

Fungifama



The Newsletter of the South Vancouver Island Mycological Society
May 2001 Volume 8.8

<i>President</i>	John Dennis	250-595-7499
<i>Vice President</i>	Richard Winder	250-642-7528
<i>Treasurer & Membership & Subscriptions</i>	Jean Johnson 2552 Beaufort Rd., Sidney, BC V8L 2J9 jeanwade@islandnet.com	250-656-3117
<i>Refreshments Organiser</i>	Marilyn Grant	250-658-8709
<i>Publicity</i>	Gina Kiellerman	250-370-0824
<i>Foray Organizers</i>	Adolf & Oluna Ceska	250-477-1211
<i>Fungifama Editor</i>	Shannon Berch shannonberch@telus.net	250-652-5201
<i>Directors-at-large</i>	Mary Hampson Rob Countess	250-656-1555 250-363-0715

Dues: \$15.00 per year per household, payable in January by cheque made out to SVIMS or by cash at meeting.

Meetings: First Thursday of the month (no meetings December, January, July, and August), 7:00 p.m. sharp at the Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 Burnside Rd. W., Victoria. Lots of free parking. The meeting room is near the main entrance door. Non-members welcome.

Monthly Meeting:

Thursday, May 3

Rob Countess: Spring Mushroom Madness. Bring in mushrooms and work with the group to identify them. See identified mushrooms that others bring in. Learn about mushroom identification and have a wonderful time.

Thursday, June 7

John Dennis: Mushroom toxins.

Forays and Events:

August 25: Carmanah Foray. For information contact Bryce Kendrick at (250) 655-5051.

October 11: Stunning mushroom photography by Taylor Lockwood.

October 12 - 14: Mesachie Lake Foray and Lake Cowichan Salmon/Mushroom Festival.

NAMA 2001

Submitted by Sharmin Gamiet

The North American Mycological Association (NAMA) is an organization where professional and amateur mycologists meet and discuss mutual interests. Each year, an affiliated club hosts a meeting where members from the various clubs get together to collect, identify and discuss mushroom taxonomy, photography, ecology, and edibility. At the annual meeting, there are a number of interesting talks given by both professional and amateur mycologists.

All NAMA members are cordially invited to attend this annual meeting. The information for this year's NAMA foray is:

Date: July 5 - 8, 2001

Place: Collegetown, Minnesota

Accommodation: On campus, St. John's University

Cost: Price includes accommodation for 3 nights, meals from dinner Thursday through breakfast Sunday

Double occupancy US \$260.00

Single occupancy US \$280.00

Price off campus US \$170.00

T-Shirts: MNS/NAMA US \$16.00

Airport Shuttle: to & from Airport US \$45.00

Late Fee: (after June 30) US \$30.00

Post Foray Workshop: Polypores: Macro and Micro, with Dr. Tom Volk

Date: July 8 - 10, 2001.

Cost: includes foray and meals.

On campus accommodation:

Double Occupancy US \$146.00 each

Single Occupancy US \$160.00 each

Price off campus US \$110.00 each

To attend the annual NAMA meeting, one must belong to **both** an affiliated club (e.g. SVIMS) as well as NAMA. Membership fees for NAMA are US \$35.00 regular member and US \$15.00 student.

If anyone would like to travel together from B.C. please get in touch with Sharmin Gamiet at: sgamiet@dowco.com or (604) 856-7572.

Prez Sez

John Dennis, SVIMS President

For those of you who missed the April meeting you missed a good one. SVIMS VP Richard Winder brought in over 100 morels (*Morchella elata*), divided them into bags of 10 morels each and raffled them off. Richard donated the fifty-one dollars obtained from selling the raffle tickets to SVIMS. This was extremely generous in so many ways; the club benefited financially, 9 members benefited gastronomically and it set a precedent for the rest of us when we find large quantities of good edibles. This kind of event should happen again and often this fall.

That was only the beginning, because with the help of Oluna and Adolf Ceska, Richard presented a great slide presentation on fungi and their trip to the Liard Hot Springs. It made me "itchy" to get travelling into the interior of B.C. and definitely pumped up my enthusiasm and my appetite for mushroom hunting. Thanks, again, Richard!

