Managing your site

Any actions to maintain or enhance “waxcap-grassland” habitat will make a positive contribution towards the conservation of these species.

What you can do to maintain good “waxcap-grassland” habitat

- Keep the grass short through regular mowing and removal of clippings. This will ensure nutrients do not build up in the soil.
- Avoid the use of fertilizers or lime. These can raise nutrient levels or change the soil chemistry resulting in loss of certain fungi.
- Avoid the use of pesticides, fungicides or proprietary lawn treatments. Although mosses may not be very welcome in lawns, they are often present in the very best "waxcap-grassland" sites.
- Do not reseed or carry out other actions which significantly damage the soil structure or affect drainage. Compaction by vehicles can be especially damaging.
- Ensure scrub is not allowed to encroach and take over the grassland.

Further information

Members of the Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network welcome the opportunity to record fungi at good grassland sites, and will be happy to provide further information.

www.pembsfungi.org.uk
Tel: 01646 661340

Pink or Ballerina waxcap

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Sponsored by Chevron - Pembroke Plant

Managing grassland for waxcaps

Lawns, cemeteries and parks

Guidance for owners and land managers

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Upton Castle Lawn

“Waxcap-grassland” fungi

Waxcaps, together with certain pinkgills, club and coral fungi, and earth-tongues, form a group known as “waxcap-grassland” fungi.

Crimson waxcap

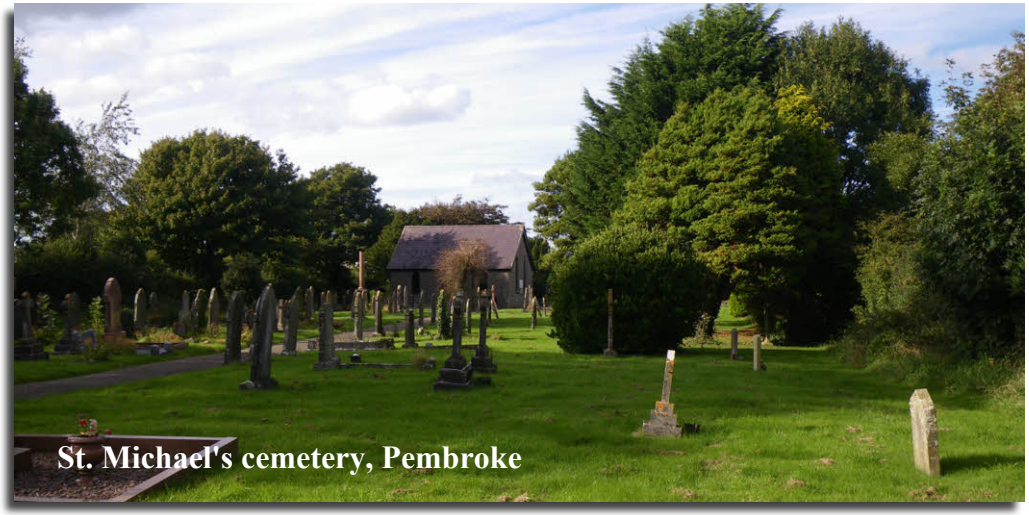
Many are threatened across Europe through of the loss of suitable habitat, for example where the favoured habitat for these species - long established semi-natural grassland - has been “improved” through the intensification of agricultural production.

Further threats arise from the loss of suitable grassland to development, or the neglect of grassland sites leading to scrub encroachment.

Several species are listed in the UK and local Biodiversity Action Plans which address the need to maintain the extent and range of suitable grassland habitat.

An especially valuable “waxcap-grassland” habitat can still be found in a few mature, nutrient-poor, grassland sites which are managed as lawns, cemeteries or parks.

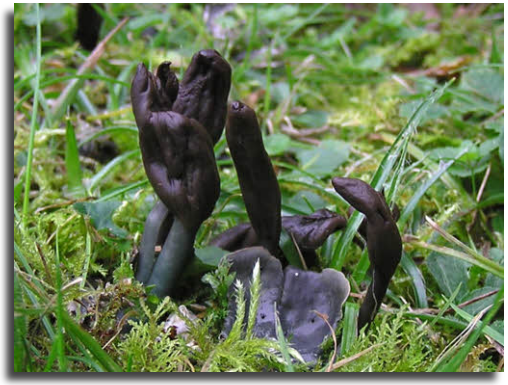
This leaflet provides guidance for site owners and managers on the best measures to help maintain this type of "waxcap-grassland" habitat in favourable condition.


St. Michael's cemetery, Pembroke

How do I know if I have a “waxcap-grassland”?

Any grassland site with a colourful display of fungi in late summer and autumn is likely to be of interest and worth investigating further. Fungi can be difficult to identify, so the four examples shown below illustrate the main groups. The presence of several different species may indicate a good “waxcap-grassland” site.

Scarlet waxcap (*Hygrocybe coccinea*) [left] - fairly common, often in large numbers. Cap typically up to 50 mm. diameter.
Blue-edge pinkgill (*Entoloma serrulatum*) [right] - an example of one of several blue-coloured pinkgills. Cap typically up to 40 mm. diameter.



Violet coral (*Clavaria zollingeri*) [left] - uncommon. Branched fruiting bodies typically up to 100 mm across.
Olive earthtongue (*Microglossum olivaceum*) [right] - uncommon and easily overlooked. Grows up to about 60 mm. high.