

Fungifama



The Newsletter of the South Vancouver Island Mycological Society
January 2007

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

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:

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 8: SVIMS Monthly Meeting with Paul Kroeger. Note this is a change of date from the SVIMS calendar.

Feb 24: February Mushroom Dinner.

Queen Mother Waterside Café
407 Swift Street
Diners with an Entertainment coupon are invited to use it for this event.
Contact Joyce Lee for more information (telephone 744-3644; email oakalloak@yahoo.com)

March 1: SVIMS Monthly Meeting: with Adolf and Oluna Ceska and photos from the David Arora foray in November

April 5: SVIMS Monthly Meeting:

"President's Research Project"

Mycological Websites

Creepy Cordyceps

Some very nice camera work in this one including some time lapse footage.

www.videosift.com/story.php?id=23191

Prez Sez

The first snow drops mark the new cycle of seasons. As soon as the days are getting longer we know spring will come again. If we look closer, this assuring prospect becomes less comforting considering long term climate prediction and short term weather forecasts. The increasing melting speed of all glaciers around the world and the runaway carbon dioxide (CO₂) readings in the air indicate long term climate changes. With the shift of the average values for temperature, precipitation, pressure, maxima and minima may shift not necessarily in the same way, making short term weather forecasts more complex

For many of our crops we know the growing conditions very well. We observe their growth; we can support them with watering, fertilizing, shading, etc. With wild mushrooms, however, there are no visible signs. They suddenly, mysteriously, show up, sometimes not every year, some on the same location, some not. This certainly is one of the exciting aspects of mushroom hunting: the experience of the hunter and the unpredictability of the hunted. Fruitings of some varieties are associated with temperature, moisture, light etc. Often it seems not only the absolute levels, but the rate of change over time is critical. Anecdotal evidence and experience are passed on in our group. It, therefore, would be interesting to take it a step further and investigate the trends in weather conditions and soil parameters leading to the fruitings of some varieties. Beyond that, it would be of interest if a change in growing patterns parallel to the changes in climate and weather patterns could be found.

SVIMS, with its experienced and interested members with a wide range of backgrounds could very well contribute to a more scientific understanding of mushroom fruiting conditions. Planning, literature research, field surveillance, local weather stations, data measuring devices for soil conditions, data collection, data processing, assessment of results, photographic work, documentation, etc., for different locations at the same time can only be done by a group. Such a wide based approach would give all

interested members a chance to participate and gain insight into a fascinating scientific research. This project will be presented in one of the next meetings and your comments and your input will be very welcome.

LOCAL EVENTS AND FORAYS:

Swan Lake Mushroom Show

- October 29, 2006
- Swan Lake Nature Centre

FAR AWAY EVENTS AND FORAYS:

January 27

Oregon Truffle Festival
www.oregontrufflefestival.com

September 14, 15, 16, 2007

Vancouver Mycological Society Manning Park Foray
www.vanmyco.com

October 28, 2007

Vancouver Mycological Society Mushroom Show
www.vanmyco.com

OTHER MYCOLOGICAL EVENTS:

Models of Mycology on Display at University of Victoria

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.

SVIMS Mushroom Show – Sunday, October 29, 2006

Submitted by Jean Johnson



It's been dry, dry, dry – and I was so worried that there would be few mushrooms and few attendees at our annual Mushroom Show at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. Thank you to the numerous members who went foraying on Saturday and

then dropped their finds off to be identified and displayed. They tell me that it took longer and they had to work much harder, but they were determined that we'd have lots of specimens for the show – and they succeeded!

Our loyal scientific mycologists helped to ID and explain the mysteries of the Fifth Kingdom: **Shannon Berch, Oluna Ceska, Bryce Kendrick, Renata Outerbridge, Christine Roberts, Richard Winder** – and even **Paul Kroeger** from the Vancouver Mycological Society. **Gerald Loiselle, Kevin Trim** and **Adolf Ceska** were in the thick of it, too. **Jocelyn LaLonde** attended to the children's Stamp Corner all day. **Chris Shepard** set up the membership table and with the help of **Jean Johnson**, also sold t-shirts, calendars, and a new mushroom book. Chris' seven-month-old son, **Dawson**, made an appearance in mommy's backpack and won all our hearts. **Heather Leary** came dashing into the show with extra copies of the latest *Fungifama*. They were so hot off the press that they were smoking! Thanks for making that effort, Heather. Although he wasn't at the show, **Rich Mably** came through with a beautiful 2007 SVIMS calendar to sell. Look for his award-winning photograph of a *Coprinus* on the back cover.

