Please do send me a note of fungi you see wherever you go – no matter how humdrum. Unless the everyday species are recorded, the overall picture of fungi in an area is very skewed towards rarities. Thank you to those of you who do send me records, please keep it up.

Jo Weightman - Recorder



### FORGET THE WEATHER – FORAY IN AN ART GALLERY!

Written accounts, with woodcuts of varying quality, allow us to guess when fungi were first described and illustrated by humans. The Shropshire mycologist, William Houghton (see News Sheet No. 16, Autumn 2008), was the first to sort out accounts by the Greeks and Romans, dating from about 300 BC. Subsequently, Geoffrey Clough Ainsworth, in his fascinating book, "Introduction to the History of Mycology" (CUP, 1976), follows on with records and reports from 1491 onwards.

In 1660, Robert Hooke, in his "Micrographia", showed drawings of the fungi which he observed using a microscope – much less easy than for us nowadays, where we simply take a colour photograph of the fungus. (However, beware of the pitfalls discussed in John



Roberts' article on the accuracy of recording in News Sheet No. 17, Spring 2009!) This note is about *Venturia inaequalis*, which causes apple scab.

The life history of this fungus, which has been painstakingly discovered over the years, is best read about in E.C. Large's classic, "The Advance of the Fungi" (Jonathan Cape, 1940). Elias Fries described and drew the fungus in 1819.

Prehistoric and later Roman apples have been preserved by archaeologists (usually as burnt,

entire remains), but apple scab has not yet been detected on these. Interestingly, though, the author conducted experiments in 1962, wherein he burnt entire apples in containers and then examined the results. These clearly showed the burnt mycelium of the scab fungus on green fruits (T.F. Preece, Nature 193, p902-3).

In 1596-1602, Caravaggio painted a very large picture (see previous page) showing Christ and the disciples, 'The Supper at Emmaus'. In the bowl of fruit on the table there is a large apple with unmistakable, classic patches of apple scab on it – a large lesion, with



smaller patches around it.

Thus it is Caravaggio who, painting a still-life for this picture, observed and carefully showed us apple scab over 400 years ago. This painting can be seen in the National Gallery.

Have you looked at any still-life paintings recently?

Tom Preece

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

#### Fact, mystery, honour, caprice, or just a hint of spite?

It is perhaps trite to say that fungus names do not just happen, but are created. And we use them as labels mostly without a second thought of any possible deeper meaning. In a previous article (News Sheet No.12, Autumn 2006, p9) it was explained how, in a simple way, many fungus scientific names were devised. A process similar in principle to that of assembling parts in the popular toy, 'Lego' is used of tacking together word-parts, the same word-parts capable of being used flexibly in a variety of combinations. For example, '*crysodon*' (of *Hygrophorus crysodon*) is built-up from

**'chrys(o)'**, which derives from ancient Greek for gold and which is also a component of Chrysanthemum, chrysalis, chrysoberyl, *chrysorrheus*, *chrysenferon*, and *chryso spermum*; and **'-odon'** which also occurs in orthodontist, Mastodon, *Sarcodontia*, *Iripicodon*, and *Leontodon*, from the Greek for tooth.

*Hygrophorus crysodon* has golden denticulate scales on the cap margin - and the literal translation hints that one should perhaps look for its gold teeth!

In the belief that decoding the meaning may lead to a better grasp of the species and a recognition of useful characters, this article explores the derivation of some interesting or intriguing names.

