

# Fungifama



The Newsletter of the South Vancouver Island Mycological Society  
October 2006

## Introducing the SVIMS Executive for 2006

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### To broadcast a message to SVIMS members via email:

svims-l@victoria.tc.ca

### SVIMS web site:

[www.svims.ca](http://www.svims.ca)

**Dues: \$20.00 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 Meetings:

**Nov 2: Mushroom Identification DVD** by Taylor Lockwood and Elections.

Visit: [www.fungiphoto.com/Treasurechest/MIT/mit](http://www.fungiphoto.com/Treasurechest/MIT/mit)

### Jan 27: Survivor's Banquet

The SVIMS annual potluck will be held at Strawberry Vale Community hall, on High St. at Burnside road. Cost is \$5.00 to cover the cost of the hall. Donations needed for the gift exchange. Volunteers for this event please call Joyce.

### Feb 24: February Mushroom Dinner.

Details to follow.



Special thanks to Jack, Christine and Oluna for their work on the Cowichan foray!

## Mycological Websites

Taylor Lockwood spent a month and a half taking photos on the East Coast.

[www.kingdomoffungi.com/Gallery/ss.mm/mm.01](http://www.kingdomoffungi.com/Gallery/ss.mm/mm.01)

## Past Prez Sez

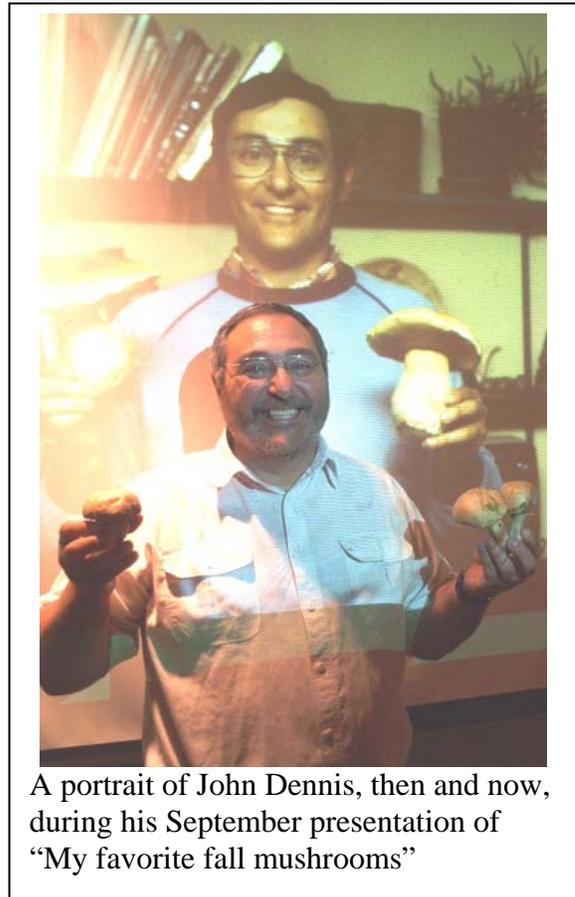
*Since our president Christian Freidinger is away, past president Christine Roberts made this contribution.*

This year's foray to the Lake Cowichan Education Centre attracted 39 forayers, including people from as far away as Vancouver, Comox and Tofino. Folks arrived either Friday evening (and grabbed the *Boletus edulis* off the lawns) or Saturday morning bright and early along with sunshine and clouds. The first stop was the Mesachie Lake Forestry Centre where we all broke into

small groups to look around the old-growth forest there. This is a mixture of Douglas fir, western hemlock, western red cedar and occasional grand fir, red alder and maples. Some Sitka spruce are close to the lake. The woods were still quite dry but there were quite a few finds of *Sparassis crispa* - the cauliflower mushroom, and many honey mushrooms (*Armillaria ostoyae* and similar). In fact almost everything we found was on wood, which can hold more moisture than the soil. A few folks found some chanterelles just starting.

