LONG ISLAND MYCOLOGICAL CLUB

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L.I. SPOREPRINT

SEASON'S GREETINGS!

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 4, WINTER, 2009

FINDINGS AFIELD

Our annual Mushroom Day at Planting Fields Arboretum is a day when we ask our members to collect specimens and bring them to the arboretum for identification and public display, and this sometimes results in an unfamiliar species turning up. Occasionally, such unknowns sometimes occur within the arboretum itself; for example, *Agrocybe sororia* appeared here a few years ago, adding its name to our checklist, and then never making another appearance.

At this year's Mushroom Day on Oct. 25, the phenomenon repeated itself, and an unknown species was brought to the display tables. This was a first however, in that the collector, Grigoriy Roytberg, had just become a member less than an hour before, and returned bearing a clump of mushrooms, some of which appeared to be growing on other gilled mushrooms. An epiparasite therefore, a mushroom growing parasitically on other mushrooms, but larger than any

(Continued on page 4)

NEMF 2009 CAPE COD, MA
Oct 15-18

Mushroomers always welcome rain, except during forays, and this late season foray was rainy from start to finish, save for a welcome Saturday break, which I, among others, eagerly used to venture out for actual collecting. Not that we lacked for willing hands otherwise, as a species total of 295 attests to. Because this foray was held later in the year than most NEMF forays, this increased the number of new species found, and 65 were added to the NEMF master list; the unique habitat, which closely resembles the Long Island pine barrens, was undoubtedly a contributing factor as well.

At the collection tables, NEMF '09

Hosted by the Boston Mycological Club, and housed in the Four Points Sheraton in Eastham, everything was well organized and efficient, with none of the snafus sometimes encountered at such events. Meals, however, were mediocre, except for the mycophagy event, which was superb and more than ample, with several imaginative renditions of Matsutake, *Tricholoma magnivelere,* which fruits here among the Pitch Pines, although it is absent on Long Island.

The proceedings were slightly marred by the absence of the scheduled Chief Mycologist, Roy Halling, who suffered a broken leg, and was replaced by Don Pfister, who did a creditable job. A giant get well card was signed by all attendees.

An international faculty included Bart Buyck (Paris Museum of Natural History),Gro Gulden (Botanical Museum of Oslo), Anne Pringle (Harvard Univ.) , David Hibbett (Clark U.),

(Continued on page 6)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM ENCLOSED

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is the end of the 2009 mushroom season and of the year. It was such a thrill to still find oysters into December. Somehow these late bloomers always taste so good, probably because we know that it will be a long time until we find more.

This year has been pretty interesting what with there being too much rain at one point. Whoever thought we'd complain about that? Usually, we are railing against the drought conditions. We'll have to wait to see what Mother Nature has in store for us next year.

The NEMF Foray was quite interesting. Cape Cod is such a beautiful area. It has wonderful forest areas with lovely mushrooms, ferns and mosses in abundance. Unfortunately, it also had an over abundance of rain and wind in the form of a northeaster. Still, everyone had a great time and I'm sure came away with some new knowledge. I came away with an oyster spawn treated bag of hay that some of us had the opportunity to put together. It produced some nice edible specimens which were quickly dispatched.

For those of you who couldn't attend our picnic or luncheon, you missed two very nice events. See if you can make it next year.

Our mushroom day was blessed with a beautiful day and plenty of mushrooms for the public (and us members) to enjoy. The highlights for me were the beautiful *Aleuria aurantia* that Roger brought in and the parasitic mushroom that Grigoriy found on the grounds; quite a find. (See Findings Afield, p.1)

In closing, I wish you all the best that the New Year will bring. Hope that means a lot of goodies of the fungal kind!

EDITOR'S NOTE

Every voluntary organization has its passive and active members, and we are no exception. Of our approximately 130 members, perhaps only about 35% did not attend any forays, but our membership is aging and some can no longer tolerate the physical activity required. Others are perhaps satisfied to be associated with the group and remain aware of activities and developments through this newsletter. Which is O.K.

