OMPHALINA

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Newsletter of FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

is an amateur, volunteer-run, community, not-for-profit organization with a mission to organize enjoyable and informative amateur mushroom forays in Newfoundland and Labrador and disseminate the knowledge gained.

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OMPHALINA *is the lackadaisical newsletter of Foray Newfoundland & Labrador. There is no schedule of publications, no promise to appear again. Its primary purpose is to serve as a conduit of information to registrants of the upcoming foray and secondarily as a communications tool with members.*

The content is neither discussed nor approved by the Board of Directors. Therefore, opinions expressed do not represent the views of the Board, the Corporation, the partners, the sponsors, or the members. Opinions are solely those of the authors and uncredited opinions solely those of the Editor.

Please address comments, complaints and contributions to Andrus Voitk, self-appointed Editor:

foray AT nlmushrooms DOT ca,

… who eagerly invites contributions to OMPHALINA*, dealing with any aspect even remotely related to mushrooms. Authors are guaranteed instant fame—fortune to follow. Authors retain copyright to published material, and submission indicates permission to publish, subject to the usual editorial decisions. Issues are freely available to the public on the FNL website. Because content is protected by authors' copyright, editors of other publications wishing to use any material, should ask first.*

COVER

Alloclavaria purpurea, Burnt Hill, Norris Point, 18 Oct., 2009. Looks like a *Clavaria* and named purple, but is neither. As with many purple mushrooms, the colour seems to come from a blend of red components of the background brown with a blue of varying intensity. Its colour ranges from brown to purple and mauve, depending on the relative and absolute amount of each colour. That is why this particular *purpurea* is not purpurea. Now see lead article (Totipotential, p. 4) to learn why this *Clavaria* is not a clavaria.

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CONTENT

Message from the Editor

With this issue mushroom season will be upon us in earnest, a remarkable abundance and diversity of species from now until the end of October. Enjoy it!

With over 1,000 mushroom species identified by our foray so far, and no end in sight, to know them all is a formidable task beyond most of us. OMPHALINA tries to introduce you to a small number of common or interesting mushrooms, but much more it tries to help you learn ABOUT mushrooms. The cover picture and short lead article are an example. Unless you encounter it often, you may forget the name *Alloclavaria purpurea*, but the fascinating concept of parallel evolution will be with you for long.

The more we go out and get down and dirty with mushrooms, the better we shall know them. Pick them, examine them, do sporeprints, smell them, look at cross sections, see what they grow on and what they grow with. This will help you learn and understand them. Taking pictures will also help you enjoy mushrooms. See the articles devoted to photography and take your own. And please contribute to our Photo Contest (see p. 12).

Some of the data and material we have gathered during our forays has become the subject of academic research. The astute reader may already have noticed that articles like the chanterelle study by Vilneff and Thorn (Vol II, no 4) and the chocolate cort by Niskanen et al. (Vol II, No 5), are preliminary reports of ongoing research about our mushrooms. We cooperate in many such projects with various investigators, and are beginning to find that these studies give us new information about the mushrooms that grow in our province. When a study is complete, investigators like to report interesting findings to their peers in a professional journal. OMPHALINA does not pretend to be an academic journal and is not known to most mycologists. However, when something of interest has been learned about **our** material, we hope to continue to bring it to your attention as short preliminary reports, without the rigid formality required of full scientific papers. For various reasons not all studies will go to formal reporting. It would be a shame not to document their results somewhere, because they still provide useful information and perhaps will stimulate somebody else to pick up the thread. To learn that the pine mushroom in our province quite likely is the real *Tricholoma matsutake* of the far east, and not the *Tricholoma magnivelare* found in western North America, is one such report.

We hope that both participants and partners find some satisfaction from the contributions we make to mycological knowledge. Our foray Report and Species List are our contractual obligations to many of our partner organizations. Clearly, the work does not stop there and these updates and preliminary reports are part of the reporting process for anybody interested in documenting our mycota.

Paired with an interest in eating wild mushrooms is a fascination with their ability to poison. In an effort to put a human face to the tragedy, in this issue you will find the first of a small number of articles about real people, whose lives have been significantly influenced by such events. No matter how stupid some of the actions and decisions may seem in retrospect, while researching these stories, we were profoundly moved by the severe price extracted for very human shortcomings, character traits we recognize in ourself.

As promised in the last issue, Mac Pitcher begins a series of short articles about lichens in our province with an overview of three very common lichens, the weeds of our lichen population. Others to follow.

Finally, get a load of the mail basket! Three pages just to print the select few. Keep writing.

Happy mushrooming and see you at the foray!

andrus

Foray matters...

Foray is full!

As things stand right now, we have reached our limit. However, each year we have had some last minute cancellations, so that if you are really anxious to come, register as soon as you can. Based on past experience, the first 2-6 will almost certainly be able to participate. Additional registrants will be taken from the waiting list in order of registering. Also, registrants before the end of July can still take advantage of Timely Bird savings!

Mail strike

The mail strike is over. A few registrations were held up, while others worked out inventive or humorous (or both) workarounds. All Early Bird registrations were honoured, even if they did not make it to us in time. All registrations have been acknowledged by Geoff Thurlow, our Treasurer. If you registered, but have not heard, please ask. It is conceivable that in mopping up after the strike a letter may have been misdirected. Since we are already at full capacity, it is important to know if there is anybody in the wings, unbeknownst to us.

Minister's Reception Hosted by Terra Nova Park

Friday's events are all at the Terra Nova Hospitality Home, times as below:

REGISTRATION 4:00 PM

If you are free, strong, and very, very obedient, arrive early and help set up the lab, display, lecture halls, etc.

RECEPTION 6:00 PM

The food is calculated to satisfy supper requirements.

EVENING LECTURES 7:45 PM

This year's Minister's Reception is sponsored by **Terra Nova National Park**. We are very grateful to the Park for this kindness, particularly given the difficult financial situation of these agencies at the moment.

Terra Nova National Park also supports us by waiving entry fees for participants during the foray, making its boats available to foragers, and supplying some staff to act as guides on some trails. An excellent partner to have! See the inside back cover for a full list of our partners.

