

FUNGI IN SCHOOLS

for
CHILDREN
TEACHERS
PARENTS

and other
interested parties



TRUFFLE HUNTING AND TRUFFLE EATING

On a Fungus Foray most people look for mushrooms and toadstools which are easy to find. But if you see a group of forayers on hands and knees busily scratching the ground with small rakes they may be looking for **truffles**. These are fungi which grow in the soil often under oak and beech trees. They are usually small — ½-2 cm across — black and brownish and can look like small stones but they are soft and often have a strong smell. Rabbits and squirrels can smell truffles and scratch small holes to find them. If you search in a hole they have started you may be lucky and find a truffle they have missed. If you are very lucky a squirrel will throw one down to you — this happened to Prof Ingold who drew a cartoon to celebrate the event.



How can you find truffles? The easiest way (and the most fun) is to join the **Truffle Hunt** organised in August each year by the **British Mycological Society**. Two young truffle hunters are shown at work on page 90 of **The Mycologist**. The picture below shows a dog sniffing out truffles for his master in France. Fig. from Kendrick, B (1986).



Figure from Kendrick, B (1986).

Next time: Fungus guns.

It is difficult to find real truffles but you can easily make — and very easily eat — these chocolate ones. The recipe was copied by Piglet who has kindly permitted it to be copied again and has also offered two rather good suggestions.

1 Ask permission to use the kitchen (please leave it tidy).

2 Wash your hands really well before you start.

You will need:

- Scales for weighing
- Mixing bowl — large one
- Wooden spoon
- Cup and teaspoon
- Plate

Stage 1. Weigh out, put in the mixing bowl and stir with the wooden spoon

- 200g (8oz) porridge oats
- 200g (8oz) soft margarine
- 150g (6oz) caster sugar
- 6 teaspoons of cocoa powder

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Stage 2. Measure and mix in the cup
2 teaspoons 'instant coffee'
6 teaspoons cold water

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Stage 3. Tip the coffee/water mixture into the mixing bowl with everything else and give it all a tremendous stir until it looks good and smooth and just right to eat.

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Stage 4. Take out small lumps either with the teaspoon or the well washed fingers and make them into small balls.

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Stage 5. To add a professional touch roll each ball in cocoa powder spread out on the plate or, rather expensive, use chocolate vermicelli (worms).

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