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Contents

Introduction

2025 brings the start of a new fungus recording year – though sadly without one of our stalwarts, Nigel Stringer, who died just before Christmas. He will be greatly missed. Further losses to the mycological world occurred in the early part of 2025: Michael Jordan (Fungus Conservation Trust), Irene Ridge (Northwest Fungus Group) and Richard Fortey (Fungus Survey of Oxfordshire). We send our condolences to their friends and family members.

We now enter the 21st year since the PFRN was established by Sam Bosanquet, Jane Hodges and me. Shortly after this Trevor Theobald, Robin Crump and Holly Harries joined the steering group followed, more recently, by Adam Pollard-Powell.

During that time we have expanded our range of interests well beyond the grassland fungus recording that piqued our interest in the early days. We especially welcome newcomers who bring their own specialities to the network.

David Harries, March 2025

Useful website links

https://www.pembsfungi.org.uk/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/PembsFungi

West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre
https://www.wwbic.org.uk/

LERC Wales' Biodiversity Information & Reporting Database (ADERYN)
https://aderyn.lercwales.org.uk/

Fungus Records Database of Britain and Ireland (FRDBI) maintained by the British Mycological Society (BMS)
https://www.frdbi.org.uk/

Fungus reports and records

Leucoagaricus leucothites

Trevor Theobald found this example of *Leucoagaricus leucothites* (White Dapperling) during a walk on the coast path west of St. Non's chapel, St. David's in September. Aderyn shows 45 records from Wales with the majority occurring near the coast.

This species was originally described as a member of the *Agaricus* genus (*Agaricus leucothites*, 1825) but underwent a number of name changes until 1977 when the name was established as *Leucoagaricus leucothites*. [Note that although this is the currently accepted name in the UK, the latest information indicates a further name change in 2023 to *Leucocoprinus leucothites*!!]

Specimens are easily separated from members of the Agaricus family by spore colour (*Leucoagaricus* spores are white, *Agaricus* spores are brown).

Coprinopsis picacea

Richard Brown and Giselle Eagle, Wardens on Skokholm, reported on a collection of *Coprinopsis picacea* (Magpie Inkcap). The specimens were spotted on the main path down towards the Well in November.

At one stage, this would have been part of a large genus all under the name *Coprinus*. However, following molecular studies, this genus was largely dismantled in 2001 with a number of species, including this example, moved to a new genus: *Coprinopsis*.

The Aderyn website shows 53 records from Wales, but none from Pembrokeshire.

Postia ptychogaster

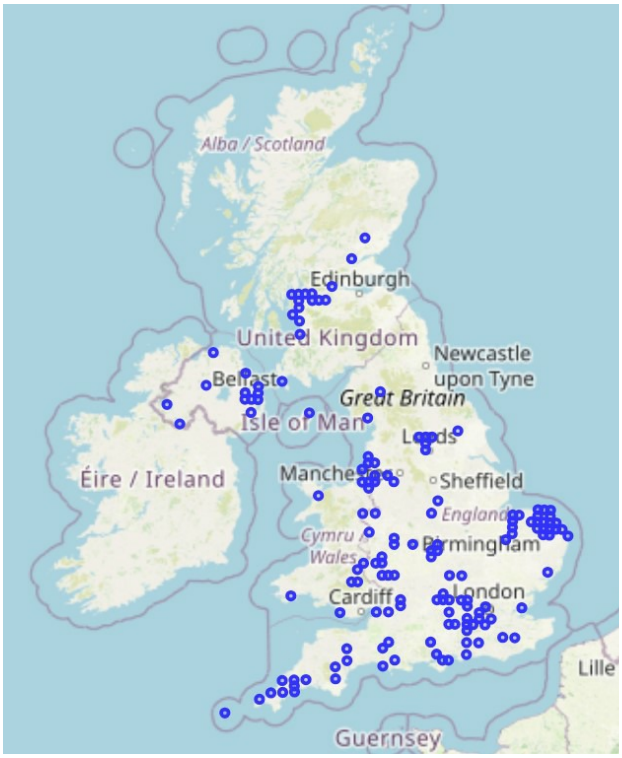
Nigel Lee reported more interesting finds including this example of *Postia ptychogaster* (Powderpuff Bracket) spotted near Puncheston during a Ramblers excursion in mid Pembrokeshire.

This species, found on decaying conifer has just two Pembrokeshire records: Colby woodland during the 2007 BMS foray and Martletwy in 2023.

Some winter colour - *Leratiomyces ceres* (DJH)

An otherwise dull and overcast December was brightened up with a colourful display of *Leratiomyces ceres* (redlead roundhead) in woodchip-covered flower borders in a neighbour's garden.

L. ceres is related to the genus *Stropharia* and at one time was included in the genus as *Stropharia ceres*. The species is reported as having a worldwide distribution - turning up wherever woodchips have been used as mulches in garden borders and around trees. The species may originate from the southern hemisphere, but was not recorded in the UK until 1957.



The Fungus records Database of Britain and Ireland shows 350 records, with just 8 from Wales including one from Pembrokeshire (2011, Sageston, Mike Karpaty). Aderyn shows rather more records in Wales with 37 records, mostly from Glamorganshire.