Last chance

Time is running out and this is your last chance for a few things:

1. The deadline for photos to be considered for this year's contest is August 14 (see p. 13). Entries after that may still be considered for the poster, but will not garner lucrative cash prizes.
2. The deadline for entries to the Fungal Arts display at the foray, whether to show or to sell, is August 15. See details in Issue 3, p. 10. Contact Urve Manuel <urve DOT manuel AT gmail DOT com>.
3. Finally, we still have some space for the mushroom dyeing workshop. If you have wondered about taking the course, but were not sure, now is the time to take the plunge! Send an e-mail to Maria at <medemari AT gmail DOT com> and you can pay on arrival. Preregistration is needed to know how much materials to bring.

Totipotentiality & Parallel evolution

Totipotentiality—the ability to develop into anything.

Parallel evolution—development of similar form or function in separate evolutionary pathways.

Alloclavaria purpurea, our cover illustration, is a very interesting fungus, because it provides insight into the phenomenon of parallel evolution. If you think it belongs with the clavarias, to which it has an undeniable and striking resemblance, you will be mistaken. *A. purpurea* belongs in a larger group, the Hymenochaetes. Most members of this group are conks and brackets on wood that look and behave like polypores. They are not polypores. A small group of Hymenochaetes are little gilled species of *Rickenella* and related genera.

Thus, genetically *A. purpurea* is much closer to a few gilled mushrooms and some conks, than it is to the clavarias that it resembles. Similarly, the rickenellas are closer to this club mushroom and some conks, than to other gilled mushrooms that they resemble. And, of course, the conks and brackets in this group are closer to a some delicate gilled mushrooms and this fragile club, than to conks and brackets in the polypore group.

Go figure!

Once these unexpected relationships were discovered, it became apparent that the seemingly different members of the Hymenochaetes do share some morphologic similarity with each other, not found in fungi from other genetic groupings. Somehow, it is reassuring to know that morphology also unites related mushrooms, not just travel patterns of nuclear components through gel in response to an electric current. The common features of Hymenochaetes are microscopic, and obviously earlier efforts at classification elected to stress more obvious macroscopic features and ignore microscopic ones. Sometimes that is right, but in this case that decision turned out to be wrong.

Since mushrooms have gill, club and conk shapes (as well as many others), we readily accept that the progenitor from which they arose carried the potential for all these shapes. For some reason we assumed that during evolution branches split off the evolutionary tree with the ability to form gills, for example, but not the other shapes. Perhaps this is true, and e. g. the “gill branches” had to “reevolve”, i. e. “rediscover from scratch” how to make the other shapes, when circumstances deemed these to be advantageous. However, the story of *A. purpurea* suggests that the ability to form different shapes (the totipotential principle) was probably retained in the splits. As each branch evolved, its different twigs used that totipotential ability to make whatever shape had the greatest evolutionary advantage in its setting. Thus we get several genetic lines giving rise to similar club mushrooms, for example.

Phellinus sp. Most Hymenochaete species are corticates or conks like this. A very few are small gilled mushrooms like the Rickenella fibula in the title banner, above. And one, Alloclavaria purpurea (cover), looks like all the other clavarias. This an example of totipotentiality leading to parallel evolution.

Tricholoma matsutake
The pine mushroom

Becky Bravi, Vancouver, BC, Andrus Voitk, Humber Village, NL

Figure 1. Tricholoma matsutake, *the "true" matsutake mushroom so prized in Japan, growing in central Newfoundland. The Japanese market does not value big specimens like these. Top price is paid for young buttons, which are usually only found under the soil's surface. By the time they break through, the cap has begun to flatten, as has the price.*

We have the famous pine mushroom in Newfoundland and Labrador! At least this is likely. Recent work with material from the Foray Newfoundland & Labrador collection by of one of the coauthors (BB) suggests that although we may have the pine mushroom of the West Coast, *Tricholoma magnivelare*, more common is a separate cryptic species of the complex, not found on the Pacific coast. Other investigators report the much more valuable relative, THE pine mushroom of the Orient, *Tricholoma matsutake* from the east coast of North America, making it most likely that this is the identity of our separate species (Figure 1).

The pine mushroom is much prized in the Far East, particularly Korea and Japan, where a kilogram of the finest buttons can fetch as much as CAD $1,000.00. The Japanese have always maintained that pine mushroom imported from North America is inferior, and as a result it commands only a tenth of the price—still a respectable amount for most pocketbooks. Thus, even at this lesser price, pine mushroom harvesting is potentially rewarding, to the degree that economically this is the leading non-timber forest product exported from British Columbia. In California harvesting it is permitted by license only, and picking even one for a foray would be a crime. Pickers are natu-

Figure 2. Tricholoma caligatum *from The Avalon peninsula. Very similar to the pine mushroom, it also has a "special" odour, ring and "boot". Slightly smaller, it usually has a longer stem in proportion to the cap diameter and the colour leans a bit more toward the reddish than the yellowish end of the brown spectrum.*

Figure 3. Tricholoma focale, *a smaller and darker mushroom often found in the same location as the pine mushroom, is useful for identifying pine mushroom sites. Despite their similarity, their smell makes confusion unlikely. The pungent smell of the pine mushroom is unmistakable, while* T. focale *smells like rancid flour. Although edible, its unpleasant smell makes it unfit for the table.*

rally secretive and protective of their areas, and there are reports of turf wars with shots fired to warn off intruders.

The complex also contains other species that are close in appearance. Figures 2 and 3 introduce you to two of them growing in our province. Unfortunately the commonest of them is *T. focale*, the only one unfit to eat, because of its unpleasant smell.

While prized in the Orient, not all peoples share equal enthusiasm for this delicacy. The flavour is so unique and strong that for many it is an acquired taste that they have failed to acquire. A similar mushroom was known to fruit in Scandinavia, but because it was not that common and found primarily in the less inhabited and less sophisticated northern parts, it was essentially ignored. Its description did not appear in mushroom books. Thought to be a separate species, it was named *Tricholoma nauseosum*, giving a hint of what the reserved Scandinavians thought of it.

