

Watlington Hill 30 September 2023

The Fungus Survey of Oxfordshire's first Autumn walk took place on top of Watlington Hill, led by Caroline Jackson-Houlston. The crisp September morning had everyone in good spirits although we were warned not to expect to find too much fungi as it had been very dry, and a recce the previous week hadn't turned up many specimens. Our leader needn't have worried because by the end of a lovely morning we had turned up dozens of species, many very colourful and exciting to see.

One of the first finds was the ubiquitous *Mycena crocata* (Saffrondrop Bonnet) which can be found all over the Chilterns. Newbies were treated to the sight of the orange latex that gives this mushroom its common name dripping from the snapped stem.



A beautiful bright cluster of *Calocera viscosa* (Yellow Stagshorn) was spotted by Heather in a dark section of the woods.

Some glowing *Mucidula mucida* (Porcelain Fungus) could be glimpsed high up in a tree (right), while lovely examples of *Neobulgaria pura* (Beech Jellydisc) could be spotted all over the logs at ground level (below).



Lycoperdon perlatum (Common Puffball)

Crepidotus cesatii (Roundspored Oysterling)



Stereum subtomentosum (Yellowing Curtain Crust) could be found on many of the downed beech logs in the woods. The thin flexible brackets have irregular wavy edges and zones of colour.

An ordinary looking *Ganoderma* bracket caused much excitement when Linda felt underneath and discovered the galls produced by the Yellow flat-footed fly (*Agathomyia wankowiczii*), which made this the uncommon *Ganoderma applanatum* (Artist's Bracket).



As the group left the woods and began walking on the chalky grassland area, many *Entolomas* and Waxcaps were found, including this beautiful *Gliophorus psittacinus* (Parrot Waxcap) seen here in three stages of its life.



(Left) *Hygrocybe conica* (Blackening Waxcap) and (right) *Hygrocybe chlorophana* (Golden Waxcap) were also found in the grassland area.



Research was done in a variety of positions.



And the group posed for a portrait before disbanding.



Linda and Richard continued down the hill (one to walk Jack the dog and the other to have lunch while watching the Red Kites). Three more fungus species turned up a short way on from where the group disbanded.

The beautiful *Amanita simulans* (no common name as yet) is known to grow in this section of Watlington Hill and many specimens were seen, with several kicked over unfortunately. Note the volva and the gorgeous snakeskin stipe.



In the same area was a *Gymnopus peronatus* (Wood Woollyfoot) with a Striped Woodlouse (*Philoscia muscorum*) feasting on its stipe.



And for the final surprise, we found a gorgeous display of *Clavulinopsis corniculata* (Meadow Coral) in the grass.