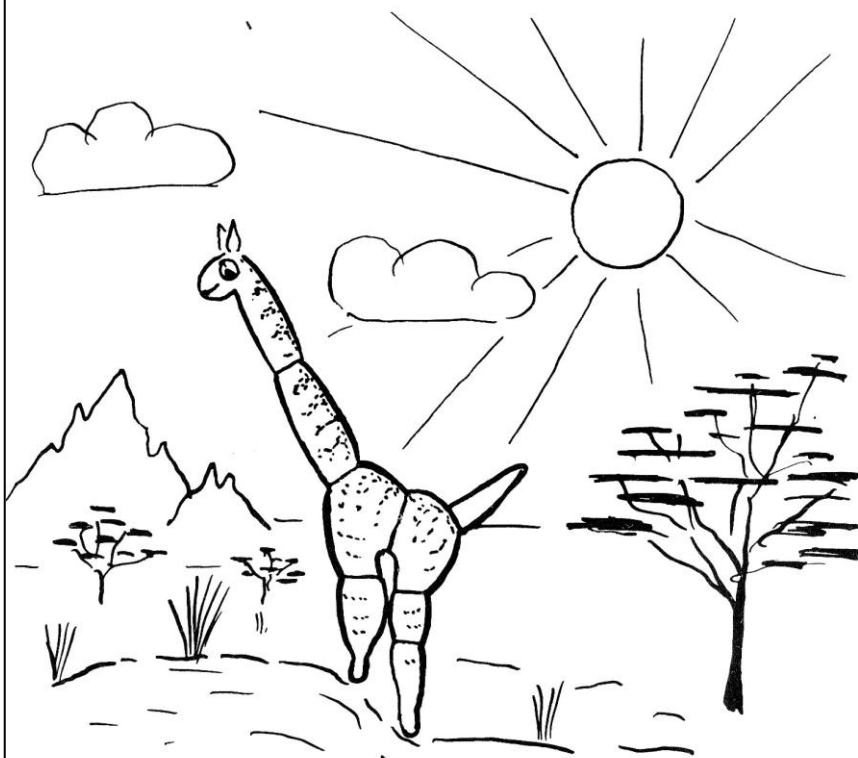
Most species names ("specific epithets" in techno-speak) refer to some intrinsic trait such as colour, stature, texture, clamminess, taste, odour, habitat, or some other attributes which epitomize its identity.

As in Science generally, much

#### TRIOSPERMUM CAMELOPARDUS INGOLD, DANN & McDUGALL

C.T. Ingold

Some six years ago I was involved with others in the isolation and description of a beautiful species of *Triospermum* the conidia of which were found in the foam of a river in the English Lake District. The conidium looked to me so like a giraffe (or camelopard to use the ancient name) that I could not resist temptation, and so now the fungus rejoices in the name *T. camelopardus*. At the time I drew a sketch, here reproduced, showing a *camera lucida* drawing of a conidium only very slightly modified by the addition of a head, ears and some shading.



mycological nomenclature is derived from Classical Latin and Greek, the now well-established binomial system having been pioneered by the great Linnaeus and developed in turn for fungi by Elias Fries. Many scientific terms, including the vast vocabulary of fungus taxonomy, can be decoded (more-or-less meaningfully) with the aid of good lexicons. With experience, a basic vocabulary of classical 'word-parts' may be acquired which, because they recur repeatedly in descriptions of like characters, can be

recognised as discrete elements.

Not all efforts at decoding are successful. Although a perfectly sound translation may be arrived at, some names defy explanation with no obvious relevant connection. Wider research may uncover it, but the allusion may remain cryptic and the intentions and rationale of the originator puzzling.

Examples of inscrutable epithets are (*Lyophyllum*) *eustygium* and (*Mycena*) *zephyrus*, '*eustygium*' meaning "truly of the nether world", and '*zephyrus*' "the west wind" - how these tags relate to fungus fruit-bodies is not at all clear. Another intriguing puzzle concerns (*Entolma*) *querquedula* which seems to be named from a small duck, the Garganey, *Anas querquedula*<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps the greenish-blue-toned pileus may relate to the distinctive coloured wing-patch (speculum) characteristic of teal ducks; equally, perhaps "*querquedula*" may be onomatopoeic of 'quack-quack'.

(*Mycena*) *aetites* is from the Greek for 'eagle stone', a stone which the ancients believed was taken by eagles to their nest to facilitate egg-laying - seems reminiscent of pottery eggs placed under broody hens! *Aetites* is also a mineralogical term for a geode-like hollow concretion with a loose piece inside which rattles when shaken, also known as an eagle stone. But it is not obvious why a *Mycena* should be so dubbed.

It is more than likely that authors, needing to create unique names for new Genera or species, may often have been stumped for ideas and it is evident that a number of devices have been employed. The derivation may be truly descriptive, as in the case of *Omphalina*, from the Greek for navel due to its deeply depressed cap centre. Otherwise, authors have resorted to sources such as the classically historic, the preternatural, the whimsical, the capricious, even anagrams of existing names, or by honouring some person.