All this changed when the pine mushroom complex was studied with nuclear sequencing methods. These have revealed at least three species in the complex, as explained in Figure 4. Considerably more work is required, but until then, Figure 4 offers a plausible explanation for the worldwide distribution of this species complex. Thus, genetic work has validated the Japanese palate: the Oriental pine mushroom is not the same species as that found on North America's west coast. The great surprise for the Scandinavians was to learn that their nauseous pine mushroom was in fact the same species as the highly prized Oriental one. Respect for it went up, its portrait began to appear in mushroom books and harvesting was begun for the Japanese market, which rewarded it accordingly, well ahead of the mushrooms from the west coast of North America. It is quite likely that this is also the species found here, although so far we are not aware of sufficient quantities to make harvest or export commercially viable.

Figure 4. Probable world distribution of the pine mushroom complex. Red indicates the North American Tricholoma magnivelare, *primarily restricted to west of the Rocky Mountains. There is speculative suggestion that the complex may have travelled from there to Asia across the Bering Sea (orange). From the Far East* T. matsutake *can be found as a band across the boreal forest to the east coast of North America and at least almost half way across the continent. We have added another speculative orange band to indicate potential mixing of this population. A genetically different species, thus far unnamed, is found in Mexico (indicated by blue). It is reasonable to speculate that this evolved during travels up and down the continent, fleeing and following repeated periods of glaciation, across the purple transition zone. An additional North American species, travelling up the eastern seaboard from a common southern refugial ancestry is possible although not supported by our present information. Of interest to Newfoundlanders and Labradoreans is that current knowledge suggests that not only the less valued North American* T. magnivelare, *but also the "real"* T. matsutake *quite likely grows in our province. (Map from internet)*

Mushroom Photography: Eliminating Blur

Jim Cornish

Many amateur and professional photographers share a passion for nature photography, yet, their online sites and social media photo albums rarely contain any photographs of fungi. The few photographers I know who do shoot mushrooms all have something in common: they are as passionate about mushrooms as they are about photography.

Mushroom photography often occurs in awkward places and under poor lighting conditions. This is challenging for photographers, especially for those who do not know the full capabilities of their cameras or have not applied some simple photographic techniques. This is the first in a series of articles that will address some of these challenges, primarily aimed at owners of point-and-shoot (P&S) cameras.

Mushroom photography is really close-up and macro photography. This doesn't mean photographing mushrooms is limited to expensive digital single lens reflex (dSLR) cameras equipped with lenses that cost as much as the camera. Today's P&S cameras have many of the same features found on dSLRs and are quite capable of taking great close-ups. For many P&S owners, who bought their cameras for ease of use (literally point and then shoot), the challenge is how to improve their photography when the AUTO mode doesn't quite do the job.

Keep It Steady!

P&S camera owners often complain about soft and blurred photographs. Image softness is common in some P&S brands because of inferior lenses. It is especially noticeable when the image is enlarged on a computer screen or when processing exceeds the 5x7 print format. Softness can be adjusted somewhat by using the image sharpening adjustment option on some cameras or by using the sharpening tool common in image editing software, even the one that comes on a CD boxed with the camera. Blur, on the other hand, is caused by the photographer, usually because of unintentional shift and angular movements, commonly called camera shake. Blur is worse in close-up and macro photography because even the slightest movements, by either the camera or subject, are greatly magnified. Unlike softness, blur cannot be adjusted in software. It has to be eliminated as part of the picture-taking process.

The following tips will help you eliminate blur from your images. Sometimes multiple tips can be combined for better results.

Use the Viewfinder When Composing and Shooting

LCD technology on P&S cameras has either physically eliminated the viewfinder from the camera's body or, according to some photographers, made its use obsolete. Photographers who don't use the viewfinder often extend their arms to view the LCD while composing a shot. It is difficult to hold a camera steady at or near arm's length, especially while pressing the shutter release button. If you have a viewfinder on your camera, use it. Place the camera against your cheek, take a feet-apart stance, gently brace your elbows by your sides, take a shallow breath, hold it, and then gently squeeze the shutter release button.

Use a Support

If using the viewfinder doesn't eliminate blur, then you will have to support your camera some other way. A tripod is the best solution. Tripods are sturdy and depending on the model, provide many adjustment options; height, angle and closeness being the most common. Tripods are perfect for photograph

The Gorilla Pod is ideal for point and shoot cameras: inexpensive, flexible, lightweight and stows easily in a backpack or camera bag. It has a removable attachment plate so the camera can be quickly attached or removed from the legs. The legs collapse easily to place your camera almost eye-to-eye with a ground hugging mushroom.

components of your camera (lens barrel, mode dial or shutter button), you may end up with a costly repair bill or worse, a useless camera.

If you are shooting close to the ground without a tripod, use your upper body to create one. To do this, lie down, plant your elbows on the ground, hold the viewfinder against you cheek and shoot.

A tripod will steady the camera, but it will not steady the surface on which it is mounted, especially if that surface is moss covered. After composing the shot, stand still until the photo is taken. Any movements you make during the exposure might shift the camera ever so slightly, pushing it out of focus and creating blur.

ing mushrooms growing on substrates knee-high or higher, but only the expensive models can be manipulated at low levels. For these situations small tripods that fit in the pocket may be a good solution for light P&S cameras. A more flexible option is a Gorilla pod. Its sturdy yet highly flexible legs are ideally suited for lightweight P&S camera shooting at or within 30 centimetres of the ground, and offer many other possibilities as well. Gorilla pod knock-offs are reasonably cheap, if you can find them, and you can even build your own <http://www.instructables.com/id/Make-your-own-Gorilla-Pod/>.

Turn the Image Stabilization feature ON

Newer P&S models have a feature called image stabilization, usually abbreviated IS. This means the camera mechanics and/or the camera's software will adjust for minor shaking during picture taking. However, it is not a

There are many portable and cheap supports to replace a tripod, like The Styropod (see article on p. 10). Another great substitute is a bean bag (or split peas, a staple in any Newfoundland cupboard). These items are cheap, lightweight and provide a stable surface within a few centimetres of the ground. Because the beans/peas can be shifted around inside the bag, they provide enough flexibility to finely adjust the orientation of the camera lens, something not always possible when using a tripod or when placing the camera directly on the ground. Do not use a sand bag for support. Sand grains tend to leak through fabric or along seams. If sand grains get into the moving

A bean bag is a great accessory for every mushroom photographer's camera bag, in some cases better than a collapsed Gorilla Pod. I frequently use a bag of peas. The set-up is always quick and easy and it often does as good a job on steadying my camera as an expensive tripod.

replacement for a tripod. In close-up photography even the slightest shake of the camera can translate into a windstorm on the viewfinder or LCD and will be beyond the IS system's ability to correct.

