



Herefordshire Fungus Survey Group

News Sheet N° 35: Autumn 2019



Leucocoprinus birnbaumii Photo Jean Wynne Jones

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Editor's Notes

Thanks go to Jo Weightman for her Recorder's report.

Thanks to Ted Blackwell for his interesting articles.

Thanks also to Anna Tun for the poem

During September and October HFSG ran a course, 'Introduction to Fungi' at Queenswood Country Park. The course was designed and given by our Recorder, Jo Weightman. The six weekly sessions - attended by between 12 and 16 people - concentrated on a different group of fungi each time and I know that all those who participated would wish to join me in thanking Jo for passing on some of her knowledge and giving up her time.



Discussing recent finds at the 'Introduction to Fungi' Course 2019 Photos Graham Park

Below are some links to websites that you may find useful. If you use any other websites that you think may be of help to others, please send me the link and I will share them.

(HFSG have no connection to these links, which are provided for information only).

BBC Slime mould video

https://youtu.be/GY_uMH8Xpy0

A list of common acronyms and jargon used with reference to fungi has been added to the HFSG website

http://www.herefordfungi.org/index_htm_files/Abbreviations%20&%20acronyms%20in%20fungus%20literature.pdf

If you have any items or suggestions for future issues of the News Sheet please forward them to my email address. graham.park1@btinternet.com Tel 01873 856641

From all at HFSG hope you have a joyful Christmas and New Year ready for more Fungi next year



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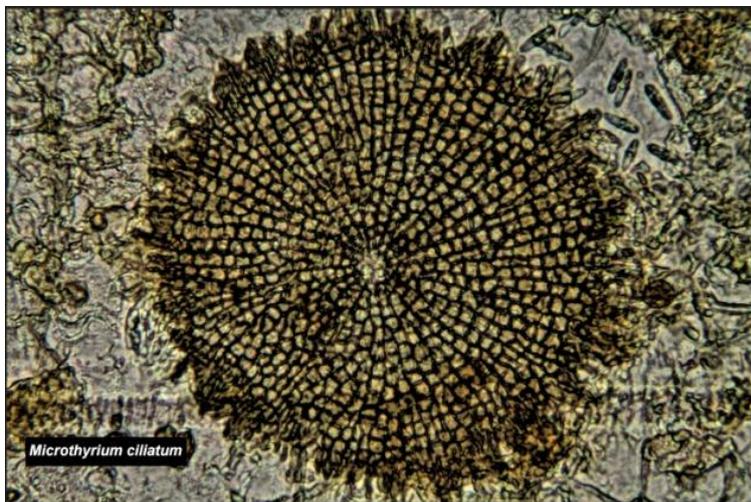
HALF-YEAR REPORT Jo Weightman, Recorder (January - August 2019)

Foray records

Whitney Court Foray 17. 04. 2019 21 new site records

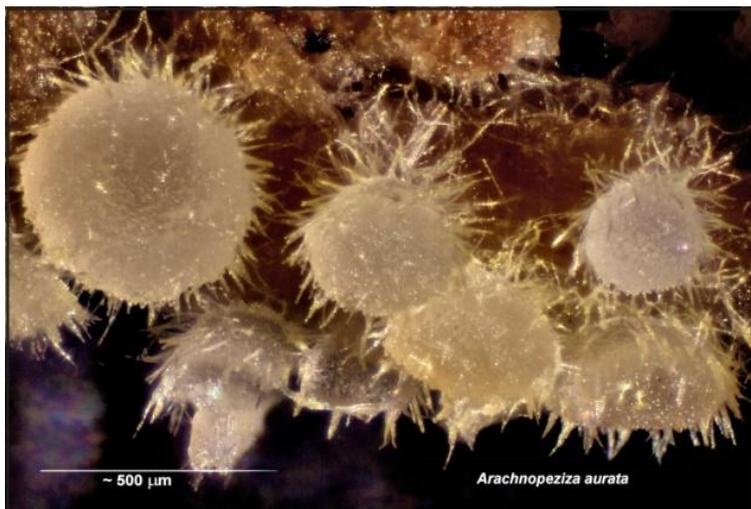
Although the Group has visited Whitney Court before in the spring (2006), we inevitably found additional species this second time round despite the dry conditions. The wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* was flowering magnificently but among them we did find a few specimens hosting the rust *Tranzschelia anemones* and the smut *Urocystis anemones*. The rust is quite often recorded, as infected plants are conspicuously tall and spindly, the smut less so (4th VC36 record) as at a casual glance the plant merely looks age weary.