After lunch we looked around the Gilbert Bay area, finding and photographing what must be a record - a whole lot of puffballs growing right out of a rock, not in cracks and crevices, but from the apparently smooth surface. The mycelium must have been woven throughout all the minute pores within the rock. It was pretty impressive. Other nice finds of the day included a deep blue *Leptonia*, a perfect cluster of *Gymnopilus ventricosus*, *Boletus fibrillosus* and an olive brown, blue-staining bolete we hadn't found before - *Boletus rainisii* - a large *Truncolumnella citrina* and a branch with some very cute little *Pleurotus ostreatus* (oyster mushrooms), that grew measurably overnight.

The evening brought some heavy rain, and some adventurous cooking, as some folks didn't want to wait till they got home to try the *Sparassis* and some angel-wings. They hit upon the idea of loosely wrapping several pieces of these mushrooms in foil with butter and seasoning and cooking them on the coals of the fire. Was that ever good, I'm drooling all over the keyboard at the mere memory! Around 150 species were labeled and displayed on the tables, and Sunday morning Oluna and I talked about the various attributes of many of these species. Quite a few folks planned diversions from the trek home to foray, so maybe we will hear some other stories of fabulous finds.



A portrait of John Dennis, then and now, during his September presentation of "My favorite fall mushrooms"

### **LOCAL EVENTS AND FORAYS:**

#### **Swan Lake Mushroom Show**

- October 29, 2006
- Swan Lake Nature Centre

### **FAR AWAY EVENTS AND FORAYS:**

David Arora's Annual Mendocino Mushroom Foray

- November 24-26, 2006.
- Three days of mushroom hunts, ID, cooking demos, and lectures by Arora and special guests
- \$170 (US) per person includes lodging in heated cabins and most meals. All experience levels welcome.
- This foray fills quickly. To register contact Debbie Viess at [amanitarita@yahoo.com](mailto:amanitarita@yahoo.com) or by phone at 510-430-9353. Mail a cheque to 328 Marlow Dr., Oakland, CA, USA 94605

For more information and late-breaking foray details go to [www.BayAreaMushrooms.org](http://www.BayAreaMushrooms.org)

## OTHER MYCOLOGICAL EVENTS:

### **Cowichan Salmon/Mushroom Festival**

- October 28 & 29, 2006
- Organized by Ingeborg Woodsworth
- MayoCreekGardens@shaw.ca

## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

### **Reflections on Mushroom Poisoning – Part III. The final installment of Michael Beug's presentation.**

Blonde, black and gray Morels (52 people poisoned + 77 in one banquet). Morels are all capable of causing gastrointestinal distress and sometimes chills, disorientation, fever, flushing, sweating, hot flashes, flatulence and hallucinations. If even tasted raw, the GI distress can be severe. In a famous BC case chefs at a banquet served sliced raw morels and other raw mushrooms in a salad. Of 483 at the banquet, 77 wound up in the hospital with GI distress. Some people are made ill if they drink alcohol with a meal of morels.

*Coprinus atramentarius* (6 people poisoned) is famous for causing an Atabuse type reaction if alcohol is consumed with the meal or within three days after the mushroom meal. It contains coprine, which in conjunction with alcohol triggers a racing heart and palpitations, tingling in the arms and legs, flushing and sometimes additional maladies.

*Coprinus comatus* (9 people poisoned). *Coprinus comatus* is a distinctive and delectable edible, can make some people ill if consumed with alcohol but the symptoms are different – GI distress. It does not contain coprine. Even consumed without alcohol it can cause GI distress in a few people, especially if eaten raw.

*Pholiota squarrosa* (12 people poisoned) is another mushroom that can cause GI distress and if consumed with alcohol the effects can be worse, but again it is not the coprine type reaction. While distinctive and edible for most people, this mushroom is not choice and so is not worth taking a chance with.

