

Stalked Tooth (Stipitate Hydroid) Fungal Communities

Zoned Tooth *Hydnellum concrescens*, **Mealy Tooth** *Hydnellum ferrugineum*, **Velvet Tooth** *Hydnellum spongiosipes*, **Fused Tooth** *Phellodon confluens*, **Grey Tooth** *Phellodon melaleucus*, **Black Tooth** *Phellodon niger*, **Bitter Tooth** *Sarcodon scabrosus*, **Scaly Tooth** *Sarcodon squamosus*, *Sarcodon joeides*

Areas and status: The stipitate hydroid fungi are a collective BAP community with an English stronghold in Berkshire, the New Forest, and the West Kent/East Sussex border. There are scattered populations in several other English counties. A further community is found in the Scottish Caledonian pine forests. They are relatively easy to identify as stipitate hydroid fungi by the toothed spore-bearing under-surface of the caps.

Woodland type: Lowland Broadleaved Woodland, Plantation Woodland, Wood-pasture.

Preferred habitat niches: All but one of the English species of tooth fungi associates with trees of the *Fagaceae* family. There are scattered records in England for the rare Scaly Tooth *Sarcodon squamosus*, where it can apparently associate with various conifer species, but it is most prevalent in Scottish pine forests. Sweet chestnut coppice is an important habitat in Berkshire and Kent/Sussex but the fungi also associate with oak and beech, especially in the New Forest. Wood-banks and path sides appear to be of importance and possibly offer microclimatic features such as sharp drainage, a particular aspect etc. They have been recorded on steep roadside verges, sometimes within inches of the tarmac road surface. Competition from vascular plants restricts their range and the fungi are normally found on nutrient-poor bare ground with scattered leaf litter and bryophyte cover, or with sparse heather cover at the periphery of lowland heath. They are all ectomycorrhizal with their associate trees.

Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Loss/conversion of sweet chestnut coppice
- PAWS
- Lowland heath restoration
- Rhododendron cover
- Wood banks
- Public pressure (dogs, mountain bikes, horses etc)

Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Manage the woodland with fungi in mind	Refer to the generic woodland fungal community management guidelines.
Retain sweet chestnut coppice rotation	Sweet chestnut coppice with known toothed fungi communities should be retained and if possible managed along traditional methods of cutting on a 10-12 year rotation. A shorter rotation should be avoided as this will encourage vascular plants such as brambles to dominate, which will negatively affect fruiting and may cause long-term damage or loss of the fungus. Fire sites should be avoided at tooth fungi sites, and logwood should be stacked away from these areas. Vehicles should avoid driving over sites for fungi, and keep off the wood banks.
Retain a conifer element in PAWs restoration	Scaly Tooth <i>Sarcodon squamosus</i> associates primarily with Scot's pine. Scattered pines should be retained during PAWs restoration work, particularly on bare acid soils with a heathy element. PAWs woodlands may support further toothed fungi species and other important fungal communities amongst the hardwood element, and this should be borne in mind before tree clearance begins.



© Mealy tooth, Mark Gurney



© Velvet tooth, Mark Gurney



© Zoned tooth, Mark Gurney

Retain wood-edge habitat during heathland restoration	“Wooded heath” may support important toothed fungi communities. The best habitat comprises sweet chestnut, oak, beech and Scot’s pine, with scattered heather over bare ground. These are often found on or close to wood bank systems near the edge of the open heath.
Control rhododendron	Invasive rhododendron can damage toothed fungi habitat and should be controlled or eliminated. Mechanical stump removal will have potential negative impact on fungal links to host trees and should be avoided. Chemical treatment is acceptable.
Retain wood-banks and other uneven features	Wood-banks and other earthworks should be retained and protected from damage. These are often of significant archaeological heritage as well as habitat for rare fungi. Recent mounds, banks and cuttings may support toothed fungi as well as historical ones.
Manage public pressure	Damage can ensue from unofficial mountain bike, horse and 4x4 trespass, especially where they cross banks and ditches. The fungi are often found close to paths and bridleways and so are at risk of trampling and compaction, and soil eutrophication from dog waste.