While the fungi above occur on living leaves, dead leaves have their own fungus flora. Shelly Stroud identified three species on dead holly leaves, all ascos, all black dots and all common. *Trochila ilicina*, ca.1mm diam., 'raises its hat' ie has a lid which lifts when the spores are ripe. *Phacidium multivalve*, 1-2mm, is often found in its conidial state in the spring when it oozes white conidiospores. *Microthyrium ciliatum* is only just visible to the eye and requires microscopy to reveal its structure.



Microthyrium ciliatum Photo Mike Stroud

Shelly also identified *Arachnopeziza aurata*, a pale yellow to golden disc fringed with hairs that occurs on the rotting wood of a range of broadleaf trees. The discs are seated on a cobwebby yellow mat.



Arachnopeziza aurata Photo Mike Stroud

Cherry Greenway who identified the pinkish crust on box wood as *Peniophora proxima* has provided all four of our records for this species. Box is the only host for this southern species.

Hardly any toadstools or other large fleshy fungi were seen. However, Sulphur Tuft, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, occurred generously, as always, and was recorded by almost everybody.

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Brampton Hill 15. 05. 2019
All records new to site

Much of Brampton Hill is planted up with conifers but there are some areas of deciduous woodland. Many of the forayers headed for the lower and damper northern edge, others headed uphill.

This was the Group's first visit to the site so all records were firsts. However, the ground was very dry everywhere and fungi hard to find. Agarics were very few and far between but we did find the spring species, St. George's Mushroom, *Calocybe gambosa*, and an early *Psathyrella conopilea*, along with some common brackets.

A stray plant of *Mahonia* was attacked by the rust *Cumminsia mirabilissima* which causes reddish purple spotting. It was interesting that all three stages of the rust were present, albeit on separate leaves. Under the microscope the telia (Stage III) have exceptionally long stalks – a modest achievement scarcely accounting for the seemingly extravagant specific name which means 'wondrous', 'amazing'.

Lophiostoma fuckelii var. *pulveraceum* has only been recorded once before in the county (2005 in Cusop churchyard) although there are two other collections recorded as *Lophiostoma fuckelii* only. To the eye this species is visible as a black dot, probably looking slightly irregular or bubbly from the very compressed necks of the perithecia (bottle-shaped fruiting bodies). This collection had 3-septate spores, a character which separates it from var. *fuckelii* which is only 1-septate. Both varieties are host specific to bramble *Rubus fruticosus*.



Psathyrella conopilea Photo Mike Stroud

Suillus grevillei was certainly the largest and brightest find of the day - and a really early fruiting. A trawl through our records for the number of times per month that this larch *Larix* specialist has been recorded, showed: 2 in May, 8 in June, 4 in July, 30 in August, 58 in September, 52 in October, 6 in November and 0 in December.

Little Doward Foray 12. 06. 2019
17 new site records

The site slopes steeply upwards through broad-leaved woodland to an open hill fort. It was difficult to find any fungi at all in this season's dry conditions. Most were found by diligent rummaging in the litter and woody debris.

'Puffballs' –were beginning to emerge on the grassy summit. The large *Bovistella utriformis* (in recent memory both *Handkea utriformis* and also *Calvatia utriformis*) was also starting up although still far from its fist-sized mature stage. When young it has most attractive polygonal scales; when very old it gapes widely, often rain-filled.

Alternaria tenuissima is considered to be a common hypha (although this is only our third record) but the record is interesting as the host deadly nightshade *Atropa belladonna* is itself rare, qualifying for an entry in the newly published *Rare Plants of Herefordshire*.

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Tarzetta catinus - there has been some confusion over the spelling of the name of this genus and books may still use the now discontinued *Tazetta*. Under either name it is a small cream cup only a few centimetres across with a dentate margin. The usual ones in Britain are *T. cupularis*, *catinus* and *scotica* and require examination under the microscope. This specimen was growing in bare soil under beech.



