**Forays Reports 2017 (in reverse order)**

**Ransom Wood Foray 29th November 2017**

This last NFG foray of the year was also the coldest, in fact bitterly cold, but after the first hour and a slightly strengthening sun things did improve. For all that, the foray was well attended and this venue has proved consistently popular in recent years.

The mossy lawns and grass verges produced 7 species of fungi typical of CHEG grassland, containing Clavarioid spp (clubs, corals etc), Hygrocybe spp, Entoloma spp and the Geoglossaceae (Earth Tongues). None of the species we recorded is in itself an important indicator of this valuable grassland type, except for the Earth Tongue Geoglossum fallax (all Earth Tongue species are reckoned to be of significance). Nevertheless these grassy areas should be monitored, as taken all together these commoner fungi suggest that more important indicator species might also appear there.

Charlie collected a single specimen of Inocybe calospora, a small species with prickly-scaly red-brown cap, which attracted the attention of the photographers. It is uncommon nationally and a first record for Notts. The Earth Tongue Geoglossum fallax, seen by Ann and David is a 3rd Notts record (it has previously been found at Idle Valley NR and Sherwood Heath Ollerton, both also sandy sites). It is an 'occasional' species nationally. Inocybe nitidiuscula var. tarda, found here by David, is also a 3rd county record. This may be a true species, Inocybe tarda, but is not yet recognized as such in Britain.

The Common Bird's Nest Fungus, Crucibulum laeve, was recorded by Ann. It is the commonest of this group but always good to find. Arthur and I respectively identified two tiny whitish Mycena species: Mycena capillaris on a dead beech leaf and Mycena mirata (found by Ann) on the dead stem of Rosebay Willowherb. Neither is particularly uncommon.

The bright yellow Tricholoma sulphureum (Sulphur Knight), found and determined by Arthur, again attracted the photographers. Its strong sulphurous smell is unpleasant, though surprisingly some members were unable to detect it. Arthur also collected the little Arrhenia rickenii, a grey-brown fungus in mossy sand; and Mike identified the rather large white Clitocybe phyllophila (Frosted Funnel) among a tangle of briars.

The foray over, some of us retired to the Forever Green restaurant on the site before heading off home.

Howard Williams

**Duke's Wood NR Foray 18-11-2017**

Lying on a 110m high ridge, Duke's Wood is an attractive mixed deciduous wood dominated by ash, elm, birch and oak with hawthorn, hazel and willow understorey. Its clays and marls make its flora and mycota similar to Treswell Wood where we forayed in October. As there, few larger, coloured or more conspicuous fungi were found, but the foray proved well worthwhile with a decent collection of 46 fungi identified and 24 lichen species (thanks to Craig's expertise in this difficult area).

Two of the fungi were first Notts records. A single specimen of the uncommon, medium to large, Hebeloma aestivale, found in soil under trees by Arthur. No evidence of 'weeping' droplets with this one, but with all the viscidity of the Poison Pie species, colouring a little deeper perhaps, especially at the cap centre. One of its microscopic characteristics is that the outer layer of many spores loosens conspicuously giving the spores a misshapen look. Well under 100 records on FRDBI and CATE databases.

The other first Notts record was an insignificant, thin, whitish crust on a fallen twig, which I thought was going to be Peniophora lycii or cinerea. Under a lens, however, the surface was seen to be soft and lumpy with a whitish bloom. Under the microscope it proved to be one of the jelly crusts, Exidiopsis calcea, again uncommon, with 110 and 19 records only on the national databases.

Bernard found some good specimens of the large coffee-coloured Bjerkandera fumosa (Big Smokey Bracket) on a sycamore stump - it is much less common than its cousin Bjerkandera adusta. As at Treswell, a fine ring of large Clitocybe geotropa (Trooping Funnel) was seen under the trees by Mary, and Di spotted the tiny Hemimycena tortuosa (Dewdrop Bonnet) on a fallen twig. Three species of Lepista were recorded: Lepista nuda (Wood Blewit) and Lepista sordida (Slender Blewit) tufted on an old grass pile, both collected by Tony; while Mary pointed out several Lepista saeva (Field Blewit) in grass at the wood edge.

