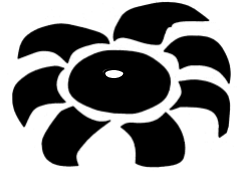


Cotswold Fungus Group

www.cotswoldfungusgroup.com

Summer/Autumn 2008



Chairman and Foray Leader: David Shorten, 45 Sevenfields, Highworth, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 7NF. Telephone / Fax: 01793 764649 Email: daveshorten@cotswoldfungusgroup.com

Dear Member,

Here's the Summer-Autumn Newsletter, continuing the series of occasional CFG Newsletters with a round up of news of mycological events for our local region and around the country.

Sincerely
Dave Shorten

Group News Membership

Thanks to all who paid up their membership fees promptly this spring. If your membership is due and you haven't paid, then there is a reminder with this newsletter. The autumn fixtures list will only be sent to current members, so please do let us have your subscription.

Subscription rates are unchanged in 2008, standing at £5 for individuals, £7.00 for couples at the same address. Family membership is calculated at £3 per address plus £2 per head. Please make cheques payable to Cotswold Fungus Group and send to the address on the header.

In all, with all the occasional visitors and leaders of other local fungus groups, we stand at around 131 members.

CFG Accounts

The financial year for CFG runs from April to March. The end-of-year accounts for the last year (2007/08) are given at the end of the Newsletter. Basically CFG is in a reasonably healthy position thanks largely to the influx of new members last year and the profit generated from external slideshows, talks, walks and forays carried out on behalf of the group. These two main incomes formed 51% and 47% respectively of the group's annual income. Although this year we have waived membership fees for a number of new members who joined the group late into the foraying season in 2007, this projected loss of income (£104) will not dent our current working balance significantly.

CFG Website

The website has been updated with the addition of previous editions of the Spring and Summer/Autumn Newsletters.

Our other new feature, the photo gallery is growing. Please check out what's on there now and let us have any contributions you have to photos@cotswoldfungusgroup.com

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CFG's main Autumn Event at Westonbirt

The main autumn event for CFG is the annual open foray at Westonbirt Arboretum on Sunday 19th October (please note that yet again we have pushed this event back one week later in the autumn calendar to put it at the peak of the autumn fruiting season). All local fungus groups in the region are invited and the format will be largely the same as in previous years – a morning foray around the Old Arboretum (no dogs allowed), picnic or restaurant lunch, afternoon foray into Silkwood followed by an open exhibition of the day's finds by the Education Centre on the edge of the arboretum (see picture right)



CFG Normandy trip

This year's trip to France is our seventeenth consecutive mycological autumn holiday in Normandy and our sixteenth to the international festival of fungi at Belleme. However the two visits are being split, with just Jenny and I visiting Belleme this year as I'll be delivering the Saturday evening guest lecture on the Fungus Flora of Australasia and New Zealand.

The main overseas holiday party will then be joining up with us later in Bagnoles de l'Orne, foraying in and around the woodlands of southern Normandy and Orne valley for a week.

This year we have the challenge of a new hotel to break-in to the idiosyncrasies of the British mycologist on holiday as well as find a new bar to relax in before dinner. While we are away there will be no other foraying activities in the region covered by CFG over the weekend of 11th / 12th October, but John Roberts is leading the CFG foray in my absence on Sunday 5th October.



CFG Forays reach 500+

For those of you who read the weekly foray reports, you may have noticed a number in the top right corner of the page, this is the sequential foray number. During the spring foray season of 2008 we reached a sort-of milestone in mid April, with the 500th home foray over the sixteen years CFG has been going, from the start-up of the group in early autumn 1992. In addition, there's been something of the region of a further 210 forays in France (around 10-14 a year for fifteen years for CFG in September/October and my own visits in winter) and 360 other local forays in our area that I've led for other groups or our impromptu winter/summer walks.

This has amassed something in the region of 39,000 foray records in Gloucestershire (submitted to the county biological archive GEDU) and 33,000 in Wiltshire (W&SBRC county biological records database) with both data sets fed into the national biological records for fungi through the British Mycological Society and on into the National Biodiversity Network. On top of this we have fed back a further over 17,000 records to the equivalent French regional databases.

