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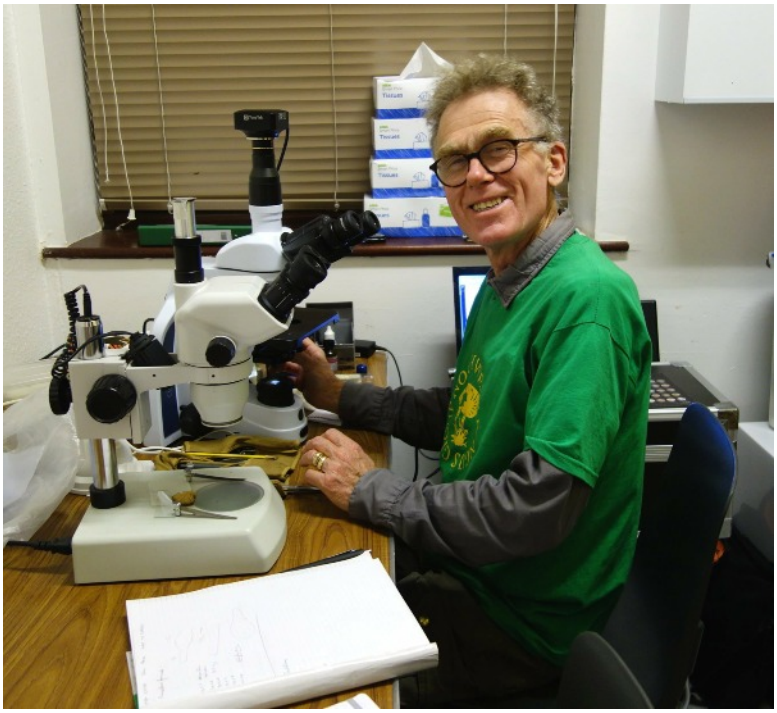
Newsletter

Autumn 2018



CHAIR: Irene Ridge, Smalley's Farm, Whalley Old Road, Billington, Clitheroe, Lancs BB7 9JF, 01254 247274

VICE CHAIR Jeanette Maddy 07548 838 946

TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP Kathleen Ryan: 01254 580 730

SECRETARY: Mike Walton 01606 259 286

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Dr Paul Hamlyn: 0161 434 1401

(Typesetting & Printing: Mike Walton)

FORAY PLANNER John Watt: 01695 578 843

RECORDS CO-ORDINATION/FRDBI LINK John Taylor 0161 445 3308

WEB SITE/SOCIAL MEDIA: Lynne Healey 07938 663 232

COMMITTEE Ali McKernan, Tim Rogers.

EMAIL GROUP CO-ORDINATOR Tony Carter: tocart2@btinternet.com

View from the Chair

Irene Ridge

Since the spring 'View' last April there has been a whole season of foraying and the committee has just met to review the provisional foray programme prepared by John Watt for 2019. In 2018 we held 14 forays beginning in April (which was a bit late so we plan to start forays in March next year) and with the last one on 4 November. That wonderful summer did not suit many fungi and grassland fungi in particular have had a very bad year – reported for most of the country and not just us. Nevertheless we still managed to find good numbers of species; 86 records for Loggerheads in August for example, including the lovely little Bracken Club (*Typhula quisquilaris*) found by Clive Garnett. Attendance on forays has also been healthy with 10 to 15 people not unusual. There was the usual microscope workshop at Risley Moss in July, which people said they found useful, and of course the Keswick residential weekend (see later report). Supposedly this was to have been our last Keswick visit because the Convention Centre was closing – but it has been decided that it will remain open for 2019 (and possibly even longer) so we shall be going again next year. The encouraging news is that more members are now leading forays and a few more are using the microscope to check identifications at home. It is only a few, however, and we would dearly love that number to increase not least because it would greatly reduce the burden on the small number of people who check or identify species at home.

The system for recording on forays has proceeded roughly according to plan despite a few problems! The foray leader, or someone they delegate to, records species found and finder and identifier, substrate, location and habitat (ecosystem); the recorder then enters records for that foray into FRDBI 2 (the new

national database) where John Watt has very helpfully listed and provided maps for all our sites. Species lists for most of the 2018 forays are on the NWFG section of FRDBI 2 and to view them you need to register with John Watt who can authorise access and then register with FRDBI 2. If you have problems doing this then do ask for help. There are also brief reports of some forays on the website and it may eventually be possible to provide full species lists there too.

