

In August, I took a trip to Ards, which has extensive areas of grassland and dunes leading down to the estuary. Within the first minute I had found plenty of Chanterelles in the usual place near the car park, and then I glanced up the forest path and immediately recognised the Destroying Angel - *Amanita virosa*.



A. virosa produces the same toxin as the Death Cap; this causes death by multiple organ failure within 72 hours. Something had chewed the right-hand side of the cap, destroying the symmetry of the image, but it will serve its purpose. Growing under Beech.

Many of the expected Ards fungi were not yet obvious, although I did spot a little patch of the exceedingly rare *Phellodon melaleucus* in its usual spot. This has clearly just emerged, and is paler than the long-lived mature caps will be later in the year.

The next part of the foray was through mature mixed woodland, where many of the Conifers have been harvested, leaving plenty of open areas with some logs left behind to enhance the habitat. I spotted several very

fresh *Russulas* at the base of one of the stumps.

I had a great deal of trouble identifying this specimen when taking it through Geoff Kibby's excellent new key, with no decent match turning up. After a couple of days, however, I noticed that the stipe had developed a pink tinge at the base and that led me quite quickly to *Russula velenovskyi*. *Ramaria stricta* was also very fresh-looking.

Waxcaps (*Hygrocybe mucronella*) are usually associated with grassland, but I found quite a few on bare soil under trees.



Phellodon melaleucus

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Hygrocybe mucronella



Ramaria stricta



Russula velenovskyi

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