Fungus Foray in New Parks

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The Wyre Forest Study Group in the Arboretum, New Parks, 6 November 2019 Rosemary Winnall

For the Wednesday Study Group field meeting on 6th November 2019 it was decided to hold a fungus foray which I was asked to lead. Fungi are at best unpredictable and this year was no exception with some areas of the country being good whilst others poor. The Marches area including the Wyre Forest seemed to have been very poor due to the dry summer followed by a very wet autumn, too wet and cold for many fungi! We met up at Callow Hill for our foray and I came up with a target of 50 species for the day, which came as a surprise to some people present.

We started off well with a good number of species favouring the disturbed wooded banks around the car park. We soon had *Clitocybe nebularis, Coprinus comatus, Hebeloma crustuliniforme, Laccaria laccata* and *Tricholoma saponaceum* on the list, all common species. *Helvella crispa* added some interest for just being such an odd-looking fungus. Off we headed into New Parks adding a few conifer associates as we went, *Rhodocollybia butyracea* being all too common in its various shades of brown. On an old conifer stump we found *Tapinella panuoides*, an uncommon species for Wyre, one I had not seen for several years. In the grassy ride side along the forest tracks several *Pseudoclitocybe cyathiformis* were found, a typical late season species.

Heading on down further into the woodland smaller species were added to the list, which was now over thirty species long. In the *Mycena* genus we added *M. pura, M. galericulata, M. aetites* and then *M. haematopus* (with its red latex) growing on oak logs with *Armillaria gallica* looking different every time it was spotted. *Hypholoma fasciculare* in clustered clumps was heading to be the commonest fungi of the day as many tree stumps had fruiting bodies present. Larger fungi were few and far between with only the occasional species recorded from genera like *Russula, Boletus* and *Amanita*. We stopped for lunch in an area of beech woodland just as light rain started to fall. Beech is often good for fungi but few species were seen, although *Cortinarius anthracinus* was quite common. It is always good to see a few *Cortinarius* species as they tend to be uncommon, and in this case it was good to be able to name the species. Our list of fungi was now in the high forties.

After lunch we headed through a moss-covered conifer area where we found a selection of larger fungi and *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca, Boletus edulis, Lactarius rufus, Suillus luteus* and *Xerocomus cisalpinus* were all recorded. At the other end of the scale the tiny *Rickenella fibula* was spotted. The option to head back or carry on to the arboretum areas was considered as the rain fell, but as we were a hardy bunch (or should that be foolhardy) we all carried on. Luckily the rain stopped and the grassy arboretum yielded quite a good mix of new species for our list, now well into the fifties. Waxcaps were spotted in the open grassland - *Cuphophyllus flavipes, Gliophorus irrigatus, Cuphophyllus pratensis, Cuphophyllus virgineus, Gliophorus psittacinus, Hygrocybe russocoriacea* and the uncommon *Porpolomopsis calyptriformis*. Several spindle fungi were also seen including *Clavulinopsis*

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Calocybe chrysenteron, Wyre Forest Arboretum, 6 November 2019 John Bingham

laeticolor, Clavulinopsis corniculata and *Clavaria fumosa*. In some brashy conifer litter under a spruce tree Ian Wright spotted a group of bright yellow/orange fungi, much like waxcaps, but clearly not waxcaps, but what were they? A specimen was collected and later I discovered it was *Calocybe chrysenteron,* a new species for the forest and rare in Britain.

The daylight was getting poor so we headed back, losing some of the party for a time, but all were eventually found. Our grand total of fungi came to 79 species and I must say I was quite pleased to have found so many as we had to look quite hard to find some of them. Many of the typical larger species proved to be very scarce or absent, so the list contained more 'small jobs'. But a fungus is a fungus, so despite the season the day's species list was not too bad for a foray!

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