

Fungifama

June, 1997

The newsletter of the **South Vancouver Island Mycological Society**

Volume 4.6

Officers:

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Dues: \$15.00 per year per household; after July \$7.50.
Please make checks payable to SVIMS or bring cash to meetings.

Meetings: First Thursday of every month (except December, January, July, and August) 7:00 p.m. Sharp at the Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 West Burnside Rd., Victoria. Parking is plentiful, and the meeting room is by the entrance. Non-members are welcome.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SACRED FUNGUS

CULTIVATED CHANTERELLES

WHAT DID WE SEE IN APRIL?

WHEN IS A CORAL NOT A CORAL?

...AND MORE

MEETING Thursday, June 5th

Mushroom Mania! Come test your prowess at keying mushrooms or learn from those who have some experience! Everyone please try to bring up to three species of mushrooms (try to get specimens of all ages—it can really help!) in paper bags labelled with the habitat you found them in (in forest or field, on dead wood, old socks, etc.). Also, bring your field guides!!! We will split up into small groups each containing at least one person experienced in identification.

Please be a friend to the environment: bring your own coffee mug! And remember that we always appreciate your home-made cookies, etc.

Field Trip Saturday, May 24

Parksville member Al Rupprecht will lead us on an easy trail skirting the Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park, followed by a moderate climb on a good trail up Nanoose Hill. We don't expect to find much for the pot this time of year, but our challenge will be to add "new" species to our Island list! The more eyes, the better!

Meet at the parking lot of Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park at 10:00 a.m. To get there from the new section of Hwy 19, take the Hwy 4 exit toward

Coombs and drive about 8 km. The park is on the right. If you're coming from Victoria, allow yourself a bit over two hours to get there in time. Bring your lunch!

Meeting September 4

Tentative program: Taylor Lockwood, the brilliant and widely travelled mushroom photographer from California presenting some of his mushroom images from around the world.

Meeting October 2

Tentative program: Nancy Smith-Weber, the Northwestern cup-fungus expert, will talk about her favourite organisms, and will also accompany us on some field trips. Nancy is the author of the authoritative book "A Morel Hunter's Companion."

SVIMS Fall Foray Oct. 10-13, 1997. at Bamfield Biological Station (details to follow in a later issue)

SACRED FUNGUS IN TRADITIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE

Blanchette, R.A. 1997 *Haploporus odorus*: A sacred fungus in traditional native American culture of the northern plains. *Mycologia* 89:233 - 240.

Abstract: The Indigenous Peoples of the northern American plains used *Haploporus odorus* to ornament sacred robes, human scalp necklaces and other cultural properties. The fungus was also a component of medicine bundles and used for protection against illness. Numerous collections, some dating to the early 1800s, from the Blackfoot, Blood, Cree and other northern plains tribes indicate this fungus was used widely as a component of sacred

objects and as a symbol of spiritual power. The exceedingly fragrant anise-like scent of *H. odoros* sporophores appears to be the reason this fungus was selected and revered. Collection notes and historic photographs provide additional evidence for the importance of this fungus in traditional Native American culture. The significance of this fungus has remained obscure due to misidentification of the fungus as carved cottonwood roots, loss of information on traditional Native American culture over the last century and lack of previous ethnomycological investigation.

Robert A. Blanchette Department of Plant Pathology, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108.

Thanks to Adolf Ceska for supplying this article through his Botanical Electronic News (BEN).

CULTIVATED CHANTERELLES

News of *Cantharellus cibarius* successfully fruiting in greenhouse cultivation comes from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Francisco Comacho, from Oregon State University, states that he and Erie Danell from Sweden, will detail how Eric developed his technique in Sweden and put it into practice while teaching at Oregon State. Using seedlings of *Pinus sylvestris* (scots pine) as the host plant, they inoculated the roots with a Swedish strain of *C. cibarius* and planted them in pots filled with vermiculite and peat moss. No special efforts were made to control pH or other chemical factors in the soil. Regular watering and occasional fertilization were the only care they received. After a year and a half, mushrooms of normal size and characteristics fruited with two trees out of twenty. Additional experiments are planned using different strains and species of fungi. Watch for additional future reports on this interesting subject.

Bill Freedman, in *Mycena News*, Volume 46, Dec. 1996, the Mycological Society of San Francisco.

WHAT DID WE FIND IN APRIL?

Near Lizard Lake, *Plectania nannfeldtii*, *Plectania melastoma* and *Vibrissea truncorum*. The first is a beautiful black goblet; another specimen was found near Parksville. The second is a black cup with orange granules round the border. *Vibrissea truncorum* is a very small orange capped white mushroom that grows near or often in running water. It is considered uncommon, but if mycologists kept their noses under water instead of sniffing through moss they might find it reasonably common. Another black cup recorded this month in several places was

Pseudoplectania melaena (called darkening *Pseudoplectania* because it starts brown and turns black).