A provisional list of forays for 2019 was presented by John Watt at the November committee meeting and if all goes to plan there will be 15 Sunday forays and a microscope workshop in June (IF there is a demand), the Keswick weekend and a new venture – a visit to the Isle of Man. John Watt has emailed details about this last event, which was planned when we thought there would be no visit to Keswick; it was at the invitation of the Isle of Man fungus group who have been very helpful and offered to sort out foray sites for us. If you would like to go to this event and haven't already contacted John Watt then please do contact him soon.

At that committee meeting we also discussed ways of helping people to improve their identification and microscope skills. Ali McKernan does a splendid job getting children interested in fungi and the NWFG Facebook page started and monitored by Lynne Healey has proved very helpful to beginners who send in queries: Lynne also told us about a small self-help group on Facebook that works well. Beyond this the microscope workshop can help people who just want to know how to set up and use a 'scope (Robin Dean did a great job in this area at the workshop and at Keswick); and it also helps people who want to know how to prepare, mount and stain fungi for the microscope. So the only extra idea, suggested by Jeanette Maddy, was to link the 'intermediates' – those who have or use a microscope but need more help in interpreting what they are looking at. Quite a few people on the committee would be happy to visit or be visited by members in this situation for one-to-one sessions. You can expect to hear more about this on Facebook, the website or via the e-mail group (and remember that to join this last you need to contact Tony Carter).

Jeanette Maddy presented a report about all the outreach activities last year, including a big family day at Jodrell Bank for National Fungus Day. Jeanette has been a very able co-ordinator of outreach events for several years but is resdigning from the job this year – so we shall be looking for a successor! Jeanette and Ali must also be congratulated on their election to national committees of the British Mycological Society: Jeanette to the Field Mycology and Conservation Committee and Ali to the Fungal Education and Outreach Committee.

In general, a good year for the NWFG but there is no room for complacency and we need to look constantly for better ways to meet our aims – to record fungi in the North West and to interest, inform and educate people about fungi. If this all sounds a bit solemn the other side is that fungi are amazing and it can be great fun to attend forays and look for them. So do come on a foray or more next year and happy fungal hunting in 2019.

North West Fungus Group
Roudsea excursion May 2018

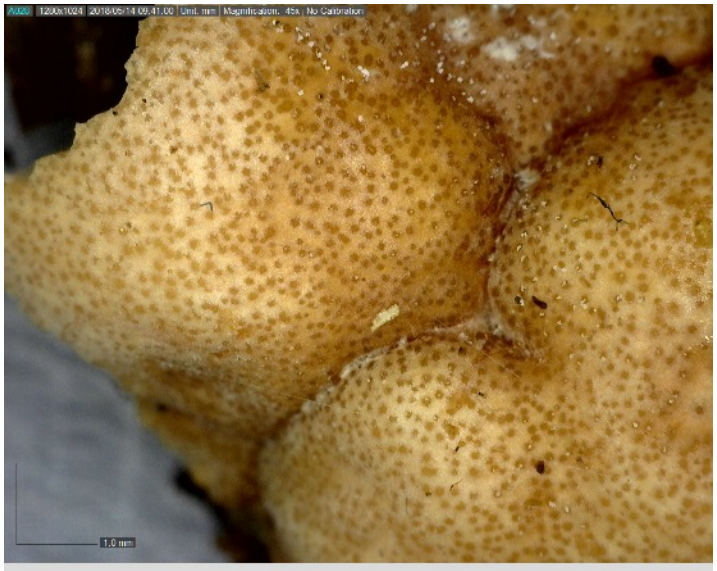
John Watt

Our first 'real' group foray of the year took place on 18 May at Roudsea Woods National Nature Reserve, led by Helen with permits for the 12 of us. It is well located for some of the members living in the area and whilst still early in the year for fungi we did positively identify a total of 39 species. Equally, it turned out to be a lovely day for walking around and admiring flowers such as Herb Paris, Bog Rosemary as well as the more abundant bluebells and anemones, and we enjoyed watching a pair of lovely Longhorn beetles; Blackspotted Pliers Support beetle (*Rhagium mordax) !*

Within the 'toadstool' category, George and I had a collection each of *Roridomyces roridus*, *(ex-Mycena)* which is usually a late summer species. It is said to associate sometimes with *Vaccinium* species, which would also fit.

There were three species of polypores (four if you include what is now to be known as *Lentinus brumalis*) and Mike was able to identify *P. ciliatus* (right) later which is much less common than *P. leptocephalus* or *P. squamosus*. I was fresh from Bruce Ing's Microfungi Course at Kindrogan, so was keen to look for rusts on leaves as well as small ascos so a good number of these helped with the tally.

With a clear image of a *Hypocrea* from Wigan Flashes last year, one find suggested itself to belong to this same genus, and with rather irregular spores, it matched *Hyocrea citrina* (left), though not so rare as last year's, a satisfying find all the same. Various other photos are on the website.