John Dennis, who is usually in the ID



quadrangle, was the “cook du jour” at the portable BBQ as **Astra** was ill, unfortunately. Hope you're better for next year's show,

Astra. However, John, looking quite natty in his mushroom tie, lured folks into the show with a homemade duxelle and marinated shitake and chanterelles mushrooms. Thanks to **Jane Lindsell, Marlee Loiselle, and Renata Outerbridge** for providing the chanterelles. Where did they find them????

Many thanks to the folks who provided food and goodies for our volunteers: **Joyce Lee** for her wonderful hot soup, marinated mushrooms, and bread; **Jean Johnson** for Pumpkin Cake; **Chris Tomaschuk** for freshly made Spanikopita; **Peggy Tarkanen** for Coconut Lemon Bars; **Christine Roberts** for hummus. **Zora Creery** brought two plates of yummy Egg Salad Sandwiches. All the food was gobbled up and enjoyed immensely by our volunteers.

The star of the Show was a mushroom specimen only displayed by photographs - *Tubaria punicea* – found growing close to the base of older Arbutus trees and just recently named. A brilliant red fungus, it has been found in six locations in the CRD by **Oluna and Adolf Ceska**. Please call them if you find this fruiting in your area this fall and winter (cell phone: 250-216-1481).

As usual, at the end of the Show, **Ian Gibson** comes to enter all the fungal species in our Club's database. In spite of the dryness to date, he marked down more species than last year and several specimens are being sent away for further identification. After sharing with the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, our wooden mushroom gathered \$90 in donations. The unofficial attendance count was 220 people and we attracted three new members.

We hope that everyone who contributed gets thanked so if there are any errors and omissions in this summary, please let us know. The people who attended this event, whether SVIMS members or members of the public, all enjoyed themselves. And some of our mushroom specimens lived on – recycled by **Rene Zich** for the **Galiano Mushroom Show** on Sunday, November 5th.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The latest news from Taylor Lockwood (Mendocina, CA):

I wasn't feeling that well but after waiting through three weeks of cold weather, the warm rains had returned and it was time to go. I would be looking for *Clathrus ruber*, which is not that uncommon in the woodchips of planted areas around the San Francisco bay area. Common or not, a photo up to my expectations had eluded me for years.

By the time I was fifty miles down the road, I realized that I hadn't brought a change of clothes. However, I was dressed for hunting mushrooms, not socializing, and I wasn't about to spread my cold germs around anyway. It didn't help that I might be driving right into worse weather with possible adverse effects on my already compromised health. But like I've said many times before, sneezes, bites and all of that are temporal; a good photo will last forever. Onward into the fog!

My first stop was the area around the Palace of Fine Arts, which was reputed to have some aged wood chips-and stinkhorns-in the planted areas around the pond there. It did stop raining for a bit and I did manage to find a rare place to park. But by the time I figured out there was nothing to photograph, I also figured out that in my single-minded quest I hadn't made a note of where my car was.

If it's good to "sweat out" my cold, I was doing the right thing. I walked around several blocks until I happened upon the right one. At this point in the late afternoon, it was getting a little dark so it was time to get serious and head for Golden Gate Park. Walking, driving, walking, driving. I wasn't feeling very well but I didn't care. In this big place there has to be some somewhere.

Aha! A dead one here, a dead one there. There's a pattern here. The leftovers are all in the open - probably frostbitten and washed out. I'll try a new strategy; crawling on my hands and knees under the bushes where they would be protected from the frost.

Starting where I found the last leftovers, under I go and just at the edge of the bush cover - bingo! One up and open, one on it's way and several unhatched eggs. So I took a bunch of shots and gathered up a few eggs. As it was getting too dark to hunt now, I

headed back dropping film in the lab, and putting heat on the wet feet.

And now, after several days, the eggs still haven't hatched but the slides have arrived and I did get a shot that was more to my liking. You can see it at: www.kingdomoffungi.com/d.pages/m.2006.12/m.2006.12b.php. And the cold has receded as well, thank you. May the spores be with you!

Taylor



The Fly-Truffler by Gustaf Sobin
Norton & Co., New York, NY,
155 p. ISBN 0-393-04322-2

Book Review appearing in the NAMA Mycophile (Jan/Feb 2007) by Britt Bunyard

The Fly-Truffler is a pretty little book. No, there are no pictures of mushrooms – or anything else for that matter. The book is actually a novel by the acclaimed author and poet Gustaf Sobin. In fact, the book could probably be called a novella – partly because of its length but also because it is very engrossing. And the language of Sobin...very pretty. The topic of the book is of a fungal sort.