The outing to the Malahat on April 13 yielded *Agrocybe praecox*, *Gyromitra esculenta*, *Helvella acetabulum*, *Nolanea verna*, *Sarcosoma mexicana*, *Sarcosphaera crassa*, and 20 others. The Ceskas plunged down the hillside through the thickets toward the ocean, leading a line of amazed followers. The way up took longer, but the last stragglers in two groups were rewarded by one morel for each group. There was quite an argument about whose morel was bigger. Adolf found a single *Verpa conica*, but the evidence was destroyed as a dog dived into Oluna's basket.

John Dean Provincial Park April 20 was a guided tour through some of the labyrinth of trails by Bryce Kendrick, who takes a leading role in the Park's protection, (as one unfortunate cyclist found out). The view from Pickles' Bluff is one of the finest on the Island. Several fine examples of *Cryptoporus volvatus* were found on a log beside the West Viewpoint Trail.

An outing to the Campbell River area April 26-27 found *Tarzetta cupulais* as well as the common and beautiful but often overlooked *Zachnellula* (on dead berry canes) and *Dasyscyphus virgineus*. (on alder cones and leaves). Randy Marchand showed us more morels than you can shake a stick at. (It's not very easy to shake a stick at a morel however: the only way to shake a stick at a morel is to stick at it till you're shaking.) [Eds: In other words, we didn't find very many!] The Italian plum trees at his house had beautiful examples of an ugly fungus called *Apiosporina morbosa* or black knot (see illustration in Phillips). Another fine-looking ugly fungus was carbon cushion, or *Ustulina deusta* (illustrated in the Audubon guide). We enjoyed a beautiful walk down the Ripple Rock Trail on the second day, and should investigate it again in the Fall.

Finally, Rob Countess identified *Discina perlata*, *Melanoleuca graminicola* (microscopically), and *Hygrophorus subalpinus* on the Coastal Forest Chronosequence plots in March or April.

There was an error in the March *Fungifama*: *Echinodontium tinctorium* is not confirmed on Vancouver Island and is normally found east of the Cascades in BC. There is a specimen from Swan Lake, but this is more likely another Swan Lake elsewhere in BC. Of the other species in the March issue mentioned as not found by SVIMS but with specimens in the PFC Herbarium, I have found only *Schizophyllum commune* so far. Unfortunately I happened to be in coastal Washington at the time, so it's still not on the list. There are many others in the Herbarium that we haven't seen.

Some of them are now listed as a footnote on the longer version of the list.

Vancouver Island checklists are available from me at 384-6002. Use one for any outing on Vancouver Island and send it back to me by mail at 67 Linden Avenue, Victoria BC V8V 4C9 or fax at 920-7768.

-- Ian Gibson

WHEN IS A CORAL NOT A CORAL?

That mushroom is a *Clavarielllla*? Or is it a *Clavulinicorona*? Do these names confuse you as much as they did me? This is before I decided to take the bull by the Caloceras (Greek for beautiful horns) and find a way to remember them.

My first revelation was that they should have called *Clavulinopsis*, *Clavariopsis*. After that, everything fell into place. The suffix, -opsis means "like" or "resembling" as in "I *hopsis* is something you *like*". But *Clavulinopsis* for our purposes is more like *Clavaria* than *Clavulina*, as we'll soon see.

We'll start with *CLAVARIA*, which apparently means "relating to a small club" which makes it the perfect place for a small club like SVIMS to start. The *Clavarias* are the fairy clubs, small erect and unbranched or sparingly branched.

The small club has a big brother called *CLAVARIADELPHUS* which means "brother of *Clavaria*". Think of an bigger brother with an "iron will" (*Iron sulphate will stain stain it green*) who likes oranges and is a bit thick.

CLAVULINA can mean "small nail". There is an antibiotic called Clavulin which is supposed to "nail" small bacteria. It's hard to imagine any fungus looking less like a small nail than this branched coral does and *Clavulina* can also mean "small club", but that would be too confusing. Think instead of the small nails on your little toes. They are pale and dull in color, brittle or tough in consistency, there are two of them (*Clavulina* is unusual in having

2-spored basidia), and if they have anything to do with a fungus (as in athlete's foot) they break into numerous branches. Voila!