Tarzetta catinus Photo Mike Stroud

The best of the day came last with yet another record of *Hydropus subalpinus*, a species with a plane (flat), pale cream to pale brown cap, fairly distant white gills and a rather stiff white stipe. It arises from dead wood, buried in this instance. *Hydropus* species are far from common but Herefordshire seems to be a hot spot for *H. subalpinus* as this is our eleventh record, five of which have occurred in the Doward area.

Tarzett11a catinus Photo Mike Stroud

The Flits 17. 07. 2019 17 new site records

Conditions on this normally wet National Nature Reserve were once again very dry.

Chaetosphaeria ovoidea is a new vice county record. Even under the lens the minute black mounds of this specialist of decorticated ivy stems are only just visible. It is probably under-recorded rather than rare.

Some years ago *Hypoxylon* species found on ash wood were all 'lumped' in *H. rubiginosum*. Now they have been teased apart and four separate species are recognised in Britain. Two of these were recorded, *H. rubiginosum* and *H. petriniae*. The first has bright orange to rusty, pustulate, multi-layered stromata and strongly raised perithecial mounds. It is common on dead ash wood but can also occur on dead wood of some other broadleaf trees. The second species is much flatter with low perithecial mounds. In colour it is dark rusty to purplish and occurs almost exclusively on ash.

Echinoderma echinaceum is a striking member of the *Lepiota* complex. Species in this genus have pale caps completely covered with dark brown pyramidal spines. In my experience it is a hedges and edges species.

Three odontoid corticioids were found, ie three crust-like species with spines / teeth. *Steccherinum ochraceum* forms quite large patches of a warm yellow colour when seen at its best, covered in small neat crowded teeth and is clearly bounded by a paler margin. *Kneiffiella barba-jovis* (formerly both *Hyphodontia* and *Grandinia*) is whitish in colour and the spines have brush-like tips. When fresh *Phlebia radiata* resembles a reddish orange lunar landscape and can usually be identified in the field but the material seen on the day was very dry and had a spiky, waxy look. Once soaked, it regained its usual irregular, ribbed, warty, and sometimes spiny appearance.

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Phlebia radiata Photo Mike Stroud

Stapleton Castle and Stapleton Wood 14. 08. 2019

7 new site records – the Castle

All records new to site – the Wood

A very wet foray! We started at Stapleton Castle where we looked at a wooded area near the pond. This was a rewarding start as all but one of the records were new to this part of the site. *Hymenoscyphus cf albidus*, a small cup fungus that grows on ash petioles, was very abundant and we have to hope that it was indeed this species and not the look-alike *H. fraxineus (pseudoalbidus)* which is ravaging our ash trees. While it is possible to distinguish the two species at microscopic level by observing the presence of a crozier or spur-shaped growth at the base of the ascus of *H. fraxineus*, it is easier to say this than to find it and our collections remain at cf (and hopeful) level. We thank Trefor Griffiths for his welcome to the castle grounds.

We then walked up the lane to Stapleton Wood, a new site for us and one with no previous known records. The entrance strip looks promising as it comprises damp alder/ash/hazel woodland on the floodplain of a stream. We did not get much further. Most species seen were those that we would expect in that location in early August, so there were no great thrills but much potential. *Reticularia splendens* var. *jurana* was originally identified in the field as the common *Reticularia (Enteridium) lycoperdon*, but the species found was smaller and red-brown, not silvery. Our thanks are due to Ted Blackwell and Alan Feest for the identification. Ted also contributed our one other county record for this nationally scarce or under-recorded species in Mortimer Forest in 1985

Non-Foray Records



Battarrea phalloides Photo Jo Weightman

Battarrea phalloides was first reported in the county from Ross last year and at least one fruit-body was still visible in March. In February 2019 Will Watson spotted seven fruit-bodies in Docklow under a south-facing yew and holly hedge close to the busy A44, 2nd VC36 record.

Will also found *Nectria punicea* var. *ilicis* growing in abundance on the living trunk of a holly in the grounds of Docklow Manor. 25.02.2019. 1st VC36 record. K.

