

Quick Waxcap Key

This quick key contains the species in Boertmann which are claimed to be British. To use it, start on this page. Decide whether the cap and stipe are dry or viscid (you need good fresh material), then choose a column. Work down the left hand column until you find the row which best describes the cap. Look at the box where the chosen column and row coincide. If there are several species listed in the box, select the number listed and turn over the page where a short key will be found to the species listed against that number. Note: this is a field learning key and should not be used for critical determinations.

	Stipe viscid	Stipe dry + cap viscid	Stipe dry + cap dry
Cap turning black	<i>conica</i>	<i>conica</i>	<i>conica</i>
Cap dark grey to black, gills & flesh reddening		<i>ovina</i>	<i>ovina</i>
Cap white		<i>virginea</i> 1 <i>russocoriacea</i>	<i>pratensis</i> var <i>pallida</i> 2 <i>fornicata</i>
Cap or stipe with at least some green	<i>peittacina</i> var <i>peittacina</i>	<i>laeta</i>	<i>citrinovirens</i>
Cap violet, lilac or blueish	<i>blacina</i>	<i>calyptiformis</i>	<i>calyptiformis</i> 3 <i>blacina</i> <i>viola</i>
Cap grey or grey-blue	<i>irrigata</i>	<i>fornicata</i> 4 <i>lacmus</i> <i>flavipes</i>	<i>fornicata</i> 5 <i>caneescens</i> <i>nitrata</i>
Cap brown	<i>irrigata</i>	<i>ingrata</i> 6 <i>spadicea</i> <i>colemanniana</i>	<i>ingrata</i> 6 <i>spadicea</i> <i>colemanniana</i>
Cap yellow + conical	<i>persistens</i>	<i>persistens</i> 11 <i>aurantiosplendens</i>	<i>citrinovirens</i>
Cap yellow + convex or applanate	<i>chlorophana</i> 7 <i>vitellina</i> <i>glutinipes</i> var <i>glutinipes</i> <i>insipida</i> <i>citrinopallida</i> <i>xanthochroa</i>	<i>chlorophana</i> 8 <i>ceracea</i> <i>citrinopallida</i> <i>aurantiosplendens</i> <i>subpapillata</i>	<i>turunda</i> 9 <i>citrinopallida</i> <i>xanthochroa</i> <i>quieta</i>
Cap orange + gills free, adnate or adnexed	<i>mucronella</i> 10 <i>insipida</i> <i>xanthochroa</i>	<i>aurantiosplendens</i> 11 <i>persistens</i> var <i>konradii</i> <i>persistens</i> var <i>persistens</i>	<i>quieta</i> 12 <i>miniata</i> <i>calciphila</i> <i>substrangulata</i> <i>intermedia</i> <i>helobia</i> <i>reidii</i>
Cap orange + gills decurrent	<i>insipida</i> 13 <i>laeta</i> <i>xanthochroa</i>	<i>laeta</i>	<i>pratensis</i> 14 <i>turunda</i> <i>cantharellus</i>
Cap red + gills free, adnate or adnexed	<i>glutinipes</i> var <i>rubra</i> 15 <i>peittacina</i> var <i>perplexa</i>	<i>coccinea</i> 16 <i>punicea</i> <i>marchii</i> <i>salicis</i> - herbaceae	<i>mucronella</i> 17 <i>splendidissima</i> <i>helobia</i> <i>miniata</i> <i>calciphila</i> <i>reidii</i> <i>coccinea</i>
Cap red + gills decurrent	<i>coccineocrenata</i> 18 <i>mucronella</i>		<i>cantharellus</i> 19 <i>coccineocrenata</i> <i>mucronella</i>

1. Strong smell of russian leather/cedar pencils Smell indistinct, mild coconut	<i>rusocoriacea</i> <i>virginia</i>	p 46 p 48
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3. Cap narrowly conical Cap convex or omphalinoid	<i>calyptriformis</i> B	p 136
B Cap < 5 mm, omphalinoid, gills adnate Cap > 5 mm, convex, gills decurrent	<i>viola</i> <i>hilicina</i>	p 70 p 68

5. Gills decurrent, cap felty Gills adnate or adnexed	<i>canescens</i> B	p 44
B Stipe white or cream Stipe grey to fawn, smell nitrous	<i>formicata</i> <i>nitrata</i>	p 72 p 74

7. Gills adnexed or adnate Gills sub-decurrent to decurrent	B C	
B Stipe opaque, fungus robust Stipe hyaline, fungus small	<i>chlorophana</i> <i>glutinipes</i> var <i>glutinipes</i>	p 140 p 142
C Lamellae edge viscid Lamellae edge dry	<i>vittolina</i> D	p 90
D Stipe red at least at the apex Stipe orange yellow or white	<i>insipida</i> E	p 122
E Stipe orange, at least at the apex Stipe white, or yellow at the apex	<i>xanthochroa</i> <i>citrinopallida</i>	p 66 p 64