I admit that I was pretty excited about being one of the lucky members to win a package of morels. I don't think I have ever seen Richard Winder's face so shocked when I told him I was going to take them home and curry them. I was just kidding, of course. It would take a lot of morels to want to cover up any of their wonderful flavour with strong spices. Jocelyn Lalonde, another morel winner, came over and we combined the morels to make a really good feast. They were absolutely wonderful! Renata cooked them for us. You won't want to miss her cooking session at the September meeting. Eastern Europeans certainly have a way with

preparing mushrooms. I will try to convince Renata to tell us her secrets. For the other morel winners, I hope that in a future Fungifama article you will tell us how you prepared and enjoyed those tasty morsels.

Also at the meeting I presented a proposal from Ingeborg Woodsworth, a fund raiser for the municipality of Lake Cowichan. She has planned a "Salmon/Mushroom Festival" to take place in Lake Cowichan on the weekend of October 13th. Plans are for display booths, demonstrations, walks, talks and a barbeque. I have often thought that when I got a chance to go to France or Italy, I would go to the Truffle Festivals there. So, why shouldn't Lake Cowichan have a mushroom festival to draw tourists and visitors to that area? That same weekend SVIMS is planning on having their Annual Mesachie Lake field foray, so it is an opportunity for us to set up a booth on the Sunday with lots of mushrooms. Ingeborg is looking for volunteers to help with all aspects of the mushroom festival. If you would like to become involved, I can give you more information and put you in contact with her.

Don't miss our May meeting. Mushroom Madness is upon us, and Rob Countess is arranging a mushroom identification workshop. He will have a bunch of microscopes, tools, chemicals, and "know-how" set up at the Pacific Forestry Centre to help you learn how to identify mushrooms you've never seen before. Please bring in any mushrooms you can find, even if you already know what they are. It will be just like being at school again, only with no exams. Well, maybe there will be a little exam, but only a volunteer one and maybe a prize for the right answer. See you there!

MycoKey on-line

Submitted by Bryce Kendrick

From Thomas Laessoe, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, and Jens H. Petersen, Department of Systematic Botany, Institute of Biological Sciences, University of Aarhus, Nordlandsvej 68, DK-8240 Risskov, Denmark
E-mail: jens.h.petersen@biology.au.dk

MycoKey is now available on the Internet. Try it on <http://www.mycokey.com/>.

MycoKey is a synoptic key for determination of fungal genera. This first version includes 171 genera and about 700 illustrated species. It covers the genera of basidiomycota with stem and cap (Agarics, Boletes etc.) from Northern Europe (i.e. Europe north of the Alps) and will be gradually updated to include more groups.

Fungus can control locusts, say scientists

From Knight Ridder Newspapers

http://www.staugustine.com/stories/102400/nat_1024000049.shtml

From millennia ago in Pharaoh's Egypt to months ago in Texas, swarming locusts and grasshoppers have attacked crops and left, as the Bible puts it, "nothing green" behind.

But scientists announced that they've found an environmentally kind way to control the biblical eighth plague. The new weapon is a tiny, naturally occurring fungus mixed with oil in a sticky spray called "Green Muscle." It killed 95 percent of the voracious crop-eating grasshoppers in tests in Africa, bio-pesticide researcher Jurgen Langewald said in an interview.

The problem: Every few years the usually solitary desert locust in Africa changes dramatically. "They become gregarious; they form huge aggregations and they start migrating," said Piotr Naskrecki, visiting curator at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge, Mass. These swarms can consist of more than 50 billion locusts and weigh up to 70,000 tons. And they're mighty hungry.

"The amount of food that a large swarm of locusts can eat per day is the equivalent to the amount of food that all the people in New York can eat in one day," Naskrecki said.

So numerous governments, the World Bank and some nonprofit organizations interested in global food supplies declared war on them, using scientists as their ground troops. The result is the spray developed by Langewald's bio-pesticide project at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria.

Just one spore is enough to kill. "It just digests the grasshopper from the inside. It looks disgusting, I tell you," Langewald said.

"Green Muscle" spray is environmentally safe, according to Langewald, because it's a mix of a naturally occurring fungus and oil.

Langewald said production of the spray -- which at \$4 an acre costs the same as chemical pesticides but lasts three times as long -- will start by the end of the year in South Africa. But it could be years before it clears U.S. regulatory hurdles, he added.

John Capinera, chairman of the entomology department at the University of Florida and an independent researcher, tested the fungus, called *Metarhizium anisopliae*, on Florida grasshoppers. "It worked quite well," he said.