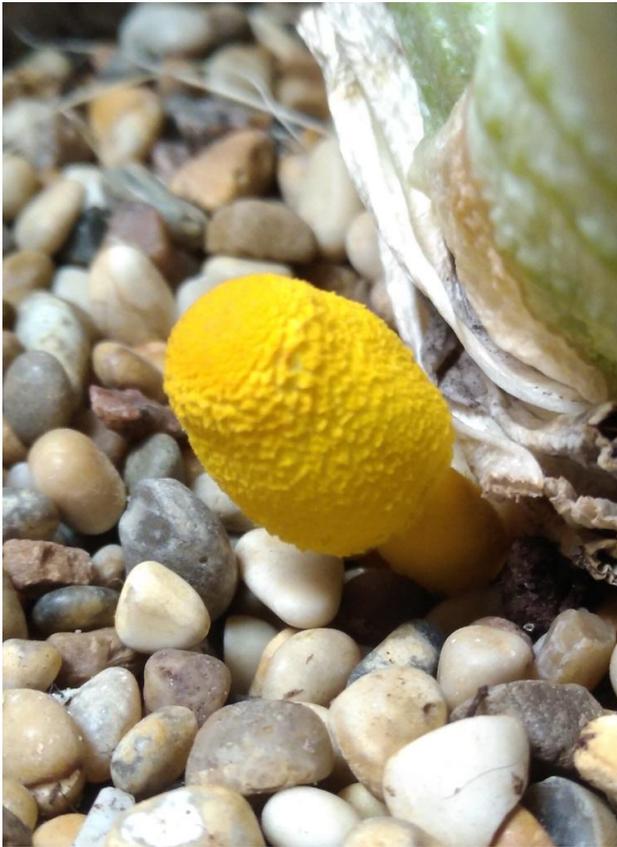
Geopora sumneriana grows as a closed sphere under cedars, opening at ground level in March or April and revealing a duck eggshell coloured lining. There are only a handful of known sites in the county, perhaps because cedars mostly occur in private grounds. We do know that it persists – at Hampton Court near Bodenham it is still fruiting after one hundred and fifty years. A fruiting in Ross on 25.03. 19 could be from the same colony as a Graddon record in 1983. Nice thought. 4th or 5th VC36 site.



Geopora sumneriana Photo Jo Weightman

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Leucocoprinus birnbaumii is a small (ca. 5cm tall) but conspicuous canary yellow species related to the Lepiotas. In this country this tropical or subtropical species is confined to hothouses or indeed pot plants which is where Jean Wynne-Jones found it in late July. 1st VC36 record.



Leucocoprinus birnbaumii Photo Jean Wynne-Jones



Leucocoprinus birnbaumii Photo Jean Wynne-Jones

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A SUBTERRANEAN FORAY. Ted Blackwell



Hydnum repandum This shows a similar malformation as No. 26 in plate description below Photo Ted Blackwell



Amethyst Deceiver *Laccaria amethystina*
Photo Ted Blackwell

Coppet Hill near Goodrich has been the venue for several HFSG forays in recent years. It may surprise forayers to learn it was a venue of a curiously different sort, way back in 1870, a subterranean foray, no less, and approached by boat.

For many years the Woolhope Club of Hereford did not admit women to membership. But by magnanimous condescension it allowed female attendance at an annual summer excursion. Accordingly, on 21st June 1870, Members and their Ladies were able to enjoy a boat excursion along on the River Wye, starting from Ross-on-Wye and eventually terminating at Symonds Yat. Here dinner was taken, followed by a lecture, after which the party returned by train to Hereford. During the journey downstream as the boats proceeded there were a number of pauses enabling the members to disembark for brief visits to points of interest. Among these was a tunnel being cut through Coppet Hill for a new railway, and a report in the 1870 *Transactions* reads as follows:

“About a mile below Kerne Bridge a stoppage was made to visit the tunnel for the railway now in course of construction between Ross and Monmouth. It passes through Coppet Hill, and through the politeness of G.E.W. Wellesley, Esq., a man had been sent down to open it for any ladies or gentlemen who might wish to visit it. The navy appeared in due course with a bunch of candles, and lighted one for every visitor who entered. Many did so, and found themselves in a passage boarded up on all sides, dark and damp, and cold. At first the candles only made its darkness more intense, but by degrees as the eye accommodated itself to gloom, the hunt for funguses began. Several **Polypores** were found quickly, growing on the timber and boarding, and a very pretty **Mycena** and a fragile **Coprinus**, too delicate to exist long enough in the dry air outside for the exact names to be determined. From the boards forming the roof curious masses of **Mycelium** hung down. It was too dangerous to remain long, and the boats were soon regained in the warm air outside.”