Use the Camera's Timer or a Shutter Release Cable

No matter how gently you do it, pressing the shutter release often creates movement that causes blur, particularly in closeups and macros. The solution is to use the camera's timer feature, especially if you are using a tripod or IS. Using the timer means you have a few seconds to get the camera steady without having to touch the camera during the exposure process. Another advantage to using the timer, especially in P&S cameras, is related to shutter lag, the time between when you squeeze the shutter button and when the picture is shot, which can be as long as a second on some models. Using something to steady the camera and using the timer means no shake through the entire picture taking process.

Newer P&S models have a shutter release cable input jack. This cable allows you to trigger the shutter release without having to touch the camera. Combined with a tripod, it provides the best option for sharp images.

Increase the Shutter speed

Despite all efforts to be prepared, there are times when the tripod or bean bag is left at home or in the car and you have no choice but to shoot your new mushroom find with the camera hand-held. Increasing your shutter speed is another option you can use to reduce the effects of shake. Most models of P&S cameras allow you to select the shutter speed. Turn the mode dial to S (Tv on some models) and change to a faster speed. Exactly how this is done varies from camera to camera, so consult your manual.

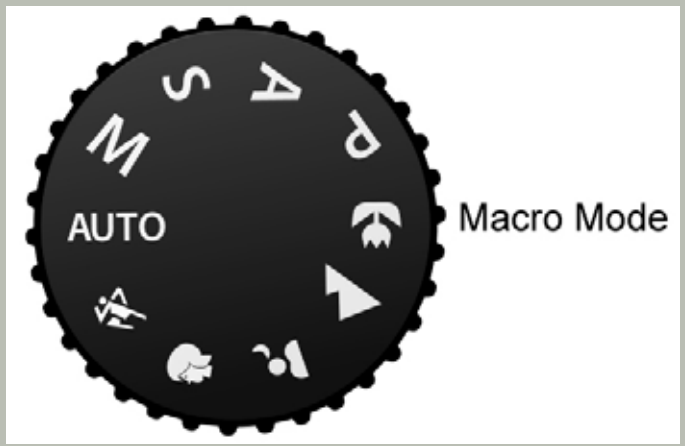
Select Macro Mode

Macro mode, generally symbolized with a flower on the mode dial, allows you to focus on a subject close to the lens. Macro mode instructs your camera to allow more light in so that your subject is in sharp focus but the background is blurred. If your camera does not have a macro mode, try using the portrait mode indicated by the human head symbol.

Be Wary of the Minimum Focusing Distance

How close can you photograph a subject? It depends on the minimum focusing distance of your camera. That distance is usually included in the "Specifications" section of the users manual and is likely to be around 30 centimetres. Most cameras will not allow you to shoot closer than that distance because the auto focusing mechanism can't create a focus lock. If the auto focus can be turned OFF, (something not all that common on P&S cameras) knowing that distance is critical especially when shooting macros using manual focus. Shooting closer than this distance will always create blurred images.

You can practice using these techniques right away. Practice setting up your tripod, changing the shutter speed and setting and triggering the timer before your first mushroom shoot. When you do finally get in the field, "working to get the image" will be old hat.

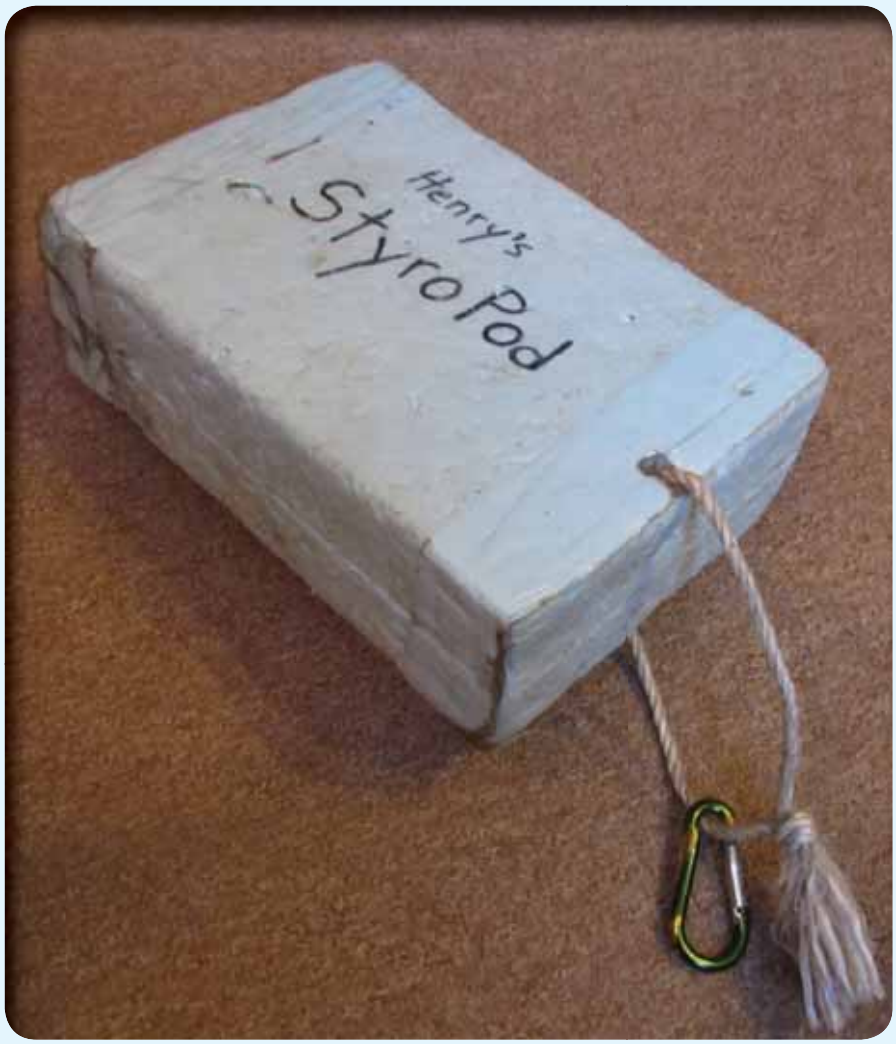


The macro setting on the mode dial enables you to do macro-like shots of flowers, mushrooms and lichens. This is an automatic mode. Once selected the camera makes the best choice of ISO, shutter speed and aperture for a sharp close-up shot. There is no guarantee that this is the best option for all shooting conditions.