But we need more active involvement from those members who do attend forays and other activities. There is a danger that if most of the responsibilities rest on one or two pairs of shoulders, that the demise or incapacity of those individuals will lead to the extinction of the club. This has happened locally with the disappearance of the Eastern Long Island Mycological Club following the death of its founder. LIMC has been in existence since 1973 and we wish to avoid a similar fate. To do so, we will need increased participation on all levels by our members. Although Mushroom Day was successful, it was left to Peggy & myself to set up the tables and to arrange almost the entire display. This is far from ideal, and we hope that this warning bell will alert those who are dedicated to the continued existence of our club to extend themselves and pitch in in the future. Thanks are due to all those who did their part this past year.

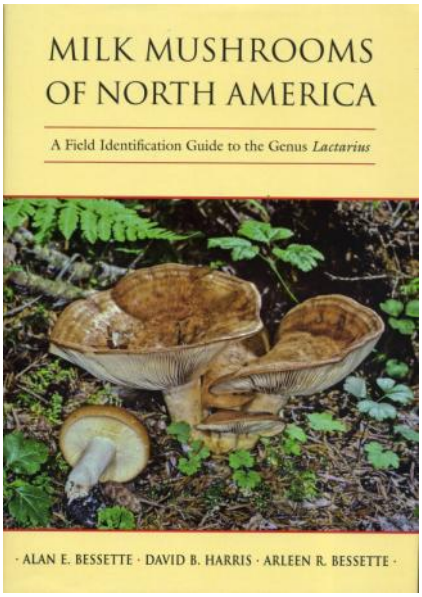
MATERIAL FOR THE SPRING, 2010 EDITION SHOULD REACH THE EDITOR BY MARCH 1ST

(Submissions may be forwarded by email in any format or typed.)

(All unsigned articles authored by editor)

BOOK REVIEW CORNER

MILK MUSHROOMS OF NORTH AMERICA, A Field Identification Guide to the Genus *Lactarius* by Alan E Bessette, David B Harris, & Arleen Bessette Syracuse University Press, 2009. Cloth $110, Paper $45



This is the first field identification guide to North American species of *Lactarius,* prior to which mycologists, amateur and otherwise, have had to rely upon the out-of-print "North American Species of Lactarius" by Lexemuel R Hesler & Alexander H Smith published in 1979. Although the jacket blurb claims that only150 species and varieties are included, the actual count is 220, a very respectable total compared to the 250 known species claimed by Hesler & Smith. Also included are such atypical members of the Russulaceae as *Bondarzewia berkeleyi,* a polypore, as well as subsurface (strangely referred to as subhypogeous) genera such as *Zelleromyces,* which were outside the bounds of the earlier treatment.

Inasmuch as it proclaims itself a field guide, macro characteristics are emphasized, particularly in the extensive keys, which will be very useful to field mycologists who do not rely upon the use of microscopic characters for identification. Over 250 color photographs enhance this work, including many not included in any other guide or searchable on the internet, and represent one of its most attractive and useful features. However, while some species are depicted by several images, only about 160 species are illustrated. While the Hesler & Smith work did contain photographs, these are in black & white, and although not nearly as useful, did provide a sense of structure and texture. A monograph for use by professionals and advanced amateurs, its descriptions were detailed, sometimes running to several pages for one species, and contained drawings of both spores and cystidea. As a result, it is a "bear of a book" as Kuo refers to it, running to over 800 pages, and not easily mastered; by contrast, the Bessette volume's descriptions average two to a page, and although capsule descriptions of microscopic features are given, no drawings are furnished. Nevertheless, for the average reader, this will suffice. The fact that some species cannot be identified by macroscopic features alone is not overlooked.

