



Fabulous fungi!

Fungi grow almost everywhere – if you keep your eyes open. There are many different species adapted to different habitats, such as grassland, woods, or just damp corners. They come in a huge variety of shapes and colours. Fungi are often thought of as plants, but they're as different form plants as they are from animals. They are their own entire kingdom of species.

Autumn is a particularly good time to spot fungi as many appear from under the soil in September to November. We spent the morning at Community Gardening in mid November looking around the site at Root'n'Fruit to see what we could find. At first glance, we didn't think there was much there. But as we looked closer, we found quite a few.

Safety first

The most important rule of fungi hunting is never pick them.

It's very hard to be certain that what you've found is safe and many species are poisonous. Even if you're sure that what you've found looks identical to the ones in the supermarket, it might not be. There are many species that look similar, so one that looks like a tasty mushroom could easily be a poisonous toadstool in disguise.

We're not even entirely certain of the IDs in this report, with many only having the genus (group of fungi) identified not the species (specific type). We've gone with what seems most likely.

Galerina

These little orangey-brown cap fungi are common in grass. We found several around the allotment, mostly growing in quiet little corners of grass that don't get walked on much.





Mycena

These delicate little caps were found growing in the straw that was spread out after using the bales as seating at the Pumpkin Party. It's no wonder, as Mycena are known to love straw.

Blue Stain Fungus

These tiny little blue-grey cups are about the size of grains of rice. They are easily missed if you're not looking carefully. They grow on old wood and often leave a blue stain across the surface of the wood.





Slime mould

These especially weird clumps of goo are not even fungi – they are more like amoeba. They are often microscopic, but sometimes make visible blobs known as plasmodia.

Wood rot

There are many different kinds of wood rot. This one looks like dry rot, which grows fine cobweb-like strands. All kinds of rot break down dead wood, which is very important in natural environments.





Bracket Fungus

Bracket fungi grow sideways out of wood, instead of having a cap on a stalk. This one is on dead wood, but some grow on living trees.

Soft slipper

This gets its name from apparently being slipper-like in shape. It's also known as the jelly crep because of its rubbery skin.

