

Issue 12  
August 2008



*Ganoderma applanatum*  
on beech

# NIFG NEWS

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# NIFG NEWS 2008

With the kind support of N. Ireland Electricity

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Hi Folks!

Another foraying season is well under way—and yet another unusual year for weather! As I write the rain is pounding off the ground outside while small fungi are pushing up out of the soil in my garden. Currently there is a thick white band of tiny *Hemimycena* along six inches or so of the cut edge of the front lawn. I can't imagine what they are all growing on!

In Britain it seems to be an unusually good year for fungi—so much so that Brian Spooner (Kew/British Mycological Society) is quoted in the Daily Telegraph urging mushroom pickers to be wary of poisonous varieties in “a bumper year for fungi”. Just so. Which reminds me that we have featured a personal experience of severe poisoning (by destroying angel) on pages 10, 13 & 14.

Following the resignation of our long-term Chairman Gerry Shannon last year, we now have a new Chairman (or should it be Chairperson?). I am referring of course to Debbie Nelson who has

accepted the mantle and made a great start to her new post in 2008. You will see Debbie gracing the front page as she gazes (?in awe) at large *Ganoderma* brackets on beech at Clandeboye in the second foray of 2008. We wish her all the very best!

Gerry is still of course an enthusiastic member and foray attendee and we still rely very much on him for chores like getting the Newsletter printed! Many thanks for all your hard work Gerry and we sincerely hope you will enjoy retirement both from the chairmanship and from your day job at UU which is imminent.

Roy Anderson, Editor

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## Chairman's Report 2007

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Well, you may or may not be aware that our long standing Chairman, Gerry Shannon, has decided to retire from work for a well earned break. As it happens, this coincided with his retirement from Chairmanship of the NIFG. Gerry, we wish you all the best and lots of happy hours foraying and catching up on your library!

For my sins, I chose to step forward and offer

### DISCLAIMER

The contents of NIFG NEWS are as accurate as can be achieved within the constraints of a small newsletter. The editorial staff take no responsibility for views expressed about the edibility or otherwise of fungi described by contributors. Edibility is a relative term and what may suit one person may react badly with another. The identification of fungi for consumption is entirely the responsibility of the individual reader. Guidance given in these pages is not definitive and regardless of the degree of expertise available, infers no guarantee of edibility. Therefore the management accept no responsibility for the consumption of fungal fruiting bodies based on information presented here, whatever the advise or ultimate consequences.

my services as Chairperson.

I also thought that, as I have not met some of you before, I would use this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Debbie Nelson and come from the ‘sunny’ seaside town of Donaghadee, where I spent most of my younger days combing rock-pools for sea creatures and taking trips to the Copeland Islands. My interest in the natural world began in school where we had to design wall displays based around native wildlife. I now work as an Environmental Education Officer for a Wildlife Rescue Centre based in Crumlin.

My interest in fungi began while carrying out an NVQ in Environmental Conservation in which fungi played a big part. I wanted to be able to label the photographs and my addiction began there!

Enough said I think!

Last year was a rather odd year for fungi. The first few forays produced quite long lists. Then, Northern Ireland being what it is, decided to play a trump card and throw us a series of hot dry spells followed by serious flooding. This did not bode well for fungi. It seemed they either did not fruit at all, or when they did they simply got washed away. The summer series of forays showed up very little but the later autumn forays were much more productive. We had several new finds, some new to Ireland!

The group also broke its record species number for one foray with the residential trip to Roe Valley Country Park producing 94 Species! The following day at Binevenagh produced some super finds including the magnificent Green Earth Tongue, *Microglossum olivaceum* and the rare waxcap, *Hygrocybe ovina* also known as the blushing waxcap. Two very important natural grassland indicator species!

At the AGM, we had a few other shifts in the committee. Roy stood down as Acting Recorder as the designing and writing the newsletter is very time consuming and hard work so Robert Cobain took over. Robert also came forward to be a joint Webmaster with David Mitchell. David is very involved with Environmental projects and this will at least take a little strain off his shoulders.

One last note. I recently attended the BMSRN Group leaders Meeting in Preston. There I was handed a piece of paper which had on it the total number of records submitted by the Group. Not including 2006 & 7 records which are still to be submitted, we are at present standing at total records submitted by the Group of 21,689, total records submitted for our Vice Counties at 29,333 (these include individuals records) and total individual species recorded are 5,961 species. This is a fantastic achievement and could not be reached without YOUR dedication. So thank you to everyone for keeping up the work and passion within the Group and lets hope 2008 produces more finds and fun for everyone.