Fruitbodies are bright orange-red, initially slimy but soon drying. The white, slightly floccose stem has an indistinct, fragile ring which is soon lost. The spores give a dark purple-brown print.

DNA barcoding reveals *Entoloma viiduense* (DJH)

A striking collection of a blue *Entoloma* fungus turned up in coastal, pony-grazed, grassland at Angle in October. The specimens had a blue-black scaly cap and a smooth dark blue stem up to 80 mm in height.

The collection did not fit well with the keys in Vesterholt (2002), so a DNA sequence was obtained. This gave 100% similarity with *Entoloma viiduense*: a species which appears to be rather variable with some collections coloured blue as in our example whilst others are pure brown without any blue colours. Noordeloos (2022) comments that "*....not surprisingly this species has been described under several names.....*"

The FRDBI shows four UK records from 1992 to 2003, all originally recorded as *E. scabrosum*. More recently, Andy Overall has reported this species from Sussex and, like ours, its identity was unclear until a DNA barcode was obtained.

References:

Vesterholt (2002) Fungi non Delineati 21: Contribution to the Knowledge of Species of *Entoloma* Subgenus *Leptonia*. Libreria Mykoflora

Noordeloos et al (2022) Fungi Europaei, Volume 5B: *Entoloma* s.l. Edizioni Candusso

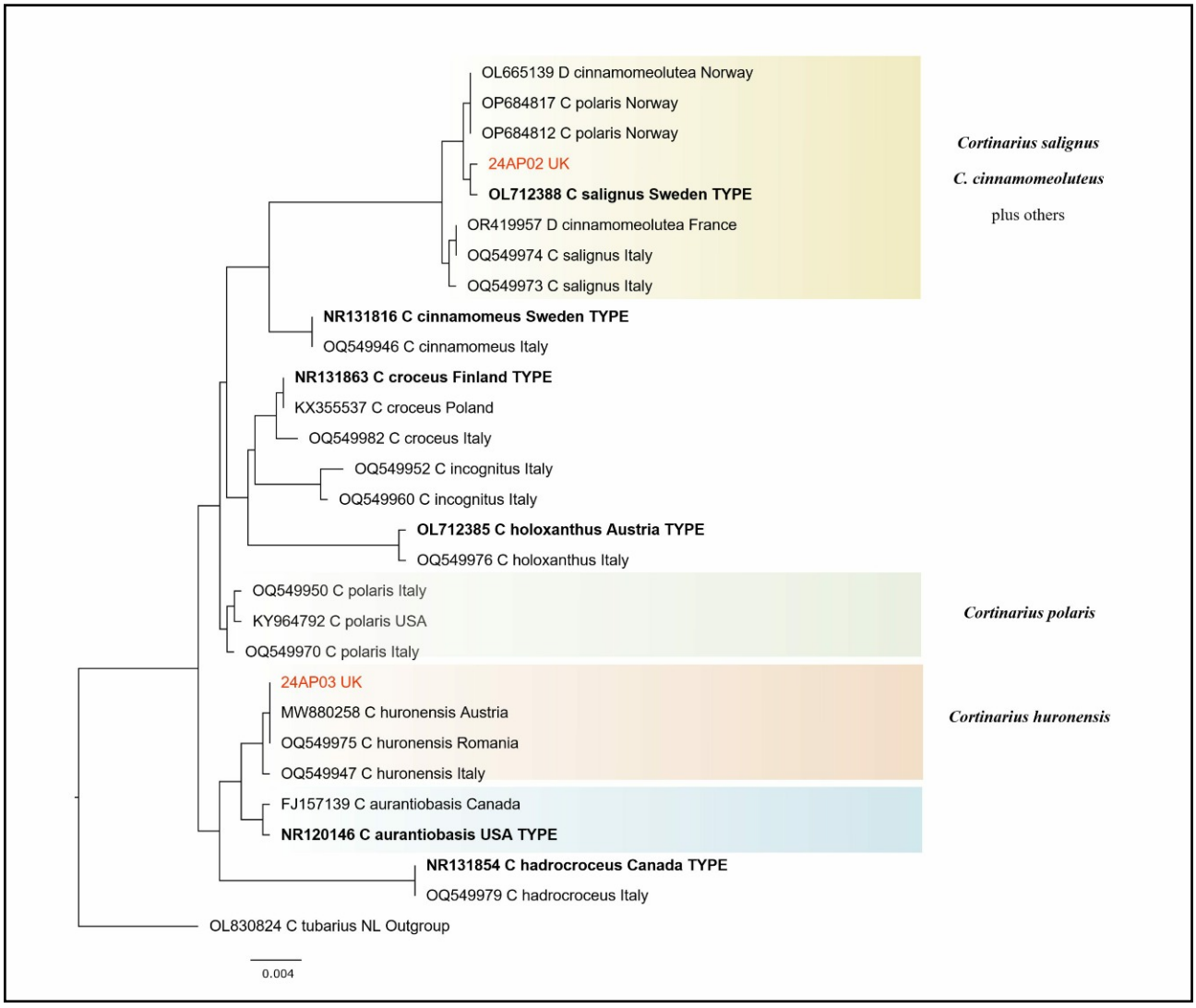
Two *Cortinarius* collections from Pembrokeshire (Adam Pollard-Powell)

Introduction

In 2024, APP took the bold decision to take a closer look at the *Cortinarius* species found in Pembrokeshire (Pollard-Powell, A. 2024). This article presents the results for two interesting collections made in October 2024.