What we all assumed at the time to be Marasmius epiphyllus on decayed leaves turned out to be Marasmius setosus with yellow-brown stem with setae and larger spores. An exciting find was Dorothy's Rhodotus palmatus (Wrinkled Peach) on an old log, possibly elm, which is favoured by this attractive salmon-pink species. Widespread but uncommon in Notts, having been found at only 6 other sites from Carlton-in-Lindrick in the north to Bunny Wood in the south.

A very satisfying foray on a crisp fine morning at a site not often visited by the Group.

**Rushcliffe Country Park, 11th November 2017**

We have visited this lovely country park near Ruddington on at least two other occasions. This time the aim was to involve the children's Wildlife Watch group in our foray. It is owned and managed by Rushcliffe Borough Council but a lot of work is carried out by the "Friends of RCP" who also produce a regular newsletter. It is a large park with a visitor's centre and toilets and there are a variety of habitats and well maintained paths which give good access to all areas. We were lucky again with the weather and had an enjoyable walk around the park.

We went to the activity wood for our foray and the Wildlife Watch group joined us at 11am. This plantation is about 30 years old and has a variety of trees. They have imported logs and spread them around to create habitats for insects and small mammals and the Wildlife Watch group use this area for activities. We did not find as many fungi as on previous visits but we still recorded 31 species of fungi and Craig recorded 13 species of lichens.

In a pile of wood debris we found Hypoxylon fuscum on a fallen piece of Alder and some small "Oysterlings". Since these need microscope work to identify to species they were taken home and subsequently named as Crepidotus variabilis (on Ash twigs) and C. cesattii (on a Bramble stem). Another Oysterling with a gelatinous texture was found on a cut conifer log. It was identified as the elastic Oysterling (Panellus mitis). We also found Candlesnuff (Xylaria hypoxylon) and Dead Man's fingers (X. polymorpha) on cut logs. Also on wood, Arthur found the Winter Polypore (Polyporus brumalis) and Angela found the Bay Polypore (Polyporus durus). These were useful specimens to show the children so they could appreciate that not all fungi have gills! There were many cut logs and fallen branches with curtain crusts on. These were identified as the Hairy Curtain Crust (Stereum hirsutum) and the Bleeding Broadleaf Crust (S. rugosum). We also found Silverleaf (Chondrostereum purpureum) with its pinkish-violet colours.

There were four different types of jelly fungi: the white Crystal Brain (Exidia nucleata), the black Exidia plana, the Yellow Brain (Tremella mesenterica) and Jelly Ear (Auricularia auricular-judae). We did find a few more typical fungi with caps and gills: the Blusher (Amanita rubescens), the Deer Shield (Pluteus cervinus), the Glistening Inkcap (Coprinellus micaceus) and the Shaggy Inkcap (Coprinus commatus). It was unusual but we didn't record any species of the Brittlegills (Russula sp) or Milkcaps (Lactarius sp). Perhaps the woodland is not mature enough or they had finished fruiting so perhaps another visit in the future will be needed to get a more complete list of fungi at Rushcliffe Country Park.

This was a well attended foray with 13 NFG members, 4 non-members and 15 children and adults in the Watch Group. Thanks to the Wildlife Watch group for inviting us. We had a very enjoyable walk around the park and we hope that it has sparked an interest in this diverse and interesting group of living things.

Diane Mears

**Brinsley Headstocks Heritage & Nature Reserve November 5th November 2017**

We were invited to visit the site by the "Friends of Brinsley Headstock" who work in partnership with the site's owner, Broxtowe Borough Council. It is located in Brinsley village just north of the town of Eastwood. This area has had a close association with mining for the last 700 years and the unique tandem headstocks are an important local sign of this heritage. Since 1991 it has been developed as a picnic and leisure site and now has a well established nature reserve. The access to the site is very good and the paths are well maintained.