Thank you

Debbie Nelson

## MEMBER'S NEWS

### *Forthcoming events:*

#### **The Apple Show 2008**

Due to the success of last years Apple Festival at ~~Crawfordsburn Country Park we have been~~ asked to attend again this coming October. The event will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> October from 10am to approx 5 pm both days. We will have a bigger and better stand of fungi specimens on display, posters and display boards, powerpoint fungi shots and be on hand to answer questions or give advice where we can. We will also be selling some education resources courtesy of BMS, to help raise funds for the Group.

The Park is situated just outside Crawfordsburn Village and is well signposted from the A2 Belfast to Bangor road (there will be yellow council signs directing you to the event.) Please come along and show your support, either by saying 'Hello' or maybe staying to lend a hand with the display. If you are coming along bring some fresh samples that could be set out in the display.

Hope to see many of you there.

Debbie Nelson

[Photos and write-up of last year's event are on p. 10]

## **Stop-press! - addition to Foray List**

### **Foray to Roe Park, 25 October:**

This is a requested foray by Mrs Joe Simpson. The meeting point is the Radison Hotel Carpark near Limavady at 11am.

Members meeting there will then move on to Roe Valley Country Park for the foray itself.

Anyone attending this event must bring a packed lunch, although there is a cafe in the Country Park which they may be able to use. Lunch is at 1pm. There is always the opportunity to meet at lunch time at the Park itself if you cannot make it for 11am.

This event is running in conjunction with the Apple Festival in Crawfordsburn Country park, but those living in the North coast or those not able to attend the Apple festival may wish to join the foray instead. Gerry Shannon and Chris Stretch should be leading the walk as expert guides. Please treat this as any other foray and follow the general advice of sensible footwear, waterproofs and collecting box if you wish.

Debbie

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## N. Ireland Fungus Group Forum

[<http://nifg.proboards54.com/index.cgi>]

Robert Cobain continues to take the lead in organising the Forum and it seems to have remained busy into 2008.

A major puzzle within the last year was provided by a small fungus which came up on a member's lawn (7 Sept '07). This went through ~~opinions from most of the members but in the end~~ no-one could put a name on it.

It was eventually sent to Kew and identified as *Hygrocybe irrigata*. The very hard body, steely-blue colours and white gills foxed everyone. *Hygrocybe irrigata* is a not uncommon waxcap but this one was very fresh (young) and didn't look like a waxcap so fooled everyone (including myself—RA).

Another puzzle was posted in Feb '08. This one was a cup fungus. I don't think a name was put on it and I missed the whole show so can only reveal its identity now, a bit belatedly. The clues are in the form of: found near alder; found in early



spring. Can be only one thing—*Ciboria caucus* (= *amentacea*) growing on alder catkins. This has been christened the alder goblet. Nice little thing isn't it?

Finally, a nice photo of a sulphur tuft posted by Robert:



and a photo of a *Peziza micropus* taken at Clandeboye.

Roy Anderson



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# Foray and other finds 2007/8

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## Foray Records

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The foray season in 2007 got off to a good start after a long dry spell in the spring followed by a very wet second half of June. There was a visit to Clare Wood on 27 July in which 67 species of fungi were recorded, one of our best recent efforts. This included 17 ascomycetes. The most interesting cup fungi were *Humaria hemisphaerica* which occurs very sporadically here and *Scutellinia superba*, a fairly common eyelash



fungus which has shorter hairs than the abundant *S. scutellata*, but unlike it grows on forest soils and never on wood.

Among the higher fungi only *Macrocyttidia cu-*



*cumis*, a species which is particularly associated with wood chip deposits, could be considered rare. It has become less so in recent years because of extensive use of wood chip mulches.

In contrast with Clare Wood, Hamilton Kee's



O'rganic Farm at Camowen Green, visited 15 September, had a very short list of 17 species. Some of these were unusual, however, including the sulphurous parasol *Cystolepiota bucknallii* and the ashen knight *Tricholoma sciodes*. This



was common on hedgebanks under beech. Easily the most successful foray of the year was



the first day of the Residential, held at Roe Valley Country Park, which now holds the record of most species on a foray at 92 .

Among these were several notables. The uncommon ascomycete *Tarzetta scotica* was recorded. This is a northern form distinguishable from *T. catinus* and *T. cupularis* by its combination of small size and narrowly ellipsoid spores. *Cortinarius* is not a genus we see particularly



often but there were several species, including *C. caeruleus* and the beautiful *C. purpurascens*. The carpark at Roe Valley was covered in *En-*



*toloma*, mainly *E. rhodopolium nidorosum* but



also a few *E. incanum* and *E. conferendum*. The rich woodlands boasted, as well as the *Cortinarius*, a fair number of uncommon agarics, including the sulphur knight *Tricholoma sulphureum*, under beech and *Russula integra* under



Douglas fir, along with the conifer puffball *Lycoperdon umbrinum*. It was nice to see *Amanita citrina* var. *alba* here and there and *Coprinus lagopus* and *Stropharia aurantiaca* were common in one or two places on wood chip piles.