The detailed and extensive dichotomous keys are user friendly and well thought out, providing the most useful feature in this guide. The key to eastern Lactarius alone comprises 28 pages and is further broken up into four subgroups based upon the color of the latex, taste of latex, cap color, etc. Western species are similarly treated in 12 pages, reflecting the greater diversity of eastern species of Lactarius. I tested the eastern key, using characteristics of some species on the Long Island checklist (*L. rimosellus, L. thejogalus)* which are somewhat ambiguous in the field and was rewarded with the proper determination. Alas, *Lactarius aquifluus* is no more, and is now known by the Friesian name *L. helvus,* an earlier synonym (1838), Peck not having described *L. aquifluus* until 1875. This bit of history can be gleaned from information provided by the authors, who include an unabbreviated original author citation as well as synonyms and subsequent reclassifications.

It might perhaps have been appropriate to include a section summarizing the history of Lactarius publications, as well as present research and possible future developments. We now know that *Lactarius deliciosus* as defined by European authors, does not occur in North America, and the this name is therefore wrongly applied in the USA, although the definitive research has not as yet been published.

To conclude, the present volume represents the most complete guide to North American Lactarius published to date, and is the equivalent of the Bessette guide to North American Boletes, simply the best available and unlikely to be surpassed for generations to come. Its ease of use, comprehensiveness, and extensive image collection will quickly make it a standard with field mycologists.

(Cloth edition available on Amazon for $69, shipping included.)

-LIMC ANNUAL LUNCHEON-

Clockwise: Milton & Bernice, Roger, Leonard, Peggy, unk., Doris, Bob, Cathy, Bob C., and Paul

Doris, Bob W., Cathy & Bob C., Paul & Mary Beth, George, Bruce, and Ken (facing away).

Bruce Eberle, new editor of the Mycophile, gets a hand from (l to r) Cathy & Bob, Milton & Bunny (our most longtime members) and Roger.

Peggy displays copies of "Fungi" provided By Bruce; Joel, left.

(All photos courtesy Doris Fleischer & Phil Cimino)

Findings Afield

(Continued from page 1)

we had ever encountered before.

Parasitic gilled mushrooms are rare, and include *Asterophora, Collybia, Stropharia* and *Volvariella,* and it was obvious from the conspicuous volva (cup) enclosing the base, that this was the latter genus. Although the gills were white at first when the cap was unopened, when placed in a damp chamber for several days, they turned pink when the cap opened and the spores matured. This mushroom was none other than the "seldom encountered" (as O.K. Miller characterizes it in "Mushrooms of North America") *Volvariella surrecta.* Even without any microscopic data, no other mushroom fits this description. It is a specialist, parasitizing species of *Clitocybe,* notably *Clitocybe nebularis,* although it also infects other *Clitocybes* and sometimes *Tricholomas.* In this case, the spores of the host were few and distorted, so no definitive conclusion was possible, but *Clitocybe robusta*, also collected elsewhere that day, is a good possibility.

They were growing gregariously upon their host, and the cap when opened was about 2.5 inches wide, silky fibrillose, light gray with yellowish-brown fibrils and unremarkable odor. The stipe was striate, concolorous, the base enclosed by a fleshy, lobed volva. Gills were free, broad, white, becoming pink when mature. Quite a unique and attractive mushroom.

Its range encompasses both North America and Europe, where it is also considered rare. Its rarity in N.A. is attested to by its non-appearance on the cumulative (34 yrs.) NEMF checklist, as well as the NJMA checklist, the NAMA database, and the NYBG collection. One record was found in the USDA database, and that was a 19th century record from Ontario. However, it is described or mentioned in some popular guidebooks, including Lincoff, Bessette, Arora and Miller. We are happy to add it to the LIMC checklist.