The specific epithet *septentrionalis* occurs in a number of genera. The literal translation means 'the seven stars of the Great Wain' meaning the constellation of The Plough, or Great Bear. This appears to have little affinity with a fungus but, in fact, the oblique description merely refers to their northern distribution.

There is a veritable zoo of epithets pertaining to animals, perhaps alluding to colour, patterning, or even to smell. Included in the bestiary are such as *caninus*, dog; *felina*, cat (but not *catinus* which means a bowl); *ovinus*, sheep; *equinus*, horse; *vaccinus*, cow; *muscaria*, fly; *vemicularis*, worm; *cossus*, goat-moth; *cervinus*, deer; *leporinus*, hare; *leoninus*, lion; and not forgetting *pantherina*, referring to its spottiness. And from the fancied shape of conidia in an Ingoldian fungus (*Tripaspermum*) *camelopardus*, the epithet means a giraffe, so named by Prof. Ingold himself (see previous page).

The specific epithet of *Cortinarius galeobdolon* alludes to its smell, described as 'often strong, peculiar, pungent'. The name *galeobdolon* is Greek for weasel-stink, the same

epithet being applied to the wild-flower Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon*, also strong smelling. Another strange allusion to smell occurs in what used to be called *Tricholoma cnista* (now *Melanoleuca strictipes*), the epithet *cnista* meaning 'the smell of burnt sacrifice', perhaps more familiar today by the redolence of neighbours' barbecues.

Some names are fancifully informative such as *Zeus olympius*, a fungus which is known only from one site at around 1300m altitude on Mount Olympus. The Roman name for the supreme god of Mount Olympus was Jupiter which features in (*Hyphodontia*) *barba-jovis*, Jupiter's Beard. Another of the classical Greek gods was Adonis, renowned for his beauty, this attribute being applied to *Mycena adonis*. (*Psathyrella*) *caput-medusae*, whimsically named from its caespitose growth, the multiple stipes being likened to the writhing snakes of Medusa's head. *Arachnopeziza* and *Arachnoscypha* are named from Arachne of the Greek legend who was turned by the jealous Goddess Athena into a spider because of her skill as a weaver, species of these Genera being seated on a cobwebby subiculum.

(*Russula*) *delica*, means 'weaned' - an odd anthropomorphism for a fungus. According to some authorities, it refers to the absence of milk in *Russula delica* which could be confused superficially with *Lactarius vellereus*; the name given by Fries was *Agaricus vellereus exsuccus*, "*exsuccus*" meaning 'without juice, sapless', since when it has changed genus.

*Agaric* is from Greek *agarikon*; said by Dioscoroides to be reportedly derived from Agaria, the name of a Greek city which had abundant mushrooms. The genus *Agaricus* was used by Dillenius for bracket fungi but later adopted by Linnaeus and misapplied to Agarics.

*Peziza* and *Hydnum* were ancient Greek names for fungi which meant something quite different from their modern meanings, having been resurrected from ancient writings by Linnaeus then misapplied to dissimilar genera.

There are also names not derived from Latin or Greek where lexicons cannot help. In this class, apart from the (fortunately rare) invented words masquerading as Latin or Greek, there is an abundance of honorary epithets. These are bestowed out of esteem, affection or to acknowledge a contribution to science.

Honorary names of species are usually instantly recognisable by specific epithets ending in (for men) -i or -ii, such as '*berkeleyi*' (for Miles Joseph Berkeley, often referred to as the Father of British Mycology), and '*bullii*' (from Hereford's very own illustrious Dr. Henry Graves Bull, of which more later) - both of Woolhope Forays times. For women, the endings are -ae or -iae as for example (*Collybia*) '*henriettiae*' (named by Worthington G. Smith after his wife), and (*Leucocoprinus*) '*wynniae*' (from Mrs Lloyd Wynne, who frequently attended Woolhope forays). Such as the foregoing are traceable with a little searching, but other honorary names may pose a host of questions of who, when, where, and why? One whose



identity has so far eluded discovery is the bizarre appellation "*crec'hqeraultii*".