The second day of the Residential did not disappoint either as we decamped to Binevenagh mountain. Very old stacked logs in the forest were covered in *Coniophora puteana*, *Pseudohydnum gelatinosum* and *Stereum sanguinolentum*. A jelly baby-like agaric on the sides of one stack was at first thought to be the N. American *Chrysomphalina*



*strombodes*, but was later changed to *C. grossula*. The literature on this genus is highly confused and confusing. In moss under large firs a few *Cortinarius acutus* were recorded—a rather rare species in our area. Beyond the woods, on the rich basaltic grassland, a deep blue-green form of *Micro-*



*rantiosplendens*, a single *H. fuscescens* and many *H. ochraceopallida* and *russocoriacea*. The most interesting find, however, was a very strange colour variety of the parrot waxcap *H. psittacina*. There were only 2 or 3 but they were very large and coloured a rusty brown with strong pinkish-violet overtones to the centre of the cap. It was unfortunate, but when I came back the following day to photograph them, none were to be found.

### Other records

Among other finds during the year was a deeply unimpressive little brown job found growing on old reed stems washed up on the shores of a small loughan called Derrintrig L. on the Pettigo Plateau in September '07.

This was investigated and keyed to a rare agaric, called by a variety of names over the years, but now generally accepted as *Pholiota pityrodes*. As far as I am aware this has not been recorded previously in the British Isles.



*glossum olivaceum* was present. And, although late in the season there were still a few 'mature' specimens of *Hygrocybe ovina* about—this is one of the few localities in N. Ireland where it can be seen. Not many other waxcaps were about, though, with a total of only 6 species.



The last foray of 2007 was devoted to waxcap grasslands at Slievenacloy Reserve just north of Belfast. Slievenacloy has some very interesting old pasture on slightly basic soils with very little peat—therefore unusual in a N. Ireland context. There were a lot of waxcaps about—15 species plus one variety. The species included a great abundance of *H. punicea* and a scatter of *H. au-*



Roy Anderson

Roy Anderson

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And see

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New finds

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& much

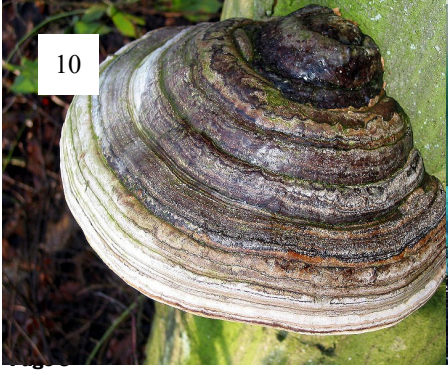
more.....



# Fungi Picture Quiz



**Can you identify these 12 fungi?**  
Answers on page 13



# Fungal Miscellany

## PREHISTORIC MYSTERY ORGANISM VERIFIED AS GIANT FUNGUS

[Science Daily, April 2007]

Scientists at the University of Chicago and the National Museum of Natural History at Washington (NMNH) have produced evidence to finally resolve the identity of a giant organism called *Prototaxites* dating from 350 million years ago. This has defied scientists' attempts to classify it until

that the mystery giant is in fact a fungus. The fungus idea originated in 1919 but it has taken until 2001 for this to be confirmed. Francis Huebner of NMNH made detailed studies of the internal (fossilised) structures from which he proposed that the creature was a fungus. Unfortunately, the most distinctive feature of fungi is their reproductive parts but these were missing from *Prototaxites*.

*Prototaxites* lived worldwide

and Devonian epochs. The



Huebner with a fossil of *Prototaxites*

Devonian was notable for the spread of giant primitive plants devoid of roots and with primitive outgrowths from the stems in lieu of leaves just like the horsetails (*Equisetum*) of today. The giant swamps populated by horsetails were full of millipedes, wingless insects and worms but little else. The world was a very strange place indeed.



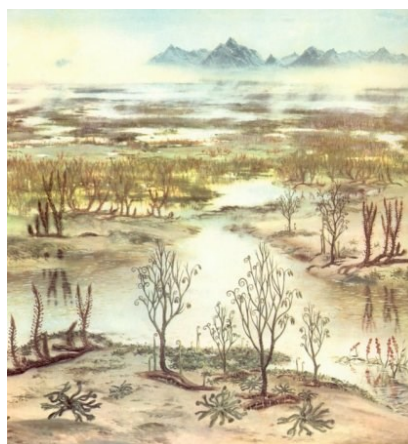
quite now.

It was apparently the largest known organism of its era at some twenty feet tall. But was it a coniferous tree as originally thought, a lichen, an algae or possibly a fungus??

“No matter what argument you put forward people say, well that’s crazy. That doesn’t make sense.” says C. Kevin Boyce, assistant Professor in Geophysical Sciences at Chicago University. “A twenty foot tall fungus doesn’t make any sense. Neither does a twenty foot tall algae make sense, but here’s the fossil.”