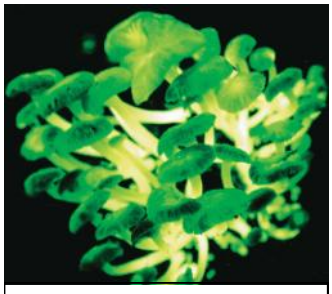
Gleanings

■ ***PSATHYRELLA AQUATICA:*** **1ST SPECIES OF UNDERWATER GILLED MUSHROOM.** Unofficial accounts of this amazing discovery, which some (including myself) believed to be a hoax, have been circulating for some time, and have now been accepted by the professional community with the online publication in *Mycologia.* Discovered in 2005 by hydrologist Robert Coffan of Southern Oregon University in the upper Rouge River in Oregon, initial reports were greeted by skepticism, but collections made in 2007 and 2008 established the reality of this species, which is not one fruiting on wood and then washed into the river. On the contrary, they grow constantly submerged on woody debris, gravel and silt at depths up to 1.5 feet, and fruit over an 11 week period. The small caps (1.5 cm.) have gas pockets below into which the spores are released. The spore discharge mechanism is "enigmatic" but the authors speculate that the observed gas pockets (see illustration) may provide the atmosphere needed for normal (forcible) discharge. (*"Aquatic Psathyrella", Frank, Coffan, & Southworth, Mycologia online, 7-17-09, 10:3852/07-190)*

■ **GOOD NEWS FOR EARTH, BAD NEWS FOR FUNGI?** Researchers from the Univ.of Cal., Irvine, have come up with the unexpected finding that warming of the soil in northern regions (such as dry Spruce forests) results in diminished production of CO_2, rather than the expected increase. This is due to the fact that the soil fungi dried out, either dying or becoming inactive, thereby cutting CO_2 production in half. The authors conclude that "It's not so great for the fungi, but might help offset a little bit of the carbon dioxide we are putting directly into the atmosphere…*" (Science Daily, Nov. 5, 2008 summary of Global Change Biology, Nov. 3, 2008)*

■ **HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT:** We are accustomed to new species discoveries in out of the way places like Indonesian jungles or Peruvian mountains, but this new species of bolete, *Xerocomus silwoodensis,* was found on Silwood Campus, Imperial College, London (and several other European sites). Such a discovery in one of the world's most closely studied mycoflora shows how incomplete our knowledge of these species is. *(online Live Science, "Top 10 New Species, undated)*

■ **SHEDDING LIGHT:** Although most of us are familiar with only one or two bioluminescent fungi, (*Panellus stypticus, Omphalotus olearius)* recent explorations in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest have yielded 3 new species of luminescent fungi, for a worldwide total of 65 species. Two of the newly described species were Mycena (*M. asterina, M. lucentipes),* which genus contributes about 70% of all luminous fungi, and the authors contend that since many authors rarely address luminescent properties, the actual number may be much greater. While luminescence may function to attract nocturnal animals (probably arthropods) to aid in spore dispersal, the authors favor the explanation that it is "an incidental by-product of an enzyme mediated oxidation reaction". In other words, this may be the fungal anti-oxidant. *(Bioluminescent Mycena species from São Paulo, Brazil, Mycologia, 99 (2), 2007, pp. 317-331)*



Mycena lucentipes

(Compiled by editor from cited sources.)

SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp 2010

Occidental, CA

January 16-18, 2010 (Sat-Sun-Mon) Martin Luther King weekend.

Mark your calendars, and sign-up online! SOMA Camp will be packed with wild mushroom related forays, activities, lectures and workshops . Our keynote speakers this year will be the Drs. Tom: VOLK, and BRUNS! And the incredible cuisine by our "Myco-Chef" Patrick Hamilton, is worth the price of admission alone!

We are also offering a "Saturday only" option in addition to "Sunday only" option this year. Check out the Camp page on the SOMA Website http://somamushrooms.org/ to register online and to see a list of some of the special workshops offered.

NEMF 2009 *(Cont'd from page 1)*

Michaela Schmull (Univ. of Gottingen), among others. Of course, the established favorites and crowd pleasers, Gary Lincoff and Tom Volk made well received appearances.