Public Liability Insurance

CFG is covered by the Public Liability Insurance with the Association of British Fungus Groups, but only on the condition that there is a member of the Association present on the foray. There are currently seventeen CFG members who come into that category, including many of our regular foray stalwarts. So if I am not around, just make sure one of them is and you will be covered!

Diary Dates for the autumn

A few other things are happening in the region in the autumn season that may interest you:

Monmouthshire Show, Thursday 28th August: Gwent Fungus Group stand

Abergavenny Food Festival, 20th & 21st September: Gwent Fungus Group stand. Foray 21st.

Royal Berkshire Show Newbury, 20th & 21st September: ABFG stand in Horticulture Tent.

RHS Malvern Autumn Show, 27th & 28th September: The British Mycological Society's Roadshow stand will be at the RHS Autumn Show at the Three Counties showground in Malvern. If you are going to the show over the weekend please do look us up. To find out more about the Roadshow check out the Marches Fungi Website at www.herefordshire-fungi.org.uk

ABFG residential half week foray/workshop induction courses in Herefordshire, Berkshire (Savernake Forest 14-15th Oct), Somerset and Nottingham (info via ABFG Forayer magazine or the ABFG website at: www.abfg.org).

Dean Heritage Museum: The Dean Fungus Group are running their popular Fungus Weekend event at the Dean Heritage Centre over Saturday and Sunday 25th and 26th October. There will be an exhibition of fungi on display in the museum over both days (open from 11am to 4pm) and a fungus foray on each of the two days (set off 2pm). If you want to attend the foray, please purchase tickets from Reception at the Museum (01594 822170) – see more details of the museum on their website at: <http://www.deanheritagemuseum.com>. As both I and key CFG members will be helping with this event, there will be no CFG foray on Sunday 26th October.

Other Local non-CFG Forays

I will be running fungus forays on behalf of a number of natural history societies and organisations this autumn. If you are interested in coming on any of these events, please book with the relevant local society or organisation listed below. However, there are a limited number of free spaces for agile helpers, if you are available to work as a 'hunter-gatherer' roving ahead of the main party and bringing back interesting finds for me to show to the main body of the group - fairly competent identifiers please.

Day & Date	Venue	Organisation	Times
Saturday 13 th September	Snows Farm	Glos. Wildlife Trust	am
Saturday 20 th September	Westonbirt Arboretum	Forest Enterprise	am & pm
Saturday 4 th October	Midger Wood	Glos. Wildlife Trust	am
Saturday 18 th October	Great Wood	White Horse Garden Club	am
Saturday 18 th October	Great Wood	Swindon Rangers	pm
Saturday 25 th October	Westonbirt Arboretum	Forest Enterprise	am & pm
Saturday 1 st November	Coate Water Park	Wilts. Wildlife Trust	am
Saturday 1 st November	Coate Water Park	Swindon Rangers	pm
Saturday 8 th November	Batsford Arboretum	Batsford Arboretum	am & pm
Saturday 15 th November	Siccaridge Wood	Glos. Wildlife Trust	am & pm

Research news

Cinnamon prevents bread-mould

Recent research from the University of Zaragoza published in the *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry* found that solid paraffin-wax incorporating a cinnamon extract is an efficient antimicrobial coating for paper or cardboard packaging to prevent white bread from spoiling. The active ingredient cinnamaldehyde applied in the essential oil extracted from cinnamon is effective against the pin-mould *Rhizopus stolonifer* along with common species of the *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* genera, which are the most prevalent spoilers of white bread and baked goods. "The use of this active paper packaging is a smart alternative for protecting bread from fungal infestation since no direct contact between the food and the packaging is require," concluded the researchers.

Wanted - sightings of the Yellow Birds-nest plant

The BSBI undertake periodic surveys of scarce plants, and one of these is the Yellow Birds-nest (*Monotropa hypopitys*) – see picture right. While recording the presence/absence of this flower at any locality, useful information would be gained if a note was made of associated tree species and fungal partner (at the appropriate time of year). The involvement of local field mycology groups for this might help, especially as the plant is quite often associated with Willow and these trees have specific fungal associations (e.g. *Tricholoma cingulatum* and *Tricholoma terreum*).

Further background info on the request and contact for data is available from Dave Shorten.



