

# TATTON PARK FORAY

27th October 2013

*It was a grand day out organised by the National Trust rangers. There were 25 official people plus the usual folk who "sidled" in. It started off raining but in true Fungalpunk fashion, it cleared up, and warmed up.*

*First of all Dave talked about the basic fungal divisions, and the various niches that they occupy. We started by the large fallen beech, which Dave said is beginning to run out of fungal food. It still is a great spectacle to get people interested in mushrooms, the huge variety that grows just on one fallen beech, and the concept of not tidying fallen trees away so that they can provide habitat for so many critters. Then we mooched around to find identifiable specimens to add to the list of 67 species already clocked up by Dave and Gill in an hour and a bit before the meeting started.*

*There were brackets, like this trembling rot, crumbly russulas, folk "volunteering" to lick fiery milkcaps and some fantastic gooey things:*



**Trembling Rot - a well used excuse for the work shy it appears**



**A sci-fi slime mould - ready to creep into your own personal comfort zone**

*Most folk left around 3pm, Dave always worries that he hasn't given people enough information, but people were passing round specimens at the back, taking photos, thoroughly enthralled, and probably a tad overwhelmed. When they could absorb no more, some drifted away for rest and relaxation.*



Now, here's one we thought Dave would refuse to do – a classic pretty little thing, about .5 cm across, on dead wood, he identified it as *Mycena haematopus*.

*There were 3 hours left of daylight, it wasn't raining and Dave and Gill wanted to walk round the lake, as they had always run out of time on previous Tatton forays. We found more grassland fungi, including a great crop of meadow waxcaps, and various yellow and red waxcaps to smell, and add to the box. These grassland fungi are increasingly rare because their habitat of unimproved or semi-improved grassland is so easy to destroy - one good dose of fertiliser, a reseed with the ubiquitous perennial rye grass, and there's an antique gone. We've lost 99% of our species rich meadows. Apparently it can take decades to restore a waxcap grassland, is it that the fertiliser kills the mycelium, or that they can't cope with grass overgrowth and competition.*

*At least taking out a woodland takes energy, and so our woodlands have survived better, although everyone seems to think that they are in short supply, so trees should be planted, so often on "poor grassland" i.e. non-productive, so species rich pasture.*

*We saw a spectacular example of the mushroom energy: the role of honey fungus in creating dead wood habitat by felling a large tree:*



*It was getting dark, we were under pines, but couldn't see anything, and it was the end of another good day. The wet weather and no frosts meant that even Dave couldn't complain that it 'were rubbish' - there was loads out, some as common as muck, on a list that had plenty we should be able to identify after 1 foray - you know the one, the one I haven't mastered yet. The total stands at 140 species. So, till we meet again next year: JULIE*