

Foraging for fungi can be rewarding at any time of the year because there is nearly always something to be found, although not always edible. However, in the late Autumn through to around Christmas time one can find field blewitts *Lepista saeva*; they don't seem to mind having been frosted. Field blewitts also have common local names such as blue legs or blue stalks. They really are amongst the easiest of mushrooms to identify, the clue is in the local names, and hard to confuse with anything that will cause sickness. The picture below shews a couple that I picked last week. Notice the lilac/blue streaks on the stem.

If you need a field guide the one I find invaluable and which has never let me down is 'Mushrooms and other fungi of Great Britain and Europe' by Roger Phillips. Pan Books. There are, of course, plenty of other reliable guides to be found.



Cruising south on the Shropshire Union a couple of weeks back I saw several groups of field blewitts growing on the off side of the canal, always where it was too shallow to pull in, moor and gather a few. So, having reached Worcester I decided to make an effort to find some field blewitts.

Away from the canal towpath I went looking across one of the riverside meadows and, sure enough, I found a group of field blewitts. The following day, cycling along the canal towpath very near Worcester city centre I found two more groups of blewitts and added a few to my previous small harvest.

Blewitts do not fry well because they have a high-water content so I like to use them to make creamy mushrooms. Many types of mushroom can be used for this recipe and shop bought mushrooms will serve well too.

Creamy Mushrooms

Ingredients:

Mushrooms, as many as you wish, roughly chopped.
White sauce (whichever style you wish.)
Salt and pepper to taste.
Water

Method:

- Place chopped mushrooms in water and boil for about 15 minutes with the salt and pepper.
- Prepare a white sauce and add the mushrooms and the mushroom stock to the sauce.

It's as easy as that.

I like the blewitts, or other mushrooms served on toast or as a filling for baked potatoes. I have also used it as a sauce poured over chicken.