Fungi associated with ancient native woodlands

A research project based in the departments of Plant Sciences and Zoology at the University of Oxford is looking at the association between fungi and long-established native British woodlands. Such fungi, if they can be identified easily in the field, could then be used as indicator species for such habitats, which are of high conservation interest.



CFG has volunteered its support to the project and offered our foray data covering the last sixteen years in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, alongside a list of well-forayed ancient woodland sites and details of the relevant owners of these sites as contacts for more information on the conservation status of the woodland. We may be asked to foray specific sites with key fungi in mind on subsequent CFG forays to collect data towards the project.

Good Home Wanted

A good home is wanted for a redundant stereo microscope. This reliable old work-horse has recently been released from a lifetime of good service in a laboratory and is now looking for a sympathetic user who can put up with slightly stiff mechanisms and a wobbly frame. It has been stripped, cleaned and restored to as good as working condition as possible for its more than 30 years of use.

For more information, contact Dave Shorten on 01793 764649 (evenings) or email daveshorten@cotswoldfungusgroup.com



Stereo low power microscope:

Olympus series SZ-III with 0.7 to 4.0x magnification on the rotating zoom stage and x10 eyepieces.

Magnification capacity = 7x – 40x.

Buyer must collect (can be brought to a CFG foray venue).

No money need change hands but a beer or two would be welcomed!

Advertisement

SPECIAL OFFER

FOR COTSWOLD FUNGUS GROUP MEMBERS

Save 15% if you collect your product at the next CFG foray you come to!

Baskets from £10.45*

Hand lenses from £11.00*

Mushroom keyrings £4.20*

Mushroom Playing Cards £3.45*

Email shop@mycomiscellany.co.uk with details of your order or telephone for more information.

* When collected



www.mycomiscellany.co.uk
or Telephone 01793 766759



Spring Foray Highlights

We had a rather mixed spring foraying season, with the late arrival of the St. George's Mushroom, delayed by cooler and drier weather at the end of March and on into early April and our first sighting at **Coate Water Park** on 30th March. Our two visits to Coate added significantly to the species list for the site, taking us up to 142 species so far, with more to be added in the autumn months.

The visit to the WWT Nature Reserve at **Clouts Wood** provided us with a new county record, the rust fungus specific to the uncommon Bath Asparagus (*Ornithogalum pyrenaicum*): ***Puccinia liliacearum***.

The spring visit to **Chedworth Wood** added significantly to the fungus flora of the area, with finally permission granted to enter the National Trust's part of the overall complex. The combined fungus flora of (i) the larger private Chedworth Wood, (ii) the GWT railway line Nature Reserve and (iii) NT woodland sector of Chedworth Wood now stands at 483 separate species of fungi in all. As we are tantalisingly close to the IFA target of 500 species we will try to have both a spring and an autumn foray based here next year.

Forays over the subsequent weekends were less fruitful as we hit a dry patch, although surprisingly long foray-finds lists were made for **Cirencester Park**, **Siccaridge Wood** and **Sapperton Wood**, but with few of the fleshy cap-and-stem toadstools in evidence. Similarly, the visits into Wiltshire's **Ravensroost Wood** and **Webbs Wood** were low on very fresh specimens, but by now the the St. George's Mushrooms were appearing regularly and in abundance.



Finds of edibles were eked out by the occasional charitable donation made by members exploits during the preceding week.

Opposite is John's offering of ***Morchella esculenta* var. *rotunda*** something we also saw in profusion in the Forest of Dean.

Just to give you an idea of size, each Morel is about six inches tall !!!

Our out-of-region visit to the NT site at **Tyntesfield** on the edge of Bristol in late April to join with the North Somerset & Bristol Fungus group was fruitful, helping to add around 30+ species to the catalogue of fungi found at Tyntesfield, taking it to 593 separate species in total. A couple of oddities were recorded: the (normally) autumnal Lilac Bonnet (***Mycena pura***), The Blusher (***Amanita rubescens***) and Stinkhorn (***Phallus impudicus***) making an early appearance, although the Blusher is known to flush towards the early part of autumn and the Stinkhorn pop up in wet summers. Full details on the NS&BFG website at:

<http://www.nsbfg.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk>

More Spring Foray Highlights

Early May saw us visiting **Crickley Hill** and **Lineover Wood** in Gloucestershire, then **Clanger Wood** and **Green Lane Wood** in South Wiltshire, each site supplying the odd surprise – of species normally regarded as autumnal making a very early appearance. For example the small cup fungus *Tarzetta cupularis* at Lineover Wood and the green-capped *Russula heterophylla* at Green Lane Wood.



