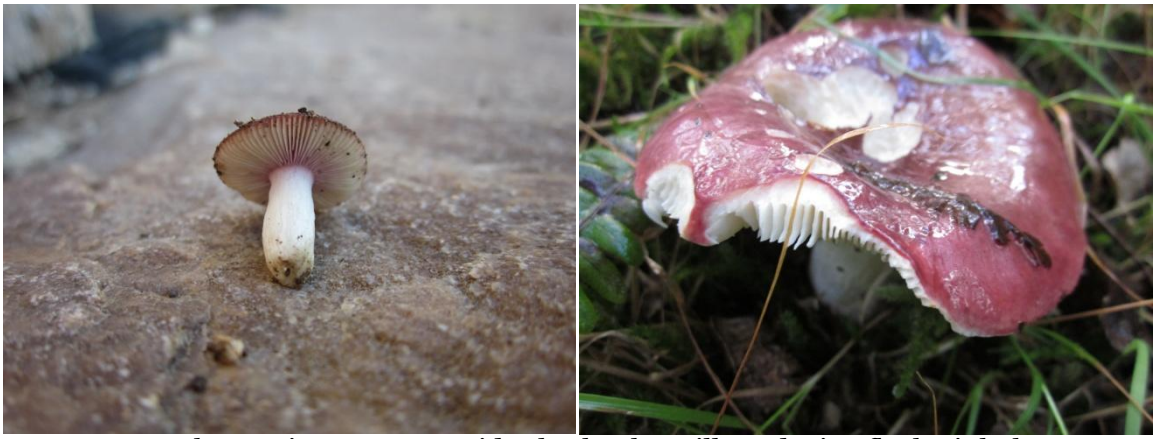
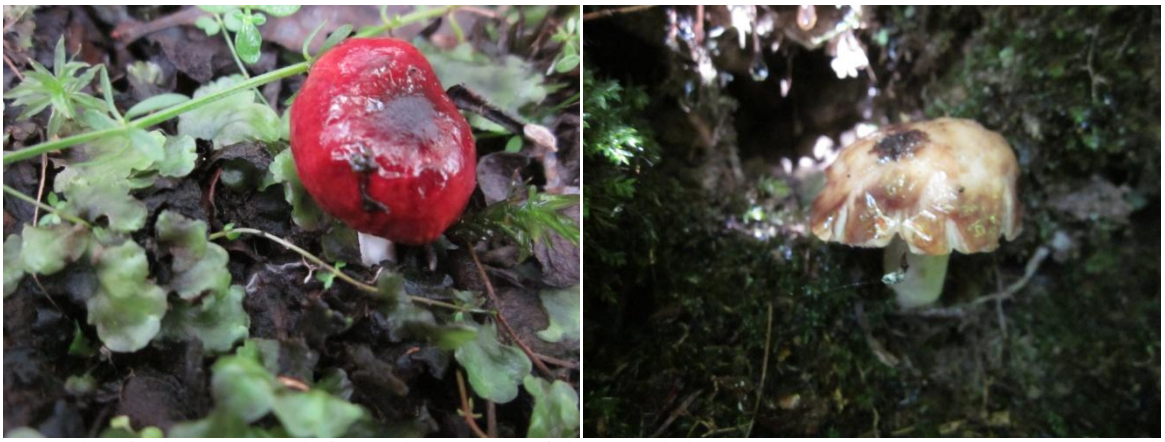
FUNGI 2013

After a hot summer and a wet spell in August, the woods quickly exploded into life with a rich display of fungi.

*Russulas* or brittlegills were particularly prominent amongst this first flush, and armed with Kibby's guide I tried to name all the different species. The first specimen that I ran through the key was distinctive, but refused to be named so I sent photos and a description to the author who agreed that it was not a known British species. Among the twenty or so species which I have identified are *Russula foetans*, *grata*, *sororia*, *densifolia*, *langei*, *nitida*, *fellea, aeruginea, acetolens, acrifolia* and *nigricans*. The latter, the blackening brittlegill, supports both species of piggyback fungus *Asterophora parasitica* and *A. lycoperdoides* when it decays. Several other potentially interesting *Russula* finds need closer examination – a small purple species which appears to be the rare *Russula alnetorum*, but isn't directly associated with alder; a similar thing but with a fruity scent which may be *Russula pelargonium*, and *Russula illota* which fits perfectly on macroscopic characters but has oversized spores.