The paper reviewed here adds a new line of evidence confirming

between 420 and 350 million years ago i.e. in the Silurian



A Silurian swamp (looks a bit like Kiltonga?)

At this time green plants such as the primitive horsetails were only a couple of feet high. *Prototaxites* was therefore the biggest kid on the block—by a large margin. During the long period that *Prototaxites* existed, there was an explosion of new forms in the plant kingdom—ferns, primitive conifers and plants with leaves all made their first appearance.

Huebner travelled to Canada, Australia and Saudi Arabia to look at fossils of *Prototaxites*. He sliced through hundreds of samples (with a sophisticated angle grinder of

course!) to look at structures. In the end, however, he relied as much on isotope ratios of the fossils to determine what they were. The <sup>12</sup>C to <sup>13</sup>C ratios in fossils had a much wider range than would be possible for a green plant and in the end indicated that this was a giant fungus. Because of its size it probably grew slowly and relied upon very constant environmental conditions to survive (not at all like today!). No doubt its height allowed its spores to be wafted long distances to new habitats long distances away.

[Thanks to Royall Moore for supplying source material]

## Fungi Expert Finds New Species In Aberdeen City Centre,

[Science Daily, August 2008]

Dr Andy Taylor, from Aberdeen's Macaulay Institute, noticed the *Xerocomus bubalinus* growing near a lime tree in the city's Albyn Place. This very rare fungus was only described for the first time in 1991 in the Netherlands, and has not previously been recorded before in Scotland.

Dr Taylor said: "I couldn't quite believe it that I had found this species, which isn't supposed to occur here in Scotland, and that it was living right here under our noses."

As well as his city centre find, Dr Taylor, a professional mycologist, also recently discovered a species (*Russula vinososordida*) not found in the UK before, and another very rare species (*Buchwaldoboletus lignicola*) in the very grounds of the Macaulay Institute where he works.

"It is likely that there are many more undiscovered species right

under our noses," comments Dr Taylor, who whilst in Berkshire last year found and subsequently named a previously unknown fungal species, which is now considered so important by scientists that it is listed in the global top ten of all newly discovered species.

"Despite the fact that the mushroom season is just a few weeks old, and I have not yet had time to go looking properly, these are exciting finds."

Dr Taylor only moved to the world renowned scientific institute in March this year following 11 years working abroad.

"The main reason for my amazing finds is that there are so few people in the UK with the necessary identification skills to be able to spot these species. There are hardly any professional mycologists with the necessary skills left in the UK, unlike many other European countries. Put simply, we just don't know what, or how many, species of fungi we have here."

"It is also true that some of these species may have recently arrived here from abroad as accidental introductions on imported trees, or they have spread as a result of climate change."

"It is very likely that if we look hard enough, we will find many more new and previously unrecorded species of fungi right here on our doorstep."

Unfortunately, he added, when he went back to check on his recent finds, some of the mushrooms had already been accidentally damaged.

"This is a great shame, but it does highlight the urgent need for detailed surveying of our fungal biodiversity so that we can give protection to rare and important species."

Dr Taylor hopes to improve the understanding of Scottish fungi by carrying out large scale recording surveys using state of the art technologies, and by

providing expertise to identify rare or difficult species.

This will be done in conjunction with local groups such as the Grampian Fungus group run by Liz Holden, and anyone interested in learning more about fungi can attend local forays organised by this group.

## I Survived The Destroying Angel!

The Friday Afternoon Mycologist, Nov., 2006

*Tuesday, July 18th, 2006.* It was a balmy day in Ithaca, New York. I went for a walk after work to sit and meditate at my favorite spot near a waterfall in Upper Buttermilk State Park. It's really nice to have such a huge backyard cared for by the public like Upper Buttermilk. I feel privileged.

You know that feeling you have when you are young and feel invincible? Well, as I walked out of the wooded area I was in, I found some young mushrooms. Their caps were hanging down like closed umbrellas. I mistook them for ink caps (*Coprinus* spp.) even though I spotted an *Amanita* nearby ~~by its cap was fully open,~~ [continued on p. 13]

and not hanging down. Thinking back, I should have been more suspicious as mushrooms do grow in colonies.

# Conservation News Etc.

## Apple Show 2007 Just a few pics of the 2007



show. This went well and the NIFG stand was very busy. The main problems every year are getting volunteers to man the stand and obtaining sufficient fungi to attract interest—no problem last year then! - Gerry, one of the stalwarts doing a stint (above); a great display (below).

