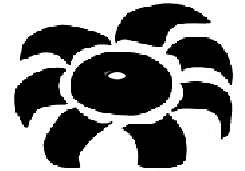


Cotswold Fungus Group

www.cotswoldfungusgroup.com

Summer 2009



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

Autumn Foray Programme

The CFG Autumn Foray programme is currently being put together and will be emailed out to paid-up members (or a hardcopy posted if you do not have email) within a week or so of receipt of this Newsletter. Forays will be run almost every weekend from Saturday 5th September through to Sunday 29th November, with the exception of mid October when the group is foraying in France. In all, the CFG autumn program includes 27 half-day forays for CFG members, excluding the six days overseas in France in October and the BMS Upland Foray week in September.

Please note the day and date of the forays, some have been organised on a Saturday rather than the usual Sunday, at the request of some group members.

Three key dates for your diary:

Joint CFG – NS&BFG Foray: Sat 21st November

Again we are joining up with the North Somerset & Bristol Fungus group at their flagship site, the National Trust property at Tyntesfield just outside Bristol for an all-day foray on 21st November. Pub lunch off-site will be organized in a local pub-restaurant with foraying into mixed woodland, parkland and Hygrocybe-rich grassland. Please book in with Dave Shorten in advance if coming.

CFG's main Autumn Event at Westonbirt

The main autumn event for CFG is the annual open foray at Westonbirt Arboretum on Sunday 18th October. 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.

Inside this edition

Autumn Foray Programme
Events around our region
Mushroom Discovery Room opens nr Swindon
Other Local non-CFG Forays
New sweatshirts coming soon
Research News
Spring Foray Highlights
Unusual local finds
Books for Sale in memory of past group member
Group News

Stop Press – The Chanterelles are up!



Foray and Xmas lunch with WFG: Sun 13th December

The traditional trip up to join in on the Worcestershire Fungus Group's last foray of the year and Xmas Lunch Chinese Buffet style is on Sunday 13th December. Nearer the time, let Dave Shorten know if you are coming so the group can reserve enough tables.

Events this autumn around our area

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

Festival of The Tree: Westonbirt Arboretum, Mon 24th to Mon 31st August culminating in the Sculptree Festival over the Bank Holiday weekend (Fri 28th – Monday 31st August).

For those of you who are Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum or hold reciprocal membership of another organisation (e.g. FoBA, RHS, etc) and are going to be there on Bank Holiday Monday, a group of us will be going out into Silkwood on an informal foray in the morning prior to visiting Sculptree (see photos below) in the afternoon. Details can be found in our foray programme.



Monmouthshire Show: 27th August - Gwent Fungus Group stand.

Abergavenny Food Festival: 19th and 20th September – Sheila Spence leading fungus walks.

RHS Malvern Autumn Show: 26th and 27th 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 it up.

Dean Heritage Museum: The Dean Fungus Group are running their popular Fungus Weekend event at the Dean Heritage Centre over Saturday and Sunday 26th and 27th September (note that it is at the end of September this year, as opposed to October last year). 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>.



Dean Fungus Group members setting out the display and naming the finds at last year's Dean Heritage Museum event.

BMS Upland Foray: 19th to 26th September - the BMS's residential low-budget autumn foray this year is based in and around Parkend in the Forest of Dean (details on their website at: <http://www.britmycolsoc.org.uk/meetings.asp>). The residential and workroom elements are fully booked but the forays are open to members of the local fungus group on a day by day basis. Several of CFG members who are also members of Dean Fungus Group will be at the forays. For more information – contact Dave Shorten.

Mushroom Discovery Room opens at Great Wood, Stanton Park

The Swindon Ranger Service, which manages Great Wood at Stanton Fitzwarren (aka Stanton Park) on behalf of the Swindon Council are setting up a Mushroom Discovery Room in the renovated buildings on the site. The fund-raising and design of the fungus-themed display has been led by senior ranger and CFG member, Tim Kaye. The **grand opening** is at 1pm lunchtime of Saturday 17th October, at the end of the morning public foray. **If you are in the area, please come along to the opening** of the Discovery Room. Alternatively, please do visit the exhibition, especially during the autumn. Fun and education for all the family! For more information, check out their website at <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/leisuresport/parksandgardens/leisure-stantonpark.htm>

Other Local non-CFG Forays

We will be running fungus forays on behalf of a number of local and national 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.