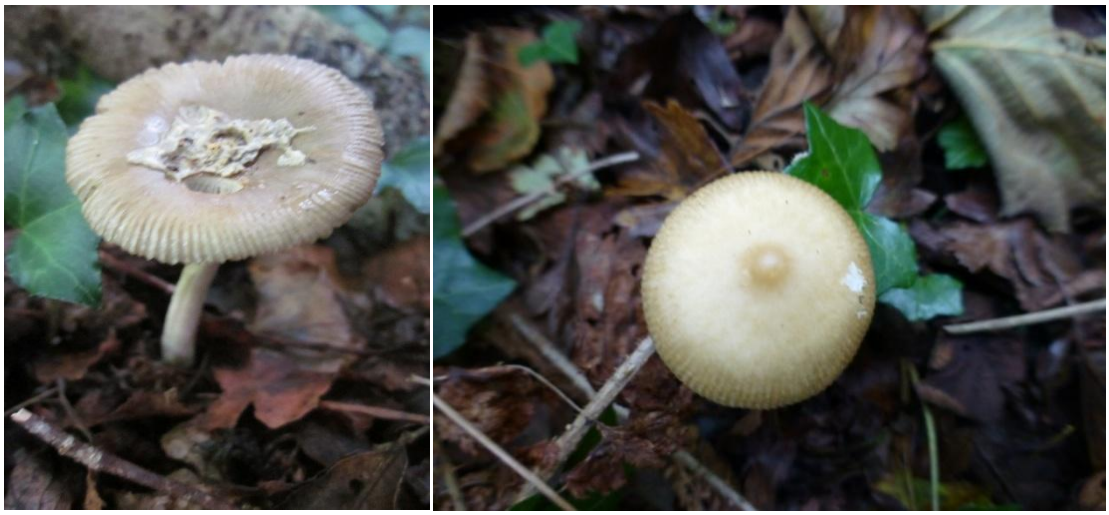


Mystery *Russula* growing on streamside clay bank – gills and stipe flush pink then turn magenta, cap only 13mm across.



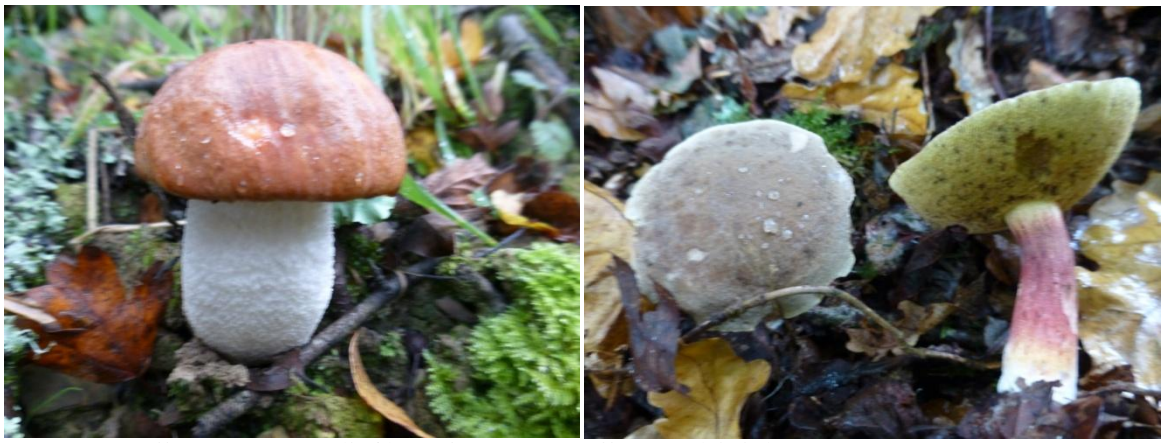
Russula cf. alnetorum (left) and Russula cf. illota (right)

Amanitas have also proved to be interesting here. The snakeskin grisette *Amanita ceciliae* reappeared in three locations, the grisette *Amanita vaginata* was found under hazel on the edge of Lake Park, and a single death cap *Amanita phalloides* was found under a veteran beech by the old road. A small troop of *Amanita olivaceogrisea* under hazel and holly represented the ninth British record, and David Harries dispatched a specimen to Kew. The best find – if confirmed – would be the *Amanita coryli* which was found under hazel in several places. This has only just been added to the British list, from Kew.



*Amanita olivaceogrisea* (left) and *Amanita* cf. *coryli* (right)

Boletes this autumn included a confusing group of *Boletus pulverulentus*, which from their clumped appearance initially appeared to be something rare. *Boletus badius*, *Xerocomus subtomentosus*, *X. porosporus, Xerocomellus engelii* and *X. chrysenteron* (although not under beech) were all recorded from Lake Park. A third aspen-associated *Leccinum* was added – the particularly rare *Leccinum albostipitatum* with a pure white stipe when young. I also found *Leccinum scabrum* and *L. cyanobasileucum* with birch in Lake Park, *L. schistophilum* with birch in the wet woods, and *L. pseudoscabrum* with hazel.