### LATEST UK BIODIVERSITY



### ACTION PLAN LIST

The UK Biodiversity Partnership produced an updated list of action plan species in July 2007. This is now being reviewed by a team of specialists in conjunction with the Environment Agency in N. Ireland. The UK List is:

*Amanita friabilis*, *Armillaria ectypa*, *Bankera fuligineoalba*, *Battarraea phalloides*, *Boletopsis perplexa*, *Boletus immutatus*, *Boletus pseudoregius*, *Boletus regius*, *Boletus rhodopurpureus*, *Boletus torosus*, *Bovista paludosa*, *Calocybe onychina*, *Can-*

*tharellus friesii*, *Cantharellus melanoxeros*, *Chlorencoelia versiformis*, *Cotylidia pannosa*, *Entoloma bloxamii*, *Geastrum berkeleyi*, *Geastrum corollinum*, *Geastrum elegans*, *Geastrum minimum*, *Geoglossum atropurpureum*, *Gomphus clavatus*, *Hericium coralloides*, *Hericium erinaceus*, *Hohenbuehelia culmicola*, *Hydnellum aurantiacum*, *Hydnellum caeruleum*, *Hydnellum concrecens*, *Hydnellum ferrugineum*, *Hydnellum peckii*, *Hydnellum scrobiculatum*, *Hydnellum spongiosipes*, *Hygrocybe spadicea*, *Hygrophorus pudorinus*, *Hypocreopsis lichenoides*, *Hypocreopsis rhododendri*, *Microglossum olivaceum*, *Mycena renati*, *Myriostoma coliforme*, *Phellodon confluens*, *Phellodon melleus*, *Phellodon niger*, *Phellodon tomentosus*, *Piptoporus quercinus*, *Poronia punctata*, *Psathyrella caput-medusae*, *Sarcodon glaucopus*, *Sarcodon scabrosus*, *Sarcodon squamosus*, *Sarcodontia crocea*, *Sarcosphaera coronaria*, *Stropharia hornemanii*, *Tephrocybe osmophora*, *Tremella moriformis*, *Tricholoma colossus*, *Tricholoma robustum*, *Tulostoma melanocyclum*, *Tulostoma niveum*.

The following on the current list have been recorded in NI (as far as I know):

*Armillaria ectypa*, *Entoloma bloxamii*, *Geoglossum atropurpureum*, *Hydnellum aurantiacum*, *Hydnellum concrecens*, *Hydnellum spongiosipes*, *Microglossum olivaceum*, *Tricholoma colossus* i.e. *Boletus satanas* has been removed and *Tricholoma colossus* added from the previous list. The *T. colossus* record is old and may be from the Rostrevor Forest area.

### BRITISH MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING

Conservation and Taxonomy Meeting 2008, Boreland, London. 22 Nov 2008. Jodrell Lecture Theatre, Kew, 10-4.30pm.

### It's a funny old world

"Blessed are they who can laugh at themselves, for they shall never cease to be amused."

Some GCSE howlers:

Q. Name the four seasons.

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on?

A. If you are buying a house they will insist you are well endowed.

Q. What happens to your body when you age?

A. When you get old so do your bowels and you go intercontinental.

Q. What happens to a boy when he reaches puberty?

A. He says goodbye to his boyhood and looks forward to his adultery.

Q. Give an example of a fungus. What is its characteristic feature?

A. Mushrooms. They always grow in damp places and so they look like umbrellas.

- 1) Beech woodwart
- 2) Clustered toughshank  
*Hypoxylon fragiforme*
- 3) Coral brittlegill  
*Collybia confuens*
- 4) Umbonate brittlegill  
*Russula velenovskyi*
- 5) A bolete  
*Russula amara*
- 6) The Sickener  
*Boletus erythropus*
- 7) Green-spored parasol  
*Russula emetica*
- 8) Dog vomit slime mould  
*Melanophyllum eyrei*
- 9) Black milking bonnet  
*Fuligo septica*
- 10) Tinder bracket  
*Mycena leucogala*
- 11) Green elf-cup  
*Fomes fomentarius*
- 12) Common puffball  
*Lycoperdon perlatum*

### FUNGI PICTURE QUIZ

# Miscellaneous Pics, 2007/8



# Fungal Miscellany- 'I survived the destroying angel'

Continued from p.11



I took three home with me. I couldn't find my Mushroom book, was in a hurry, so I trusted my judgment, fried them up in olive oil, and ate them as a side dish. I should have recognized then that they weren't inky caps, because inky caps exude a black substance when you fry them.

They honestly did not taste that good, rather bland in my opinion. I thought to myself, "Gee, I don't think I'll ever pick and eat these again." (Little did I know the truth of my thought at the time).

Next morning I woke a little earlier than usual. I couldn't quite tell whether it was still night or just breaking into the day.

I felt queasy. It was the same feeling I had when I had food poisoning. Before I had any more time to assess my state, I realized I needed to get to the bathroom. I barely made it to

the royal throne when I started heaving my guts out. The vomiting reflex was strong. The pressure of the strong contractions forced stuff out both ends, uncontrollably. At that point, deep down I knew I had made the big mistake: I HAD EATEN *AMANITA VIROSA*, AKA, "THE DESTROYING ANGEL".