Reminiscences of Keswick

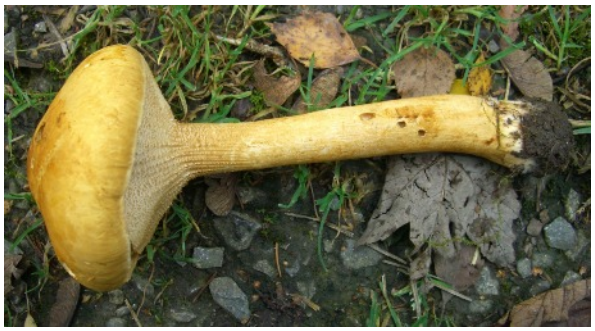
Paul F. Hamlyn

I have been on the North West Fungus Group annual weekend residential foray at Keswick, normally held the first weekend in October, on a number of occasions over the years when time has permitted. Originally the weekend foray was based at the Blencathra Field Centre until Robin Dean found a more suitable site at the Keswick Convention Centre with its well equipped kitchen allowing for self-catering and considerably reducing the cost of participation (1). It is also located within walking distance of the centre of Keswick making it easy to get essential provisions such as sandwiches for lunch or visiting a pub in the evening. Unfortunately, the Keswick Convention Centre is going to be closed down in the near future although it is still available for 2019.

There are many advantages in having a residential foray particularly for beginners as the finds are put out on a display table for all to examine and learn more about the defining characteristics of different species. In addition, a workroom allows for microscopic examination of specimens and there are always plenty of field guides around. Keswick has an another advantage in that it is close to the border with Scotland and one often comes across species of fungi common in Scotland but rarely found on our normal forays further south.

Searching through my archives the first photographic records I have for the Keswick event are in 2007. Although I bought my first digital camera in 2003 it was quite large and the battery life was very poor so I mainly used it at home. However, in 2007 I bought my first compact digital camera that had a good battery life and it went along with me on most of my travels for several years including Keswick. On the Saturday in October 2007 I recall that we set out on a medium level walk led by Robin Dean to Borrowdale and came across *Boletus parasiticus* (right - known as *Pseudoboletus parasiticus* now) growing on the Common Earthball, *Scleroderma citrinum*, the first time that I had seen this species.

I next visited Keswick in 2009. A nice find was the Red Data List species *Phaeolepiota aurea* - below (Golden Bootleg).

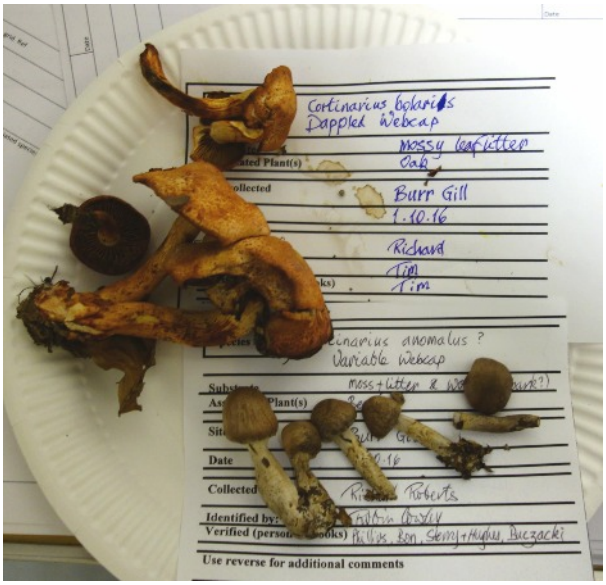


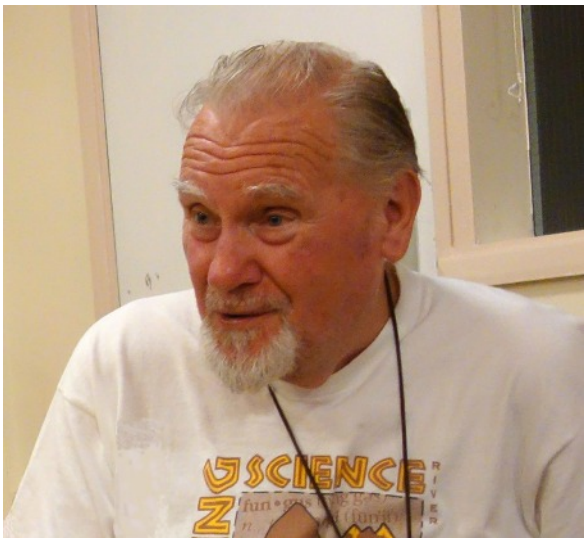
Normally at Keswick we find a lot of waxcaps and other grassland species particularly in fields near to the Blencathra Field Centre and at Latrigg.