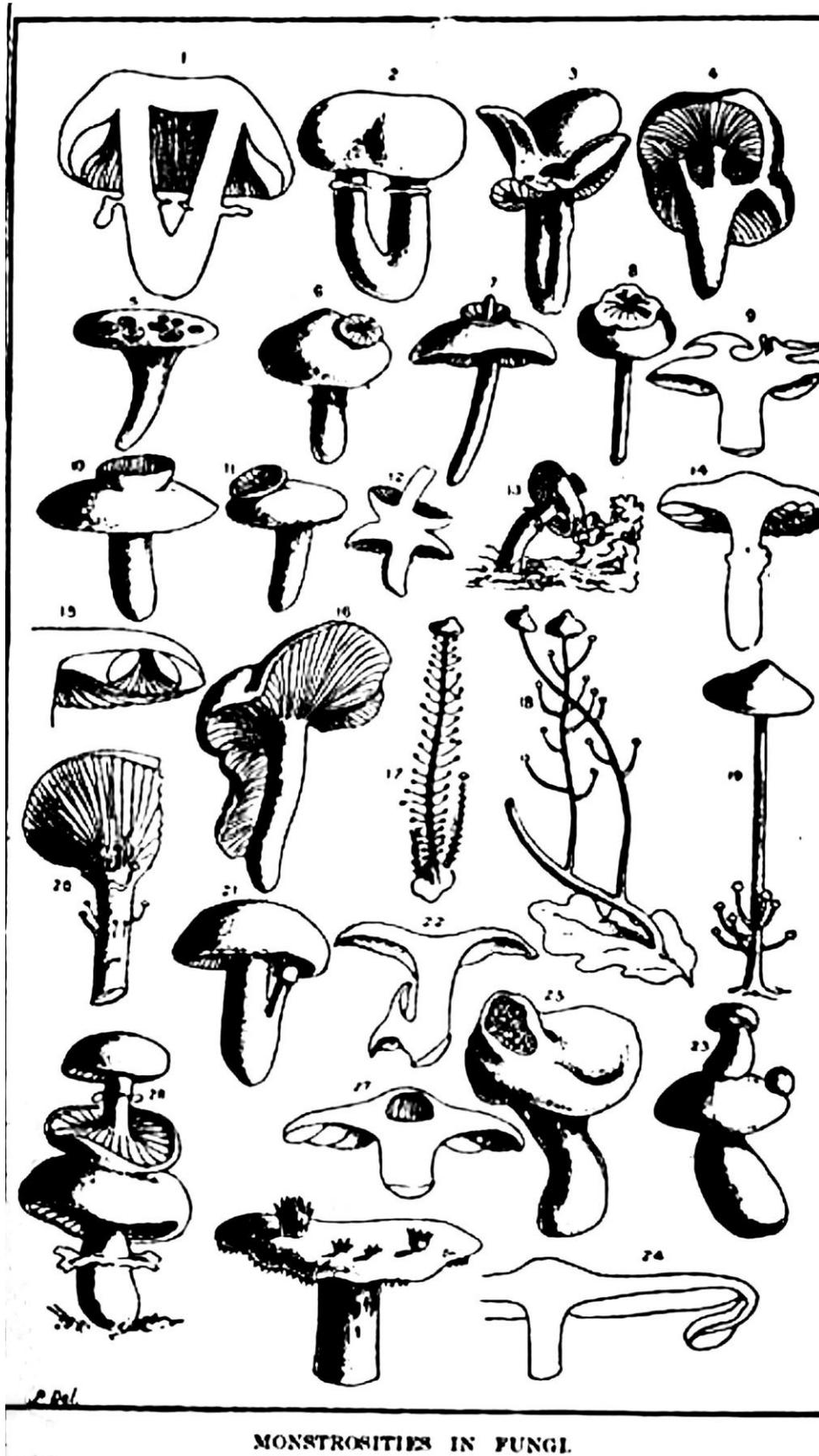
John Ramsbottom in his classic book *Mushrooms and Toadstools* relates how the strange and monstrous fungi of caves and mines have been investigated since first described from Italian mines by Scapoli in 1772, and proved a constant source of interest, far more so than the normal recognisable species. The topic is given a more comprehensive treatment by Spooner and Roberts in their magnificent book *Fungi*, relating how in the absence of light some fungi produce fruitbodies of varying abnormality where the more unusual growth forms include the loss of certain pigments, elongation of stipes and undersized caps. Illustrated is a stags-horn-like growth of *Lentinus lepideus* which grew in the dark of a mine on timber. The phenomenon was already known to the Woolhope Club which published in the *Transactions* of 1881 a plate illustrating a variety of the weird growth forms that had been found.