Tarzetta cupularis (left) found at Lineover Wood was only our eleventh record for it in sixteen years, although the textbooks describe it as fairly common on calcareous soils (our typical Beech habitat on the Cotswold scarp).

Our visit to **Sherborne Park** in late May threw up another oddity: Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus sulphureus*) on Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). The textbooks give it as normally associated with Oak, Chestnut, Willow, Poplar and Yew. Of 148 recorded finds in North Wiltshire and 82 in Gloucestershire over the last 16 years, this is our first on Beech. Although we have only been actively foraying this site since 2006, we have built up a healthy list of around 190 species recorded at Sherborne Park and the two satellite woodlands by the Watermeadow. This should be increased further on our autumn visit in November.

The end of spring season forays at the Wiltshire sites of **Stanton Park** (Chippenham) and **Vinciants Wood** at the very end of May confirmed the extended fruiting season for St. George's Mushrooms – supposedly only a couple of weeks either side of 23rd April. If anyone living in the Chippenham area visits this small woodland reserve on their own, please send me in any finds records as it will help overall towards compiling the species list for the site.

Unusual local finds

(i) *Lentinus tigrinus* found during the summer by Cherry Greenway on a standing Willow at the GWT Coombe Hill Nature Reserve in the north of Gloucestershire. This is the first record for it in our part of the county and it has not been recorded in the Forest of Dean either.



Lentinus is a small group of Oyster-fungus-like fungi growing on dead wood – some on broadleaf, others on conifer, usually stumps.

Lentinus tigrinus

has a characteristically spotted upper-surface of the cap and looks deceptively like the white-Oyster fungus underneath (*Pleurotus cornucopiae*).

See Bon pages 122-123
or Courtecuisse p.148. Photo © C.Greenway

(ii) **Stropharia aurantiaca** was initially an alien import from the southern hemisphere, originally coming in on mulched bark and wood chips. It has now colonised a lot of the country and pops up in parks and arboreta on bark chippings under a number of different host trees. It has the characteristic dark-brown gills of a *Stropharia* but a bright orange-red coloured cap. Current nomenclature changes (Field Mycology vol 9.3 July 2008) has it renamed to *Leratiomyces aurantiaca* (or possibly synonymised with *Psilocybe ceres* into *Leratiomyces ceres*).

Look out for it on our autumn foray at Westonbirt, as it usually turns up there in October (2000, 2001, 2005, 2006 and 2007 so far).



Our first record for it was in 2000 under the large pine (*Pinus nigra*) just in on the right as you walk up from the entrance to Silkwood from the plant-centre gate.

It has now spread across the road into the Arboretum itself and was spotted there by Jean Oliver in June.

Photo © J.Oliver

(iii) **Leucocoprinus birnbaumii** can turn up at any time in pot-plants, again another exotic import coming in with the mulch or potting compost used on non-native plants. This one was spotted by Sian Roberts and confirmed by her father John growing with a cactus.



A member of the *Lepiota* family and illustrated in some textbooks:
Bon page 288/289
Courtecuisse p.248.

As with all smaller *Lepiotes*, they should not be eaten as they can be quite toxic.

Even some of the larger and edible *Macrolepiotas* can affect some people.

Photo © J.Roberts

When is a Scarlet Elfcup not a scarlet Elfcup?

The Scarlet Elfcup (*Sarcoscypha austriaca*) is relatively common in this area in the late winter months and can usually be found in most woodland sites in January, February and March, and in most years through into April. Sometimes we have been lucky in the previous November and December.



Our earliest record in the Cotswolds for the Scarlet Elfcup being the 1st November and our latest the 1st of May.

Photo © D.Shorten

Of 155 records for it in Cotswold Fungus Group's foray records database covering the sixteen years of 1992 – 2007, there have been several finds for it in November (9), December (1) and January (9) when organised forays are very infrequent. Not surprisingly, there are more records in February (34) when we have the occasional organized foray and significantly more in the spring months when group forays are more regular, with the bulk of records coming from the months of March (44) and April (57) and one late record in very early May. Despite claims of global warming, this single late record was from back in 1994.

