



The British Mycological Society Report June 2015

The BMS were privileged to be asked to this event. As a chance to open doors to people who may be outside of science, it remains a very powerful event to support as the Natural History Museum is a high profile venue. As individual organisations we would rarely entertain as many visitors as we had and as a collection of natural history groups we get a chance to share what we do and help each other to face daily challenge to British Natural History. Mycology needs the best of the academic, volunteer and learning community that we can muster.

This year the event was the largest to date with over 5000 visitors and 44 natural history groups. Please refer to the letter response letter provided by Chris Raper at the end of this report.

Our exhibition had some valuable displays forming an attractive and informative backdrop including a collection of different spore prints, a woodland floor with mycelium, BMS banners, a stream of excellent fungi photos and a birch tree. The visual material successfully invoked discussion and participation and encouraged membership opportunities.



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The team worked tirelessly through the day offering support to visitors asking about mycology in schools, fungus forays, species identification, edible and non-edible, local groups and talking about fungus science. Many visitors were drawn towards looking through the microscopes, listening to fungus anecdotes and of course creating a fly agaric under the birch tree. Red balloons became our ID feature. The 200 spore kits were brilliant, as take away science packs, they allowed us to reinforce the importance of protection, not by foraging but by growing edible fungi to cook and eat.

The goodie bags our visitors took away became an additional advertisement for the BMS around the museum.



Where has he gone..... or has this fly agaric just escaped?

Thank you for the skills, experience, resources and valuable time of Ali Ashby, Penny Cullington, Stuart Skeates, Andy Richards and Trevor Taylor on the day. Apparently they all enjoyed it. Thanks also to Lynne Boddy for her reel of quality photos. Thank you to Norman in the office who made all the correct recommendations for my first lead on this event.
Beverley Rhodes June 2015