Another frequent ending '-ensis' refers to a place or habitat, as in (*Ascozonus*) *woolhopensis*, (*Hysteropezizella*) *dowardensis*, (*Cesatiella*) *lancastris*, and more far-flung (*Calonectria*) *kyotensis*; and for habitats (*Morchella*) *hortensis* (in gardens), and (*Hygrocybe*) *pratensis* (in meadows), and as pseudo-Latin inventions, *parkensis* and *dunensis*, because 'park' and 'dune' did not exist in Roman Latin, having come down to us from a Germanic lineage.

In genus honorary names the endings are not so instantly recognisable. Many end in -a, such as *Barya* (Anton de Bary), or -ia, *Ainsworthia* (G.C. Ainsworth), or -ea, *Leveillea* (Joseph Henry Leveill.) or even -ina as in *Milesina*, a Rust genus, named from Berkeley's forename, Miles. Other endings include -myces as in *Dennisomyces* (Dr R.W.G. Dennis), -ites in *Lenzites* (Harold Othmar Lenz, a German botanist), -cybe in *Singerocybe* (Professor Rolph Singer) and -ella as in *Broomella* (Christopher E. Broome, of Woolhope Club fame).

The botanic name of the well known garden shrub "Butterfly Bush", *Buddleja davidii*, has been the source of the some confusion. Normally the generic spelling from "Buddle" would be "*Buddleia*". But history tells us that when Linnaeus created it he wrote down "*Buddleja*" and never changed it, so by the Code's rule of naming priority, "*Buddleja*" should be used. There was no 'J' in Roman Latin, but in Late Latin it began to be used interchangeably with 'I' (hence amyloidity is sometimes indicated by 'I' for *Iodum*, sometimes by 'J', either meaning iodine). The usage is confused, and inconsistencies are common, even within single texts.

Amongst his many creations Linnaeus named a plant *Browallia elata*, "upright *Browallia*", in honour of a Finnish bishop Browall who had helped him. But later, due to a disagreement, he renamed it *Browallia demiser*, "lowly *Browallia*".

Returning to home ground, Hereford's Dr. Henry Graves Bull was honoured in the names of *Dasyscyphus* (now *Discocistella*) *bullii*<sup>3</sup> and *Pluteus bullii*. It is pleasing to observe from the current August issue of *Field Mycology* [11/3] p97 that *Pluteus bullii* may be regarded as probably a good species (and rare taxon) in its own right rather than, as for sometime previously thought, to be just a larger form of *Pluteus cervinus*.

*Deightonia* (Coelomycete) was named in honour of F.C. Deighton (1902-1992), a plant pathologist on Colonial service in Sierra Leone who later worked as mycologist at the Imperial Mycological Institute.

*Theadgonia* (Hyphomycete) is a name devised by Dr. B.C. Sutton as anagrammatic of Deighton, who first described it. Dr. Sutton was also honoured by the name *Briansuttonia*<sup>2</sup>. And *Datronia* is an anagram of *Antrodia*.

*Oudemansiella* is named from Corneille A.J.A. Oudemans (1825-1906), who worked on Netherlands cryptogamic flora.

The naming of fungi (and lichens and green plants) is governed by the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, a sort of *appellation contrôlée* system of rules governing how names may be ascribed and constructed. This Code is quite strictly observed by scientists internationally with the aim of avoiding confusion, but this is not always achieved.



*Hygrocybe pratensis*

For mycologists who like solving puzzles, tracing name derivations can be fascinating and informative. But it takes time. For further reading:

1) *Three-language list of botanical name components* by A. Radcliffe-Smith. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. 1998. ISBN 1 900347 50 4.

2) Carlton Rea's *British Basidiomycetae* (1922) which gives very comprehensive translations of fungus names (although without explaining why they are so called).

3) *The Vocabulary of Science* by Lancelot Hogben (1969) is a thorough treatment of the use of Latin and Greek in scientific nomenclature, with an appendix of the most common Latin and Greek word elements found in technical terminology.

4) *Pedigree, Essays on the Etymology of Words from Nature*. Potter & Sargent. New Naturalist Series. 1973. pp107-8.

Ted Blackwell

<sup>1</sup> *Pedigree, Essays on the Etymology* etc (as 4 below).