We met at the headstocks and then went along the disused mineral line which runs along the whole length of the site. The undergrowth was quite dry but we did manage to find 38 confirmed species of fungi and Craig found 21 different lichens. He also thinks he found a rare species of lichen (Physcia leptalea) but needs to go back again to check it further.

Alongside the mineral line we found a spectacular group of the Freckled Dapperling (Lepiota aspera) under a Field Maple which was a popular photographic opportunity. On a fallen Alder trunk Ann found the Olive Oysterling (Panellus serotinus) and the Alder Scalycap (Pholiota alnicola). On the Ash trees there was a good crop of Cramp Balls (Daldinia concentrica). I found a good example of the Lemon disco (Bisporella citrina) in the layered hedgerow and Ann found the Orange Peel Fungus (Aleuria aurantiaca) on soil. Richard and I got to grips with curtain crusts and identified Stereum hirsutum, rameale and rugosum. Three bonnets were recorded: Common Bonnet (Mycena galericulata), Lilac Bonnet (Mycena pura) and Snapping Bonnet (M. vitilis). It was good to see the Velvet Shank (Flammulina velutipes) beginning its winter growth, a large example of the Goblet (Pseudoclitocybe cyathiformis) and the microscopic Redleg Club (Typhula erythropus) on an Ash petiole.

We took the woodlands steps back up to the headstocks and had a look in the grassland. The grass was quite long and there were few things to be seen except a Galerina and a Naucoria which need microscopic investigation to get to species. Perhaps in several years when the fertility of the area has declined further there may be waxcaps in this area. We did however find the Bearded Milkcap (Lactarius pubescens) and the Tawny Milkcap (Lactarius fulvissimus) in grassy soil near Birch trees. Overall it was well worth the visit, the weather was lovely, the site was easy to walk round and we saw some interesting fungi and lichens.

There were 14 members of NFG on this foray, 5 visitors and 7 from the "Friends of Brinsley Headstocks". We would like to thank the "Friends" for inviting us to visit the site and for their interest and enthusiasm during the tour of the reserve.

Diane Mears

**Treswell NR Foray 25-10-2017**

A small band of 10 1/2 of us ventured upon this foray on a fine mild morning. The half was the small son of one of our members; he can claim the distinction of finding one of the smallest (Mycena stylobates) and the largest (Clitocybe geotropa) fungi of the morning. Treswell is a new location for us as a Group. It is a damp wood lying on clayey marls and in spring has a number of wildflowers enjoying neutral to calcareous conditions. As a site for fungi it is rather unrecorded. However, our foray produced 52 identifiable fungi and several obscurities that had to be discarded. Owing to the nature of the soil, few of the larger conspicuous species seem to grow here; for instance we recorded no Russulas or Boleti and just one Amanita, Amanita vaginata (Grisette), and two Lactarius, Lactarius tabidus (Birch Milkcap) and Lactarius pyrogalus (Hazel Milkcap). Di showed a good example to the timorous by tasting a piece of the latter to see if it was hot - it was.

What this wood is good for, however, are the numerous and frequently tiny fungi that grow on wood. These are often tricky to identify, but it is rewarding when you do track some of them down. On one dead stem of meadowsweet conjured up by John Brown he identified the tiny clubs of Typhula erythropus (Redleg Club) and I later added two hyphomycetes: a crowd of pinheaded Phragmocephala prolifera and the broken chains of Torula herbarum. There was another beyond my skills to identify. Phragmocephala prolifera seems to be very seldom encountered and to be a 1st Notts record. On a dead umbellifer stem which John also found, we saw the tiny white cups of Calyptella capula and on one of his dead bramble stems the ascomycete Hymenoscyphus calyculus.

Larger specimens on wood were Armillaria ostoyae (Honey Fungus); Coprinus domesticus (Firerug Inkcap) on a twig in litter; Fomes fomentarius (Hoof Fungus); Crepidotus cesatii (Roundspored Oysterling); Marasmiellus ramealis (Twig Parachute), many photogenic occurrences of this one; Stereum rugosum (Bleeding Broadleaf Crust); two Trametes species and Skeletocutis nivea (Hazel Bracket). Two crusts on wood were the ubiquitous Schizopora paradoxa (Split Porecrust) on birch and Eichleriella deglubens (Blushing Crust) on a fallen ash twig. The latter belongs in the jelly family and reddens when handled or bruised.