We do have a limited number of free spaces for agile helpers/identifiers. The job involves acting 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. If you are available to help, please contact Dave Shorten in advance to him know you can come, as places are usually restricted by the organisation running the foray.

Date	Day	am / pm	For Organisation	Location
12 th September	Saturday	am	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Savernake Forest
19 th September	Saturday	am & pm	National Trust	Chedworth Wood (NT)
3 rd October	Saturday	am & pm	Forest Enterprise	Westonbirt Arboretum
17 th October	Saturday	am	Swindon Rangers Service	Great Wood
17 th October	Saturday	pm	Swindon Rangers Service	Coate Water Park
25 th October	Sunday	am	Friends of Westonbirt	Westonbirt Arboretum
25 th October	Sunday	pm	Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	Midger Wood
31 st October	Saturday	am & pm	Forest Enterprise	Westonbirt Arboretum
7 th November	Saturday	am & pm	Batsford Arboretum	Batsford Arboretum
15 th November	Sunday	am	Minchinhampton Walking Group	Minchinhampton Common
28 th November	Saturday	am & pm	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Markham Banks & Clouts Wood

New CFG sweatshirts coming soon

Designs are being finalised as we write for new versions of the group sweatshirts to be ready for members to buy this Autumn. The clothing will carry an embroidered version of the group logo and be available in a range of sizes.

Further details will be emailed to members when these are ready and be available on the website. Alternatively you can contact Jenny Shorten on jenny@cotswoldfungusgroup.com or phone 01793 764649 for further information.

Research news

Nicotine found in Wild mushrooms

As a result of high levels of nicotine having been found in imported dried wild mushrooms on sale to the public during marketplace surveys in 2008, the European Commission has set guideline temporary limits for nicotine in fresh and dried wild mushrooms. Member States are to implement a monitoring programme for the 2009 season.

This all came about as a result of survey findings that 99 per cent of wild mushrooms tested from 2008 had levels exceeding the default maximum residue level of 0.01mg/kg. This default value applies where no scientific opinion or agreed safe maximum level has been previously agreed. As a result, the European Food Safety Authority has set a preliminary target value of maximum 0.036mg/kg of nicotine in fresh wild mushrooms and for dried mushrooms this would equate to 1.17mg/kg.

The high levels were detected mainly in the Cep or Penny Bun (*Boletus edulis*) mushrooms, but also in truffles and chanterelles; the mushrooms of concern hail mainly from China. The reasons for the high levels are not known, but nicotine, an alkaloid that occurs in tobacco, is also extensively used in pesticides.

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 early April. This was more than made-up for by the occasional finds of Morels, most coming out of the Forest of Dean, or John's garden.

However, it was a good spring for woodland wild flowers, although most arriving within a short time period. Is this another side effect of global warming or just an odd year?

Sherborne Park NT Estate, Picardy & Century Woods (Sunday 5th April)

The walk through the central wooded area of the Sherborne Estate added significantly to the site species list with a large number of small cup-fungi found on fallen-woody and dead plant remains. One oddity, *Calyptella campanula* actually a basidiomycete (related to the bracket fungi) but appearing like a small cup-fungus (see photo in B&K vol.2 #225). Something that has puzzled even the experts – see the photo on the front page of the Forayer magazine and the article on an unidentified mystery cup-shaped micro-fungus.

Great Wood, Stanton Fitzwarren (Saturday 11th April)

The inclusion of Saturday forays in the spring program fooled a few people (inadvertently!), with a number turning out on the Sunday to Great Wood. **Please do check the Autumn programme with care as there are some Saturday's coming up then too!**

Saturday's foray turned up fifteen new records for the already comprehensive site species list (already our second best-recorded site in Wiltshire with ~850 species) including *Agaricus aestivalis* the spring variant of the autumnal white Wood Mushroom (name changed recently to *Agaricus altipes*). Something we've seen before on some of the more southern Wiltshire sites in the spring, but never before here.