The Styropod
—unveiled at last

Henry Mann

Over the years I have known a number of anglers and golfers. Some have never been satisfied to catch that big fish or shoot that above-average score, but were always driven to achieve bigger or higher, always tense and self-pressured. On the other hand there have been others, relaxed and enjoying the activity whether the fish were small, average or above average, and overjoyed when the rare really big whopper was hooked. So, too, with nature photography. Do we enjoy shooting good above-average photos and are we happy to occasionally get those superb shots or must every attempt involve detailed time consuming set-up and adjustment in quest of that "perfect" photo? Each of us must answer the big question, "When is enough enough?" Do we absolutely and always need expensive and complicated equipment to do "good" photography?



Now, don't get me wrong! Expensive equipment can produce superb, near perfect photos providing one can afford it and one has the skills to use it to its optimum capacity. I too have acquired some of this over-priced paraphernalia and use it when the spirit moves me or when there is a good reason. However, I began my digital photographic journey as a point-and-shoot mann, and still like to use a p&s camera which only cost about $250, but which is capable of producing excellent photos when used to its maximum ability.

One of the first and most important requirements for taking good pictures with any camera is preventing camera movement/shake when the button is pressed, especially with close-up or macro photography, even if the camera claims to have an "image stabilization" anti-shake capability. Affluent old-timers and photo-gurus usually solve this problem by using an expensive tripod which can be adjusted in every possible dimension and then some. A novice or hobby photographer who can only afford a $250 camera is not likely to lay out a thousand dollars for a Manfrotto or Gitzo. Yes, you can purchase lower cost tripods, but for a one-shot lifetime purchase you want quality and versatility, so a fairly expensive unit is the way to go, especially for ground-level and macro photography.

Despair not and doubt not, for I have discov-

ered the next best piece of equipment which will cost you anywhere from absolutely nothing to about $10, depending on how good a scrounger you are. It is called ***The Styropod*** and as silly as it seems, it works extremely well, is a pleasure to use, and a snap to carry with you. No, it will not replace a Gitzo tripod, but in many situations it is "enough". In its basic, standard, field-tested version it is especially useful for mushroom photography and for low wildflowers, but can easily be scaled up or down.

The Styropod is essentially a block of Styrofoam 12 x 8 x 4 inches. Many building materials are still manufactured and sold in the old English inches and feet; if this troubles you, simply convert to the metric system as all Canadians are capable of doing. This size seems to provide the most versatility for close-to-the-ground photography. Mine is made of two 2-inch blue rigid polystyrene insulation pieces glued together. Four 1-inch pieces will also work—in fact, whatever can be found in your backyard shed or your neighbour's, preferably with permission. Use glue and minimum tape, as tape tends to produce a slippery surface whereas the Styrofoam surface is soft and non-slippery preventing camera slide. A block this size provides vertical/horizontal platforms of 4", 8" and 12 " or anything in-between and ***The Styropod*** can instantly be angled in any direction. Styrofoam is soft yet rigid, dampens vibrations, and the block is easy to hold steady with the camera on top.

As an accessory, a cheap set of velcro-strapped foam knee pads comforts aged knees as well as preventing premature pant knee-holes and hard to eliminate grass stains. ***The Styropod*** is light, easy to carry, can be used as a warm, water proof and gentle butt cushion, and is a good conversation piece, especially in company with well equipped, affluent photographers. If you don't mind snickers and rolled eyes and just want to get better pictures by reducing camera shake at an affordable cost, then ***The Styropod*** is for you. No set-up time, no mechanical parts, no knobs to turn, no time-consuming adjustments, no heavy equipment to lug around, no worries about being lost or stolen, and almost no cost! It doesn't get better than that! Try it. You will find your photos much improved over just hand-held shots, even better when used with your cameras' timer-auto shutter release feature, or with a remote shutter release if your camera has such.

Outdoorsman and long time ***Styropod*** *aficionado Ray* ***Humber demonstrates the use of the Styropod*** *to steady a* ***P&S camera at 4", 8" and 12" heights. The Styropod*** *can be tipped in any direction for further adjustment.*

FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Mushroom Photo Contest 2010-2011

FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR plans to produce a poster of Common Edible Mushrooms of Newfoundland and Labrador through a photo contest for Foray members. Modeled on a similar successful effort by the Alberta club, the NL version will likely feature 16 to 20 species. The contest will be held annually with the winners announced at the foray. Judges will select photos for the poster from the annual submissions and the poster will be produced once they have enough quality photos —probably in 2012.

The long-term goal of the project is to raise public awareness and interest in mushrooms, and bring members together through contributing to a worthwhile product. The poster may be offered for general sale at tourist outlets and made available to schools and public institutions as an educational or promotional tool. If the project is a success, other products such as a calendar, or a poster of other Mushrooms of NL may be produced from future contests.

Coprinus comatus *in Humber Village by Maria Voitk. This good edible is shown here well beyond its best before date. The judges disqualified the photo of an edible species because it was captured at an inedible stage—even though they liked the picture for its dramatic effect. Forewarned is forearmed.*

This project is coordinated by

Laura Park

with the help of three judges:

Faye Murrin – Mycology perspective
Ralph Jarvis – Artistic Design perspective
Joe Brazil – Photography perspective

See Rules next page. Please note especially the categories of need:

1. Absolute need: have no submissions and will not make poster without them.
2. Relative need: have no submissions, but can produce poster without them.
3. Modest need: have good entries, but could use wider selection.
4. Minimal need: have good quality submissions, but willing to consider improvement.