The railway opened in 1873 and ran until 1965, when axed by the Beeching cuts.

References:

Ramsbottom, J. *Mushrooms and Toadstools*. 1953. (6th impression 1972). Collins New Naturalist Series.
Spooner, B. & Roberts, P. *Fungi*. 2005. Collins New Naturalist Library.

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MONSTROSITIES IN FUNGI.

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MONSTROSITIES IN FUNGI. William Phillips.
Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club 1881-2, pp 103-7.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATE.

1. *Agaricus procerus*, Scop. After W. G. Smith (reduced), *Gard. Chron.*, 1873.
2. „ *campestris*, Linn. After De Seynes (reduced); Bull, *Soc. Bot. France*, V. xiv. (1867), tab. v., fig. 8.
3. *Lactarius seriftuus*, Fr. Reduced.
4. *Russula alutacea*, Fr. After W. G. Smith (reduced), *Jour. Bot.*, 1869, t. 99.
5. *Agaricus phyllophilus*, Fr. C. B. Plowright.
6. „ *campestris*, Linn. After De Seynes (reduced), l. c., t. vi., fig. 4.
7. „ *fascicularis*, Huds. Section (reduced) of specimen by Mr. Green, Bristol.
8. „ *fimicola*, Fr. After De Seynes (reduced), l. c., t. vi., fig. 1.
9. *Russula vitellina*, Fr. Section (reduced), after W. G. Smith, in litt.
10. „ *nigricans*, Fr. Reduced. Found near Shrewsbury.
11. „ *fragilis*, Fr. Reduced. From C. B. Plowright.
12. *Agaricus campestris*, Linn. Section (reduced), Master's *Teratology*, fig. 24.
13. „ „ Linn. Showing how pilei may become attached to the pileus of an older individual.
14. „ „ with a pileus attached beneath; (a) remains of stem and veil.
15. „ *polygrammus*, Bull. Section (reduced), after W. G. Smith. Exhibited by the Rev. W. Houghton, at Hereford, 1871.
16. „ *pulverulentus*, P. After W. G. Smith (reduced), *Gard. Chron.*, July 26th, 1873.
17. „ *racemosus*, Pers. After Persoon (reduced), *Dispos.*, t. iii., fig. 8.
18. „ *Aueri*, Nees. After Nees (reduced), *Nova Acta Acad. Leop.*, ix., tab. vi., fig. 18.
19. „ *nanus*, Bull. After De Seynes, l. c., t. v., fig. 3.
20. „ *laccatus*, Scop. After W. G. Smith (reduced), *Gard. Chron.*, July 26th, 1873.
21. „ *stans*, Fr. Sent me by C. B. Plowright.
22. *Lactarius quietus*, Fr. Section (reduced), after W. G. Smith, in litt.
23. *Boletus edulis*, Bull. After W. G. Smith (reduced), *Journ. Bot.*, l. c.
24. *Agaricus fascicularis*, Hudson. A section (reduced), after W. G. Smith, l. c.
25. *Paxillus involutus*, Fr. Found at Shrewsbury.
26. *Hydnum repandum*, Linn. Found at Shrewsbury.
27. *Agaricus campestris*, Linn. Found at Shrewsbury.
28. „ *campestris*, Linn. After W. G. Smith (reduced), *Gard. Chron.*, July, 1873.