Di collected Pluteus thomsonii on a mossy ash log. It has been recorded by us once before in Bunny Wood in 2004 on a similar substrate - scarce to occasional nationally. Finally, Mycena species thrive in woods like Treswell later in the season and we identified 7 species including Mycena haematopus (Burgundydrop Bonnet) collected by Inge, its stem bleeding watery-red when broken.

Howard Williams

**Daneshill Lakes Foray 15-10-2017**

We had a very good turnout for this foray at what has proved of recent years to be a popular site. In all, 21 members of Daneshill Friends and the NFG got together to record a list of 41 identified species. This year for a change we decided to go round the lake anti-clockwise to see what we could find on the grassy edges and in the scrub growth. In so doing, we missed out this time the small woodland area beyond the carpark and just north of the main lake. This may explain why we recorded rather fewer species for this time of year here than we have previously.

However, the records we made were not uninteresting or dull. We saw 5 species of Russula including Russula velenovskyi and Russula versicolor, not nationally uncommon, but not encountered by us that often in Notts. Two colourful Pholiotas were seen: Pholiota squarrosa on willow and the more viscid Pholiota aurivella at the base of an oak. Less common species were Cortinarius saturninus with oak, Cortinarius decipiens in birch litter, Cortinarius trivialis with willow and Naucoria subconspersa with alders at the lake edge. Of these Cortinarius trivialis is probably the least common. I know of only this site for it in Notts, where it can be seen each year. With its orange colours and multi-girdled stipe it is hardly mistakable.

Of three Hebelomas recorded, one was a puzzler. With its dry cap and red-brown gills it might have been a medium-sized Hebeloma or a Cortinarius. The striking thing, however, was its sweetish, elusive, not altogether pleasant smell. Hebeloma sacchariolens was suggested but generally discounted. Some Cortinarius species can have odd smells too.

Having taken some home to examine, I concluded that it was indeed a Hebeloma, but one of the drier, non-weeping ones - Hebeloma hetieri, only fairly recently separated from a group under the name of Hebeloma sacchariolens. The latter has proved to consist of 3 other species as well as itself. Because of this recent split, Hebeloma hetieri has yet very few records. This all means that any suspected Hebeloma sacchariolens with a strange sweetish smell should be examined to confirm if it really is that species or one of the other three. Hebeloma hetieri may or may not be rare. Perhaps it has only been hiding under the aggregate name of Hebeloma sacchariolens.

Howard Williams

**Rainworth Heath foray report 2017**

14 members turned out for this foray on a reasonably fine, if cool, morning. Although some members had visited the site before, this was the first time the NFG had held a foray here. The site is valuable as an example of lowland heath, a rare habitat in England these days. There is a mixture of grass heath, heather heath and woodland on acid sand, some fenced off. Another time we may try and get the gates to these areas opened for us.

The site is rich in fungi at this time of year and we recorded 65 species covering a wide range of genera (including a few species seen a few days before on a reconnaissance visit, but not seen on the foray day itself). There was much to interest us even if no rarities were recorded. Plenty of club fungi were found, bright yellow and very pretty in the grass and heather, all of them being Clavulinopsis helvola (Yellow Club). Marion found the always curious and attractive Cordyceps militaris (Scarlet Caterpillar Club), the unfortunate below-ground pupa still attached to it. John Brown collected Bisporella sulfurina (Sulphur Disco) on a dead brammble stem. These ascomycetes are clear yellow and tiny, but clustered together in numbers are conspicuous once spotted; they actually grow on old black pyrenomcete fungi rather than on the woody stem itself. Four waxcap species were recorded, the least common being Hygrocybe vitellina, a bright yellow fairly viscid species; and three Panaeolus species in the grassy parts.

