



The DNHS Fungus Foray at the Longshaw Estate - October 2010

by Peter R. Smith

The Longshaw Estate in north Derbyshire is recognised to be of national importance for its unimproved grassland. One way of assessing the ecological quality of such grasslands is by the number of species of waxcap fungi recorded in a single visit or by the total number of recorded species. Rald (1985) proposed the system outlined here:

Number of species	Conservation Value
1-3 (1-2 during a single visit).....	Of no importance
4-8 (3-5 during a single visit).....	Of local importance
9-16 (6-10 during a single visit)....	Of regional importance
17-32 (11-20 during a single visit)	Of national importance

Thirty-two species of waxcap, fungi of the genus *Hygrocybe*, have been recorded at Longshaw, making it one of the most important sites in Europe. We only found 9 species on the day of our foray so, while this would be good at any other site, it was a little disappointing for Longshaw, especially as those we did find were only in small numbers.

Overall, during our foray we did manage to find 52 species of fungi which was quite good. Most interestingly was the abundance of the scarlet caterpillar fungus, *Cordyceps millitaris*. I usually only find the odd one or two occasionally but at Longshaw every time we stopped and looked down there was a specimen at our feet, so there must have been hundreds. This species is just visible amongst the grass as small orangey-red club shaped fruit bodies. However, if you excavate underneath the fungus you will find it is attached to the corpse of a caterpillar on which it lives. One of the main hosts is the larvae of the yellow underwing moth, *Noctua pronuba*. It also holds the record for having the longest ascospore - measuring 300 microns long by 36 microns wide.

Another interesting ascomycete we found was a quite extensive patch of the rare earth-tongue, *Geolossium umbratile*, which has only 386 records from the UK.

Perhaps an omen of the wintery weather that set in towards the end of November was the finding of the herald of winter, *Hygrophorus hypothejus*, a relative of the wax-caps. Members of the genus *Hygrophorus* also have waxy caps and gills but are found in woods and are usually dull in colour, such as grey or brown. The herald of winter has a slimy brown cap but can be seen to have decurrent yellow gills when turned over.

List of fungi from Longshaw Estate 23rd October 2010

<i>Amanita fulva</i> - Tawny Grisette	<i>Laccaria laccata</i>
<i>Amanita muscaria</i> - Fly Agaric	- The Deceiver
<i>Amanita rubescens</i>	<i>Lactarius bleniis</i>
- The Blusher	- Beech Milkcap
<i>Amanita vaginata</i>	<i>Lactarius deliciosus</i>
- Grisette	- Saffron Milkcap
<i>Armillaria mellea</i>	<i>Lactarius pubescens</i>
- Honey Fungus	- Bearded Milkcap
<i>Baeospora mysura</i>	<i>Lactarius quietus</i>
- Conifercone Cap	- Oakbug Milkcap
<i>Boletus luridiformis</i>	<i>Lactarius turpis</i>
<i>Boletus badius</i> - Bay Bolete	- Ugly Milkcap
<i>Boletus subtomentosus</i>	<i>Leccinum scabrum</i>
- Suede Bolete	- Brown Birch Bolete
<i>Bovista nigrescens</i>	<i>Lycoperdon gigantea</i>
- Brown Puffball	- Giant Puffball
<i>Calocera cornea</i>	<i>Lycoperdon nigrescens</i>
- Small Stagshorn	- Dusky Puffball
<i>Calocera palidospatulata</i>	<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>
- Pale Stagshorn	- Common Puffball
<i>Clavulinopsis corniculata</i>	<i>Lycoperdon pyriforme</i>
- Meadow Coral	- Stump Puffball
<i>Clitocybe phyllophila</i>	<i>Mycena arcangeliana</i>
- Frosty Funnel	- Angels Bonnet
<i>Collybia butyracea</i> - Buttercap	<i>Mycena galericulata</i>
<i>Collybia fusipes</i> - Toughshank	- Common Bonnet
<i>Coprinus micaceus</i>	<i>Panaeolus accuminatus</i>
- Glistening Inkcap	<i>Panaeolus pabilonaceus</i>
<i>Cordyceps militaris</i>	<i>Paxillus involutus</i>
- Scarlet Caterpillar Club	- Brown Rollrim
<i>Dacomyces stillatus</i>	<i>Phaeolus schweinitzii</i>
- Common Jellyspot	- Dyer's Mazegill
<i>Entoloma conferendum</i>	<i>Piptoporus betulinus</i>
<i>Ganoderma australe</i>	- Birch Polypore
- Southern Bracket	<i>Pleurotus ostreatus</i>
<i>Geoglossum umbratile</i>	- Oyster Mushroom
<i>Hygrocybe chlorophana</i>	<i>Psilocybe semilanceata</i>
<i>Hygrocybe coccinea</i>	- Liberty Cap
- Scarlet Waxcap	<i>Russula betularum</i>
<i>Hygrocybe insipida</i>	- Birch Brittlegill
<i>Hygrocybe miniata</i>	<i>Russula fragilis</i>
- Vermillion Waxcap	- Fragile Brittlegill
<i>Hygrocybe persistans</i>	<i>Russula nobilis</i>
<i>Hygrocybe pratense</i>	- Beechwood Sickener
- Meadow Waxcap	<i>Russula ochroleuca</i>
<i>Hygrocybe psittacina</i>	- Ochre Brittlegill
- Parrot Waxcap	<i>Stereum hirsutum</i>
<i>Hygrocybe punicea</i>	- Hairy Curtain Crust
- Crimson Waxcap	<i>Stropharia cyanea</i>
<i>Hygrocybe virginiana</i>	- Blue Roundhead
- Snowy Waxcap	<i>Stropharia semiglobata</i>
<i>Hygrophorus hypothejus</i>	- Dung Roundhead
- Herald of Winter	<i>Suillus luteus</i>
<i>Hypholoma fasciculare</i>	- Slippery Jack
- Sulphur Tuft	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>
<i>Hypoxylon fragiforme</i>	- Turkeytail
- Beech Woundwort	<i>Tricholoma ustale</i>
<i>Inocybe geophylla</i>	- Burnt Knight
- White Fibrecap	<i>Xylaria hypoxylon</i>
<i>Kuehneromyces mutabilis</i>	- Candle-snuff Fungus
- Sheathed Woodtuft	
<i>Laccaria amethystina</i>	
- Amethyst Deceiver	



Longshaw Fungus Foray - showing some of the species seen



Panaeolus firmicola

Hygrocybe punicea

Hygrocybe psittacina

Hygrocybe coccinea

Pleurotus ostreatus

Cordiceps militaris
Growing from unearthed
corpse of caterpillar

Hygrophorus hypothejus

Hygrocybe pratense

Stropharia semiglobata

Coprinus micaceus



Photographs are by Bill Grange, except *C. militaris* - by Peter Smith