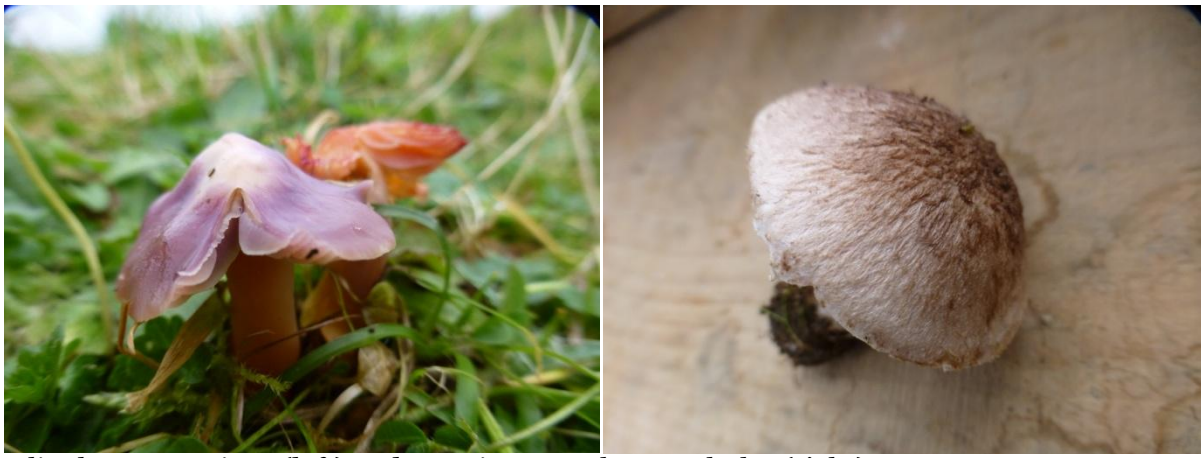


*Leccinum albostipitatum* (left) and *Xerocomellus sp.* (right)

Fourteen milkcaps, several of them new to the county, were added including *Lactarius aspideus* and *L. glyciosmus* from under willow at the edge of Lake Park, and *L. serifluus*, *L. subumbonatus, L. camphoratus* and *L. chrysorrheus* under oaks.

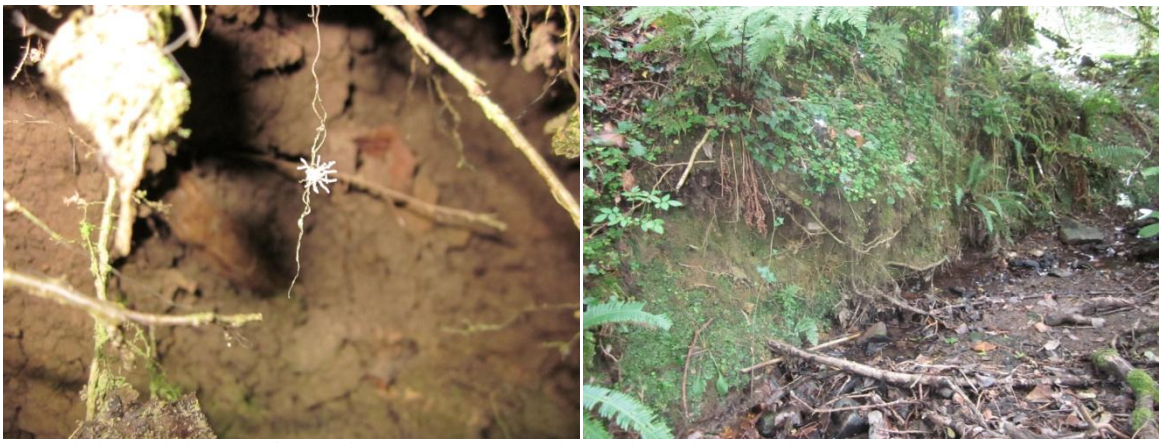
In addition to the common deceivers, the less common species *Laccaria purpureo-badia* and *L. tortilis* were found in Lake Park, and *L. bicolor* on the boundary wood-bank.

Grassland fungi included *Pholiota gummosa*, *Psilocybe fimetaria*, *Bolbitius titubans*, *Conocybe plicatella*, *Panaeolus fimicola*, *P. foenisecii*, *P. acuminatus*, *P. papilionaceus*, *Mycena flavoalba* and both *Agaricus porphyrocephalus* and the *Agaricus* pictured below, which looks to be *A. cupreo-brunneus*. A newly described waxcap, *Gliophorous reginae*, was found in the corner of one of our haymeadows.



