

Ditchley Park

17 November 2024

A crisp November day saw ten FSO members gather under blue skies at the farming end of the large property called Ditchley Park.

We explored the mostly undisturbed beech woodlands nearby as well as the fruitful logs that lined one of the paths. The beech leaves seemed to glow in the November sunshine.

photo DK



Mary made the first finds of the day: some *Auricularia auricula* (Jelly Ears) and another branch covered with *Exidia nucleata* (Crystal Brain). When Linda later looked at the Jelly Ear photo, she realised there was an *Exidia glandulosa* (Witch's Butter) fruitbody on the same branch.

photos LS



Another beautiful find on a branch was this discomycete *Bisporella Citrina* (Lemon Disco) competing with the yellow of the surrounding beech leaves. *photo CC*





Wendy and John handed Keith something very small on a stick, while Heather found a real beauty *Mycena polygramma* (Grooved Bonnet) showing its delicate mycelial roots. photos LS; photo below DK



Our leader, Keith Cohen, found a *Hymenopellis radicata* (Rooting Shank) and here showed its long stipe. In fact, this gorgeous forest mushroom has as much of its stem below the ground as above. Later, Dennis found a superb specimen that he photographed *in situ*.



photos left LS; photo right DK





Crusts were a common find on the survey and this *Phlebia radiata* (Wrinkled Crust) was a fascinating discovery. Look at how it has grown over an adjacent beech leaf. Below is another common crust, *Biscogniauxia nummularia* (Black Coins). photos LS



Tricholoma scalpturatum (Yellowing Knights) were found in abundance. Chris's photo shows the distinctive yellowing at the edge of the cap. photo CC

Although this ubiquitous mushroom, *Mycena crocata* (Saffrondrop Bonnet), is found on nearly every survey in beech woods, this photo really shows it off to its best advantage. How can you get tired of looking at something this beautiful?



Apioperdon pyriforme (Stump Puffballs) resting on their namesake.

Macrotyphula fistulosa (Pipe Club) was spotted by Keith while looking at another fungus. It is very easy to miss in the leaf litter as it is so small and thin.



all photos on this page by DK



When fruitbodies are scarce, we try not to pick them unless absolutely necessary, and here Caroline demonstrates the correct way to smell a mushroom to determine its ID without picking it. The trouble comes when non-mycologists wonder what on earth is going on!



Photographers often have to get down and dirty to get the best shot. Derek is showing just how to do it.

Studying small fruitbodies on sticks using a loupe takes some practice. Here Keith reveals his best position for this exacting work.



Fungus surveys are not all about the mushrooms. We found these galls produced by a *Mikiola fagi* (Beech Gall Midge) which were of some interest.

Linda bought a black light torch which causes *Hypholoma fasciculare* (Sulphur Tufts) to glow green when the light shines on their stipes. She was thrilled to try it out!

all photos on this page by LS





Here are some very pale *Trametes versicolor* (Turkeytails). photos CC



Parasola conopila (Conical Brittlestem), showing its serrated white gill edges. Their tall straight stems are a useful identification feature, as are the slightly downy cap edges.



photo left CC
photos right LS



A very tiny *Mycena* found in the woods by an eagle-eyed mycologist. 5p coin to show size. As yet unidentified.

photos LS



Lichens contrast beautifully with leaf litter to show off this perfect little *Mycena Rosea* (Rosy Bonnet). *photo DK*



Logs proved a prolific source of colourful fungi including these *Cyanosporus caesius* (Conifer Bluing Brackets). *photo LS*



We found a slime mould *Badhamia utricularis* swinging in the wind beneath a log and looking for all the world like bunches of hanging grapes. They are nearing their sporulation stage. *photo LS*

When the survey was finished the group headed back through the beech woods and enjoyed a well-earned shared lunch followed by the AGM. See you next year!



photo DK