Only three Russula species were recorded, most frequently Russula ochroleuca (Ochre Brittlegill). One Russula nitida (Purple Swamp Brittlegill) was seen by Richard [not in a swamp here]; while one Russula versicolor (Variable Brittlegill) was found by Arthur. The latter is so called in English for its varied cap colours: violaceous to vinaceous, shades of ochre or purplish-brown.

Richard saw Lactarius glyciosmus (Coconut Milkcap) smelling of fresh coconut, growing as usual with birch. Two other birch-associated species were Tricholoma fulva (Birch Knight) collected by Bernard and Cortinarius hemitrichus (Frosty Webcap) by Arthur. Arthur also found, just outside the reserve near a young pine, Suillus luteus (Slippery Jack), supposedly edible but I read somewhere once that the slime gives you the runs. Best left alone I think.

The most uncommon fungus was seen by Richard and me only, as it was recorded on a pre-foray walk a few days before. It was a group of three Galerina atkinsoniana, characterized by 2-spored basidia and pileocystidia on the cap cuticle. It has been recorded at 3 other sites in Notts.

Howard Williams

**NFG foray report for Vicar Water CP on 10-9-2017**

A good number of members and friends turned out for this 2nd foray of the season. The weather was cloudy with brighter intervals and a cool breeze blew,especially at the top of the restored pit heap. The rain held off for us though.

Almost at the start our party split into 2 groups, with Mike and Mary going straight up the steep path to the top; while Ann led the less adventurous or less fit to the top following the gradual contoured path. A respectable number of fungi were recorded, in excess of 40 species. Mike's party found a soggy soft bracket on a pine log, that had us all puzzled. It was dark from waterlogging. It is not surprising that we were baffled, as pine substrate is very rare for what proved later to be young fruitbodies of Fistulina hepatica, normally associated with oak or sweet chestnut. The CATE database contains only 2 other examples.

In Ann's group another common species on an unusual substrate was John's tiny pale cream, stalked ascomycetes: Cudoniella acicularis on a decaying bramble stem. It is usually associated with rotten oak stumps, but can be found on other hosts. Jean's keen eyes spotted 3 tiny (3mm) bright red ascomycetes clustered in mossy, wet sandy soil. This was Pulvinula convexella with records for only 4 other Notts sites and infrequent nationally; microscopically interesting for its large globose spores and paraphyses curved over at the tips.

A 2nd Notts record was Conocybe mesospora found in grass by Dorothy. Its small bulb at the stem base was a help in confirming the species: a good example of why you should never snap off the stem of a fungus when collecting. Russula brunneoviolacea was a 3rd Notts record found by Tony. At first we thought Russula atropurpurea, but the gills were a deep cream, almost yellow, and there was no fruity or 'stewed apple' smell. The cap, too, was more violet-brown than reddish purple.

Mary brought from the broad-leaf woodland area a middling sized, foxy-orange Cortinarius with whitish smooth stem and bulbous base. I took it back to see if I could identify it, without much hope, as this is a huge genus notoriously difficult to sort. It keyed out each time in the 3 books I used as Cortinarius firmus, but as this is not recognized as an authentic British species, I have recorded it as Cortinarius cf firmus (ie comparable to or seeming to be). In spite of their verdict of inauthenticity, the FRDBI database has 3 records listed, all dubious. As ours must be. Interesting though.

All the numerous Crepidotus species on sticks and twigs I was given were the common Crepidotus cesatii or its variant, Crepidotus var. subsphaerosporus. Other species of note were Marasmiellus vaillantii (Dorothy) and Entoloma sericeum (Ann).

Back in the car park by 12.15, and another successful foray complete.

Howard Williams

**2nd Spring Foray - Spa Ponds NR Forest Town Mansfield 13th May 2017**

This was a well attended foray with 12 NFG members and 8 members of The Friends of Spa Ponds present. For most of our members it was a first visit to this site and we all enjoyed a pleasant morning here. The ponds lie at the bottom of a steepish slope of mainly deciduous trees on one side and mixed pine and deciduous on the far side of the pools. The river Maun flows by within yards of the ponds and gives an added interest.