All but one of these 155 records are for *Sarcoscypha austriaca* and only one for the original and now rare species of *Sarcoscypha coccinea*. Let me explain the difference.....

Originally there were two species of Scarlet Elfcup: *Sarcoscypha coccinea* was restricted to the UK and *Sarcoscypha austriaca* to mainland Europe. In an article published in The Mycologist vol.9.1 in February 1995, Brian Spooner advised that it was not a simple matter of naming any find of the Scarlet Elf cup as *Sarcoscypha coccinea*, you needed to confirm its identity by its microscopical characters. Having carried out a review of the herbarium collection material at Kew, very little of the recent Scarlet Elfcup material lodged there from across the whole country was actually *S.coccinea*. From the early 1960's onwards the vast majority of finds were in fact the European species *S.austriaca*.

Following this advice, we always try to examine a few samples each foray in the hope of finding the original British *S.coccinea*, rather than the overwhelming and invading species *S.austriaca*. Up to the end of 2007, we had only one record for *S.coccinea*, and that was furnished by the leader of another fungus group travelling through Gloucestershire on holiday.

In the Feb. 1995 Mycologist article, Brian Spooner made reference to colour varieties of the Scarlet Elfcup and I thought nothing more of it until I came across an orange fruitbody on a winter Dean Fungus Group foray at Soudley Ponds in January 2008.



The fruitbody was alone, growing on a felled branch of conifer amongst other general woody debris, and was confirmed by microscopy as being *Sarcoscypha austriaca*.

Photo © D.Shorten

It is said that discoveries are often made by accident, John Roberts was to give a talk to a local Rotary group on fungi, it was early February and rather difficult to find fresh material. However, he knew where there are always plenty of Scarlet Elfcups, a Natural England Nature Reserve at Buckholt Wood in East Gloucestershire.

Collecting for his talk, John came across a branch full of Elf Cups, with white ones growing side by side with the normal bright-red variety.

It was not a single occurrence, there were several different branches with one or more white fruitbodies on them.

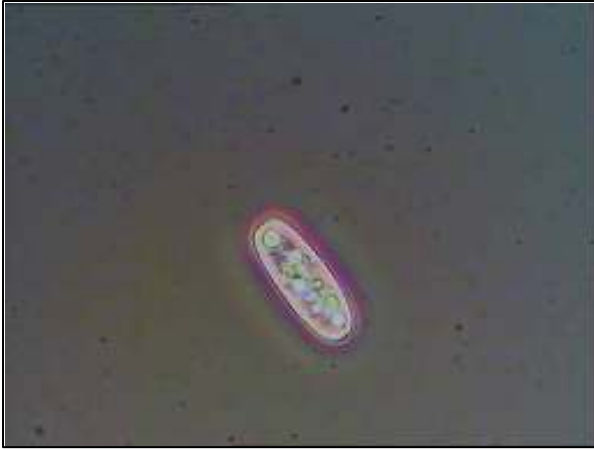
On checking by microscopy, John realised that they appeared to be the much less common *Sarcoscypha coccinea*. This species is rare in the region, in fact there has only been one true record for it in Gloucestershire in the last decade.

Subsequent checks by myself have confirmed *S.coccinea* for the white variety (based on keys published in the Mycologist of February 1995) with very round-ended spores and almost straight excipular hairs. John similarly has separately confirmed *S.coccinea* for the red-coloured specimens collected off the same branches.

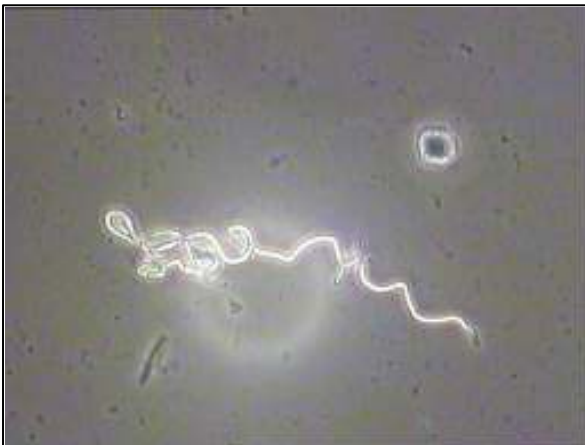
Strangely, the branches that the red and white *S.coccinea* came from are conifer, whereas we usually find *S.austriaca* on fallen or felled broadleaf woody debris.



