Thathar air am fungas dearg-ruadh seo a tha car coltach ri pocan-bearrach beag (ach air a bheil dreach coltach ri dearc bheag abaich) a chlàradh ann an Inbhir Nis, Dùn Èideann, Lodainn an Iar agus a rèir choltais tha e car farsaing ann an Arcaibh.

Tha seo gu math neònach nuair a smaoinicheas tu gur e dùthchasach à Sealan Nuadh a th' ann agus nach eil e stèidhichte a rèir choltais ann an àite sam bith eile an taobh a-muigh na RA far an deach a chlàradh an toiseach ann an Siorrachd Nottingham ann an 1973. Chuir a' chiad shreath de chlàran an cèill gur dòcha gun tàinig e bho lusan is ùir air an toirt a-steach bho ionad-gàirneilearachd faisg air làimh. Na dhèidh sin, tha iad air a bhith air an clàradh le luchd nam balg-losgainn ann an caochladh àiteachan timcheall air Sasainn – agus a-nis ann an Alba.

Scarlet Berry Truffle
Balg-losgainn Caora
Pauroctylis pila

Is e fungas "ascomycete" a th' annta – 's e sin ri ràdh gum fàs iad spòran ann an sacan am broinn feòil a' mheasa. Ann an Sealan Nuadh, thathar air eòin a chlàradh gan spioladh is gan giùlan agus 's ann à seo a thàinig am beachd gu bheil iad air atharrachadh gus cruth dhearcagan abaich a chur orra fhèin agus buannachd a thoirt à eòin a' sgapadh nan spòran aca gu làraichean ùra. Nochd seo mar aon bheachd air mar a chaidh am fungas a ghiùlan gu Arcaibh.

'S e as coltaiche gu bheil iad a' sgaoileadh agus faodar an lorg ann an àite sam bith. Mar sin, nuair a bhios tu a-muigh air sgrìob, cùm sùil a-mach agus cò aig' a tha fios nach lorg thu am balg-losgainn caora am falach ann an sprùilleach nan duilleagan.

This bright-red fungus which is rather like a small puffball (but resembles a ripe, little berry) has been recorded in Inverness, Edinburgh, West Lothian and appears quite widespread in Orkney.

This seems very strange when you consider that it is a native of New Zealand and doesn't seem to be established anywhere else outside of the UK where it was first recorded in Nottinghamshire in 1973. This initial set of records suggested that it may have arrived from imported plants and soil from a nearby garden centre. Thereafter, they have been recorded by mycologists in a scattering of locations around England – and now in Scotland.

They are "ascomycete" fungi– that is to say that they develop spores in sacs within the flesh of the fruit. In New Zealand, birds have been recorded pecking and carrying them and this has led to the theory that they are adapted to appear like ripe berries and benefit from birds spreading their spores to new sites. This has been put forward as one possibility for how the fungus was transported to Orkney.

It's most probable that they're spreading and may be found elsewhere. So, next time you are out walking, keep a look out and you might just find a "rowan-red berry toad-belly" hidden among the leaf litter.

a' tighinn am follais gun fhiosta
fodham san duilleach, nach gasta,
sprùilleach de bhalg-losgainn caora

NOTES

In English we have "toadstools" but in Gaelic "balg-losgainn", or "toad-belly" is the generic name for truffles.

a' tighinn am follais gun fhiosta
fodham san duilleach, nach gasta,
sprùilleach de bhalg-losgainn caora

coming into view suddenly beneath me in the leaves, so bonny, fragments of scarlet-berry truffles