9. Cap yellow or orange with dark squamules Cap smooth or finely pruinose	<i>turunda</i> B	p 112
B Fungus robust, stipe > 5 mm diameter Fungus delicate, stipe < 3 mm diameter	<i>quieta</i> C	p 98
C Stipe violaceous at apex, spores 6-7.5 µm x 4-5 µm Stipe pale yellow or white, spores 8-10 µm x 4.5-5.5 µm	<i>xanthochroa</i> <i>citrinopallida</i>	p 66 p 64

12. Pileus squamulose or tomentose Pileus smooth	B F	
B Lamellae free or adnexed, stipe fibrillose Lamellae adnate or decurrent	<i>intermedia</i> C	p 148
C Cap bright red, fragile, smell of garlic Cap orange or dull red, tough, no smell	<i>helobia</i> D	p 134
D Spores 9-12 µm long Spores 7.5-9 µm long	<i>subtriangulata</i> E	p 106
E Spores "triangular" Spores oblong	<i>miniata</i> <i>calciphila</i>	p 102 p 104
F Cap yellow, smell of Lactarius quietus Cap orange to orange-red, smell of honey at least in stipe base	<i>quieta</i> <i>reidii</i>	p 98 p 92

17. Pileus squamulose Pileus smooth or finely pruinose	B D	
B Fungus scarlet, squamules pointed, faint smell of garlic Fungus red, orange or yellow, squamules obtuse	<i>helobia</i> C	p 134
C Spores "triangular" Spores oblong	<i>miniata</i> <i>calciphila</i>	p 102 p 104
D Taste bitter Taste neutral or mild	<i>mucronella</i> E	p 132
E Fungus medium to large, bright red Fungus small to medium, orange red	<i>splendissima</i> F	p 94
F Lamellae yellow or orange, smell of honey in stipe base Lamellae red with yellow edge, smell neutral	<i>reidii</i> <i>coccinea</i>	p 92 p 116

2. Gills adnate or adnexed Gills decurrent	<i>formicata</i> <i>pratensis</i> var <i>pallida</i>	p 72 p 42
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4. Gills adnate or adnexed Gills decurrent	<i>formicata</i> B	p 72
B Stipe base yellow Stipe base matches cap	<i>flavipes</i> <i>lacmus</i>	p 58 p 56

6. Gills decurrent Gills free or adnexed	<i>colomaniana</i> B	p 54
B Gills yellow Gills cream	<i>spadicea</i> <i>ingrata</i>	p 150 p 76

8. Lamellae distinctly decurrent, stipe yellow or white Lamellae otherwise	<i>citrinopallida</i> B	p 64
B Stipe fibrillose or pruinose at least at apex Stipe smooth	<i>aurantiosplendens</i> C	p 130
C Cap with small papilla Cap without papilla	<i>subpapillata</i> D	p 146
D Stipe < 5 mm diameter Stipe > 5 mm diameter	<i>ceracea</i> <i>chlorophana</i>	p 120 p 140

10. Cap reddish-orange, taste bitter Cap yellowish-orange, taste neutral	<i>mucronella</i> B	p 132
B Stipe violaceous, at least at the apex Stipe reddish, at least at the apex	<i>xanthochroa</i> <i>insipida</i>	p 66 p 122

11. Stipe smooth, lamellae adnate Stipe fibrillose, lamellae free or adnexed	<i>aurantiosplendens</i> <i>persistens</i> var <i>persistens</i> or var <i>konradii</i>	p 130 p 154
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13. Lamellae edge viscid, stipe dull Lamellae edge dry, stipe red or orange	<i>laeta</i> B	p 84
B Stipe red at least at apex Stipe orange, hyaline, sometimes with violet	<i>insipida</i> <i>xanthochroa</i>	p 122 p 66

14. Fungus robust, cap dull matt orange Fungus small	<i>pratensis</i> B	p 40
B Cap orange with dark squamules Cap edge scalloped	<i>turunda</i> <i>cantharellus</i>	p 112 p 110

15. Fungus brick red, cap convex Fungus orange red, cap applanate	<i>paittacia</i> var <i>perplexa</i> <i>glutinipes</i> var <i>rubra</i>	p 82 p 144
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16. Fungus robust, stipe fibrillose Fungus small, stipe smooth	<i>panicea</i> B	p 128
B Under swarf salix, flesh tastes bitter Other habitats, flesh mild	<i>salicis</i> - <i>herbaceae</i> C	p 126
C Lamellae red, at least at base Lamellae pale	<i>coccinea</i> <i>marchii</i>	p 116 p 118

18. Taste bitter Taste mild	<i>mucronella</i> <i>coccineocrenata</i>	p 132 p 114
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19. Cap smooth, flesh tastes bitter Cap squamulose	<i>mucronella</i> B	p 132
B Squamules concolourous with cap Squamules distinctly dark	<i>cantharellus</i> <i>coccineocrenata</i>	p 110 p 114

Note: The page number after each species name, for example "helobia p 134", refers to David Boertmann's Key to the genus *Hygrocybe*. This quick key is designed to help with learning the field characters of the genus, it should not be used for critical determinations. Boertmann's key gives full data and descriptions including species variability.