

Roy Mantle 15th February 1945 - 7th July 2015

ROSEMARY WINNALL



Roy Mantle in New Parks, 16 July 2005 Rosemary Winnall

It was with great sadness that we heard of Roy Mantle's death on 7th July 2015 after a long illness. We shall miss a very special man, a kind and generous friend, and a great naturalist who had a wide knowledge of natural history, and in particular mycology.

Royston John Mantle was born in Burford, Tenbury on 15th February 1945, the only child of Edgar (Pete) and Iris Mantle. He attended Cleobury Primary School and then Bridgnorth Grammar School where he met his future wife Annette whilst on a school trip to Denmark. They married in September 1965 and spent just under 50 happy years together living in Bridgnorth. Roy and Annette had two children, Jacqueline and Peter, and two grandchildren Briony and William. Roy was enormously proud of his family and loved to spend quality time with them.

He was an industrial chemist by profession and worked for many years at Manders in Wolverhampton, then Mirage of Telford. In addition to his love of nature, he liked classical music, reading Tolkein and science fiction, and growing arctic-alpines in his carefully tended garden.

But his abiding love was natural history which began as a child and continued throughout his life. His family remember him keeping toads and snakes. Then there were those summer holidays when the lizard and moth larvae had to go along too.

He joined the Bridgnorth Natural History Society, becoming their chairman in later years. He particularly loved the Wyre Forest and used to walk there regularly with family and friends. Roy became a member of the Wyre Forest Study Group in the 1990s and wrote a *Mycological Report for 2005* for this Review (<http://www.wyreforest.net/2012/01/15/mycological-report-for-2005-roy-mantle/>).

Roy's interest in fungi began in his early twenties and continued for the rest of his life. He was meticulous in his identification, taking detailed notes and photographs in the field, then laboriously checking and measuring spores under the microscope, and making detailed records.

He was soon leading nature walks and fungi forays for the Forestry Commission, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Herefordshire Botanical Society, Shropshire County Council and others. He was a patient teacher, never hurrying and always willing to help beginners.

Roy was one of the founder members of the Shropshire Fungus Group (SFG) which was formed in 1992. He undertook the daunting task of computerising the records on a database, all of which were submitted to the British Mycological Society (BMS) database (now the FRDBI - the Fungal Records Database of Britain and Ireland). He led many of their forays and was a key person in planning their field meetings and compiling their newsletters. He was elected President of the group in 2015. He was, from about 1998, the BMS's Shropshire County Fungi Recorder. Roy occasionally was called upon to speak about fungi on the radio and his articles appeared in local newsletters and in *Field Mycology*.

Roy gave many talks about natural history around the region, each illustrated with his beautiful photographs. He took a lot of trouble to get the best shots of his subjects - particularly fungi and flowers. He used a very heavy tripod so that he was able to use natural light instead of flash on his subject matter. He was occasionally forgetful and his family remember him once leaving that tripod behind in a bog.

Roy inspired many of us to appreciate the beauty and diversity of nature, and we shall miss his excellent company, good humour and wide knowledge of wildlife so generously shared.