RULES

Photo specifications

1. Photos should be colour, digital, and high resolution (minimum of 300dpi), with the featured mushroom clearly identifiable.
2. Photos must be taken in NL by the person submitting the photo.
3. Photographs should be restricted to those species on the list to the right.

Who can enter and how often?

1. Contest is open to all Foray Newfoundland and Labrador members.
2. Members may submit as many entries as they wish; there is no limit.

Conditions of entry

1. Foray Newfoundland and Labrador will be granted the right to use all submissions in the production of posters, or other educational or promotional material. Photographers will be given credit for each use of their photo, but no fees or royalty will be paid. Photographers retain copyright of their photo.

Deadline

1. August 14, 2011
2. Winners to be announced at the 2011 Foray, in September.

How to enter?

1. Send photos to Laura Park at <**laura.park@dfo-mpo.gc.ca**>.
2. A small jpeg (800X600 for horizontal and 600X800 for vertical view) should be submitted by email initially, but the full sized version of the file (TIFF or uncompressed jpeg) of selected photos will be required prior to the final announcements.
3. Photos should be accompanied by the name and contact information of the photographer, the name of the featured mushroom and location of the featured mushroom. Contestants' names will be withheld from judges.

ELIGIBLE MUSHROOMS

Absolute need (none, cannot proceed without)

Agaricus arvensis (Horse mushroom)

Agaricus campestris (Meadow mushroom)

Hypomyces lactifluorum (Lobster mushroom)

Lycoperdon pyriforme (Pear-shaped puffball)

Marasmius oreades (Fairy ring mushroom)

Relative need (none, can proceed without)

Clavulina cinerea (Ashy Coral)

Clavulina cristata (Crested coral)

Suillus luteus (Slippery Jack)

Modest need (some, wider selection welcome)

Boletus edulis (King bolete)

Catathelasma ventricosa (Fat cat)

Hydnum repandum (Hedge hog mushroom)

Hydnum umbilicatum (Sweet tooth)

Leccinum holopus (aka "*L. niveum*").

Leccinum scabrum (Birch bolete)

Tricholoma matsutake (*T. magnivelare*, Pine mushroom, White matsutake)

Minimal need (lots, will consider improvement)

Armillaria ostoyae and *A. sinapina* (Honey mushroom)

Morchella esculenta (Black morel)

Cantharellus cibarius (Yellow chanterelle)

Craterellus tubaeformis (Yellow legs, Winter chanterelle)

Coprinus comatus (Shaggy mane)

Lycoperdon perlatum (Common puffball)

Russula paludosa (Swamp russula)

Lactarius thyinos or L. "deterrimus" (orange *Lactarius*, incorrectly referred to as "Lactarius deliciosus")

Wristers

When do you need wristers?

The Rosie Myers Test:

If you fall and the wind keeps you upright, you need'em!

Wristers with varying length of palm/hand coverage. The lower the thumb hole (the wider the thumb lop), the more palm covered. Medium loop with 80% palm coverage on L hand and Esteri's loop-only with free palm on R hand.

Maria Voitk

When mittens were knit without cuffs, the cuffs were knit separately, and were called wristers, which stayed on the hands when the wearer reached out to adjust horse harness, tool, or fishing line. In her book, *Fox and Geese and Fences*, Robin Hansen defines wristers as cuffs without mittens, usually about 5" long, extending from under the mitten to under the sleeve, sometimes with a loop to secure them to the thumb.

At a **Much Ado About Mushrooms** workshop Lisa van Nostrand gave us felted hemi-thumbed wristers, embroidered with mushrooms. While they appealed to my aesthetic senses, it was not until exposed to 90 km/h winds at the Viking Foray that I appreciated the practical side of wristers. Although we were bundled up for the weather, whenever we reached out to pick a mushroom, the wind whistled into our sleeves and chilled us. Esteri Ohenoja noticed our fingers getting number and number, took pity on us, and gave us each a pair of wristers, called "randikaiset" in Finnish, with thumb loops, perfect for warming the hands while allowing the fingers to take photographs and collect mushrooms. Wristers do for the forearms what a scarf does for the neck, when the collar is open—keeps the wind away from direct contact to chill the arms or body.

I liked them so much that I decided to knit 16 pairs for family Christmas presents. Of course, they were overjoyed! I took the stitch count from Esteri's exemplar, and took a guess at the needle size to get an appropriate gauge. You too can own a pair and have fun varying the lengths, and even mismatching the colour combinations in matched pairs. You can make them smaller by reducing the stitch number or larger by increasing the stitch number (or varying yarn thickness and needle sizes), incorporating the appropriate adjustment for the thumb. You can use yarn leftovers, or start with a fresh ball of yarn and experiment with various weights of yarn for thicker or lighter wristers.

Try a pair! I know we will not be caught with ours at home again.

Knitting instructions for a pair of women's wristers (men's size in brackets) extending about 3cms beyond the thumb opening.

Yarn: double knitting weight
Needles: 4 double-pointed size 3 metric
No. of stitches (sts): 60 (72)
Cast on 60 sts (72); divide onto 3 double-pointed needles
Knit 2, purl 2 (rib) in rounds, until cuff measures 12 (15)cms.
For thumb opening:
Knit 2, purl 2, cast off 10 (12) sts, continue the round
Next round: knit 2, purl 2, cast on 10 (12) sts, continue round
Continue knitting in rib about another 10 rounds.
Cast off tightly in rib.
Make wristers about 15 cm long (6 inches), or whatever length you find most comfortable. The important thing is that the wrist remains covered and there is overlap with your shirtsleeve under your jacket when active with mittens off.

Selection of wristers. On left, Lisa van Nostrand's felted hemi-thumbs above and mittens below. On the right, choices, including without thumb loop (lowest).

EDITORIAL COMMENT

If you are not into making your own, but would like a pair of the best of the best, perhaps as a present to your favourite mushroom magazine editor, order some genuine handknit Kihnu Island wristers made with original folk designs of the Island from the homespun wool of homegrown sheep, by local craftswoman Elvi of Kuraga.

Kihnu Island is where Maria, author of the Wristers article, was born. It is off the coast of Estonia and has the most well preserved local customs, traditions, handicrafts and even its own "language" (dialect). It is the only place in Estonia where local people still wear homemade folk costume as everyday wear. In December 2003 UNESCO declared the Kihnu Cultural Space a masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Like Newfoundland, its insularity and colourful homespun culture make it exotic to most mainlanders. It is the one place in Estonia where the very fashionable and expensive knits in folk pattern are still bargains.