Lacrymaria lacrymabunda, Keswick 2009 (left)

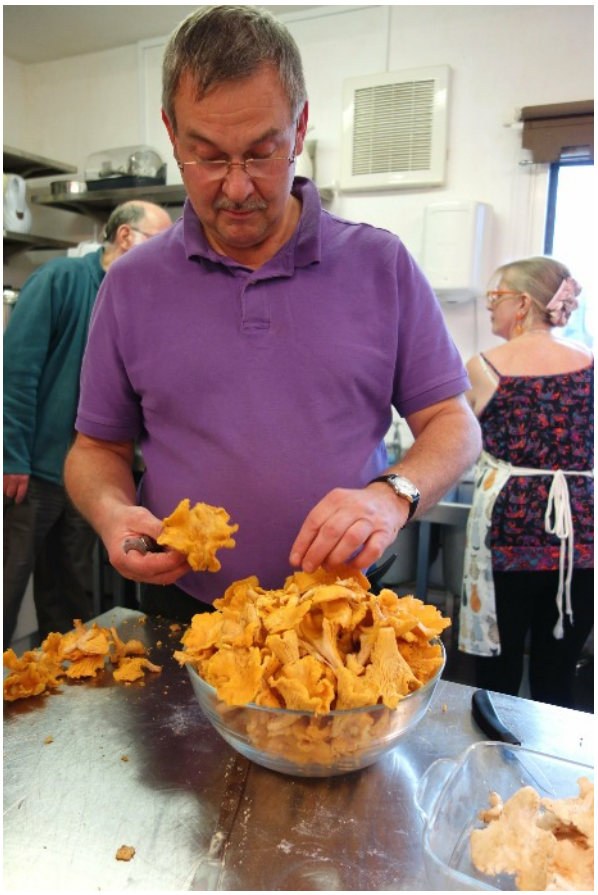
Due to the pressures of working full time that involved travelling overseas almost every month I was unable to take part in the weekend residential foray at Keswick again until 2016. However, I was able to keep abreast of events at Keswick through enthusiastic write-ups in the Newsletter (2, 3, 4). In 2016 we were joined by Bruce Ing who had been our President for a number of years up to 2015 and was now living in Scotland. Large numbers of *Cantharellus cibarius* (Chanterelle, Girole in France) were collected on the Saturday and

made good use of by the cooks for our evening meal. *Cortinarius bolaris* (Dappled Webcap - right), very distinctive for a *Cortinarius* with its red-dappled cap, was also common being found at several different locations. Tim Rogers and John Watt provided details of two of the forays carried out in 2016 for the Newsletter (5, 6).





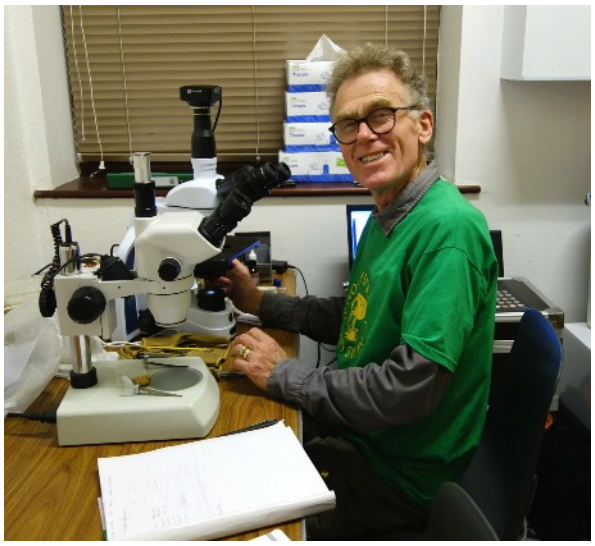
Bruce Ing, Keswick 2016 - above



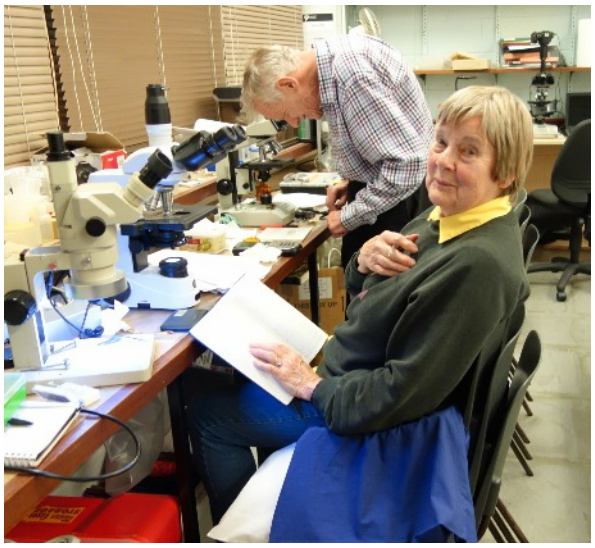
Preparing dinner, Keswick 2016

In 2018 we again came across *Pleurocybella porrigens* (Angel's Wings - above) a species mainly found in Scotland that I remembered from a previous visit to Keswick several years ago.