Most people consider *Lepiota rachodes* or *Chlorophyllum rachodes* edible and choice (16 people poisoned). In susceptible

individuals it can cause mild to severe GI distress.

*Agaricus xanthodermus* (16 people poisoned) causes mild to severe GI distress in virtually everyone who consumes the mushroom. Since it can be found in lawns it is another mushroom that children wind up eating with unpleasant results.

*Agaricus praeclaresquamosus* (6 people poisoned) is another member of the *Agaricus* genus that causes GI distress in most people who consume it. The toxic *Agaricus* species all turn yellow if you take a small piece of the flesh of the stipe and add a drop of 10% KOH or 10% Drano. Also, the toxic species all smell a little to very unpleasant when cooking, often with a creosote or wet blacktop odor while the edible species all smell good, many having an almond odor.

*Scleroderma aerolatum* (21 people poisoned by all species of *Scleroderma* combined) can cause very rapid vomiting and diarrhea.

*Scleroderma citrinum* is another toxic *Scleroderma*, or Earthball. *Scleroderma citrinum* causes GI distress in humans and in animals. Dogs and pigs have died from consuming this or a highly similar species. Some individuals are highly sensitive to the spores of this species. They experience lacrimation, rhinitis and rhinorrhea, conjunctivitis.

Have you got an interesting article, anecdote, poem, photograph or website to share? We'll include it in Fungifama. Email your submission to hleary@shaw.ca.

The remaining mushrooms are all choice edible species that can cause poisoning in susceptible individuals or if consumed raw or with alcohol.

*Lepista nuda* (6 people poisoned) is a choice edible if well cooked, though it is poisonous when raw and some cannot tolerate it even when cooked.

*Armillaria ostoyae* and other members of the *Armillaria mellea* complex are known as Honey Mushrooms (40 people poisoned) and are sought out by many people. They are tricky to identify correctly and they cause

more than 2% of all mushroom poisonings – thus this is a mushroom that I have crossed off my list of edibles. The gastrointestinal distress can be severe. At first I thought that you just need to avoid Honey Mushrooms growing on conifers or on eucalyptus, but many cases involve mushrooms growing on hardwoods as well.

Orange to liver colored *Leccinums* (58 people poisoned) can cause mild to severe gastrointestinal distress, sometimes lasting days. Because they cause between 3 and 4% of all mushroom poisonings, I have crossed *Leccinum* species off my list of edibles, even though I personally find them delicious to eat and have not yet become ill. Other friends who were reluctant to cross *Leccinums* off their list of favorite edibles have belatedly learned that they can be made ill by these mushrooms.



Jean attended the NAMA foray in Hinton and created this paper mushroom out of Turkey Tails and Red Belted Conk.

With many *Suillus* species the problem is contact dermatitis – they react to handling *Suillus* species the same way others react to poison oak and poison ivy. There were 17

people poisoned or with dermatitis from all *Suillus* species combined.

*Boletus edulis* (13 people poisoned) is one of my top favorite edibles and yet some people cannot tolerate it if they have alcohol with the meal. Others get GI distress, even atrial fibrillation and bradycardia just from eating the mushrooms without alcohol involved.

*Laetiporus sulphureus* and related species of Chicken of the Woods (37 people poisoned) is another generally edible species, yet it causes over 2% of the reported mushroom poisonings. The symptoms are mild to severe GI distress. Rarely there can be cramps, fever, flushing, headache, salivation or dermatitis. One nursing baby was made ill and one woman died of shock 19 hours after consuming 5 bites of Chicken of the Woods.

Even Chanterelles (17 people poisoned) can make some people ill. In one case in the fall of 2005 an Oregon woman had found great quantities of chanterelles and ate them meal after meal. Eventually she became sensitised to the mushroom and suffered GI symptoms.