Just after we got the wristers from Esteri and Maria wrote the article, a craft cooperative in Kihnu opened a website to display their crafts. We thought that since there are many cool winds and many mushroomers in Estonia, wristers would be a natural and suggested it to the cooperative. As we are about to go to print, the first wristers appear on the site. Here they are for your enjoyment, women's above and men's below. You can visit the site <http://www.kihnukaubamaja.ee/katised> and order your own. At 18 € a pair, they're a steal.

We do not take advertisements at OMPHALINA and do not promote commercial products. Please do not mistake this Comment for some kind of promotion! Oh, no. All we are doing is exhorting you to buy wristers from the Kihnu Cooperative. Entirely different from promoting something.

The site is all in Estonian. For the few who do not have full command of it, but wish to buy wristers, write Maria <medemari AT gmail DOT com>, and she'll help you. No commission, no translator's fee. We just sent cash in an envelope. Worked for us.

JOHANN SCHOBERT

Andrus Voitk

… perhaps you should do a piece on the German composer Johann Schobert, who had a promising career until he fed his family an *Amanita* meal, not excluding himself.

Larry Millman

Unfamiliar with Schobert, I scanned the net for information. I have not verified the details at source—for example, I have not compared the scores of his and Mozart's music—so that some information may be erroneous, missing or apocryphal. Still, a story emerged, sufficiently interesting to warrant reporting here.

Of Germanic origin, Schobert's exact birthplace is unknown. Virtually every biographical note begins by stating that the year of his birth is also unknown, but some then go on to say that at his untimely death, August 28, 1767, he was only 37!

About seven years before his death Schobert arrived in Paris, the major musical centre at the time, in the employ of the Duke of Conti primarily as a harpsichordist. He published his music during those years, apparently at his own expense, and was one of the foremost musical figures on the scene. Paris also drew the family Mozart, and naturally father Leopold met Schobert. This did not go well, because Leopold told Schobert that his children enjoyed his (Schobert's) music because they found it so easy to play. Leopold found Schobert "low".

As a composer, Schobert was avant-garde, introducing significant advances into instrumental music. For example, in his hands the harpsichord became a musical equal among chamber instruments, not just the provider of often unwritten basso continuo. Some have gone so far as to suggest he might have overshadowed Mozart, had he lived longer. Records from the time reveal that his instrumental music, as much as his harpsichord playing, was much liked by the public. I have now listened to several of his sonatas, and have found them very pleasing and interesting. If you like music but do not know Schobert, I highly recommend an acquaintance with his work.

Wolfgang Amadeus was seven at the time. What he thought about the man we do not know, but he certainly thought highly of his music. He taught it to his pupils later in his life and imitated some of the sonatas, even basing part of his second piano concerto on one of Schobert's harpsichord sonatas.

Shobert's entry into a mushroom journal is through his exit. On an outing with family and friends he encountered some mushrooms, which one of his doctor friends identified as desirable edibles. They collected them, took their bounty to a restaurant, and asked the chef to prepare the mushrooms for their meal. The request was denied on the grounds that the mushrooms were thought to be poisonous. This did not sit well with the company, which took its patronage to another establishment. Again the request was denied, and for the same reason. Convinced that proper service and respect was unlikely, they repaired home, where Johann cooked a hearty soup of the mushrooms. Its enjoyment was followed by the death of Johann, his wife, one of their little daughters and the good doctor who had identified the mushrooms.

Have you ever thought that you knew better than everybody else? I have…

OUR WEED LICHENS

Mac Pitcher

Though generally used to denote an alien plant that is noxious and unwanted, the term weed can also refer to a native species that grows and reproduces aggressively. Or according to Ralph Waldo Emerson, a weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered. It is in these latter two contexts that we shall become acquainted with the weed lichens of Newfoundland forests, and indeed, beyond.

Once we remove ourselves from the urban sprawl, we encounter trees laden with a rich assemblage of grayish-white (occasionally greenish-gray) foliose lichens with generally black undersides. Although there are a handful of species in this group, three stand out as dominant and ubiquitous, and frequently occur together. Meet the tube, the bottle-brush and the rag.

The Tube Lichen (***Hypogymnia physodes***)

The Tube Lichens are represented in NF by at least 5 species, with this, the "Monk's Hood Tube Lichen" usually the most common and widely distributed of the group. Although abundant on conifer branches and stems in all forest types, it is equally at home on other tree and shrub species and can be regularly found directly on open heathland. The Tube Lichens are named since their finger-like lobes are hollow and inflated (picture a sleeping bag), and this is readily evident when a lobe is sectioned. The Monk's Head is so named for the flaring hood-like ruptures at the lobe tips from which the soralia (vegetative propagules) are dispersed. It is rare to see this species with apothecia.

The Bottle-brush Lichen (*Parmelia squarrosa*)

The Bottle-brush is one of about six *Parmelia* species occurring in NF. These mineral-gray (rarely greenish) foliose lichens superficially may be confused with the Tube Lichens, with which they may often be entwined, however, they are flat, solid throughout and not hollow (picture a bedsheet). Although the Bottle-brush is usually considered an arboreal species, it is often found on rocks, and occasionally on humus soil and low shrubs in open heath. It is so-named for its "squarrose" rhizines (structures resembling roots on the underside of many foliose lichens), which have their side-branching at right-angles to the main "rootlet", somewhat reminiscent of miniature bottle-brushes. Although another similar arboreal species, *P. sulcata* also has squarrose rhizines, it has granular soredia on the upper surface as opposed to the often abundant peg-like isidia on the upper surface of P. squarrosa. The Bottle-brush Lichen is often found with bright golden-coloured disk-shaped apothecia.

