

Media Release from Alderney Wildlife Trust

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Rare Mushroom Found on Alderney

A rare species of fungi has been found on Alderney!

The Date Waxcap (*Hygrocybe spadicea*), one of Britain's rarest fungi, was found by the Alderney Wildlife Trust's Ramsar Ecologist Niamh McDevitt on 13th November 2025. This species is classed as 'rare to very rare' across its entire range, and in the UK, there have only been around one hundred sightings of Date Waxcaps ever recorded. This is the first record of the species for Alderney, and only the second for Guernsey, with the last coming from 1995.

Date Waxcaps are characterised by a brown cap, yellow to orange gills and a yellow stem, which is often covered in brown fibrils. Like other waxcaps, they typically grow on unimproved dry grasslands, with the species threatened by habitat loss caused by changes in land use and agricultural practice. As a result, the species is of global conservation concern, being listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Many species of fungi can be found on Alderney, especially in the autumn months when their fruiting bodies start to appear more frequently. Some mushrooms are easier to identify than others, using clues like size, shape, colour, gills, smell and habitat, while others need to be viewed under a microscope. Taking photos of multiple angles of a mushroom is often important for ID, and this was important in having this record confirmed by a UK expert in grassland waxcap species.

This sighting shows that importance of biological recording – Alderney contains many areas of potentially suitable habitat for species like the Date Waxcap, and the species may have been unrecorded in the past. Recording apps like iNaturalist and iRecord are very important for anyone to help contribute important information for conservation while they are out and about. The next new species for Alderney could come from any member of the public!

Ends

Background

About the Alderney Wildlife Trust

The Alderney Wildlife Trust is one of the 46 Wildlife Trusts working across the British Isles. We are the youngest of the Wildlife Trust, forming over 20 years ago and since then the AWT has received incredible support from a dedicated team of wildlife enthusiasts, what we like to think of as the 'TeamWilder'. This team isn't just limited to residents and AWT members, it includes people from all walks of life who have an interest in our island's wildlife, as well as supporters and organisations from around the world. We work with the local community to engage them with their natural environment in order to protect Alderney's wildlife for the future.

Our mission is to study, protect and champion Alderney's wildlife. We wish to see a thriving natural island where wildlife and natural habitats play a valued role in addressing our island's future and the climate and ecological emergencies that face us.

Alderney is a very special place and by helping the work of the Alderney Wildlife Trust you can make a difference. After all, if you love where you live, you'll want to look after it - Dr. George McGavin, Patron AWT

Notes to Media

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