As usual people were hard at work late afternoon and in the evening carrying out microscopic examinations and working through keys using the large number of reference books to hand.



John Watt, Keswick 2018



Irene Ridge and John Taylor, Keswick 2018

We all had a thoroughly good time in 2018 and I also enjoyed an excellent fish & chip supper at 'The Old Keswickian' on Market Square with Robin Dean on the Friday when dinner is not provided. Thanks to Jacqui and her friends for doing the cooking on Saturday and Sunday.

Keswick has been subject to climate change like everywhere else. In the early days I recall very frosty starts in the morning particularly on the high fells. This year I did not even bother to bring a heavy fleece with me. However, you always need to bring rainwear to Keswick just in case. I thoroughly recommend to anybody who has not been on a residential foray weekend to come along and join in the fun.

References

(1) Robin Dean. The Old Keswickian. *NWFG Newsletter*, April 2015, 4-6.

(2) Penny Hinsinger. NWFG Residential Foraying Weekend 2011. *NWFG Newsletter,* April 2012, 16-19.

(3) John Watt. Keswick Residential Weekend 2012. *NWFG Newsletter,* April 2013, 5-14.

(4) Robin Cowley. Lake District Foray 2013. *NWFG Newsletter,* April 2014, 4-5.

(5) Tim Rogers. NWFG Keswick weekend 2016: Cliburn Moss. *NWFG Newsletter*, Spring 2017, 6-7.

(6) John Watt. NWFG Keswick weekend 2016 foray at Noble Knott, Whinlatter. *NWFG Newsletter*, Spring 2017, 12-14.

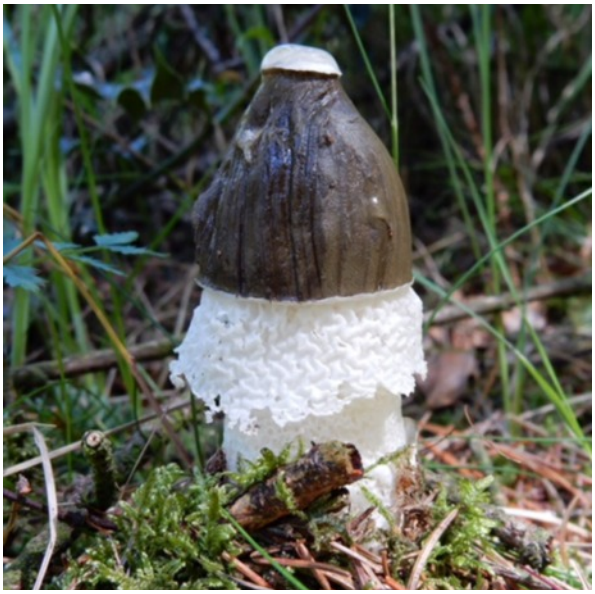
All photographs in this article were taken by Paul F. Hamlyn.

Moor Piece Foray, 25 June 2018

Irene Ridge

This was a select affair – 6 starters and 5 finishers- but a very enjoyable and fungally fruitful day. Like most places in this drought, the site was exceptionally dry but given that it is usually sopping wet there were still plenty of damp places and the final species tally is somewhere between 25 and 30. This includes several species usually confined to *Sphagnum* moss including *Tephrocybe palustris* (Sphagnum Grayling), *Galerina paludosa* (Bog Bell) and *Hypholoma elongatum* (Sphagnum Brownie). We even found a few *Russula* – including *R. claroflava* and *R. betularum* that are typical of damp, acid areas with birch. On a recce visit the day before the foray IR also found a less common *Russula – R. robertii* among mosses beside a ditch and with birch and oak; it was brown and keyed out with the Kibby key plus Sarnari's tome but the spores needed checking.

Finds of the day were the 'skirted stinkhorn' *Phallus duplicatus* (above right), first spotted by new member Philip Larkin and originally recorded at the same site (under conifers) in 2012 when it was new to Britain. Geoffrey Kibby identified it and we've found it here every year since, a stinkhorn with



a dome-like skirt below the fruiting head and for various reasons not the *togatus* variety of the common stinkhorn.

