

FUNGI IN SCHOOLS

for
CHILDREN
TEACHERS
PARENTS

and other
interested parties



FUNGUS FORAY 2

We have already prepared for an autumn foray to search for toadstools. There are many other ways of collecting fungi and the pictures show a winter foray in Sweden. The temperature will be about -5°C . with thick snow and ice covering the ground but with the sun probably shining in a bright blue sky. You will need quite different equipment: warm clothing, boots, skis, sticks and sometimes skates. The collections are carried home in a rucksack on your back. You will not be looking for toadstools as most of these disappear with the first frost, but instead for very small fungi (microfungi) which live on fallen stems, wood and bark. One such fungus, called *Hypoxyylon fragiforme* (the name is a good deal larger than the fungus), that you may find on fallen branches is shown on p18 of *The Mycologist*, January 1987. At these low temperatures you try not to take off your gloves and the material is best collected with a knife or garden cutters.

One advantage of collecting fungi when there is good thick ice is that you can put on your skates and visit places that are difficult to reach at other times of the year. It is now easy to get to islands in the middle of lakes and to reach the reed beds round the edge of the lake. In the summer these reeds always seem to stand in water that is just too deep for gumboots or in sticky mud which is not good for any sort of boot.

Collecting the fungi does not take very long and is great fun. When you get home it takes much, much longer to sort and examine the material and to name the fungi. We shall try and learn how to do a simple examination starting with a X10 hand lens which you may have noticed all mycologists wear hanging round their necks on a (usually) rather grubby piece of string.

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Next Time: Stinkhorns