Something new to me is the lichen *Chrysothrix candelaris*, (pictured right), identified by Paul Lister-Smith. It was found growing in the crevices of the bark of an old Oak. Easily identified in the field from its bright lemon-yellow powdery appearance and association with mature Oaks.

Congratulations to the Rangers and volunteers at Stanton Park for clearing the patch of Cherry Laurel on the lakeside walk. True to form, up popped *Mitrophora semilibera* one of the Morel family that appears in recently cleared ground rich in leafy / woody plant remains.



Crickley Hill Country Park & Coopers Hill (Sunday 19th April)

A slightly drier wood than the previous weekend's site with significantly more finds amongst the 'black-blobs on twigs' that a few of us specialise in. Despite the recent dry weather, the St. George's Mushroom *Calocybe gambosa* made its usual appearance along with a few members of the Morel family: *Verpa conica*, *Mitrophora semilibera* and *Disciotis venosa*.



Something that is quite common but often overlooked, the small cup fungus *Dasyscyphus virgineus* (*Lachnum virgineum* in more recent textbooks) – pictured left. It grows on fallen fruits and cones, especially Beech mast, Acorns and sometimes Hazelnuts. Also look out for it on Pine, Spruce and Larch cones in particular. Unmistakeable in the field if you have a magnifying lens, it is distinguished by its extremely hairy outside layer and overall golf-tee shape.

Shrawley Wood, Worcestershire (Sunday 26th April)

A good turnout with around thirty forayers and friends from the Worcestershire and surrounding county-based fungus groups to say farewell to Tim Bateman and spread his ashes in one of his favourite woodlands. The spot chosen was dear to Tim and where, from time to time, a rare bracket fungus fruits from the soil growing out of buried woody debris. A few weeks later and it was up and fruiting:

See photos overleaf from Shrawley Wood and the bracket fungus, *Polyporus umbellatus* photographed by local member Peter Thompson.



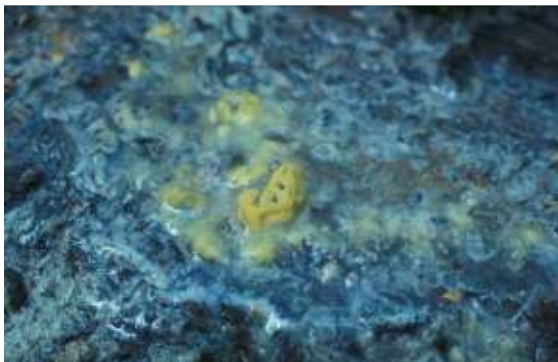
Polyporus umbellatus © 2009 Peter Thompson

Coate Water Park, Swindon (Saturday 2nd May)

A respectable list of mainly rust and smut fungi for a small turnout at Coate Water, adding a further thirty-six new species to the site catalogue of 211 fungi. Most of these new records were from Spring Field and Old Oak Field memorial plantation at the side of Coate Water Park. These are areas we'll definitely re-visit in the autumn months. A new-habitat association for us, the Semi-free Morel *Mitrophora semilibera* growing with Eucalyptus and something we don't see at many of our other sites. Eyes peeled in Westonbirt's Silkwood next spring maybe?

Cirencester Park, Oakley & Overley Wood (Sunday 3rd May)

Another good turnout with eighteen forayers adding a further twenty-seven fungi new to the site list of 415 species.



The 'Slime Flux' found in Oakley Wood on an Oak stump is interesting in that it is a composite of several different groups of micro-organisms, including fungi (sometimes cited as based on a *Fusarium* species).

Well known locally as 'the Beast of Tyntesfield' and has made a photographic appearance in both the ABFG journal *The Forayer* and the BMS's *Field Mycology*. Ours sadly was very young and rather docile!

Right is Kevin Davis's find of *Cordyceps gracilis*, much like the illustration of *Cordyceps capitata* in Bon, but *C. capitata* is a parasite on underground truffles, particularly the non-edible *Elaphomyces* species. *Cordyceps gracilis* is parasitic on the overwintering pupa of larger moths, some sources claim the Common Swift Moth, others the Goat Moth (*Cossus cossus*).

