

## **BMS Recording Network News**

January 2021

To: BMS Recording Network Contacts  
Cc: BMS Field Mycology & Conservation Committee members  
  
From: Nathan Smith, BMS Recording Network Coordinator

### 1. **Upcoming Online Talk from BMS President**

Newly appointed BMS President Prof. Janet Quinn will be giving an online talk on the subject of 'Killer Fungi – A Clear and Present Danger to Life on Earth' at 19.30 on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February. It promises both to be exciting and informative and provides an excellent way to engage with the British Mycological Society.

The talk summary is below:

*We share our planet with millions of different types of fungi, which perform numerous functions that make our planet habitable. However, there is a dark side to this Fungal Kingdom. New fungi are emerging that are wiping out susceptible amphibians and bats, and others are having a devastating effect on crops thus threatening world food security. This is caused both by the accidental spread of hardy fungal spores into new places due to the globalization of trade, and the disruption of natural environments which creates breeding grounds for new fungi to evolve. As humans, we are also at increasing risk from killer fungi - over 1.5 million people are killed every year by a handful of fungal species - that's a lot more than other infectious diseases we hear much more about such as malaria and superbugs such as MRSA. In this talk, I'll give an overview of some of the planet's fungal foes and how we can tackle emerging fungal infections.*

Tickets can be acquired for free from: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/killer-fungi-a-clear-and-present-danger-to-life-on-earth-tickets-137068141501>

If you would like to suggest any ideas for future talks or online events, please email me at [ns565@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ns565@cam.ac.uk).

### 2. **BMS Newsletter**

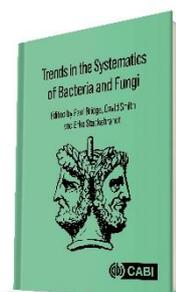
The next issue of the *BMS Newsletter* will be on the theme of 'Mycology: Old and New' and is open for submissions both for this issue and upcoming issues. Of particular interest would be articles detailing how your fungal recording group has adapted to the "new normal". For those looking for inspiration, see the collection of excellent articles in the last issue of the BMS Newsletter or Penny Cullington's wonderful article below. Please send articles for the *BMS Newsletter* to myself at [ns565@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ns565@cam.ac.uk) and Norman Porrett at [norman@britmycolsoc.info](mailto:norman@britmycolsoc.info).

### 3. **BMS Recording Network News**

Articles and news any size (but particularly those under 500 words) are also requested for future editions of the *BMS Recording Network News*. Please share upcoming events, news, and mycological top tips and tricks. Please send articles to myself at [ns565@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ns565@cam.ac.uk).

### 4. **Trends in the Systematics of Bacteria and Fungi**

Members of the BMS have contributed to a recently published book entitled *Trends in the Systematics of Bacteria and Fungi*. The book seeks to provide insights into how current methods and resources are being used in microbial systematics, together with some thoughts and suggestions as to how both methodologies and concepts may develop in the future.



BMS members can use the code CCBMS25 for 25% off individual (non-trade) orders of the print book, up to a maximum of 10 copies per customer. This offer is available until the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021, for orders placed on the [CABI Bookshop](#) only.

The blurb below provides more details:

*Methods in microbial systematics have developed and changed significantly in the last 40 years, resulting in considerable change in both the defining microbial species and the methods required to make reliable identifications. This book provides insight into how current methods and resources are being used in microbial systematics, together with thoughts and suggestions on how methodologies and concepts may develop in the future. It includes coverage of:*

- *The philosophy and changes in microbial systematics, including the relevance of names, new concepts of species, and the issues encountered with species that cannot be grown in culture.*
- *The application of new identification technologies, specifically those based on nucleic acids and complex chemo-taxonomic methods.*
- *The challenges of using published databases and other data resources in arriving at an identification appropriate to current species concepts.*
- *The practical requirements of an identification: obtaining and verifying reference cultures and data, and the type and level of identification required by different users.*

## 5. BFG: Beating the Covid Blues!

The onset of Corona virus in the UK soon brought the activities of many local fungus groups to a complete standstill, the Buckinghamshire Fungus Group amongst them. Ironically this coincided with the best and most prolific Autumn fruiting of fungi in our area for years. Sod's law comes to mind! The group has a large though not particularly active or expert membership, so we needed something which would replace our normal activities and which everyone could enjoy and contribute to, however limited their expertise. Our website was the obvious way forward, so our Members' Finds Autumn 2020 page was set up and members were encouraged to get out there and start sending in their photos which, if suitable and able to be identified, were to be uploaded together with helpful field identification notes.

We started off at the beginning of September in a modest way but it was not long before a dated species list was needed to help navigate around the many and varied collections sent in from all over the county by a range of people. A few collections were identified using a scope but most were sent in by beginners eager to learn and just thoroughly enjoying being involved and seeing their photos on the website. It really took off in October with ridiculous numbers of interesting things appearing and the photos and skills of many members clearly improving – that after all was the main object of the exercise.



**Above left:** *Rhodocybe fumanellii*, new to the UK from Rushbeds Wood, Bucks, 28.09.2020  
Penny Cullington

**Above right:** *Battarreia phalloides*, new to Bucks from Hambleton Churchyard, 05.10.2020  
Richard Fortey

None of this would have been possible without our webmaster, Peter Davis, being prepared to update the site day by day – his patience and fortitude were just amazing. We went from one unlikely target to another: first could we get to 200 species? Then possibly 300? Eventually by the end of December we'd made it to 508, including over 30 species new to the county, 2 of which, having been sequenced, are new to the UK (both found on the same day at the same site and only a matter of few yards apart - what a day that was!)

It was gratifying to receive the many appreciative messages both from members and non-members as the project gained momentum, and it does seem to have really ticked the boxes and given participants a much needed sense of purpose and achievement in what has been for all of us a very trying time to say the least. Now, at the start of 2021 as we're all about to enter yet another testing lockdown period, we've just introduced our follow-up project – Members Finds 2021 - to give members another challenge: something everyone can support by keeping an eye on their local patch.

I'd highly recommend this sort of activity to other groups but it does need a few people to head it up and take on the commitment: there is certainly a fair amount of work involved but it has turned out to be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable things I've done in mycology. The one thing we've all got plenty of at the moment is time and anything which gives us a reason to get out there and enjoy fungi has to be good. It's also produced a whole load of records which we'd otherwise have missed – that has to be another plus. Go to [www.bucksfungusgroup.org.uk/finds.htm](http://www.bucksfungusgroup.org.uk/finds.htm) to take a look at how it works.

*Penny Cullington*