SOME STRANGE FUNGUS NAME ALLUSIONS

Ted Blackwell

Scientific names of fungi are derived from many sources. Some are descriptive, although it may require a little knowledge of Latin or Classical Greek vocabulary to understand the allusion. Others may be the inspired choice of their authors and may be so inscrutably cryptic as to be almost impossible to explain.

Someone knowing of my interest in the meaning and etymology of fungus names enquired why *Cortinarius terpsichores* was so named. The strikingly blue toadstool is illustrated on the cover of a popular identification handbook by Courtecuisse & Duhem. It seemed odd for a toadstool to rejoice in a name suggestive of **Terpsichore** who, in Greek mythology was one of the nine Muses and goddess of dance and chorus. She lends her name to the word "terpsichorean" which means "of or relating to dance".



Cortinarius terpsichores Photo Ted Blackwell

Scientific names of fungi when written in full are followed by the author's name together with an abbreviation of the book or publication in which the author described it. Reference to the national fungus database revealed the following: ***Cortinarius terpsichores* Melot, *Docums Mycol.* 20(no. 77): 96 (1989)**. A date as recent as 1989 hinted that the author may be extant, and further research eventually enabled me to contact the author, Dr. Jaques Melot, living in Reykjavik, Iceland, and to learn from him that *C. terpsichores* was named in honour of his wife, a dancer in the Opera of Bielefeld (Germany).

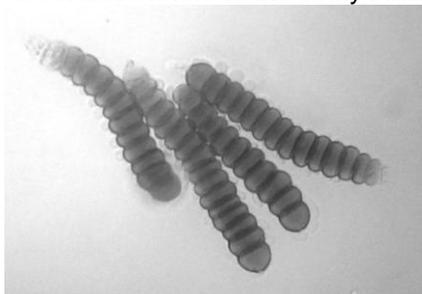
Turning to a different fungus, the Rust *Milesina scolopendrii* grows on *Asplenium scolopendrium*, the

Hart's Tongue Fern, so called from the tongue-shaped leaves, and from 'hart' being an adult male red deer. The genus *Milesina* is named in honour of Miles Joseph Berkeley (1803-1889), regarded as the founder and father of British mycology. The sori pattern on the fern's leaf is reminiscent of the legs of a many-legged insect, and *scolopendrium* is Latin for a centipede or millipede.

Another Rust growing on *Sanguisorba officinalis* Great Burnett, has the puzzling name of *Xenodochus carbonarius*. It has quite distinctive multicelled teliospores 200-300 µm in length by 25-28 µm and having up to 22 cells. This multicellular arrangement has been fancifully likened to the cubicle-like structures that monasteries and religious centres in the Middle Ages provided for the accommodation of travellers and pilgrims, known as *xenodochia* (plural of *xenodochium*, where *xeno* means 'guest' and *dochium* refuge'). The specific epithet *carbonarius* refers to the sooty black teliospores.



The Hart's Tongue Fern, *Asplenium scolopendrium*
Photo Ted Blackwell



Xenodochus carbonarius Spores Photo Ted Blackwell

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WORDS BY ANNA TUN

On finding boxes of fungi in the fridge

With apologies to William Blake

Toady toady burning bright
Greets the fridge-raider by night
What will forager espy
Reaching inadvertently?

What internal hinterland
Will meet his eye or clutch his hand
Fie! if foolish guest continues
What dread fright will twist his sinews?

When the stars throw down their spears
Wat'ring leafmould with their tears
Ranks and ranks of little guys
Spring forth to take one by surprise

No surprise to happy Jo
Seizing the archipelago
Gently asking each one's name
Naughty fellows aren't so game

Thus, sentenced to chilly doom
Gloomy mushroom waiting room
Victims of taxonomy,
Did he who hid the lamb hide thee

ESSENTIAL DATA TRANSFER

In order to update Herefordshire records in the BMS national fungus database (the new-look FRDBI), one of our members has recently completed the demanding task of transferring more than 6000 outstanding records from the Group's database. The Committee would like to acknowledge Les Hughes' hard work and skill in completing this intricate time-consuming work and to thank him most warmly for providing this valuable service to HFSG.

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