This is our fifth record for *Cordyceps gracilis* in 17 years in Gloucestershire, the other finds were from: a garden in Andoversford, Barnsley Wold woodland, and twice from Lower Woods GWT Reserve. The pupa is about an inch long.
Photo © 2009 Kevin Davis



Clanger Wood & Green Lane Wood (Sunday 10th May)

The Woodland Trust site in South Wiltshire of Clanger Wood is an interesting habitat with more and more of the conifer plantations being slowly reverted back to broadleaf woodland. It has an interesting spring flora, including St. George's Mushrooms and several members of the Morel family, as well as uncommon cup fungi, rusts and smuts. Sadly we have lost touch with the Trust since the last local warden moved on back in February and letters to the headquarters in Grantham have been unanswered, so we may not visit this site again. If anyone has a contact for the new local WT warden for the southwest, please let me know.

Midger Wood & Lower Woods (Sunday 17th May)

A small number of forayers braved the inclement weather on the Sunday morning to increase the species list for Midger Wood by eleven on top of the 411 already recorded.

One of the new finds was the lichen *Graphis scripta*. It is characterised by its long double-walled sausage-like but contorted fruitbodies on small branches. The photo here shows a half-inch thick Oak branch.



Ravensroost Wood & Webbs Wood (Sunday 31st May)

Not surprisingly, there were very few of the true cap-and-stem toadstools around because of the lack of rain in the preceding weeks of what had eventually turned into a very dry spring.

The oddity of the day was the mummified remains of the Blackening Brittle-Gill *Russula nigricans* at both Ravensroost and Webbs Wood. These were late autumn fruitbodies that hadn't rotted down because of the higher level of chitin in Russulas (hence the name Brittle-Gill) and that this particular species dries out very quickly in the late autumn.

The other unusual find was *Daedaleopsis intermedia*. This is a variant of the commonly encountered Blushing Bracket *Daedaleopsis confragosa* (below left) that grows on dead Willow and occasionally Birch,. It has slightly elongated pores on the under-surface of the medium sized semi-circular shaped bracket. The much less common variant of it *Daedaleopsis intermedia* (below right) found at Ravensroost has several rows of extremely elongated pores between rows of normal-shaped pores at the outer edge and inner centre of the bracket.



Daedaleopsis confragosa



The rarer *Daedaleopsis intermedia*

By the end of the summer, we have compiled just under two thousand data records from CFG forays, surveys and personal lists from individual contributors.

WANTED The Old Man of the Woods

Photographer Graham Soden would like to photograph a good fresh specimen of The Old Man of the Woods: *Strobilomyces floccopus* (or in some books *Strobilomyces strobilaceus*). We have records for it only in Cranham Wood (Cranham village end of Buckholt Wood) in 2006 and 2008 in the county of Gloucestershire, no records at all so far in North Wiltshire. So if anyone sees it this autumn, please get in touch with Graham, on 01295 711334 or 077290 57960.



This uncommon member of the bolete family has fibrous pyramidal scales on the upper surface of the cap, grey-mouthed soft, often collapsed tubes underneath and a darker grey-brown base to the stem. Said to grow under broadleaf trees and conifers, mostly with Beech in our area on the Cotswold Scarp.

Unusual local finds

The Juniper-pear Rust *Gymnosporangium clavariiforme*. It is relatively rare, mainly because its host plant Juniper is nowadays similarly rare. This spring's find was one of very few records for it in South Wiltshire (none so far in North Wiltshire) in the Tidworth region. We have one record of it in Gloucestershire and one lucky CFG member has it in her garden in Worcestershire.

Gymnosporangium clavariiforme only occurs where there is both Juniper and Hawthorn (its over-wintering host) in close proximity and is said to fruit in the spring months of April and May.

Photo © 2009 Paul Darby



The majority of species in the genus *Gymnosporangium* are North American, although there are four recorded British species, with the over-wintering aecial stages on hawthorn, pear, rowan, medlar, etc.

It is said to be "Widespread, locally frequent" which translates as: it's everywhere, but you'll never find it. If you do stumble across it, then you'll see it everywhere, but just there.

