

Quick Waxcap Key

This quick key contains most of the species in Boertmann's **The Genus Hygrocybe**, second edition, claimed to be British. To use it, start on this page. Decide whether the cap and stipe are dry or viscid (you need good fresh material), then choose a column. Work down the left hand column until you find the row which best describes the cap. Look at the box where the chosen column and row coincide. If there are several species listed in the box, select the number listed and turn over the page where a short key will be found to the species listed against that number.

Note: this is a field learning key and should not be used for critical determinations.

	Stipe viscid	Stipe dry + cap viscid	Stipe dry + cap dry
Cap turning black	conica	conica	conica
Cap turning dark grey to black, gills and flesh reddening		ovina	ovina
Cap white		virginea russocoriacea	1 1 pratensis var. pallida fornicata
Cap or stipe with at least some green	psittacina var. psittacina		2 citrinovirens
Cap violet, lilac or blueish	lilacina	calyptriformis	3 calyptriformis lilacina viola
Cap grey or grey-blue	irrigata	fornicata lacmus flavipes	4 4 fornicata canescens nitrata
Cap brown	irrigata	ingrata spadicea colemanniana	6 6 ingrata spadicea nitrata
Cap yellow + conical	acutoconica	acutoconica	6 6 citrinovirens
Cap yellow + convex	chlorophana vitellina glutinipes var. glutinipes insipida citrinopallida xanthochroa	7 7 chlorophana ceracea citrinopallida aurantiosplendens	7 7 8 8 turunda citrinopallida xanthochroa quieta
Cap orange + gills free, adnate or adnexed	mucronella insipida xanthochroa	10 10 aurantiosplendens persistens	10 10 11 11 quieta miniata calciphila substrangulata intermedia helobia reidii
Cap orange + gills decurrent	insipida laeta xanthochroa	13 13 laeta	13 13 14 14 pratensis turunda cantharellus
Cap red + gills free, adnate or adnexed	glutinipes var. rubra psittacina var. perplexa	15 15 coccinea punicea	15 15 16 16 mucronella splendidissima helobia calciphila reidii coccinea phaeococcinea
Cap red + gills decurrent	coccineocrenata mucronella	18 18	18 18 19 19 cantharellus coccineocrenata mucronella

1. Strong smell of Russian leather/cedar pencils Smell indistinct, mild coconut	russocoriacea virginea	p54 p56
--	---	------------

3. Cap narrowly conica Cap convex or omphalinoid	calyptiformis B	p146
B Cap < 5mm, omphalinoid, gills white Cap > 5mm, convex, gills decurrent	viola lilacina	p78 p76

5. Gills decurrent, cap felty Gills adnate or adnexed	canescens B	p52
B Stipe white or cream Stipe grey to fawn, smell nitrous	forcinata nitrata	p80 p82

7. Gills adnexed or adnate Gills sub-decurrent to decurrent	B C	
B Stipe opaque, fungus robust Stipe hyaline, fungus small	chlorophana glutinipes var. glutinipes	p150 p152
C Lamella edge viscid Lamella edge dry	vitellina D	p100
D Stipe red at least at the apex Stipe orange yellow or white	insipida E	p132
E Stipe orange, at least at the apex Stipe white, or yellow at the apex	xanthochroa citrinopallida	p74 p72

9. Cap yellow or orange with dark squamules Cap smooth or finely pruinose	turunda B	p124
B Fungus robust, stipe > 5mm diameter Fungus delicate, stipe < 5 mm diameter	quieta C	p108
C Stipe violaceous at apex. Spores 6-7.5mu Stipe pale yellow or white. Spores 8-10mu	xanthochroa citrinopallida	p74 p72

12. Pileus squamulose or tomentose Pileus smooth	B F	
B Lamellae free or adnexed, stipe fibrillose Lamellae adnate or decurrent	intermedia C	p158
C Cap bright red, fragile, smell of garlic Cap orange or dull red, tough, no smell	helobia D	p144
D Spores 9-12mu long Spores 7.5-9mu long	substrangulata E	p118
E Spores 'triangular' Spores 'oblong'	miniata calciphila	p114 p116
F Cap yellow, smell of Lactarius quietus Cap orange to orange-red, smell of honey at least in stipe base	quieta reidii	p108 p102

17. Pileus squamulose or tomentose Pileus smooth	B D	
B Fungus scarlet, squamules pointed, faint smell of garlic Fungus red, orange or yellow, squamules obtuse	helobia C	p144
C Spores 'triangular' Spores oblong	miniata calciphila	p114 p116
D Taste bitter Taste neutral or mild	mucronella E	p142
E Fungus medium to large, bright red Fungus small to medium, red or orange red cap	splendidissima F	p104
F Lamellae yellow or orange, smell of honey stipe base Lamellae red with yellow edge, smell neutral Cap with black 'coating' in the centre	reidii coccinea phaeococcinea	p102 p128 p106

2. Gills adnate or adnexed Gills decurrent	forcinata pratensis var. pallida	p80 p48
---	---	------------

4. Gills adnate or adnexed Gills decurrent	forcinata B	p80
B Stipe base yellow Stipe base pale buff or white	flavipes lacmus	p66 p64

6. Gills decurrent Gills free or adnexed	colemanniana B	p62
B Gills yellow Gills cream, context orange red when cut, smell faintly nitrous Smell strongly nitrous, hardly reddening	spadicea ingrata nitrata	p160 p84 p82

8. Lamellae distinctly decurrent, stipe yellow or white Lamellae otherwise	citrinopallida B	p72
B Stipe fibrillose or pruinose at least in apex Stipe smooth	aurantiosplendens	p140
C Stipe < 5mm diameter Stipe > 5mm diameter	ceracea chlorophana	p130 p150

10. Cap reddish-orange, taste bitter Cap yellowish-orange, taste neutral	mucronella B	p142
B Stipe violaceous, at least at apex Stipe reddish, at least at apex	xanthochroa insipida	p74 p132

11. Stipe smooth, lamellae adnate Stipe fibrillose, lamellae free or adnexed	aurantiosplendens persistens	p140
---	---	------

13. Lamella edge viscid, stipe dull Lamella edge dry, stipe red or orange	laeta B	p94
B Stipe red, at least at apex Stipe orange, hyaline, sometimes with violet	insipida xanthochroa	p132 p74

14. Fungus robust, cap dull matt orange Fungus small	pratensis B	p46
B Cap orange with dark squamules Cap edges scalloped	turunda cantharellus	p124 p122

15. Fungus brick red, cap convex Fungus orange red, cap appanate	psittacina var. perplexa glutinipes var. rubra	p92 p154
---	---	-------------

16. Fungus robust, stipe fibrillose Fungus medium, stipe smooth	punicea B	p138
B Lamellae red, at least at base	coccinea	p128

18. Taste bitter Taste mild	mucronella coccineocrenata	p142 p126
--------------------------------	---	--------------

19. Cap smooth, taste bitter Cap squamulose	mucronella B	p142
B Squamules concolourous with cap Squamules distinctly dark	cantharellus coccineocrenata	p122 p126

Patrick Leonard August 1997, updated Liz Holden January 2012
Please note there have been some name changes since these key was published.