I found my mushroom book and looked up the symptoms for Amanita poisoning: vomiting and diarrhea or severe constipation 6-8 hrs after consumption.<sup>2</sup> Oh, and by the way, it's now destroying your liver and 50 to 80 percent of the people who ingest *Amanita* DO NOT SURVIVE! At that point, I knew I was in deep, deep doo doo and in for the biggest fight of my life, *for* my life.

I called the Poison Control Center - They suggested I go back to the area where I had picked the mushrooms and get one to take with me for identification, then get myself to the local emergency room. I went back to the area and picked the one mushroom I had left because I thought it was *Amanita*. I also took a piece of stem I had thrown into the garbage the night before.

I arrived at the ER of our local Medical Centre about 9:15 a.m. Finally, after waiting another 20 minutes, someone came to get me.

It's amazing to me. Most people when they know they are dying think of what they didn't do or what they should have done. In this case, all I could do was watch and monitor time like a hawk. My concern was I needed help NOW! ASAP! But, I also knew I needed to stay calm so as not to create a panic situation.

I don't remember much once I was admitted. But they started an IV to replenish my fluids.

Then they made me drink a milk shake size container of charcoal. Have you ever seen a charcoal drink? This was the blackest black I had ever seen! It was really hard to get past the thought and just drink it. It had a

chalky flavor.

About a half hour later the ER staff informed me they were transporting me to another hospital in Rochester, New York.

Needless to say, the charcoal drink did not stay down long. After a session of upchucking I was strapped in a gurney, loaded in the ambulance and on my way to Rochester.

The trip was uneventful. I was being sent to Rochester because they had the only liver transplant unit in upstate New York. The treatment of choice is often liver transplantation. With early diagnosis, another experimental treatment includes massive doses of penicillin to stimulate the liver's defenses. This was the treatment I would receive with the option to transplant if my liver failed.

Upon our arrival at the Emergency Room, I was having blood drawn every 2 hours to monitor the buildup of toxins in my liver and kidneys. They hooked me up to a transfusion stand and monitors. They were preparing to run me through all the tests they needed in order to prepare me for a transplant in case my liver failed. They were giving me huge doses of penicillin plus fluids to rehydrate me.

Being sick as a dog with constant vomiting and diarrhea is no fun! I had a diaper on. I felt helpless. I felt humbled.

I was given a bed in the transplant unit. Taken for x-rays. Back to the room. Given a drink in order to do a CAT scan. It was a litre of pink liquid. I drank it in small amounts and even though they had given me something

to shut down the vomiting, it just wasn't working. Shortly after getting it all down, it came right back up. They gave me another liter. Again, I slowly started sipping an 8 oz glass every 15-20 minutes. Eventually, I almost got it all down and felt I could not drink another glass without vomiting again. They wheeled me down to the CAT scan machine and transferred me onto the bed that slides into the large instrument. As they started to roll me in, I yelled "Back me out, back me out! I'm going to throw up again!"

They pulled me out of the cylinder and got me a bedpan just in time. I'm glad I didn't ruin their large instrument puking inside it. After the CAT scan, I was taken back to my room in the transplant unit. There was a constant droning sound that I couldn't figure out and constant announcements over the PA system. It was really difficult sleeping with the noise and being awakened all the time for blood work. (They were drawing blood every 4 hours to monitor my liver and kidneys). It's not a place conducive to good sleep. I just couldn't get a decent night's sleep.

By now the doctors were coming around asking me questions in order to assess my mental capacity. If my liver went into failure, I would not be lucid. Without sleep, I found it hard to remember what day it was as everything seemed to blend into one long event.

I work as an accelerator operator in high energy physics and am an avid amateur dancer, a certified massage therapist and Hanna Somatic Educator. When they asked me about this and I told them, they thought I had lost my sanity. They had to ask Julie and Mark if I was telling them the truth. How many people do you know that earn their living as an accelerator operator?

At one point a doctor came in and asked me "What is Pi?" I wasn't

quite sure how to respond as I didn't know if he was asking about Pi, or pie. My question to him was "Which pi/pie, pi the mathematical term or pie the thing you eat?"

His response, "Pi the mathematical term." I proceeded to tell him about its relationship to a circle and its origins. I stumbled a little and thought maybe I really was losing my sanity.

Thursday, I was taken for tests of my cardiovascular system. The stress test. They had to do it chemically as I was unable to do it physically on the treadmill. Thursday evening they took me into intensive care. He informed me they were ready to give me a transplant if I needed it. I remember grabbing the cross on my neck chain and praying silently to myself. Somehow, in the middle of the night my liver numbers peaked and started coming down. I wasn't out of the woods yet, but it looked like I was going to recover without a liver transplant. I was wheeled back to my room in the liver transplant unit Friday morning.