Workshops and lectures by these notables enriched the proceedings. Bart Buyck lectured on his recent research (not yet published) on the genus Cantherellus in N.A., which has revealed a multiplicity of species, none of them corresponding to the European *Cantherellus cibarius,* upon which our species is based. This is perhaps to be expected in an era when DNA studies are revealing more and more divergences between the species of Europe and North America. Gro Gulden, author of a multivolume study of Arctic & Alpine fungi, delivered a fascinating presentation on that topic which seemed to indicate that there may be a circumpolar distribution of some species.

Gary Lincoff as Darwin

Gary Lincoff outdid himself by channeling the younger Charles Darwin (see photo, right) in a performance that was both hilarious and informative. It seems that Darwin collected about two dozen fungi from South America, mostly non-putrescent species such as Polypores. In Tierra del Fuego he collected Cytarria species, an edible ascomycete, one of which, *Cytarria darwinii,* honors his name, and which is still sold in markets there (see "Mushroom Usage around the World", LI Sporeprint, Summer, 2009). In the Galapagos he collected *Schizophyllum commune* and a Phellinus species. Tom Volk's fascinating lecture on spore shapes and variety was delivered with characteristic interjections of dry humor.

Mushroom sculptures.

In addition to the nightly socials, fun activities included the polypore toss and the mushroom sculpture completion, where Peggy was one of the presiding judges. Above you can see some of the artist's efforts.

But the proof of the foray is on the collection tables, to coin a phrase, and this collection was fascinating for several reasons, not least because it could be compared with our similar Long Island habitat. Mentioned above is the somewhat surprising fact that the American Matsutake is found here associated with Pitch Pines while being absent on Long Island. The moister habitat on Cape Cod, which in addition to its many bogs and swamps contrasts with Long Island in its more constant exposure to fog and sea mist, may help to account for this. Another mushroom that was not on our checklist is *Tricholoma fumosoluteum,* a bright yellow species that is common on Cape Cod. Serendipitously, we have now found it for the first time on Long Island, in a boggy area in Edgewood caused by heavy rains. We also have *Scleroderma meridionale,* a rooting sand lover. *Tricholoma collosum,* a rare European species which has been found on L.I. also occurs on Cape Cod, apparently with some regularity.

***Tricholoma fumosoluteum* found at Edgewood.**

On the other hand, it is surprising that some common L.I. species, such as *Laccaria proxima, Hygrophorus ponderatus, Tricholoma niveipes* and *Clitocybe subconnexa,* did not turn up on the foray list, as they are all associated with Pitch Pine habitat. A complete list of the 2009 NEMF Cape Cod collection may be downloaded at http://nemfdata.org/

NEMF 2010

Next year, LIMC will be one of the host clubs at this foray in Kerhonkson NY in the Shawangunk Ridge region just south of the Catskills. For more information and to place your name on an early registration list access http://nemf.org/files/2010/2010.html

FORAY RESULTS SUMMARY

SEPT. 26, BETHPAGE S.P: Only 14 species, due to a dry spell, but the picnic was a great success.

OCT. 3, CATHEDRAL PINES, PROSSER PINES, & MANORVILLE DEC: A remarkable improvement, with a total of 58 species, including 2 new to the list, *Mycena vulgaris & Paxillus involutus*. There were edibles aplenty, notably all 3 species of Honeys (*mellea, ostoyae, & gallica)* as well as Gypsies.

Paxillus involutus

OCT. 10, FOX HOLLOW: An afternoon walk in conjunction with the North Shore Land Alliance on one of their properties produced 23 species.

OCT 31, EDGEWOOD PRESERVE: A very successful day, both in edibles and species numbers: a total of 54 species, including 3 new ones, *Lactarius oculatus, Tricholoma fumosoluteum* and *Inocybe sindonia.* Edibles included the abundant *Hygrophorus hypothejus, Suillus brevipes, & Tricholoma flavovirens* as well as good amounts of *Hygrophorus ponderatus, Cantherellula umbonata, Lyophyllum descastes,* and *Tricholoma niveipes.* Although it smelled deliciously of coconut, *Lactarius hibbardae,* more abundant than ever, is of unknown edibility.

