

**PHOTOS OF FUNGI IDENTIFIED ON LENZIE MOSS**  
**29 SEPTEMBER 2018**



**TAR SPOT FUNGUS (*Rhytisma Acerinum*)**

We found this fungus on a sycamore tree shortly after entering the railway path. This is an example of symbiosis in that the fungus doesn't damage the tree. It remains dormant on the old leaf litter over the winter, and when the spores open in the spring they are distributed on the wind to new healthy leaves.

**BIRCH BRACKET POLYPORE (*Piptoporus Betulinus*)**

This large fungus is one of the most common on Lenzie Moss and groups of them can be seen on many of the birch trees. It develops from a small white spherical swelling on the side of dead or living birch trees (see photo insert). It grows mainly on weakened birches, and will cause rot and eventually death, being one of the most common fungi visible on dead birch trees. It is likely that the fungus becomes established in small wounds and on broken branches, and may lie dormant for years until something occurs to weaken the tree. Fire, drought and suppression by other trees are common causes of such stress. The velvety cut surface of the fruit body was traditionally used by barbers for sharpening the edges of their cut-throat razors, giving rise to its alternative name as the Razor Strop Fungus.



**MORE BIRCH BRACKET POLYPORES – THESE WERE ABOUT 15CM ACROSS**







Fly Agaric

### **FLY AGARIC (*Amanita Muscaria*)**

This fungus emerges from the ground looking like a white egg. By the time it matures, its shape has flattened, its colour has become red, and it has reached a diameter of about 20 cm. The gills remain white. It can cause sickness, possibly death if eaten in large amounts, but if watered down, is hallucinogenic. It is also known as Santa's Cloak. The story behind this is that it is much loved by reindeer in northern coniferous forests. The herdsmen used to drink the reindeers' pee to get the benefit of its hallucinogenic properties, and hence may well have seen "flying reindeer".

### **TURKEY TAIL POLYPORE (*Trametes Versicolor*)**

This is a common fungus found throughout the world, and because of its shape and its many different colours, it is commonly called turkey tail. The cap is flat, up to 8cm x 5cm in area, and 1-3 mm thick. Its flesh has a leathery texture. Older ones can have zones with green algae growing on them, thus appearing green. It commonly grows in tiled layers. It may be eaten by certain caterpillars and maggots.



Turkey Tail Polypore



Tinder Fungus

### **TINDER FUNGUS (*Fomes Fomentarius*)**

This fungus produces very large fruiting bodies, shaped like a horse's hoof, and ranging in colour from silvery grey, black, & brown. It grows on the trunks of various species of tree, which it infects through broken bark, causing rot. It typically continues to live on trees long after they have died, gradually causing the tree to decompose. The flesh is hard and fibrous. The upper surface is tough, bumpy, hard and woody. Historically, the fungus was removed from the tree, the hard outer layer scraped off, and then thin strips of the inner spongy layer cut for use as tinder for fires. The 5,000-year-old Otzi the Iceman carried four pieces of this fungus, concluded to be for use as tinder.



### POLYPORUS VARIUS

Typically fruiting on smaller hardwood sticks and decaying branches, this polypore is fairly easily recognized by its small size, its whitish pore surface, and its black, or half-black, central stem. Like many polypores it is rather tough, and can manage to "stay up" for quite a while in dry weather—resulting in older specimens with faded, nearly white caps and brownish pore surfaces. **Cap:** 2–6 cm; broadly convex to flat, developing a central depression; usually round in outline, but sometimes cleft or somewhat kidney-shaped; dry; bald; **Stem:** central or off-centre to lateral; 1–2 cm long; 4–7 mm wide; tapered slightly to base; often curving; dry; bald and pale tan at the apex, becoming velvety and dark brown to black from the base upward. **Flesh:** whitish to dingy yellowish, thin and very tough; its odour and taste is undistinctive.



### BONNET CAP (*Mycena Garariculata*)

This fungus is quite variable in colour, size, and shape, which makes it somewhat difficult to reliably identify in the field. The caps have distinct radial grooves, particularly at the margin. The cap's colour varies from greyish brown to dark brown and the shape ranges from bell-like, to bluntly conical, to flattened with a central swelling. The stem is hollow, white, tough and thin, often roots deeply into the wood on which it grows. The gills are white to greyish, or even pink, when mature, and are connected by distinct cross-veins. The caps can reach 4cm in diameter, and have a mealy smell and taste. The fungi grow mostly in clusters on well-decayed stumps of deciduous and coniferous trees from spring to autumn, but may also live on leaf litter. It's generally considered inedible.



### COMMON YELLOW RUSSULA (*Russula ochroleuca*)

This fungus is widespread, and common in mixed woodland. The cap is a dull yellow and 5-12cm wide, initially convex, later flat or slightly depressed. The cap margin becomes furrowed when mature, and is 2/3 peeling. The gills are white to greyish white, and are narrowly connected at the stalk. The stalk itself is 3-7cm long, 1-2cm wide, cylindrical, white or later greyish. The taste is mild to moderately hot.







Brown Roll-Rim

### **BROWN ROLL-RIM (*Paxillus Involutus*)**

This grows up to 6 cm high and has a funnel-shaped cap up to 12 cm wide with a distinctive in-rolled rim. Its gills grow down the stem and may be pore-like close to the stem. The mycelium wraps itself round the roots of trees rather than invading the trunk. The trees benefit from the fungus as it reduces their intake of heavy metals and increases their resistance to pathogens. It's highly poisonous.

### **FUNGI PHOTOGRAPHED ON BIRCH TREES AT THE END OF HEATH AVENUE OCTOBER 2017**