<sup>2</sup> Pers. com. Dr. T.F. Preece.

<sup>3</sup> Pers. com. Dr. B.M. Spooner.

## MOUNTAINS ARE NOT JUST FOR WALKING

I have a great love for mountain walking and living near Snowdonia enables Eilir and I to regularly walk on the high tops. My other passion is of course mycology and this summer I decided to combine the two - a marriage made in heaven!

I targeted mountains where the tiny Dwarf Willow, *Salix herbacea* is known to grow, as part of our walks. The *Salix* grows on mountain plateaus, often in very stony ground exposed to all the elements and therefore survives in a very inhospitable environment. It occurs above 700m and can be found on some of the highest peaks at almost 1000m. The "trees" are fairly inconspicuous and easy to overlook as they are prostrate and the shiny green, rounded leaves only measure 1-2cms. Their presence however is often usefully indicated by the bright red galls on the leaves produced by a sawfly *Eupontania herbacea*.



The *Salix* acts as a mycorrhizal host to a range of fungal species, many of which would normally be found in typical woodland and other lowland habitats and it is always strange to see quite large fungi standing out amongst the tiny leaves. There are additionally a few true alpine species of fungi only occurring on the mountains. John Taylor (2001) has highlighted a similar range of species recorded on the Lakeland fells. Timing of any visit can be critical as there is only a short period, normally late July to August, when the fungi are fruiting. They are affected to a much greater extent by weather conditions than lowland fungi with sun, wind, rain and exposure having a greater influence at high altitudes.

The summit plateau of Elidir Fach in the Glyderau range has one of the most extensive *Salix* beds at 750 to 800m. It has been recorded from for several years with a number of interesting records and the list continues to grow. (Aron 2005). During the summer I visited this peak on three occasions, (once in the company of Charles Aron and Alex Turner, CCW) and I also recorded on other mountains in Snowdonia with *Salix herbacea* beds for which there were no previous fungal records. Of these, beds on Y Garn also in the Glyderau at over 920m. and Pen yr Ole Wen in the Carneddau range at over 970m. have proved to be very good. They will be visited again in future seasons. A further four mountains with less *Salix* present supported a very small range of fungi.

The list of species recorded this summer is quite extensive and I will mention some of the more interesting records. On Elidir Fach there were large fruiting bodies of *Boletus edulis*, The Cep or Penny Bun, a species not normally associated with *Salix*, and 2 smaller species,

*B. subtomentosus*, Suede Bolete and *Chalciporus piperatus*, Peppery Bolete. No Boletes were recorded on the 2 higher peaks possibly a reflection of their higher altitude? 3 species of *Russula* were found on the three mountains; the beautiful red *Russula laccata*, (was *R. norvegica*), *R. exalbicans* and *R. vesca*, The Flirt.



The colours of the caps are quickly lost and this can lead to more difficulty with identification and differentiation. These species are common in lowland situations but *R. oreina* found by Charles Aron in 2000 is regarded as a true alpine species. Two species of *Lactarius* were recorded, the chunky *Lactarius hyssginus* on Y Garn and Elidir Fach and 2 tiny *L. tabidus*, Birch Milkcap on Y Garn.



*Amanitas* are well represented especially by the delightful *Amanita nivalis*, The Mountain Grisette, a true alpine species (see photo next page). This species was quite common, found on the 3 mountains and is distinguished by a white stipe and no ring. A new record this year was *A. rubescens*, The Blusher on Elidir Fach and in previous seasons *A. pantherina*, Panthercap and *A. muscaria*, Fly Agaric have also been found there.

The bright yellow Chanterelles, *Cantharellus cibarius* were a surprise find on a dull and often wet summer day. *Cortinarius* species are fairly common growing with the *Salix* including *C. obtusus*, *C. cf. integerrimus*, *C. anomalus* and members of the *Telamonia* group. Less conspicuous yet of great interest are the *Inocybes* which were found on all the peaks growing in stony ground with

the *Salix* thus making their removal complete with stipe base difficult. Luckily they persist longer than some of the more fleshy species.

