

## The Slime Mould *Craterium minutum* on Ivy?

Mark Peacock

Slime moulds are not something I tend to go out of my way to look for, and when I do find them I often go around the houses before realising I'm looking at a Slime mould. Such was the scenario on the 7th March 2016, when I discovered some strange looking things on an Ivy leaf by Barnett Brook, near Blakedown.

The Ivy was alive and well, providing some ground cover within the narrow valley of Barnett Brook. Initially I thought the four leaves affected were covered in eggs, but on examination under magnification, what appeared to be a large number of delicate and beautiful tiny micro fungi came into view (01).



01. *Craterium minutum*. Mark Peacock

At home I examined it more closely, looking for clues to their identity. I eventually deduced it was a *Craterium* of some sort, and a chain of emails from Brett Westwood to John Bingham to Bob Kemp lead to a majority opinion it was most likely *Craterium minutum*. Unfortunately the spores had gone.

However the identification was further supported by another contact who provided me with a picture of the species account from her copy of the Bruce Ing book *The Myxomycetes of Britain and Ireland*.

Although not uncommon, the tiny size, and its predilection for the ground layer probably accounts for it being under recorded. In Ing's book it is associated most commonly with Holly and Oak. On balance I think the correct identification was most likely reached.

### Reference

Ing, B. 1999. *The Myxomycetes of Britain and Ireland: an identification guide*. Richmond Publishing, Oxford.

Image

01. *Craterium minutum*. Mark Peacock