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Some Records of Uncommon Fungi from Wyre Forest

Resupinatus applicatus (Batsch) Gray. Tricholomataceae. Smoked Oysterling

This small fungus is not often recorded and its occurrence in the forest area appears to be unknown. Perhaps it may be overlooked but it does appear to be scarce. This specimen was found on the 19th December 2022 growing on an upright, moribund stem of Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna* in a hedge near Jack Brown's Coppice, Far Forest. The cap is c. 5mm in diameter, an unusual dark grey-blue to grey-black colour with the surface covered with small, fine hairs. The flesh is firm but gelatinous. It seems to persist well into winter and old derelict hedgerows may be the places to find it rather than in the woodland.



Roridomyces roridus (Fr) Rexter (1994). Mycenaceae. Dripping Bonnet

Whilst not uncommon in the UK, this species does not appear to have been recorded in Wyre Forest since 1904 by W B Allen, although I did record it once to the north at Birchen Park in 2006. This particular fungus was growing on a fallen Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* the twig was found by Denise Bingham in Corbet's Park, Earnwood on 29th November 2022. Formerly under the Genus name Mycena this small fungus with caps some 10mm across, grows on twiggy stems typically Bramble, *Rubus* spp. The stipe is particularly distinctive covered with a thick, slippery, gelatinous layer. Apparently, the fungus is bioluminescent an effect referred to as Foxfire.



Geastrum rufescens (Pers.) Geastrales. Rosy Earthstar

A single specimen of this uncommon Earthstar was found by Denise Bingham on 15th November 2023 at Blackgraves Copse, growing in grass under conifers on the side of a forest trackway. Perhaps the first record for decades in the forest. The last was made in 1996 when John Bingham found one at Seckley Wood. It was recorded by Carleton Rea in his long list of Wyre Forest fungi published in 1923 in the Transactions of the Worcestershire Club (Rea 1923) but hardly any records since then. It appears to be uncommon nationally with 270 records on the British Mycological Society database (BMS 2023).



Hygrophorus marzuolus (Fr.) Bres. 1893. March Waxy Cap

This fungus was found in January 2022 at Longdon Wood and after DNA analysis by Kew it was confirmed as new to Britain (Bingham 2023). Specimens have been filed at Kew as *H. marzuolus*, K-M000265126 and added to the Checklist of British Basidiomycota (Ainsworth & Henrici, 2023). The fungus appears very early in the season being a 'snow melt' species and is often hidden under moss making it difficult to find. The group I found were not hidden but the caps were very dark, quite firm and nearly black in appearance some 8 - 10cm across with light coloured gills. It was growing on a steep heathy bank in mature oak woodland. How often it occurs in Wyre is difficult to tell but anyone finding a 'fresh-looking' fungus in early winter that looks similar to the photograph should make a note and please let me know!



Marasmiellus tricolor (Alb. & Schwein.) Singer. Agaricales.

This small fungus was recorded in the Button Oak Meadow Nature Reserve on 27th July 2023 growing within a somewhat short and partly bare grass sward. It also appeared on the Elan Valley Pipetrack at Longdon. It is thought to be a saprobic species on species of grass, Poaceae. This appears to be the first record for either Shropshire (SFG 2021) or Worcestershire, with only 55 records on the British Mycological Society database. It was not noted by Carleton Rea on his Wyre fungus list (Rea 1923) but the first British record appears to have been by Rea on 29th March 1910, on grass roots in a cucumber frame. It was "on turf carried in from the neighbouring downs" at Grange Park in Hampshire (Henri 2016). In Wyre any area of stressed, short sward grassland may be suitable habitat, especially with some small areas of bare ground.



Amanita francheti (Boud.) Fayod. Agaricales. Gilded Amanita.

This large and attractive fungus was recorded in the Button Oak Meadow Nature Reserve on 27th July 2023. It appears to be rare but records from Herefordshire suggest it may be more common but under recorded. The large ring on the stem has the edge with small yellow bead-like granules. It has been found in Wyre in several places and is, possibly, not that scarce, it is associated with oak (Quercus sp.). Despite this there are only 59 records on the British Mycological Society database (BMS 2023). Possibly a species that is responding to climate change and becoming more frequent in the forest.



Leucoagaricus nympharum (Kalchbr.) Bon. Agaricales. White Dapperling.

A scarce species with previously no records for Worcestershire (?) and only 3 recent records for Shropshire (SFG 2021). This species has had an exceptionally good year in 2023 occurring at several new sites locally. A fine example of three specimens appeared in Far Forest Churchyard on 20th November 2023 growing under conifers in grassland. This is one of our more striking fungal species. The cap is 4-10cm across, white with large upturned and recurved scales with a darker brownish central area. A full history and description is given in Field Mycology (Kibby 2007). Only 33 records are noted on the British Mycological Society database (BMS 2023).



Summary for 2023

Several species of fungi did well in July of 2023 with lots of *Asterophora lycoperdoides*, Powdery Piggyback appearing on old fruitbodies of Russula spp., Brittlecaps. The rare *Cortinarius violaceus*, Violet Webcap, appeared in several places under Birch (Betula sp.) especially in old trackways or formally slightly disturbed sites. This species appears to like mid-age birch woodland. *Craterellus cornucopioides*, Horn of Plenty was abundant in some areas of oak woodland with hundreds of fruitbodies appearing. *Scleroderma verrucosum*, Scaly Earthball, normally an uncommon species seemed to appear all over the forest but *S. citrinum*, Common Earthball was unusually scarce. The orange/red *Pluteus aurantiorugosus*, Flame Shield made an appearance inside the hollow trunk of an old Ash tree, *Fraxinus excelsior* near Button Oak. Unfortunately, it was too deep inside the tree to photograph. This is a scarce species locally and a particularly attractive fungus.

This early fruiting trend did not last and the fungal season declined in Autumn with a series of minor fruitings but, as is often the case, the traditional September woodland flush did not really occur. By October Waxcap species of fungi appeared in some numbers with Far Forest Churchyard being particularly good with *Porpolomopsis calyptriformis*, Pink Waxcap appearing as well as several unusual Clavarioid species.

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