NOV. 7, ROCKY PT: Twenty-five species, many of them repeats from the previous foray, including *Hygrophorus ponderatus* and *Tricholoma flavovirens*. In all, 7 species of Tricholoma and 5 Cortinarius, including *C. azureus*. One somewhat out-of-season bolete, *Gyroporus castaneus.*

NOV. 21, WADING RIVER: Down to 21 species in this pine barrens area, with more Hygrophorus (4 species including the "almond" *H. amygdalinus),* 4 species of Tricholoma (incl. *T. imbricatum),* and many *Laccaria proxima* and *Cantherellula.* Several new species: *Inocybe subexilis,* at 5 mm the smallest I have seen; and *Scleroderma meridionale,* a denizen of sandy soil.

NOV. 28, WELLWYN: The last foray of the year produced only 11 species, but 5 were edible wood dwellers: Mica Caps, Brickcaps, Velvet Foot, Oysters, & Autumn Oysters. Beginners were treated to the sight of a large and instructive outcropping of the deadly *Galerina autumnalis.*

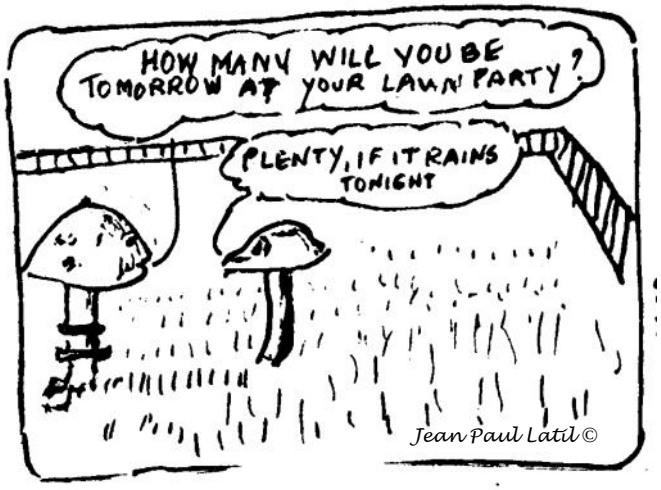
Oyster selection at Wellwyn

A CAUTIONARY TALE: TICK BORNE EHRLICHIOSIS

Some of us tend to be somewhat cavalier about the Lone Star tick, which is not known to be a carrier of Lyme disease. It can however be a carrier of Ehrlichiosis, a bacterial disease caused by a member of the Rickettsiae, as well as several other tick borne diseases. Recently, there was a case of Ehrlichiosis in Suffolk county, and the details were related to me by the victim himself, Jim Mesenbourg, Asst. Park Superintendant in Wildwood and Brookhaven State Parks, whose development of the latter was featured in an article in the autumn 2009 issue of the LI Sporeprint.

Jim suffered severe symptoms of headache, fever, nausea, muscle aches, weakness and chills but recuperated fully after a course of antibiotics. He never did see the tick that infected him, but reports that the most prevalent tick in the park is the Lone Star. It is noteworthy that this incident occurred despite the precautions that Jim normally takes including the use of DEET spray on exposed skin and Permethrin on all his clothing. His case emphasizes the fact that there is no substitute for minutely and scrupulously examining (with help if necessary) every millimeter of your skin surface immediately after possible exposure and removing all embedded ticks with fine tweezers. Only in this way can we be sure of avoiding tick borne disease, some of which may have very serious long term consequences, although Ehrlichiosis is considered to be an acute infection, sometimes life threatening in elderly victims.

Adult female & male Lone-star Ticks



IN THIS ISSUE

"There is an extraordinary pleasure in pure observation…it is delightful to use one's eyes and fingers…"

Charles Darwin

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM ENCLOSED