

Trooper's Hill Fungus Foray: Sunday 30th October 2011

Our annual fungus foray on a moist and humid day in late October, with low expectations for species recording owing to a dry October with rains coming only 4 days before the foray. In the end, with 30 people attending, we found 30+ species, including 7 wax cap (*Hygrocybe*) species.

The CHEG score (*Clavaria*, *Hygrocybe*, *Entoloma*, *Geoglossum*) was 9 for this year, lower than previous years, indicating moderate quality for a single visit (Each species recorded in the four genera is given a score of one, with total species then giving the overall score for the site: for further information, see previous reports).

Species of interest include *Crinipellis scabella* (*C.stipitaria*) found on old grass stems on an ant hill, *Hygrocybe fornicata* a new wax cap for the hill, *Cortinarius parvannulatus*, a tawny orange species scented like cedarwood, and *Gamundia striatula*, a small grey gill fungus. A small orange discomycete was found growing with *Polytrichum* moss: a species similar to *Neotiella rutilans* found in 2010, but with different spores: this specimen has been sent to Brian Spooner at Kew, a specialist on this group.

More interestingly, a small, conical, greyish *Mycena* with an elastic gill edge, elastic pellicle and medium sized spores, keying out as *Mycena agrestis* with Funga Nordica, has been logged with Kew, as this species is not known to be British. Watch this space!

Attendees were enthused with story of Ergot Fungus (*Claviceps purpurea*), found on Cock's Foot flower heads, causing St Anthony's Fire in medieval times, due to its presence in contaminated rye bread.

Management Suggestions:

- As in previous reports:
1. Create brash piles in woodland
 2. Leave as much dead wood in situ, as possible
 3. Cut main meadow area annually, to a sward height of <10cm where possible to ensure soil warming in the summer and hence enhance fruiting; preferably in late July-early September
 4. Clear bramble and other coarse scrub from around good mycorrhizal trees (oak, birch) to <10cm sward height to enhance fruiting
 5. Create 30 x 30 metre experimental plot and cut to sward height of 2-5cm in late August: and monitor fruitbody production in following Autumn

All identifications via a combination of;

Fungi of Switzerland (1980-2002)
Flora Agaricina Neerlandica (1987-2007)
Funga Nordica (2008)
Mycena D'Europa (2003)
British Fungus Flora (1970-2001)
Microfungi on Miscellaneous Substrates (1996)
Keys to Grassland Clavarioid Fungi (2002)
The Genus *Hygrocybe* (2010)

Recommended beginner's guides with most Trooper's Hill species illustrated;

Mushrooms by Roger Phillips (1981 or 2005)
Mushrooms and Toadstools by Paul Sterry and Barry Hughes (2009)

Species List

<i>Auricularia auricula judae</i>	Jelly Ear Fungus
<i>Claviceps purpurea</i>	Ergot
<i>Clavulinopsis helvola</i>	
<i>Clitocybe agrestis</i>	
<i>Clitocybe fragrans</i>	
<i>Clitocybe rivulosa</i>	
<i>Cortinarius parvannulatus</i>	
<i>Crinipellis scabella</i>	
<i>Cystoderma amianthinum</i>	
<i>Entoloma conferendum</i>	
<i>Gamundia striatula</i>	
<i>Hebeloma crustuliniforme</i>	Poison Pie
<i>Hygrocybe chlorophana</i>	
<i>Hygrocybe conica</i>	Conical Wax Cap
<i>Hygrocybe fornicata</i>	
<i>Hygrocybe laeta</i>	
<i>Hygrocybe pratensis</i>	Buff Meadow Cap
<i>Hygrocybe russocoriacea</i>	
<i>Hygrocybe virginea</i>	Snowy Wax Cap
<i>Laccaria amethystina</i>	Amethyst Deceiver
<i>Laccaria proxima</i>	
<i>Lycoperdon nigrescens</i>	
<i>Lycoperdon (Vascellum) pratense</i>	
<i>Marasmius oreades</i>	Fairy Ring Champignon
<i>Mycena aetites</i>	
<i>Mycena leptcephala</i>	
<i>Mycena olivaceomarginata</i>	
<i>Paxillus involutus</i>	Brown Roll Rim
<i>Psathyrella conopilea</i>	
<i>Scleroderma verrucosum</i>	

Justin Smith

justinhongos@yahoo.co.uk