Report of poisoning with classic edible wild mushrooms

Submitted by Adolf Ceska from BEN (Botanical Electronic News) # 73, April 1, 1994.

"Here is a story that I posted on the April 1st BEN few years ago. Hrabal (1914-1997) was the best-known "contemporary" Czech author. He died exactly four years ago (Feb. 4) when he was feeding pigeons from his hospital window and fell out. People are convinced that it was a suicide, but it was nicely romantic: he put a table to the window and a chair on top of it, to get closer to his beloved birds."

From: Hrabal, Bohumil, 1994. The little town where time stood still; translated from the Czech by James Naughton; London: Abacus.

Bohumil Hrabal from the Czech Republic described a strange case of poisoning with edible mushrooms, after a long conditioning to inedible and poisonous mushrooms. The fierce competition among mushroom pickers in Bohemian forests forced Hrabal's Dad and Uncle Pepin to start collecting both inedible and suspect fungi and toadstools.

"Dad took with him a saucepan and a pat of butter and he and Uncle Pepin began to practice some experimental mycophagy. This way they always had fungi almost from

the late spring up to the end of autumn. They started by picking grey tall amanita and bunches of sulphur tuft, they kindled a fire, softened onion in butter, and added a pinch of common earthball and panther cap. Dad handed the fried concoction of fungi to Uncle Pepin first, waited half an hour ... and since Uncle wasn't hearing any ringing sounds, Dad ate some of the mixture too and pronounced it quite excellent."

"Once however they stayed in the woods for whole five hours, Dad had added a bit more earthball or truffle, and their legs had gone numb. Uncle Pepin rejoiced that he wouldn't ever have to walk again, but a couple of hours later Uncle Pepin was to be disappointed. The strength returned to their limbs and they got to the station and returned safely home."

"And one day they found a hot patch and filled a basket piled high with beautiful orange birch boletuses. And so it happened that same evening, when Mum for the first time in ages cooked up those classic edible mushrooms, all three of them were horribly sick and Uncle Pepin had fainting fits and diarrhea, and then he got a dreadful thirst and vomited again, and this was followed by a dull headache, cramps in the calves and intermittent double vision as well as continuous ringing sounds in the ears. When they took them all off to hospital, the consultant said they'd all been poisoned by edible fungi. The last person that had happened to was Professor Smotlach [sic!] himself, found in a deep coma after partaking of edible mushrooms."

The Decline of *Arbutus menziesii* Pursh in Urban and Natural Environments: Its causes and management

By Marianne Elliott, Chairman of the Supervisory Committee: Professor Robert L. Edmonds, College of Forest Resources, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

Decline symptoms have been noticed on arbutus during the past 20 years in the Seattle area. The fungus *Nattrassia mangiferae* Nattrass has been associated with cankers on declining trees, and probably spread to madrone from Persian

walnut in California, where it causes a wilt disease. Low resistance to an introduced pest and severe weather conditions have made this typically weak pathogen a serious problem on arbutus. A decline cycle was created with increased weakening of trees through defoliation caused by the opportunistic pathogen *Fusicoccum aesculi* (*Botryosphaeria dothidea*, teleomorph or sexual stage).

The decline cycle is described for arbutus growing in three types of environment: conifer forest, open urban habitat, and the bluff environment at Magnolia Bluffs Park, Seattle. Arbutus growing at Magnolia Bluffs has the most severe disease symptoms. The trees have large diameters similar to trees growing in the open urban environment, with a relatively small amount of foliage in the crown similar to trees growing in the forest environment. This low ratio of photosynthetic area to respiring tissue combined with the harsh environmental conditions of wind and sun exposure explains the increased severity of the disease in the bluff environment. There was no difference in severity of disease on arbutus growing in the urban and forest environments.

Initial tests of chemical and biological treatments for cankers were carried out. The biocontrol fungus *Trichoderma* spp. was antagonistic to *N. mangiferae* in culture, mainly by outcompeting the pathogenic fungus for space. The chemical fungicide Greenlight Systemic Fungicide (Thiophanate-methyl) inhibited the growth of *N. mangiferae* in culture, and only slightly affected the growth of several isolates of *Trichoderma* spp.

Check out the new SVIMS **web site** at www.svims.ca. Many thanks to Web Meister Rob Countess!

You can now pick up **Fungifama** from the web site.

Please give feedback on the web site to Rob.