My liver and kidneys had taken a big insult, as had my gastrointestinal tract. Although my liver numbers were coming down, the kidney numbers still hadn't peaked. I would be in the hospital another week to make sure I would not need kidney dialysis.

They took the tube out of my nose going to my stomach on Friday. It had been quite annoying as it gave me the hiccups. I could almost predict when the next one would come along. It was that periodic. Even after removing the tube, the hiccups lingered for another couple hours.

By Sunday, all the tubes in me had been removed. But I still found it hard to sleep. Now, at least, they were only drawing blood every 4 hours. That night another patient was in my room who was there to receive a transplant. He was constantly yelling out for help from the nurses.

Sunday night/Monday morning I finally fell into a deep dream sleep. I feel so lucky and yet fortunate. I found out that of three people admitted in 2006 to the Rochester Hospital with *Amanita* poisoning, I am the only one to have survived; the other two died.

Why did I live and the rest not live? Was it the amount of toxin? Was it the doctors' care? One of them said it was a miracle! Simply said, I don't know that it was any individual thing, but a combination of everything.

How did I get in such a mess? In reality, the mistake I made was just **not taking the time to positively identify the mushrooms I had picked before ingesting them!**

# FORAY PROGRAMME 2008

## FORAY ARRANGEMENTS!

The new arrangement for forays has been extended into 2008. Just to remind you, this essentially means that on each date 2 forays will be held.

The first foray on a given date (for those who wish to foray all day) will start at 11am and go on until 12.30pm.

There will then be a return to the meeting point for lunch and a second foray (along previously established lines) will be held from 1pm to 4pm. This will allow those wishing to spend more time at the site to do so. These arrangements are subject to alteration. Details will be forwarded of any changes.

Please visit [www.nifg.org.uk](http://www.nifg.org.uk) for maps etc.

### ~~17<sup>th</sup> May 2008~~ Loughgall (H906521) OS map No. 19

From north, follow M2 south to Belfast, continue onto M1 west. From west, follow signs for Belfast. From both directions, take Junction 13 of the M1 signposted for Loughgall. Follow to the town. The arranged carpark is that of the Golf Course. On entering, tell staff you are with the NIFG on a foray and you can use the carpark free of charge.

From south, follow signs for Armagh. Once in Armagh follow the A3 to Portadown, a short way along the A3 follow left turn for Loughgall (B111). At T-junction turn right into Loughgall town and follow as above.

### 26<sup>th</sup> July, Helen's Tower, Bangor (J478776) OS map No. 15

From north, follow directions for Belfast (M2) Once on motorway continue onto A2 signposted Bangor. Do not turn off the m'way as it becomes a dual c'way. Follow to

Bangor. \* On approach to Bangor, pass Ballyrobert Car Sales on left. Straight through T lights. At next T lights take a right (posted Ards). Follow under low bridge, take next left (posted Ards) Follow for 3-400 yds. On left (just past Sawmill) is a lay by. Park here.

From south & west, follow all signs for Belfast. Once on M1 continue onto Westlink and keep right onto A2 and follow as above \*

### 9<sup>th</sup> August, Pomeroy Forest Park, Co. Tyrone (H705725) OS map No. 13

We will meet in the forestry college car park. From Belfast take the M1, go past Dunganon and then take first right on road to Castle Caulfield and then Donaghmore, turn left on to B43 then 7 miles to T junction at which turn right on to B160. The white entrance to forest is 1/4 mile on the right. From Cookstown take the B505 Omagh road and then B4 to Pomeroy. Turn left on to B160 and entrance is about half a mile on the left east out of town.

### 16<sup>th</sup> Aug, Mourne Wood, Co. Down (J275165) OS map No. 29

The most direct route to this forest is by following directions to Newry. Once in Newry you follow the A2 through Warrenpoint to Kilkeel. Mourne Wood is situated approx 3.5km outside Kilkeel town on the left hand side. Signs at the entrance, 'Kilkeel Golf Club'.

### 6<sup>th</sup> September Portglenone Forest Park (C975025) OS map No. 8

From all directions, follow signs for Ballymena. From south, take J2 of M2, R'stown, Through town, straight ahead at mini r'bout, onto B52, left at fork in rd onto Portglenone rd— becomes Largy rd. Continue to P'glenone. Join left onto A42. Continue through main st. \*Take the A54 (left) Ballymacombs rd. Take 2<sup>nd</sup> left to end: carpark.