Then there was a less common *Tephrocybe, T. tylicolor*, found and identified by Tim Rogers in *Sphagnum* (but not confined to this): it looks rather like a pallid *Mycena* (Bonnet) but with a flaky stipe. And finally there was a lovely orange-red eyelash fungus *Scutellinia olivascens*. This was found by George Clarkson on peaty mud and identified by IR using Brian Spooner's 2012 key and Mal Greaves's wonderful TomBio key plus several Ascofrance posts on the internet. It has shortish brown marginal hairs and the spores have low warts with some interconnections.

So altogether a most satisfying day – good fungi, good weather and good company – what more could you ask!

Moore Nature Reserve foray, October 2018

Paul F. Hamlyn

Ten people turned out including Robin Dean, John Ratcliffe and Christopher Bowden together with several beginners at least one of which had found out about this beginners foray through our Facebook page. It is likely that two of them will join the Group.

I carried out a brief survey of the site before the others had arrived. My normal route starting out through the lowland heath part of the reserve looked to be a bit disappointing with regards to fungi however I also looked over an area near to the car park where we had previously found an earthstar and this appeared to be more promising with lots of brown roll rims, a fly agaric and other species likely to be of interest to beginners. Therefore, we covered this area first. It did not disappoint somebody spotted *Cyathus striatus* (Fluted Bird's Nest - top right) easily overlooked and a first for me at Moore.

We then went to the heath area and although the grass was quite long managed to find three waxcaps: *Hygrocybe conica*, *Hygrocybe psittacina* and *Cuphophyllus virgineus*.

The rest of the route was mainly through woodland and overall we identified fifty one species not bad for a beginners foray. Nothing rare but a number of species of particular interest to beginners including the scented

Clitocybe odora (Aniseed Toadstool) and *Lactarius glyciosmus* (Coconut Milkcap) together with more unusual looking species like *Otidea onotica* (Hare's Ear - below) and *Helvella lacunosa* (Elfin's Saddle).

Lyme Disease

John Watt

This is something of a personal tale for which I apologise but I thought it may be more likely for you to sit up and heed the warning of contracting Lyme disease rather than by scanning through the somewhat dry BMS Risk Assessment table. All members reading this account ought to have had sight of this table which contains this row, but probably will not have dwelt on it too long.

Contracting Lymes disease	Low	Major	Avoid areas where ticks may be present. Keep legs covered and check for ticks after trip. If you are bitten by a tick followed by flu-like symptoms contact your doctor

Within our group, we have already had the experience up plucking ticks off colleagues' trouser legs, thinking of Roudsea Woods NNR two years ago. I had at that time started carrying with me a specifically-designed tick removing tweezers purchased from one or other of the websites such as the Lyme Disease Action.

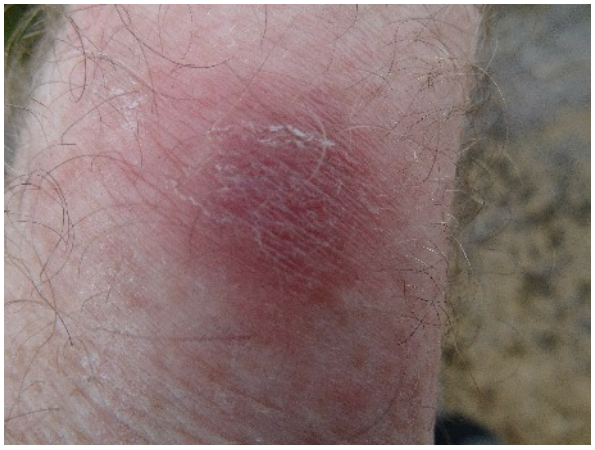
www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/about-ticks/tick-removal/

This website provides a fund of information, which I would urge you to check out.

In earlier days before I knew better, I simply used methods of removal which actually increase the likelihood of the tick regurgitating its stomash contents into your blood stream.

This year, I spent two enjoyable weeks at the Kindrogan Field Studies Centre on Bruce Ing's Microfungi course, followed by the BMS Spring Foray also led by Bruce. I wasn't the only one to pick up a tick, but at Faskally Woods I found my first tick walking on my hand shorly after its landing so was able to remove it at the time; (they sense your carbon dioxide as well as body heat). But it was not for a couple of days that I found another on my calf and yet a third under my watch strap feeding themselves. I was pleased to be able to remove them intact with my tick tweezers and thought that maybe it was too early in the season for the Borrelia burgdorferi but it turns out that the infection risks are greatest in spring to early summer.