*Gliophorous reginae* (left) and *Agaricus porphryocephalus* (right)

The rarely recorded spider parasite *Gibellula pulchra* was found to be fairly frequent on streamside banks, often attached to rootlets exposed in eroding sections. Alan Orange confirmed the original specimen. Alan also took a specimen of a *Cordyceps* for determination, possibly *C. tuberculata*, but his post at the museum disappeared before he could look at this.



*Gibellula pulchra* (left) and typical stream-bank location (right)

As well as being the best location for the *Gibellula*, the stream boundary bank near the old Tenby road in Lake Park yielded several of the more interesting other finds, with *Humaria hemispherica*, *Cordyceps capitata*, *Thelephora penicillata*, *Pluteus phlebophorous*, *Scutellinia umbrarum*, *Pleurotus pulmonarius*, *Lycoperdon pyriforme* and *Xylaria carpophila* (on old beech mast). *Microglossum viride* again appeared here. *Hebeloma radicosum* was under beech near the stream, and an *Agaricus*, seemingly *depauperatus* under oak / holly on a boundary bank.

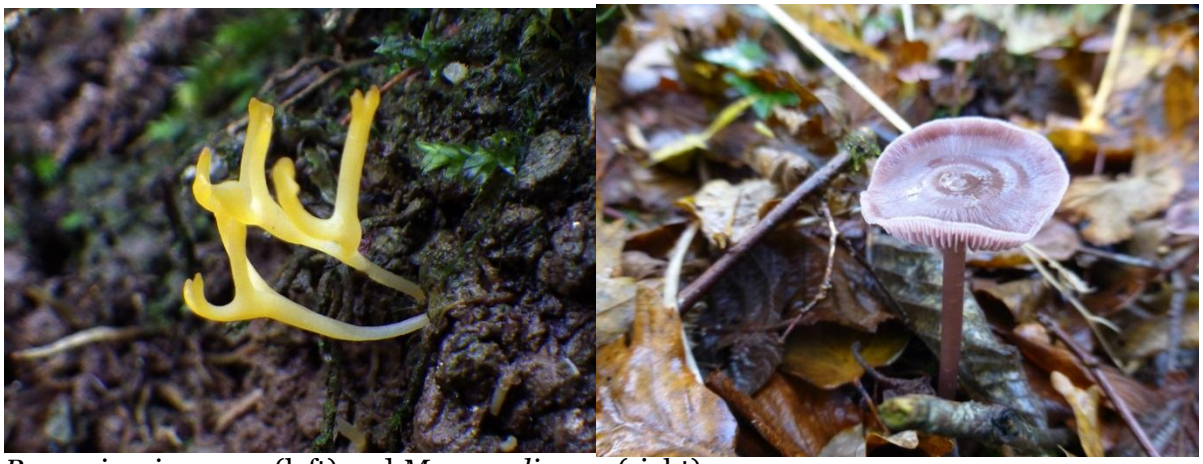
*Hebeloma radicosum* (left) and an *Agaricus*, cf. *depauperatus*, with no yellow or red when cut.

On the other side of the farm, the boundary bank adjoining Minerton showed its riches again, with another fine crop of tooth fungi. As well as the *Hydnellum concrescens*, *H. spongiosipes* and *Hydnum repandum*, some specimens seem close to *Hydenllum scrobiculatum*; whilst the *Phellodon confluens* determined by Martyn Ainsworth looks bafflingly like *Phellodon melaleucus* to the amateur eye. Also on this bank were *Tricholoma columbetta*, *T. sejunctum* and several *Cortinarius* species which, other than the distinctive *C. bolaris*, would need expert determination.

*Tricholoma sejunctum* (left) and *Phellodon confluens* / *melaleucus* (right)

One of our internal wood-banks, perhaps defining the boundary of a medieval deer-park, also yielded some interesting species. The Orange Coral *Ramariopsis crocea* was only the second Welsh record of this red-listed species, and around the same veteran ash were *Hygrocybe mucronella* and *Microglossum olivaceus*. *Amanita coryli* was under hazel a few feet away.

*Mycena diosma* was a new Welsh record from the riverbank woodland. A brief flush of stinkhorns included the rarely seen veiled variety of the common stinkhorn, *Phallus impudicus* including var. *togatus*.



*Ramariopsis crocea* (left) and *Mycena diosma* (right)

Wood-rotting species kept appearing late into the year. *Inonotus obliquus*, more typically on Scottish birch trees, was found on a veteran oak by our barn. *Grifola frondosa* was on the base of another oak, and *Lentinellus cochleatus*, *Pleurotus cornucopiaea, P. pulmonarius* and *Sarcomyxa serotinus* appeared on fallen branches.