The weather had continued very dry with cool winds, so we were uncertain of finding anything very much at all, though the site's being naturally rather damp gave us some hope of records. We identified 21 species by the end, which is really not bad given the adverse weather conditions of the last 6 weeks or so. Of the larger fungi seen, the ones attracting most attention were probably Polyporus leptocephalus, Blackfoot Polypore; Polyporus brumalis, Winter Polypore on fallen twigs; the bracket Trametes ochraceous on birch branches and stump; and Fuscoporia ferruginosus, Rusty Porecrust on the underside of a fallen rotten branch. On bramble stems Kuehneola uredinis, Pale Bramble Rust, caught the attention with its bright golden yellow colour.

We became a bit scattered at one time, but some of us enjoyed (with a lens) the truly minute white cups of Micropodia pteridina swarming on the black base of a dead bracken stem; while easier to spot if you look for it was the very common Trochila ilicina, Holly Speckle, on old fallen holly leaves.

The most seldom recorded species was seen, alas, only by me on a decrepit oak leaf taken back for microscopy with the barbarous name Repetophragma goidonichii. It is a hyphomycete with cigar-shaped, 6-septate, pale brown conidia with transparent tips. A first Notts record apparently.

Howard Williams

**Spring Foray at Idle Valley NR 23rd April 2017**

Nine of us gathered in the car park at the Visitor Centre for this first foray of the year, including two guest visitors who proved to have keen eyes. The morning was sunny and reasonably warm despite a cool breeze. For weeks the weather had been dry, and with few exceptions, cold; so we were prepared to find very little. In the event we did rather well, the total (probably some 20-25 species) including a possible rarity, and a widespread fungus with only 10 Notts records for all that.

The potentially rare fungus and a possible RDL species was collected by Jean. It consisted of a number of tiny yellow rings with bright black centres on a fallen willow twig. These little 'eyes' stood out all the more for being on a dark, glossy, purple-brown bark - perhaps of Salix daphnoides or Salix purpurea. It has been found in the UK only in Norfolk, Scotland and Pembrokeshire and has no more than 38 records in total from these places. It may be Cryptomyces maximus, Willow Blister. However, as I could find no spores or conidia it is by no means a certain identification. I shall keep it warm and damp to see if in time it fruits.

The other striking fungus found this morning on a willow branch by Maureen was Polyporus tuberaster, Tuberous Polypore, of which we have just 10 Notts records. It is widespread from Scotland to Cornwall, but thin on the ground north and east of a line from Herefordshire to Hampshire. The Polypore looks like a mini version of Polyporus squamosus, but tends to have a central stem and a round cap with dark grey-black scales.

On St George's Day it was only fitting that we recorded Calocybe gambosa, St George's Mushroom, but just a few as yet. Two more early toadstools were Psathyrella spadiceogrisea, Spring Brittlestem (April) and Agrocybe praecox, Spring Fieldcap, the latter very mealy-tasting (Inge). John rooted around for the tiny delicate bells and cups of Calyptella capula on the buried base of an old umbellifer; and Will collected the dull pink-brown fruitbodies of Hypoxylon howeanum on a fallen hawthorn twig. This is not uncommon but was accompanied by yellow conidial outgrowths often present earlier in the year when it is said to be in the geniculosporium state. Our old loyal friend at this time of year did not fail us: Leptosphaeria acuta, Nettle Rash, on dead stinging nettle stems.

An enjoyable start to the season.

Howard Williams

Post scriptum (05/06/2017): I kept the possible Cryptomyces maximus mentioned above for several weeks, but found no change in growth or character, and no spores or other structures. This leads me to conclude that it is certainly not that species, or perhaps not a fungus at all. It seems most likely to be a bark feature or a vegetative growth on the bark. Had it been a fungus I would have expected not only the sort of developments mentioned, but also an increase in actual size. There was none of those things.

A disappointment but not a waste of time - you live and learn. HW.