At the time I had a minor irritation and redness on my wrist passing off in a couple of days so gave it little thought until 5 weeks later, when on holiday in Isle of Wight, a 5cm swelling and rash appeared under my watch strap within a matter of hours. Though not of the typical *erythema migrans* appearance, it was clearly a manifestation of the infection and so the next day cycled a few miles to St. Mary's



Hospital A&E, Newport , having tried to brief myself on the treatment recommendations and options for blood tests. I was lucky in that after the initial 'triage' , I was then seen by a nurse practitioner whose knew something of Lyme's disease through a young friend of her husband, chronically ill with the condition. After deliberation, we opted not to send of for diagnostic blood tests to Porton Down ! since these two-stage tests are frequently equivocal, and she was agreeable to get me started on doxycyclene 100 mg twice daily, and this treatment is to continue for 4 weeks. The rash started subsiding after 36 hours serving to confirm the diagnosis.

I was grateful in that 30% of people don't display a rash and indeed some first present with one or other complicating nasty symptom upon which I won't elaborate but just read them up if you need convincing.

There is a good question as to whether the body can develop immunity against a second infection.

In response to this, I would say don't assume so for there are different species of Burdorferi and different strains even though there is some evidence that strain specific immunity may develop and last for at least 6 years.

The preventative role of insect repellant is not clear-cut, so in summary, we need to be informed and vigilant, wear long trousers in risky habitats - pale in colour ? -, and check our clothing and upper body well afterwards; buy and carrry tweezers.

PS The BMS risk rating for Lyme disease is being upped to High!

www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/

lymediseaseuk.com/lyme-disease/

www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng95

Gait Barrows.

John Watt

It had been a few years since the previous foray at Gait Barrows, and a very wet one it was, so it was high time to explore this site again, and it was good that local members, Sue Shiels and Sarah Harvey, were able to lead not only NWFG members around us but also members of Arnside Natural History Society. On limestone geology, it was a blessing that the dry weather had come to an end and in fact our final tally of identified species for the day amounted to 86.

In the rarified zone, Irene had *Inocybe kulthani* of which there are 9 records on FRDBI1 though it is currently regarded as a subspecies of *I. cookei*: *Inocybe obsoleta* in turn has 24 records:

Tim's *Hygrophorus penarioides* is listed in *Index Fungorum* but this would appear to be a new record for UK. His finding of *Entoloma poliopus* does have 4 records though. A couple of blue *Entoloma* species were found close together so it was helpful to be able to distinguish some differences in the field; *E. serrulatu*m had a much smoother looking cap in the field though under the hand lens was seen to be finely scaly; *E. mougeotii*, a much less common species, was distinctly more scaly and the spores were very knobbly with up to 9 angles.

Bruce had alerted me in spring to look out for *Capnobotrys dingleyae* (below), which with only 30 records on FRDBI, has only been found in a few sites in the British Isles. Looking like a sooty mold on wet drips patches on Yew Tree boles, we were in luck when Dennis spotted the first specimen. Pauline herself had in the past found it once but not subsequently near Arnside.

Some days beforehand, I had had an email from Brian Douglas alerting us to search for three species in Lost and Found project to give us extra incentives but in these cases we were not in luck. The *Amanita friabilis* had in the past been found in the alder carr near Little Hawes Water where we did however find a good range of other species and it was a nice contrast from the hillside.

Nicely spotted by Max was a cluster of *Crucibulum la*eve, on dead bracken stem, a more unusual substrate for this species. Always impressive to see also were a few separate sightings of *Chroogomphus rutilus*. A new *Pluteus* for me was *Pluteus petasatus* (below) growing on a wood chip pile.

A.G.M.

Saturday 23 February 2019

10.30 a.m.
at the Risley Moss Visitor Centre.

Morchella purpurascens

Tony Carter

(Published in *Field Mycology* Vol 19 (3) August 2018 p. 77)

Every spring, North West Fungus Group has visited Ainsdale Sand Dunes Reserve, west Lancashire. In recent years, I have led the foray. The attraction is the opportunity to examine the morels that grow in the dune slacks.

This area was once woodland but has been cleared to recreate the original dune system. When wooded, morels abounded. Now they are very few and unreliable, presumably existing on the buried remains of the trees.

The morels have been recorded there since the 1990s, when I was guided by the late Ken Jordan. The earliest recorded month of appearance was February.

They have always been recorded as *Morchella elata* (Black Morel). Most were black, some brown with a black lattice, a few just brown. We assumed that they turned black with age.

In the spring of 2017, I took a group of NWFG members to the Reserve to collect some of these morels at the request of Kew who planned to carry out DNA sequencing. It was suspected that the Ainsdale species might not be *M. elata*.