*Inocybe soluta* predominated with *I. phaeoleuca* var. *phaeoleuca* and a couple of records of *I. lacera*, a new record for this year. A pinkish-stiped collection with a pale cap and large, elongated, nodular spores I collected on Y Garn has caused excitement. It was sent by Charles to Penny Cullington and is currently being investigated by a



*Amanita nivalis*

European expert (pers. comm.). Other fungi included *Laccaria* species, Deceivers, *Peziza badia*, Bay Cup and the bright yellow *Lichenomphalia alpina* and white *L. hudsoniana*, both lichenised species.

Mountain rusts also featured in my list of records for 2010 but were not associated with the *Salix*. *Puccinia eriophori* is a species occurring on Goldenrod, *Solidago virgaurea* with only Scottish records up to now and was found by me on Moel yr Ogof near Beddgelert on a botanical meeting in late June. It was easily differentiated from the other 2 microcyclic species, *P. virgae-aureae* and *Uromyces sommerfeltii*, that I have previously found on this host, (see Evans, 2008) by the yellow aecial cups with a white torn peridia rather than dark-brown telia. The rust alternates between *Solidago* and Deergrass, *Trichophorum cespitosum* on which it produces uredinia and telia and is thought to be rare because the 2 hosts do not regularly grow together. It is called 'The Deer Grass Rust' and is in the Red Data List of Threatened British Fungi as 'vulnerable'. On a return visit to the site in late July I found a single scruffy clump of Deergrass nearby with infected stalks. The tiny brown uredinia were quite inconspicuous and required close inspection of the clump by scanning with a hand lens.



*Puccinia eriophori* on *Solidago* (left) & Deergrass (right)

A bonus was finding a further collection of *U. sommerfeltii*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> British record on another *Solidago* plant nearby. I subsequently found *Puccinia eriophori* again in August on both hosts in the Ogwen Valley, this time quite close to the

road at 295 to 330m. Both telia and uredinia were present on fresh and dead stalks of the Deergrass.

In June Paul Reade, a keen mountaineer and expert alpine botanist, (now a rust protégée) found *Chrysomyxa empetri* on Crowberry, *Empetrum nigrum* ssp. *nigrum* on Carnedd Llewelyn in the Carneddau range. I hadn't seen this rust before and found there was only one old record for VC49 from 1928 in the FRDBI. The rust is listed as 'near threatened' in the RDL. I was determined to see this rust

myself and I now have records from many of the mountains in Snowdonia that I've visited and Paul has a further record from Tryfan. It is worth checking for wherever the host occurs. Again this is an inconspicuous rust producing small orange uredinia on the tiny leaves. I have found the best non-destructive method to look for it is to scan the leaves on the plants with a hand lens while kneeling on the ground. Both these rusts help to confirm my opinion that rarity of many rust species may be more due to the rarity of rusters than the rusts?



*Chrysomyxa empetri*

Finally, mountains are also for bees and I recorded the attractive Mountain Bumblebee, *Bombus monticola*, a declining and probably under-recorded species, on several occasions. It is easily identified by its orange abdomen and lemon-yellow thoracic band.



*Bombus monticola*

All in all, it was a very productive summer with not only a list of peaks climbed, but with the additional bonus of a useful list of fungi.

Thanks to Charles Aron for his help with identifications, especially the *Inocybes*; to Penny Cullington for help with the *Inocybes*; Paul Reade for highlighting *Chrysomyxa empetri*; Alex Turner for information on the *Salix herbacea* distribution; and to Eilir for his immense patience while out on our walks!

Text and photographs by Debbie Evans

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## SMALL FAN-LIKE FUNGI

There are a number of small more or less fan- or shell-shaped species arising from dead wood and stems – the pink-spored genus *Crepidotus* springs immediately to mind, but is not my subject here. This note is concerned only with fungi that have a readily visible short stipe and do NOT have pink spores – clearly this will not be obvious until you turn your collection over to look at the underside. Most are pale brownish to brown. I am thinking of just four species that fall into that category – there may be others I am not remembering - plus a fifth, rather literally, a hanger-on that I can't resist including. Four of my five are swarmers.

In the field the trick is first to look at the stipe:

***Melanotus*** – stipe short and slender, more or less cylindrical;

***Panellus*** – short, broad and fat.

Secondly, consider the habitat.

