

Annual abundance of chanterelle mushrooms (*Cantharellus cibarius*) in Scotland

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The chanterelle fungus (*Cantharellus cibarius*) is widespread throughout Scotland and is found in woodland habitats where it can be common (Jordan, 2004; Phillips 2006; NBN Atlas, 2019). Being edible and considered to have gastronomic qualities, the mushroom fruiting body (Fig. 1) is collected and sometimes sold commercially. Publications describing fungi state that the mushrooms are present above ground from summer through to late autumn, although the exact period is not stated.

I have been collecting chanterelles at a site near Loch Lomond each year since 2011 in a small mixed woodland of birch *Betula* spp., oak *Quercus* spp., rowan *Sorbus* spp. and holly *Ilex* spp., of about 10 hectares in size (Fig. 2). On each foray I have recorded the mass of wet mushrooms harvested. The results of these forays are shown in Fig. 3. Over the nine year period about 250 kg of mushrooms were harvested in total. Mushrooms first appeared in June in very small numbers just in two years (2015 and 2019) after rain, but it was not until July that significant quantities were found. Highest numbers were present in August and September, with a decline through October, and the last in early November.

Harvesting the mushrooms did not appear to have reduced their presence in the wood, with instead

increased numbers harvested year on year (Fig. 3). Indeed, the woodland contains fungi of a wide range of other species, which were also present every year, many in high numbers.



Fig. 1. Chanterelle mushrooms (*Cantharellus cibarius*), Loch Lomond, Scotland, July 2014. (Photo: C.J. McInerny)



Fig. 2. Chanterelle mushrooms (*Cantharellus cibarius*), Loch Lomond, Scotland, September 2016. (Photo: C.J. McInerny)

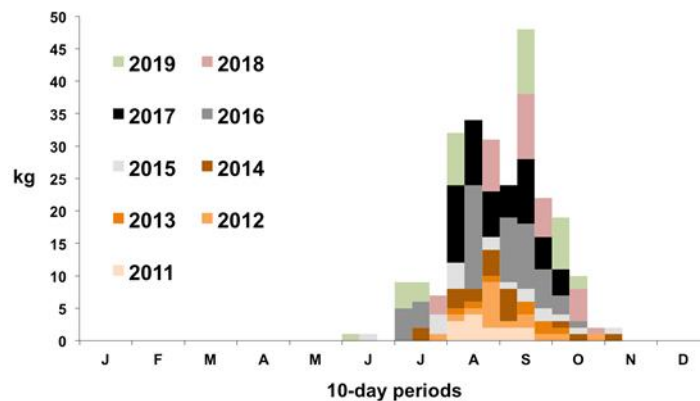


Fig. 3. Annual harvest of chanterelle mushrooms (*Cantharellus cibarius*) in kg by month, Loch Lomond, Scotland, 2011-2019.

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