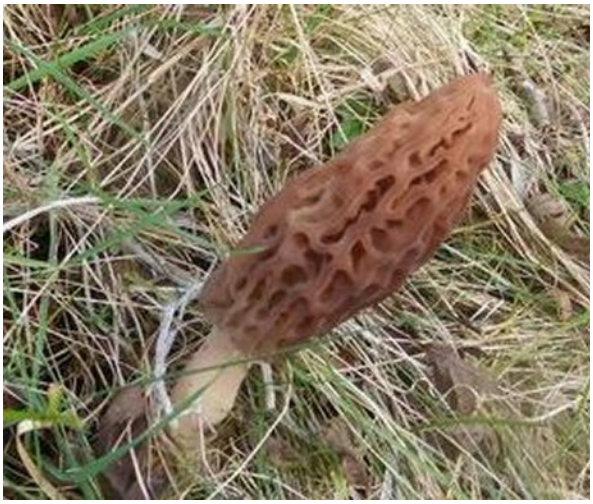
A number of specimens were collected, which I dried and dispatched to Kew. My observation at the time was that the specimens were not as black as previous years. There were, for example, many totally brown specimens.

(Photo by Lynne Healey)

A year later, I received the results of the DNA sequencing from Dr. A. Martyn Ainsworth: one specimen was sequenced (ITS) and was found to be a good match (only 1 difference in the sequence) with a sequence derived from the epitype of *Morchella purpurascens* (hardly any British records and previously known here as *M. elata* var. *purpurascens*).

Morchella purpurescens is apparently a common species whose distribution ranges from Sweden to Turkey. The species is characterised by fruitbodies with a short stipe and elongate, somewhat obtuse pileus, and purplish or pinkish brown colours that tend not to darken with age.

My plan was to go back to Ainsdale this spring, with a group, to search for some black ones. Such specimens would be sent to Kew to see if they have the same matching ITS barcode of *M. purpurascens* or if they are a different species. Unfortunately, no morels were seen by the Manager. I also visited but found nothing. Perhaps next year.



The specimens shown above were photographed by me in the same area on a foray in 2011. Whether these represent further examples of *M. pupurascens* or other species remains to be determined. One is black although I must concede that people have different views of colour (many say that the Wimbledon tennis balls are yellow). It certainly matches photographs of *M. elata* to be found on the Internet. A DNA comparison may give the answer.

The problem is that there is no accepted epitype for *M. elata*. Many of the elata-type taxa are very similar. Once the taxonomy of *M. elata* and its closest allies is resolved, we will be a step closer to naming our Black Morels.

[Note from the Editor of Field Mycology: The common black morel in Europe is now usually called *M. importuna*, the name *M. elata* being considered of uncertain application, see Richard et al., 2015]

Reference

Richard, F. et al (2015), Morchella in Europe and North America. True morels (Morchella, Pezizales) of Europe and North America. Evolutionary relationships inferred from multilocus data and a unified taxonomy. *Mycologia* 107(2). 359-382.

Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR - 16 September 2018

Tony Carter

Eighteen people attended this popular event held by North West Fungus Group. Starting by the reserve manager's office, we moved very slowly down to the oak wood which is as far as we got by lunchtime because the fungi were numerous and varied.

The paddock produced a couple of new species for the Reserve, *Lepiota cortinarius* and *Psathyrella bipellis*. We also found a little brown job, *Panaeolus fimicola*, on a little brown job (a rabbit dropping).

Along the path we encountered *Entoloma hebes*, while the in oak wood, we found the tiny *Rutstroemia sydowiana* on the petiole of an oak leaf.

Tolypocladium ophioglossoides, one that grows from an underground truffle, was rediscovered. A patch has been in the same area for years but tends to move around and is hard to spot in the moss.

Along the Firebreak to the dunes and back along the pinewoods to base, we recorded the very poisonous *Amanita phalloides*, the very edible *Boletus edulis*, *Pluteus pouzarianus*, *Clitopilus hobsonii*, *Inocybe microspora* and a host of more common species. The final total was 100 species with 15 new to the Reserve.

Editorial

This issue of the Newsletter includes an interesting and varied range of material. Many thanks to all those members who have contributed articles for this issue and to Mike Walton for typesetting and organising the printing and posting of the newsletter. Articles can be submitted to me by email. Pictures of fungi to accompany articles are very welcome preferably sent as separate attachments. Please note that it is important to show due diligence when including any photographs (or other material) that have not been taken by yourself by getting permission and including the name of the photographer (or copyright holder) so that due credit can be given in the newsletter.

Paul F Hamlyn

pfhamlyn@gmail.com