My starting point for this note was the record of *Melanotus phillipsii* in Mains Wood in July. *Melanotus* is a predominantly tropical genus with brown spores. Some years back there were in Britain a number of species to conjure with but CBIB now lists only two – *M. phillipsii* and *M. horizontalis*. The short cylindrical stipe can be either well off centre, or lateral - ie on the edge, giving it a true fan or shell shape.

*Melanotus phillipsii* is a really small species which I find fairly regularly on rotting grass stems and which can also be found on marsh plants such as sedges, rushes and reed mace. Mostly, the caps are only 5mm or so across, pale or pinkish brown, smooth, the flesh thin. The mini-stipe is curved and similarly coloured and the gills pale brownish. If one is found, there are usually more if you rummage gently through the rotting herbage.

*M. horizontalis*, which is somewhat larger with caps up to 18mm diameter, does not occur on rotting monocot stems, but on dead wood - almost any wood, anywhere. My rather poor photo shows how abundant it may be on the cut end of a broadleaf log. I have also seen it on fallen conifer wood and have a record of it from a friend who found it on the bit of chipboard she used to cover her compost bin. The cap is cinnamon to rusty brown, drying paler; stipe short, curved, eccentric or lateral, brown.

*Panellus* species also have a stipe, but one which is always lateral and more of a broad, scurfy stub and so less cylindrical than in *Melanotus*.

*Panellus mitis* is to be found in swarms on dead conifer branches. Usually it is small, 1 cm or less across but may be twice that size. The cap is whitish, perhaps colouring a little with age to buff and the gills are cream.



*Melanotus horizontalis* (photo by Jo Weightman)



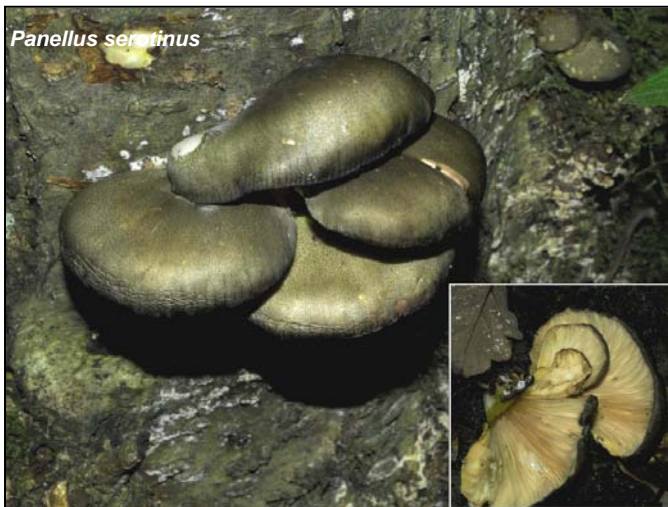
*Panellus mitis* (Photos by Geof Kibby)



*Panellus stipticus*, on the other hand, occurs on deciduous wood - especially oak, often on cut ends where it grows in overlapping tiers. The cap is matt, often radially grooved and a soft buff to brown. Gills and stipe are concolorous. The junction between gills and stipe is very precise. This species is remarkably long-lived, persisting for weeks, or even months from autumn and through the winter.



(*Panellus serotinus* is not a small species and so is outside my brief, but to mention it completes the round-up of familiar *Panellus* spp. It is doubly gorgeous - always so - underneath with golden gills and, when young and fresh, a handsome bottle green above. But, alas, this turns greyish in time as do we all. Again, it has a short, fat scurfy lateral stipe.)



My last, *Plicatura crispa*, is a very different fungus, not being gilled but with sufficient points of resemblance to justify inclusion – my hope is to spur members to find this apparently northern species in Herefordshire. It has cropped up in Kent in recent years, so why not in VC36 as well? I am not convinced by the apparent restriction to Scotland and Northern England, as I have seen it in northern France. This fan-like, brown fungus is to be found on fallen wood, from which it hangs by a stipe-like narrow point of attachment (so no need to turn it over). Individual caps are 10-20mm across, but several may be conjoined. They are finely tomentose to floccose and somewhat wavy, especially at the margin and yellow- to red-brown. Underneath, the white hymenium is much folded and crisped. There is nothing else quite like it in Britain.

Jo Weightman