Collections were inspected and documented following Kibby & Tortelli (2021). DNA sequences from the ITS barcode region were obtained and incorporated into a phylogenetic tree (figure 1) constructed using *Cortinarius* sequences downloaded from the public database, Genbank. Priority was given to species from the subgenus *Dermocybe* where known to occur in Europe and included in a recent review of this group by Huymann et al (2024).

Figure 1: Phylogenetic tree based on ITS sequences



Collection 24AP03 - *Cortinarius huronensis* (figure 2)

Fig. 2

Collection details (24AP03)	
Location:	Minwear Woods, Pembrokeshire NGR SN049137
Habitat:	At base of a coppiced beech in mixed woodlands
Cap:	Dry and smooth, up to 4 cm diameter. Slightly convex with small umbo. Bright orange-brown, paler at edge.
Gills:	Adnexed, medium-spaced, concolourous with cap. Gill edge wavy-jagged in places, many gills not reaching centre
Stipe:	Up to 5-7 cm long. Straw coloured, darker yellow towards apex. Dark yellow veil remnants in top 2/3 of stipe.
Ring:	Not present
Base:	Cylindrical.
Smell:	Not distinctive.
KOH:	Dark red-brown on stipe and gills after 1 min
Spores:	Ellipsoid to sub-amygdaloid 7.4-9 x 5.3-7 µm
Cheilocystidia:	None seen

Collection 24AP03 was a good fit with sequences for *C. huronensis* as shown in the tree by Huymann. This clade was reported as including a Type sequence (though not publicly released by the authors) so provides good evidence to support the identification.

The Fungus Records Database of Britain and Ireland (FRDBI) shows just 8 records for *C. huronensis* including one from Wales, recorded by Bruce Ing in Radnorshire in 1997.

Collection 24AP02 (figure 3)

Fig. 3

A second reddish-brown *Cortinarius* was collected during a joint foray with the Wildlife Trust at Pentre Ifan Woods. Due to the conflicting need to concentrate on foray leader duties it proved impractical to collect full details of the fresh collection at the time. However, material was retained for subsequent inspection and was shown to have spores measuring 7.8-9.6 x 5.6-6.4 µm. but the collection did not key out convincingly in Kibby & Tortelli (2021).

A DNA barcode for the collection was placed in the phylogenetic tree, but any conclusion proved problematic as a number of different species with almost identical ITS barcodes cluster in the same region. Typical species names assigned in this region include *C. polaris* and *C. salignus* (neither recorded in the UK) and *C. cinnamomeoluteus* (as *Dermocybe cinnamomeolutea*). *D cinnamomeolutea* is recorded in the UK with 77 records noted on the FRDBI, including 4 from Wales. It seems likely that this part of the phylogenetic tree is not yet fully resolved.

References

Pollard-Powell, A (2024). *Cortinarius* in Pembrokeshire. PFRN Newsletter 2024-02

Huymann, L. R. et al. (2024). Revised taxon definition in European *Cortinarius* subgenus *Dermocybe* based on phylogeny, chemotaxonomy, and morphology. Mycological Progress, 23(1), 26.

Kibby, G., & Tortelli, M. (2021). The genus Cortinarius in Britain.

In memory of Nigel Stringer

Nigel Stringer, one of the UK's leading experts on rust fungi, passed away at home in Kidwelly on Friday 20th December.

Nigel was a good friend and enthusiastic supporter of the Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network and a familiar figure at our events where he freely shared his extensive knowledge on mycology in general, and rusts in particular. He was a regular contributor to our newsletter. Nigel, together with Philip Jones, generously supported our first ventures into fungus events in Pembrokeshire including one of our first public walks at Colby Woodlands in 2008.

In the course of his studies Nigel established extensive links with other specialists in the field including leading experts in Europe and North America. In recent years we had collaborated on a number of DNA barcoding projects on plant parasites, including mildews as well as rusts, with the output published in the BMS Field Mycology journal.

As one of the Welsh Microfungi Group* he will be remembered for his contribution to a series of checklists, identification guides and red data lists compiled and published and updated by the team since 2015. Copies can be downloaded from the website:
https://www.aber.ac.uk/waxcap/links/index.shtml

A great raconteur and communicator, Nigel always entertained those who surrounded him as he educated them on the finer points of rust biology. He will be very sadly missed.

* Nigel Stringer, Ray Woods, Arthur Chater, Debbie Evans & Paul Smith.

Photos: Nigel with Philip Jones and Mike Karpaty (Colby 2008)
Nigel with Eef Arnolds at Pembrey during the BMS 2006 foray