Our hero is a certain Philippe Cabassac, a French linguistics professor whose pet subject is the dying Provencal language. He lives in a dilapidated farmhouse – the family home for eight generations – selling off a parcel of land each year in order to make ends meet. Every sale is a small betrayal for Cabassac’s roots in the Provencal landscape run deep. To fill his larder, he stalks the estate’s property for natural delicacies, “truffling every winter, gathering wild asparagus in the spring, speckled mushrooms each fall.”



The elusive *Tyloporus pseudoscaber* (Dark Bolete) has again been found in Shirley, close to the ocean near French Beach. Three days earlier there was nothing under that Sitka Spruce, but on Thursday, the day of our meeting, I wandered by just to check. There, big as life, sat that giant bolete with its smaller cousin stuck under its cap covered in white, pink, and blue mold! (Last year they were found nearer to French Beach where the bush meets the rocks on the eastern end.)

We brought it home after our meeting and again checked the books - yes, it is an edible, but MD says definitely not incredible. In any case, I sliced it up and the tubes were firm with no insects. It smelled a bit acrid, but after I washed the top and sliced it up, it smelled just like a normal Bolete. Popped it into hot olive oil and it sautéed up nice and golden brown; now the test: Taste was fine - mild, but interesting. Texture was similar to that of a King Bolete, but not as crunchy.

When I didn't come up with any gastric distress after about 4 hours, Jan tried it; thought it was just a bit bitter, but quite edible. I guess we have another edible around here. Too bad they are in short supply!!

All the best from Shirley,
Marcie & Jan

He is most devoted to the art of truffling and, not unlike the Old World truffle gatherers who use pigs or dogs, he watches for the fungus flies, “lei mousco” which, drawn by the rich scent of truffles, lay their eggs in the loose topsoil nearby.

Since the death of Cabassac’s young wife Julieta, the truffles have come to represent something far more than a delicacy for his palate: eating these black truffles brings on dreams of his recently deceased wife.

This book is so richly written that you can almost smell the damp earth which Cabassac’s fingers probe – desperately, somnambulistically – for one more of those hypogeous sporocarps.

Library Update

The SVIMS library listing is posted at www.svims.ca. Members are invited to borrow items for one month. Email requests to oakalloak@yahoo.com. If you are interested in assisting with the SVIMS Library or would like to make a donation please contact Joyce Lee.

Effects of poisoning by *Agaricus praeclaresquamosus*

Christine Roberts

Last evening at my dance class one of my friends of European extraction, who was buying a SVIMS calendar asked me to identify a mushroom. She pulled out a button *Agaricus*, which was quite a good size, sort of beige, and to her credit had the complete untrimmed stipe. (Some of what I tell folks is actually sinking in!). It puzzled me for a few moments because it did not look grey enough for *A. praeclaresquamosus*, but on closer examination it had some tiny dark grey scales around the margin. The clincher was the

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.

disinfectant-like smell at the base of the stipe, which she was able to detect once it was pointed out. She had confused it with the meadow mushroom, *Agaricus campestris*, telling me that the other ones had pink gills before they went brown.

When I said it was poisonous she looked a bit sheepish, - that would explain the 3 days of diarrhea, she said. A bit more cheerfully she pointed out that she was still with us in life, and fit enough to dance, but probably wouldn't eat any more of those particular mushrooms. The lady in question recently celebrated her 88th birthday, but is definitely not frail, so that gives you some idea of one possible outcome of eating *Agaricus praeclaresquamosus*.

Remember, with *Agaricus* species, good ones smell nice - of anise, almond or pleasantly mushroomy - bad ones smell of phenol, disinfectant or metallic at the base of the stipe and often while cooking.

If you are not sure, ask yourself the following two questions:

1. How badly do I really need to eat this mushroom?
2. Am I willing to suffer the consequences in the name of science (3 days on the toilet, maybe less, maybe worse)?

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.

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to Rich Mably who won two NAMA photography awards in 2006: Documentary Award (Third Place) for his *Phaeolus schweinitzii* and Judges' Option Commendation for a Gnat on *Mycena aurantiodiscus*. Both photos appeared in the November/December 2006 issue of *The Mycophile*.



Comparing specimens at the Mushroom Show. Photo: Heather Leary