

Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network

(www.pembsfungi.org.uk)

Newsletter (1/2009)

2008 Review

2008 was an active year for the Network both in terms of grassland foraging and public talks.

January provided an opportunity to participate in a local Biodiversity conference at the Stackpole Centre. The outcome was valuable financial support from three organisations which enabled us to organise a Pembrokeshire visit by a leading European mycologist, Dr. Eef Arnolds.



Dr. Arnolds' October visit was the highlight of the year and included a weekend residential foray at Cuffern Manor near Roch. The event was fully subscribed and provided an invaluable opportunity for participants to learn more about the identification of grassland fungi.

During the year we provided local community groups with seven illustrated talks on Pembrokeshire's Fungi which were well received. The presentations were greatly enhanced by the purchase of a large projection screen part-funded through the Pembrokeshire Community Plan.

Immediately prior to the weekend event, Eef Arnolds gave a public lecture entitled: "*A colourful autumn - Grassland management with fungi in mind*" which provided an European perspective on the conservation of grassland fungi. The event was well attended and much appreciated.

Eef Arnolds inspecting a specimen at St. David's

Three local forays - one grassland and two woodland - were run by local members, with the woodland events particularly well supported.

The Network received extensive media coverage including a radio interview on BBC Radio 4 Wales, two Western Telegraph articles and features in the Farmers' Weekly and Pembrokeshire Life magazines.

Organisation changes became necessary following Sam Bosanquet's move to Carmarthenshire - though Sam retains a keen interest in the Network activities. David Harries adopted the role of County recorder, and Trevor Theobald (Pembrokeshire CC - Planning Assistant, Ecology) joined the co-ordinating group to assist with planning and running of the Network.



Philip Jones reviewing the collection from Colby woods

Particular thanks go to the following organisations for their support for our 2008 programme:

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership (Community Plan)
Welsh Assembly Government
Chevron Refinery

Records

Work is currently underway to check, collate and enter our 2008 records into our database before submitting them to the national database - the Fungus Records Database of Britain & Ireland (FRDBI) managed by the British Mycological Society. Once this is complete, we will have a set of up-to-date information available for the production of species distribution maps for the County.

Highlights of the 2008 recording programme included three new records for Wales as well as confirmation of the continuing presence of the very rare Willow Blister (*Cryptomyces maximus*) fungus at Dowrog Common (see PFRN newsletter 2/2008).

The new Welsh records were:

Entoloma henricii - a medium-sized brown pinkgill found in grassland at Somerton Farm, Hundleton (see PFRN newsletter 5/2008). Fourth British record - the previous three all from Scotland.

Entoloma mutabilipes - a small, brown, pink-gill with an attractive two-tone blue/grey stem collected from grassland at Somerton. The sixth British record.

Clitocybe foetens - a group of small brown fungi (~ 2 to 4 cm high) collected from Rhos Fach during the October Foray weekend with Eef Arnolds. This species was previously regarded as "not authentically British" with just two records from England in the national database. However, with positive identification by Eef Arnolds and voucher specimens lodged with Kew, the species must now be regarded as "British".



2009 Programme

Plans are currently being developed for our 2009 programme which will include autumn forays for network members at woodland and grassland sites as well as illustrated talks for local groups .

There are recording excursions planned for the spring when we will look for more examples of the Willow Blister fungus in north Pembrokeshire. There may also be an opportunity to search for suitable habitat for the rare Willow Gloves fungus (*Hypocreopsis lichenoides*) which is not yet recorded in Pembrokeshire.

Grassland recording activities during late summer and autumn will continue as in previous years. Additionally, using the data now available for our best sites, we will be able to offer land owners and site managers advice on the appropriate management of waxcap-grassland sites.

If you have any ideas for items for inclusion in the 2009 programme, or would like to participate in any of the specialist recording activities, please contact me or alternatively pass your ideas to Jane Hodges (PCNPA) or Trevor Theobald (PCC).

David Harries (January 2009)