

## HFRG Report 2025

### Group Activities

In total, there were 24 group surveys, 6 Fungus Walks at the Reptile Centre and a couple of pre-/post-AGM/workshop forays at Hursley.

We did organise 3 outings with MikeH's TVFG but, unfortunately the weather put paid to the one at Bowdown Woods.

Many thanks should yet again go to Pam, Russ and others who have taken on the task of both recording what we find in the field and then entering these into the FRDBI. I keep saying that this is a "great learning opportunity" and while this is (undoubtedly) true, one can have too much of a good thing so more volunteers would be more than welcome.

As mentioned above, we ran only one external educational event at the Reptile Centre and the publicity attracted about the right number of visitors with no influx of foragers this year.

I also did a session with Winchester College students, the fees for which should be visible in the accounts.

We also received £1500 for some work I did for Forest Research in 2024. The eDNA results (thanks Ben) were very interesting and reinforce the suspicion that there are numerous unrecorded species contributing spores to the air-flow if only we could find (and identify!) them.

We held 2 microscope workshops at Hursley, including an afternoon session in August following the morning's fungus hunt.

SueR invited the Group to a housewarming which was much appreciated by those who made it to the (wild) West :-) and it was good to see Alan again.

Our membership has fluctuated over the year with about 40 paid-up members (plus our two honorary life members!)

### Records

After adding personal finds to the surveys, 1800 records covering over 700 species were added to the FRDBI, with *Pappia fissilis* dominating, thanks to SimonC (!). Over 340 species were recorded only once. See HFRG2025Merge.xlsx for details. These overall numbers are similar to 2024, although only about half of the species recorded were the same.

A number of the finds are not listed on the FRDBI and may be NTBs but it is hard to confirm, at least as far as basidiomycetes are concerned, given that Martyn Ainsworth has been tasked with updating the Red Lists rather than maintaining CBIB...

### Communication

Phil has continued to do a great job of maintaining and tweaking the website and he has managed to continue working on it from Tasmania but we REALLY do need to find a willing deputy/replacement.

DaveS has continued to supplement the species list with trip reports and photos.

Further suggestions for other improvements are welcome – particularly if they are accompanied by an offer to help bring them about...

The Facebook thingies still have just DaveM to look after them, so I'm sure that he would welcome some help – any volunteers?

### **DNA Stuff**

DNA processing has continued to keep me occupied with about 360 samples processed in 2025 which have produced just over 580 sequences.

A further 150 sequences have been published on Genbank, bringing the total to 633 – it is now not unusual to find HFRG sequences returned in the Blast searches.

We received the second tranche of funding from the New Forest Biodiversity Forum which covers our sequencing costs and I continue to use the BMS contract to cover samples from other groups and areas.

I gave a short presentation on our DNA work at last year's New Forest Biodiversity Forum Conference in March, organised by Russ..

We are still getting donations from other groups for whom we process samples (mostly Buckinghamshire), which cover the ongoing PCR costs.

### **BMS Liaison**

There have also been occasional group leaders calls which covered a range of topics but nothing else which we could obviously introduce to the group.

There is now some work trying to assess how to “verify” records. While being laudable – “an unverified record is just an observation” – this sounds like an unachievable task, at least for historic records. I also pointed out that any process designed to make verification possible could be in danger of making the whole thing just too much effort for most people to even bother at all!