**Book Review: *Common Mushrooms of the Northwest: Alaska, Western Canada & the Northwestern United States* by J. Duane Sept, Calypso Publishing, 2006**  
Reviewed by Jean Johnson

This is Duane's twelfth natural history book and his first book on fungi. The book contains physical descriptions for 130 of the most common mushroom species found in this geographic area, plus details on season, habitat, range, edibility and important features. It focuses on species that can be identified easily by appearance, rather than by examination with a microscope. There are few mushroom books that concentrate on fungal information in this specific region and this book is an important contribution for those living in the area.

This is a beginner's identification guide and the Introduction is a must-read for those new to the subject. A biologist and member of the Vancouver Mycological Society, Duane provides background information for the

novice and is clear to emphasize that caution, especially for the neophyte, is strongly advised. Details on edible, poisonous, hallucinogenic and other fascinating fungi are included.

A unique and helpful feature of this book is the circle icon that appears on the upper left side of each species account. It represents the spore print colour – an important mushroom identifier and a first step to positive identification.

As well, the book contains some helpful websites, poison control centre contacts, and mycological club information, a useful bibliography and glossary, and an index which lists both common and scientific names for the reader's convenience.

The author is an award-winning photographer and his photographs in this book are beautiful, capturing the typical shape, colour and habitat of each species. Priced at \$12.95, this book is a must for mushroom fanciers, naturalists, campers, hikers and anyone who loves and values the outdoors.

For more information go to [www.calypso-publishing.com](http://www.calypso-publishing.com)

**Common Mushrooms of the Northwest: Alaska, Western Canada & the Northwestern United States** will be available at the September mushroom show, the November SVIMS meeting and directly from Jean Johnson at [jeanwade@islandnet.com](mailto:jeanwade@islandnet.com) or 656-317

### **Models of Mycology on Display at University of Victoria (from BC Nature, Fall 2006)**

If you are a mycologist, a mushroomer or any other sort of fungi fancier, you will not want to miss an exciting exhibit at the University of Victoria's University Centre. There, you will find about 100 ceramic models of mushrooms and other fungi.

These scale models, drawn from nature, were meticulously handcrafted by renowned artists, the late Ernst and Alma Lorenzen, at their pottery in Lantz, Nova Scotia. The sculptures are not only scientifically accurate, but are aesthetically pleasing - and well worth a visit.

This collection was donated to the Maltwood Gallery in 1992 by Margaret Vincent, a member of the Cowichan Valley Naturalists, who acquired the pieces over a period of thirty years. This is the first time the collection has been on public display.

The exhibit, in the foyer and mezzanine of UVic's University Centre, is on now until July 2007. Admission is free. For more information, contact the curator at 721-6313.

#### **Library Update**

Thanks to Bryce, Christine and Shannon and a nameless donor, the SVIMS library is growing. The books have already been useful during the Cowichan Lake foray. Please consider donating your books or \$\$ towards our library.

Volunteer to help with typing would be much appreciated. Thanks, Joyce.

### **MEMBER NEWS**

**Richard Winder** had a paper published on "Cultural studies of *Morchella elata*" in *Mycological Research*. (110[5]: 612-23). The *in vitro* growth of *Morchella elata* was characterized with respect to the effects of a variety of substrates, isolates, developmental status of the parental ascoma, temperature, and pH. Reported in Volume 47:5 of *The Mycophile*.

**Caution:** The South Vancouver Island Mycological Society (SVIMS) newsletter, *Fungifama*, is not intended as an (online) identification or medicinal guide to mushrooms. There are risks involved in eating and in using wild mushrooms. The possibility may exist that you are allergic to a specific mushroom, or that the mushroom may be anomalous. SVIMS, *Fungifama* and the authors on this site warn that the reader must accept full personal responsibility for deciding to use or consume any particular specimen.

# Memories of Cowichan Lake



In the field at the Forestry Centre.



Christine finds the way in!



Foraging works up a big appetite! SVIMSers line up for dinner



Examining the loot. Christine identifies some of the species found the previous day.



Cooking mushrooms in the main fireplace.



A foray lunch break.



Sparassis crispa!