The Wikipedia entry for it states that: *Gymnosporangium* is a genus of plant-pathogenic fungi which alternately infect members of the family Cupressaceae, primarily species in the genus *Juniperus* (Juniper), and members of the family Rosaceae in the subfamily Maloideae (apples, pears, quinces, shadbush, hawthorns, rowans and their relatives).

On Juniper, the fungus forms a ball about 2-4 cm in diameter which produces a set of orange tentacle-like spore tubes called telial horns. These horns expand and have a jelly like consistency when wet. The spores are released and travel on the wind until they infect an apple, pear, or hawthorn tree.

On the secondary host, the fungus produces yellowish depressions on the leaves (much like its close relative the rust fungus *Puccinia* which forms yellow crater-like pustules). It also infects the fruit, which grows whitish tubes like a Medusa head. These are the spore tubes. The spores must then infect a Juniper to complete the life cycle.

The fungus does not cause serious damage to Junipers, but apple and pear trees can suffer serious loss of fruit production as a result of its effects. Due to the economic impacts of the rusts in some areas where orchards are of commercial importance, some regions have attempted to ban the planting of and/or eradicate the Juniper hosts.

Data in the BMS's FRDBI database gives six UK species with finds records, although only four are commonly encountered:

Gymnosporangium asiaticum (1 record: 1974 on an imported Bonzai tree),

Gymnosporangium clavariiforme (103 records, mainly on Juniper and leaves of Hawthorn),

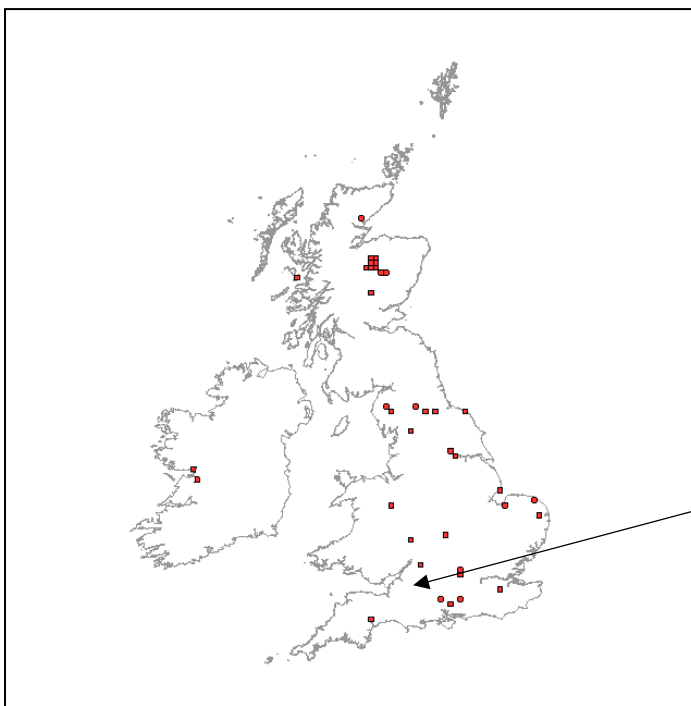
Gymnosporangium confusum (160 records, mostly Warwickshire, some Herefordshire, mainly on Juniper and leaves of Hawthorn),

Gymnosporangium cornutum (177 records, none south of the Wash, most Scottish, mainly on Juniper and leaves of Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*)

Gymnosporangium juniperi (1 record from pre-1900),

Gymnosporangium sabinae (45 records, 9 sites, mainly on Juniper and leaves of Pear).

We have one record of it in Gloucestershire in its over-wintering form on Hawthorn leaves at Siccaridge Wood. In fact on Midland Thorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) from back in summer 2005, although the location of the alternate Juniper host was not spotted. However, there is also a record of it in FRDBI from Moreton-in-Marsh on *Juniperus sabina* from 1935.



Distribution map for *Gymnosporangium clavariiforme* from the NBN Gateway site linked off the BMS's FRDBI database.

The Siccaridge Wood find is on the map, just to the south-west of Gloucester.

Paul Darby's new record is not yet on this map but is around here (about halfway between Gloucester and the Isle of Wight). Sadly none of the other South Wiltshire records are on here either.

