



November 2024



What's in a name?

At this time of year there are species on the common with wonderful, beguiling names – names such as amethyst deceiver, spectacular rustgill, upright coral and pleated inkcap, that might have come from fairytales.

The scientific names are important for study and recording, but the common names are often captivating and create pictures in the mind.

When Shakespeare asked the question, he was considering a rose, but the names above belong to fungi, and autumn is a good time to see them.



Amethyst deceiver
Laccaria amethystina



Spectacular rustgill
Gymnopilus junonius



Upright coral
Ramaria stricta



Pleated inkcap
Parasola plicatilis

Fungi come in many different shapes, sizes and colours, and are found in all habitats. They grow in grassland, leaf litter, and on dead wood. There are more than 15,000 species in the UK.

They are neither plant nor animal, and they are amazingly diverse.

Fungi have a significant role in decay and the recycling of nutrients back into the environment, but many also have a complex and beneficial relationship with

the living plants around them, in particular the trees.

This is one of the reasons that we leave dead wood and fallen trees lying in the woodland.



The variety of fungi adds interest to an autumn walk on the commons.

The photo above is of angel's bonnet (*mycena arcangeliana*).



This is clouded funnel (*Clitocybe nebularis*).

As it grows, it takes on a funnel-like shape.



Otidea onotica

Hare's ears

The Latin name refers to donkey's ears, an alternative common name.





Fungi spread via spores that are dispersed by wind or animals. The spores from this earthball (*scleroderma citrinum*) were released in a cloud from a hole in the top.

Important, fantastic and interesting as fungi are, there are a few that have the ability to damage trees, and tree inspections are an important part of the work on the commons.

The photos were all taken recently on the commons. Identification of fungi is difficult, because there are similar species, variations within species, and they change in shape and colour as they age.

Identification of the species above has been carried out by consulting books, charts, the internet, and phone apps. However, although enthusiastic, we are not experts, and there are many that we have not been able to put a name to with any degree of confidence.

If you have a particular knowledge of or interest in this subject, we would love to hear from you.

You can contact us at: info@chislehurstcommons.uk



Finally, unless you do have specialist knowledge, the sensible rule around fungi is – LOOK, BUT DON'T TOUCH! Some, like this fly agaric (*amanita muscaria*), are poisonous to humans!

Family Morning



We held another Family Morning during the October half term break, with activities including a Batty Facts Trail, and art and craft using natural materials.

There was also an opportunity to find minibeasts in soil samples and see them

enlarged on a screen.

A big thank you to everyone who came along.

We enjoyed meeting you all and sharing some aspects of the commons with you.



Christmas Market



A date for your diary.

We will be at the event with our Christmas cards and mounted photos for sale.

