

Wyre Forest Study Group

Yellow Flat-footed Fly *Agathomyia wankowiczii*, Platypezidae, Diptera, on Artist's Fungus *Ganoderma applanatum* (Pers.) Pat. Polyporales

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Photo 1. *Ganoderma applanatum* with protruding galls, April 2012

John Bingham

On a Wyre Forest Study Group meeting on 13th April 2019 members ventured into Hitterhill Coppice in our usual search for anything of interest. I recalled that about 10 years ago I had found several windthrow uprooted oaks in this location that had been colonised by the early stages of the Artist's Fungus, *Ganoderma applanatum*. This bracket fungus is uncommon in the forest as it tends to favour growing on larger old oak and beech trees that Wyre generally lacks. On the 24th April 2012 I'd returned to check and photograph the fungi mainly to confirm I had named it correctly. It was *G. applanatum* and to my surprise on the underside were several galls made by the Yellow Flat-footed Fly, *Agathomyia wankowiczii*, a very scarce species. (Photo1).

On our 2019 WFSG meeting, as we were near to the

site of the fallen oaks, I led the party to the area. We soon found the trees, now more rotted. Stepping over a fallen trunk I spotted an old *Ganoderma* bracket fungus lying fallen on the ground and examination of the underside revealed dozens of galls caused by the fly. We soon discovered several more fallen brackets with numerous galls (Photo 2) - perhaps the most galls ever seen in Worcestershire!

The Yellow Flat-footed Fly is rarely seen and is a vivid orange colour. It is also the only invertebrate in Britain known to cause a gall on a fungus, and a very specific fungus *Ganoderma applanatum*. The fly was first found in Kent in 1990 but is spreading northwards so may become more common in the future. The fly grub grows inside the fungus but drops down into the soil to pupate.



Photo 2. *Agathomyia wankowiczii* galls in *Ganoderma applanatum*, 13 April 2019

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