From C'raigne/north, follow A26 – Belfast. At Glarryford take a right onto the B64 (Station Road). At T-junction take left onto B93 and follow to Cullybackey. At end of road veer right onto B96 (Dreen Rd) follow to Portglenone. Entering town, take a right onto A42. Follow as above. \*

### 20<sup>th</sup> September, Tynan Estate, Co. Armagh H760432 O.S.Map no. 19

From north, follow to Belfast and enter the M1 West. At J15, exit left to Armagh, A29. Follow to town centre. Continue straight on A29 through town. Continue straight onto A3. At T.Jtn take right onto Friary Rd, continue straight as it becomes A28 Killylea Rd. Continue to Tynan. Look for signs for B210 (Coolkill rd) Turn left. Take next right (Cortynan Rd.) Once on this road, look for the large gate at the back of the estate. We will meet here.

**\*Important\*** These gates will be **locked between 11 and 12.30 and 1pm-4pm** so if you wish to attend a full day you must **be there before 11am**, Or aim for the 12.30 meet in the parking area. Gates will be closed between times for security reasons!

27<sup>th</sup> September Glenmore Wood, (H651609) OS map No. 19

From north: follow to Belfast and enter the M1 West. Follow past Dungannon. M1 becomes the A4. On passing signs for Parkanaur F.P. look out for signs on right for \* Glenmore Scenic drive. You are looking for the Tullnaverne road on your right. Take this road and follow to the top carpark of the forest.

From west: follow A4 towards Belfast; after Ballygawley r'bout look for signs as above \* only on your left.

From south: follow A1 north. At Hillsborough follow signs to M1 and then keep left onto M1 WEST. Follow as above.

4<sup>th</sup> October, Glenarriff Forest Park (D311149) O.S. Map no. 9

From all directions, follow onto M2. Either take the scenic route along the Antrim Coast road to Waterfoot. At t-junction at end of town, take left and follow to the forest park carpark. Alternatively, from North take A29 south to B'mena. Exit at J11 of M2. Veer right to B'mena A42. \* Continue straight ahead at 1<sup>st</sup> r'bout, at 2<sup>nd</sup> r'bout exit right (A43 Cushendall Rd.) Follow to Glenarriff F.P.

From south, follow North on M2. Exit at J11 & take right to B'mena, A26. Continue to 7 Towers R'bout. Exit Right (3<sup>rd</sup> exit) Continue to next r'bout. Take 2<sup>nd</sup> exit, Straight ahead. Continue to J11, exit left to B'mena and follow as above \*

18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> October Residential, Fermanagh Lakelands, Castle Archdale area. O.S. Map 17 de-

tails to follow

All being well, set for the north of Lower Lough Erne. Details to be finalised but in communication. Please contact Debbie on [nelson\\_debbie2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nelson_debbie2002@yahoo.co.uk) or 07724417274 asap to place your name on the list.

2<sup>nd</sup> November (\*Sunday\*) Redburn Country Park (J396772) O.S. Map no. 15.

*This event is run in conjunction with Crawfordsburn Country Park wardens with public attendance.*

From north, west and south. Follow all directions to Belfast. From north continue onto Sydenham Bypass Bridge: From west and south onto M1 follow to Belfast. At end of Westlink keep RIGHT! Follow up slip road onto Sydenham Bypass Bridge.

From here follow A2 towards Bangor. On passing the City Airport you need to keep right. Exit right onto slip but keeping in the left hand of the 2 lanes. Through the lights keep left. At next lights go straight up hill passing Knocknagoney Tesco Store on left.

Continue straight up hill to end. At lights go left. Travel along this road. Pass the first low level small carpark for Redburn. Take the second carpark which is on your right (also signposted for a nursing home entrance).

15<sup>th</sup> November Shanes Castle Estate, Antrim (J110881) O.S Map no. 14

West: follow towards Belfast. Exit left at Junction 9. Take the 1<sup>st</sup> exit towards Antrim\*. Follow to Nutts Corner R'bout. At r'bout take 2<sup>nd</sup> exit (airport, Tully Road A26). At r'bout take 1<sup>st</sup> exit towards airport. At 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> mini r'bout go straight. At 3<sup>rd</sup> take right (Antrim Road) Follow into Antrim. Continue straight at mini r'bout. Through t'lights. At approach to next r'bout keep left. Exit left onto Randalstown Road.

Continue straight. Take 1<sup>st</sup> entrance on left into Shanes Castle Carpark.

South: follow north to Hillsborough. At 1<sup>st</sup> r'bout go straight. At next exit left. At underpass enter left onto the M1. Follow to Moira J9. Exit left. At top of sliproad take the 3<sup>rd</sup> exit, A26 (Antrim) follow as \* above.

North. follow M2/A6/A26 towards Belfast and the M2. Exit left at Junction 1. Take the Antrim exit (3<sup>rd</sup> exit). Continue straight ahead through a series of small r'bouts. Pass a Maxol garage on left. At next r'bout exit right (Randlestown Road) follow to the 1<sup>st</sup> entrance to Shanes Castle Carpark.