Books for Sale in memory of past group member

In the last Newsletter I reported the sad death of Sheila Nicholls, one of the earliest members of CFG when we formed the group back in 1992. Sheila left her fungi identification books to the group and I propose to put them to good use, they'll be put up for sale to group members and all proceeds will be donated to the funds of the Chosen Hill Nature Reserve, where Sheila's spent the majority of her free time.

The books are all second-hand but well looked after, first reasonable offer will be accepted for any individual book, or all of the following as a single lot:

1. The Encyclopedia of Fungi of Britain and Europe. Michael Jordan. ISBN 0-7153-0129-2. Hardback. 1995. Original list price £25.00. A4 size.
2. Mushrooms and other fungi of Great Britain & Europe. Roger Phillips. ISBN 0-330-26441-9. Softback. 1981. A4 size.
3. The Ultimate Mushroom Book. Peter Jordan & Steven Wheeler. ISBN 1-895967-092-X. Hardback. 1996. Original list price £16.95. A4 size.
4. Fungi of Britain & Europe, Collins New Generation Guide. Stefan Buczaki. ISBN 0-00-219448-1. Softback. 1989. Original list price £8.95. Pocket size.
5. Field Guide to the Mushrooms & Toadstools of Britain & Europe. David Pegler. ISBN 0-86272-565-8. Softback. 1990. Original list price £7.99. Pocket size.
6. Fungi of Britain & Northern Europe, Field naturalist Library. Paul Sterry. ISBN 0-600-57081-9. Softback. 1991. Original list price £7.99. Pocket size.

Group News

CFG Membership Renewals

Thanks to all who paid up their membership fees promptly this spring.

Following comments from a number of members during last year about chasing membership fees, anyone not paying by the end of the spring foraging season will not receive this newsletter nor the autumn fixtures list, unless they have rejoined. Where we have an email address, these lapsed members have received a final reminder, and this has resulted in some latecomers rejoining. We also have a few people who have moved or their circumstances have changed. In all, including the occasional visitors and leaders of other local fungus groups that we do not charge membership fees for, we stand at around 130 members and friends.

CFG Accounts

The financial year for CFG runs from April to March and the end-of-year accounts for last year (2007/08) were given at the end of the Spring Newsletter. Since then, we have received £429 in 2009 Membership fees and £200 in advance for two of the non-CFG fungus forays from one of the organisations that we run them for. Further income (around £700 in total) is expected for these events, although this is usually balanced by payment of costs (purchase of leaflets handed out, pub lunch for foray helpers and my petrol costs to the events).

A small number of members have made representations about the payment of the expenses from the outside income. I believe that they are bone fide expenses and should be set against CFG's income. However, if there are members who strongly disagree and they would be willing to run these events at no cost to CFG, I am perfectly willing to hand over all of these forays to them (almost every Saturday from 12th September to 28th November). In addition, if anyone would care

to undertake the evening slide-shows and talks, using their own equipment, there are five bookings across the region this autumn season from Broadway in Gloucestershire to All Cannings in Wiltshire.

Alternatively, I am perfectly willing to pay the running costs of these events from my own pocket, but will consequently keep the fees paid by these societies and organisations. This means that CFG would lose out about £200 a year and consequently the membership fee would need to go up by around 50%. Any further comments on this and other CFG organisational issues are welcome.

Public Liability Insurance

CFG has again taken its Public Liability Insurance with the Association of British Fungus Groups and cover runs for 12 months from 1st January 2009 as the ABFG has changed the insurance-cover year. One of the conditions of the Public Liability Insurance scheme is that our forays have to be led by a paid-up member of ABFG and thus personally covered by its PLI scheme. Currently this is usually OK as long as I am present at forays to lead them, but under exceptional circumstances where I'm not available, forays covered by PLI insurance can go ahead only if led by any one of the other twenty-two paid-up ABFG members within CFG (e.g. John Roberts, Dave Champion, Mary Hunt, George and Sheila Spence, etc).

Under our PLI cover, you are free to bring along the occasional visitor and family friends to our forays, but please let me know in advance - an email with their names and home addresses will suffice for our insurers should anything happen to them on the foray and they need to make a claim on our insurance cover.

STOP PRESS The Chanterelles are up!