CLAVULINOPSIS should be "like" *Clavulina*. As I said, a better name would have been *Clavariopsis*, because it is like *Clavaria* in being called a fairy club, in being slender and fragile and unbranched, and in having 4 spored basidia under the microscope. I conclude that the person who named it must have been looking at *Clavulinopsis corniculata*, which is branched (unlike most species of *Clavulinopsis* but like most *Clavulinas*) and this persuaded him to use the name *Clavulinopsis*. Probably there's a more valid obscure reason, but there's no reason to pay attention to it.

CLAVICORONA is obviously "crowned club" and refers to the crown-like branching pattern and the crown at the tip of each branch. [see table below for a key to genera mentioned so far]

What about *CLAVICEPS*? It's enough to make your head spin. And spin it does, if you take the derivative LSD, originally made from *Claviceps purpurea*, which is ergot of rye and other grasses, not a coral fungus, and must not be confused with *Clavaria purpurea* which is a coral fungus not an ergot. *Claviceps* means "key head", as in the English words "clavichord" with a keyboard, and "cephalic" meaning "of the head". Some people thought that *Claviceps* (or at least LSD) did hold the key to their head. The fact that *Claviceps* could also mean "nail head" or "club head", I'll be sure not to mention. ("Clava" is Latin for "club"; "clavis" for "key"; and "clavus" for "nail".)

CALOCERA looks a bit like the coral fungi, but it isn't. Its sticky surface when wet gives it away as a jelly fungus. Remember "Calo" rhymes with "Jallo". *Calocera* means "beautiful horn", which is an apt description. (Calisthenics are derived from the Greek words for beauty and strength. Rhinoceros means "nose horn".) *Caloscypha* is another story, so are *Calocybe*, *Caloporus*, *Caulorhiza*, and *Calvatia*. I'll stop before we have a calamity. -- Ian Gibson.

Here's a table for those who didn't quite catch everything.

Genus	Usual Branching	Usual form	Coloring	Spore Print
<i>Clavariadelphus</i>	Unbranched	Thick	Orange	White /ochre
<i>Clavaria</i>	Unbranched	Slender fragile	Varies	White
<i>Clavulinopsis</i>	Unbranched or branched	Slender fragile	Varies	White
<i>Clavulina</i>	Branched	Brittle to tough	Pale or dull	White
<i>Clavicornona</i>	Branched	Pliant tough, crowned branching and tips		
<i>Ramariopsis</i>	Branched	Fragile	Pale	White
<i>Ramaria</i>	Branched	Pliant tough	Colorful	Ochre
<i>Lentaria</i>	Brachned			Whitish

Spores	Spores on basidia	Clamps	FeSO ₄ reaction	Remarks
Smooth	4	Yes	Yes	Club
Smooth	4	No	No	Fairy club
Smooth	4	Yes	Often	Fairy club
Smooth	2	Yes	No	Coral
Smooth to roughened	4	Yes	No	Coral on wood
Warted or smooth	4	No	No	Coral
Warted	4	Yes	Yes	Coral
Smooth				Coral

Poets' Corner

Shaggy Mane Question

Why
the need
to autodeliquesce
on this
warm and
sunny day
unless
in the
throes
of thought?

How many
millions
of shaggy ink caps
have preceded
me
into
inky oblivion?

- Willie Boepple

RECENT PUBLICATION BY SVIMS MEMBERS

(members' names in **bold**)

Renal Failure Caused by Mushroom Poisoning' Anne M. Leathem, Roy A. Purssell, Victor R' Chan' and Paul Kroeger. Clinical Toxicology, 35 (1) 67-75 (1977).

This article describes four cases of probable *Amanita smithiana* poisoning in the Pacific Northwest. This fall-fruiting mushroom caused vomiting within 1-6 hours in all cases followed by kidney failure within 1-5 days. It was probably mistaken for the choice edible' the pine mushroom (*Tricholoma magnivelare*). With haemodialysis and supportive care, all four patients recovered.

[Please look up these species in your guidebooks, or come to our annual SVIMS mushroom show in October to learn to distinguish these look-alikes!]

WHO IS THIS FUNGUS AMONG US?

[Image of *Amanita muscaria* character holding fly spray redacted]

This is an enlarged view of the "logo" we now put at the top of each issue of *Fungifama*. We found him in a French book called "Le Gratin des Champignons" by Becker & Sabatier. This book is a highly amusing compilation of anthropomorphized agarics, each being portrayed in a manner befitting its Latin name' The fellow above is actually *Amanita muscaria*, the so-called "fly agaric."

It was formerly used to make a fly-killing solution' and our friend, true to his reputation, is using an old- fashioned fly-sprayer.

Despite its levity, the illustrations are quite biologically accurate, and much other information, including edibility or otherwise, fruiting season, and even spore size, is also provided. It is not a comprehensive treatment' but many well-known fungi are effectively lampooned in its pages.