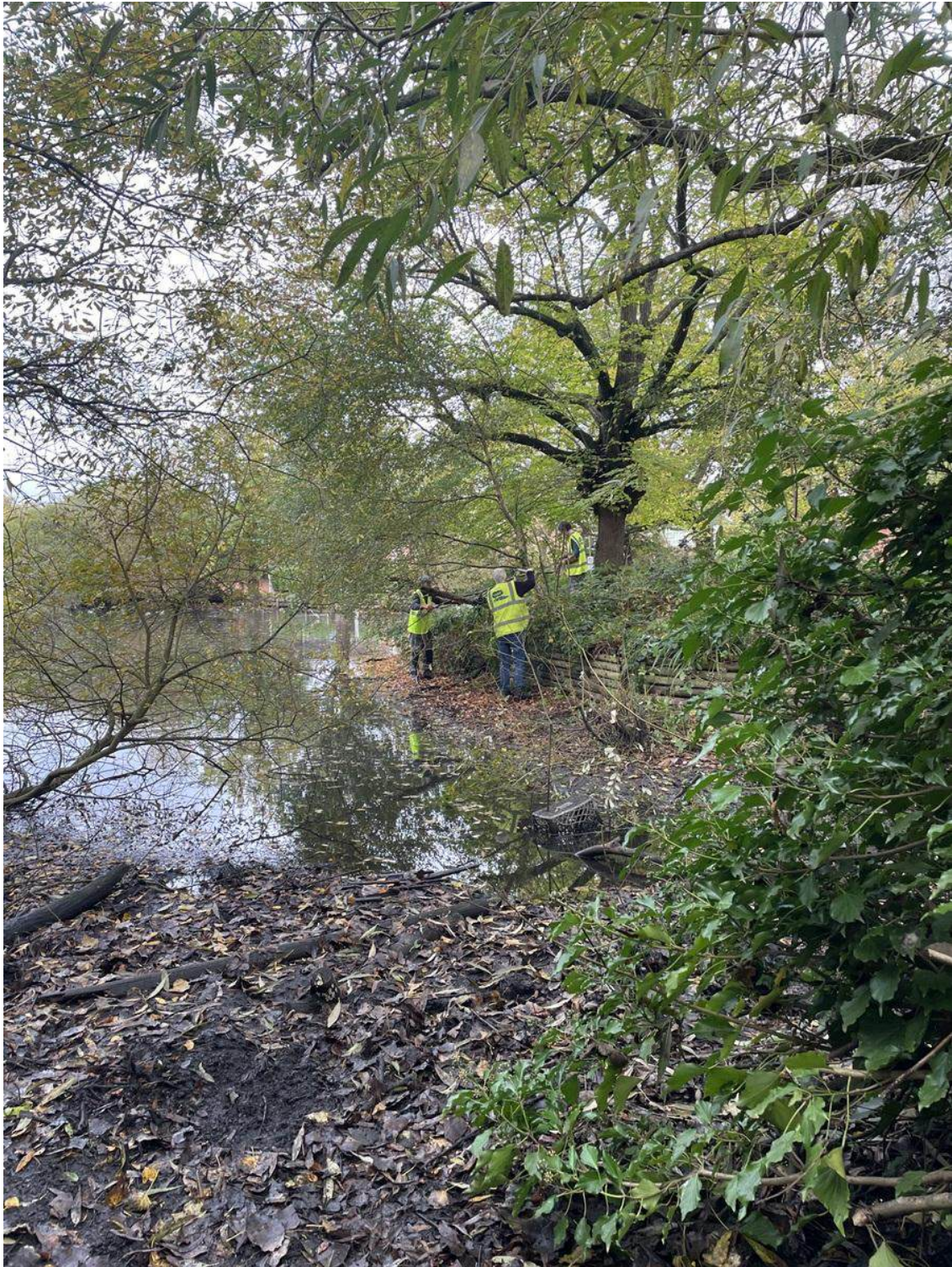
All profits go towards maintaining our beautiful commons, so come along and support us.

We look forward to seeing you!

Our Wonderful Keepers and Volunteers



It is important to contain and conserve as much of the water that falls on the commons as possible, and direct it into the ponds, or into road drains to avoid flooding, so a regular task for the volunteers is clearing the ditches.



Although vegetation around the ponds provides a habitat for invertebrates and perching places for waterfowl, it also takes up water, and fallen leaves add unwanted nutrients.

Volunteers have had several sessions cutting back overhanging foliage at Rush

Pond while the water levels are low.



The Overflow Pond retained water this year into June. It is currently dry, and the working party had a session cutting back the willows that grow in it.



Path maintenance is another task for the volunteers before winter sets in. Here they are repairing the footpath from the bus stop at the War Memorial.



Gorse flowers provide a welcome splash of colour in winter, but the bushes become tall and woody if they are not trimmed regularly, a task for autumn or winter to minimize disturbance to wildlife.



The Overflow Glade is a wonderful heathland habitat, with a patchwork of grass, wildflowers, heather, bracken and moss. However, it is surrounded by gorse and silver birches which constantly threaten to invade it. In the past they would have been kept in check by grazing animals, but today the management falls to the working party.

**And Finally – a Rural Scene within Chislehurst's
Urban Setting**



The commons here in Chislehurst provide a space for recreation, proximity to the natural world, inspiration and interest, and give us all a pleasant and ever-changing backdrop to our daily lives.

We will continue to do our best to maintain and enhance them for present and future generations.



The two commons of Chislehurst, Chislehurst Common and St. Paul's Cray Common, are managed by a Board of Trustees, established under an Act of Parliament.

The Act protects the 180 acres but provides no funding, and the

generosity of local people and the time given by volunteers are vital.

The knowledge and dedication of the two full-time Keepers are invaluable. Everyone else who works to preserve and maintain the area does so voluntarily.

If you would like to support the work of maintaining and enhancing the commons.

you can donate via our website

www.chislehurstcommons.uk

or via PayPal Giving

Thank you!

Get your bird seed at Champion Wines.

We are grateful to Champion Wines for stocking packets of seed on our behalf. This food is healthier

for the birds than bread or products made from flour.

All proceeds go to Chislehurst Commons.

**When the birds stop eating, please stop feeding!
Food left on the ground or floating on the water will
attract rats!**



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Thanks for this month's photos to – Jonathan Harvie, Mary Wheeler and Peter Woodward.

Thanks also to the Editorial Team – Christine Wearn, Ross Wearn and Mary Wheeler.



**Chislehurst Commons are proud to display the Green
Flag Award logo.**

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