See overleaf for spore images



The spores of *Sarcoscypha austriaca* (above left) tend to be slightly fatter and more truncated at the end, whilst those for *Sarcoscypha coccinea* (above right) are generally slenderer and rounded-ended.



There is one marked difference between the two species: in the excipular hairs – the fine hairs on the outside of the fruiting body. The excipular hairs on *Sarcoscypha austriaca* (above left) are curly, whilst those on *Sarcoscypha coccinea* (above right) are straight.

COTSWOLD FUNGUS GROUP

Chairman and Foray Leader: David Shorten, 45 Sevenfields, Highworth, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 7NF. 01793 764649.

ACCOUNTS 1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008

Item:	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	BALANCE
1. MEMBERSHIP 2007/2008	£ 551.00 ^{*8}		+ £551.00
3. B.M.S Booklets / Pocket Guides ^{*1}	£ 17.00	- £ 15.00	+ £ 2.00
4. Income & 5. Expenditure			
ABFG Membership ^{*2}		- £ 17.50	- £ 17.50
ABFG PLI-supplement (2007/8) ^{*3}			
Slide-shows & Talks & Led forays ^{*4}	£ 513.00	- £ 324.49	+ £188.51
Petrol & Accom at B.M.S meeting ^{*5}			
Mileage: W&SBRC Meetings at Devizes ^{*6}		- £ 78.05	- £ 78.05
Mileage: ABFG Annual General Meeting ^{*7}		- £ 51.57	- £ 51.57
CFG website domain hosting			
6. POSTAGE		- £161.45	- £161.45
7. STATIONERY		- £346.85	- £346.85
SUB TOTALS	+ £1,081.00	- £994.91	+ £ 86.09
OPENING BALANCE 1 st April 2007			+ £376.32
CLOSING BALANCE 31/03/2008			+ £462.41 ^{*9}
2. Subscriptions received in advance for 2008/09:			+ £ 88.00 ^{*9}
8. Income planned 2008/2009 (Slideshows & Forays already booked)			+ £450.00

Notes:

^{*1} : BMS recommended price for Pocket Guide is £1.50 with 20% donation to authors (30p each sale / give-away). A large stock was obtained FoC from BMS and is being given away at events to generate interest, especially children and is to be offset against income from forays and talks in item no.4 / note no. ^{*4} above.

^{*2} : ABFG Membership's accounting year is from Jan-December. Public Liability Insurance runs Aug-07 to July-08.

^{*3} : ABFG Public Liability supplement of £20.00 to cover insurance for outstanding memberships of CFG at end of July 2007 and cover new CFG-members and occasional attendees during autumn foray season (I forgot to pay it).

^{*4} : Income & expenditure from a number of organisations for slideshow talks or forays:

Bath Naturalists, Bishopstone Gardening Club, Chiseldon Gardening Club, Forest Enterprise Westonbirt Arboretum, Batsford Arboretum, Forest Enterprise Westonbirt Arboretum, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Swindon Ranger Service, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Ramsbury Horticultural Society, Gloucestershire Wildlife Watch Group, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

Mileage reimbursed to DS at 30p/mile to each venue & lunches for helpers.

^{*5} : Meeting held every 2 years and partly subsidised by BMS. DS's petrol reimbursed at cost. Next meeting July 2008.

^{*6} : Annual meeting for Biological Recorders at Devizes WWT centre. DS unable to attend meeting in March 2008.

^{*7} : AGM of Association of British Fungus Groups in Chard, Somerset. DS mileage reimbursed.

^{*8} : A number of new members joined CFG after the bulk of the autumn foraying season, anyone joining after the Day Foray at Westonbirt

in mid-October will not be charged for membership in spring 2008. Membership income will be slightly less in 2008 .

^{*9} : Bank statement dated 31st March 2008 agrees totals (£462.41 + £88.00 = £550.41)

David Shorten.

07-08 Accounts/c:\CFGAdmin-2008\31-03-2008