The Rag Lichen (*Platismatia glauca*)

The Rag Lichen is far and away the most common of three *Platismatia* species that occur here. It is most commonly found on the trunks and branches of conifers, particularly Balsam Fir, but can be found on other tree species and even on old lumber. Like our other weeds, it can also occur on rocks, soil and shrubs in heathland. The Rag Lichen is aptly named. It is a highly-variable foliose species, often with a crumpled appearance and a ragged margin. In well-lighted situations it can appear burnished brown as opposed to the usual mineral gray with black underside. Additionally it may have isidia, soredia and marginal lobules.

the mail bag

or why the passenger pigeons assigned to serve the lavish Corporate and Editorial offices of OMPHALINA get hernias

Greetings from our spring foray on the Island of Saaremaa in Estonia! We had good weather with a lot of spring mushrooms. Most excitement, of course, was provided by the morels and gyromitras.

Our sortie was reported in the local press and the attached fantastic action shot by Värdi Soomann was a great hit in *Pärnu Postimees*, garnering several deserved kudos from readers. We enjoy your Omphalina and think back fondly to our pleasant time with you in 2003. Best wishes for your fall foray!

Vello Liiv and Kuulo Kalamees
Faculty of 2003 Killdevil Foray

Dear Editor,

Thank you for latest issue Liked it and the lichen article. Just to add some positive recent developments, *Erioderma pedicellatum* has lost some of its glory: it was recently reported from Alaska, and my Russian friends brought me good material collected in Kamchatka last year!

Ted Ahti

*Correction to a correction: not the family **Chailleti**, the family **Chaillet***

And, a "vole" is not a "vole" - some voles, the red-backed in particular, being fungivores favouring truffles. (I note the island of Newfoundland lacks these; not sure of the mainland Labrador) When kept overnight in a trap with a choice of two types of tree seeds (spruce/fir) for sustenance, the rbv spurned BOTH; deer mice preferred spruce. I'm not sure about meadow voles, which you seem to have as natives in NL. I think their diet is much seedier. ... Another link in the unbroken chain?

Greg Thorn

I note your article on *Multiclavula vernalis* in **FUNGI**. You may be interested to know that I collected it from the Burin Peninsula. Cheers! Mac

614. *Multiclavula vernalis* (Schwein.) R. Petersen
On side of low peat hummock in wet site below highway embankment
West side of Rte. 210, ~ 2.6 km. south of jct. with North Harbour Road
N 47 53 22.53 W 054 07 26.52 (NAD 83) Elev: 100 m.
Collector: M. Pitcher Det. By: M. Pitcher, July 23, 2009.

Sincerely, Mac

Dear Editor,

Taxonomy is only useful, if correct, organizational taxonomy as well as organism taxonomy! The genus name *PiptopOrus* refers to the pOres of this polypOre. Pipto idicates sunken, as the pOres are, due to the overhanging (involuted) edge, well pointed out in your otherwise excellent article; piptopErus, as you had it, just reveals our mycoignorance, or it might mean that Peru is sunk, which perhaps makes no sense for a mountainous country. And recent molecular sequencing has caused a reassignment of Sir Wilfred Grenfell College to Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland, making the former Memorial University to become St John's Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Get our Partners' names right!

Two admirers of the birds in your journal

To the Editor of Omphalina
I write with regards to a chocolaty smelling *Cortinarius* described by you and your Finnish mycocohorts (wisely, Aava had the good sense to stay silent on the topic). Unlike the authors, who are admittedly well known for their myco-astuteness and fully functional sniffers, other mycophiles have indeed smelled chocolaty notes coming from other mushrooms. To wit: *Hebeloma populinum* of Europe is considered to be odiferously similar to chocolate (says so in the Hebeloma book--I've never yet encountered it). Also, I can tell you from personal experience that at least one North American truffle smells of chocolate: *Leucangium carthusianum*, the Oregon black truffle. The smell of this truffle, which can get quite large (and may even grace the cover of an upcoming issue of FUNGI Magazine), smells fruity when immature--like pineapple. Immatures are used locally in the Pacific NW in sweet desert preparations. Mature specimens, to me and at least one truffle collector I know, smell strongly of chocolate. Others say cream of broccoli - cheese soup...I guess the jury's still out. Either way, your Cort has GOT to smell better than the incredibly foul smelling *Cortinarius camphoratus*!

Keep up the good work,

Britt Bunyard
Editor
FUNGI

Dear Editor:

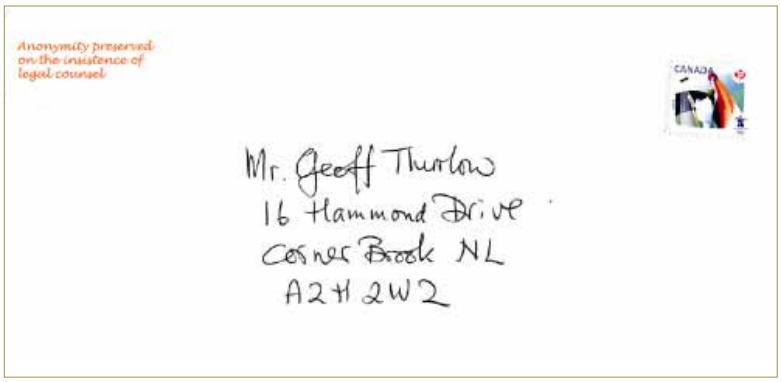
Just a short note to report first fry of Avalon chanterelles Sat Jul 2, 2011. Although maligned on the pages of your journal as being less pristine than west coast chanterelles, they tasted superb!

Faye

Dear Faye:

We had our first capelin fry Sat Jul 2, 2011. Superb!

Ed.



Considering the postal strike, to claim "early bird" status, I attach a picture of the stamped envelope containing our registration forms and cheque, to be mailed in as soon as Her Majesty's postal workers return to work as it appears they will be on the orders of Her Majesty's Parliament in Canada (albeit no doubt without the consent of the member of that parliament for whom we voted).

A prospective forger

One of the joys of editing a world-famous mushroom journal is the unexpected mail that delights. The pictures on the left were sent with an appeal to do a foray in Goose Bay: "This is the sort of pretty "mushrooms" you can expect to find at Goose."

Needless to say, this Editor had no idea what they were, had never seen anything like it. However, it was identified by Henry Mann to be *Splachnum rubrum*, bright red dung moss. The fly is no accident, for they are indeed main vectors for spore propagation. There are a few pictures on the web, but none that come close to these. Gorgeous!

OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

People of Newfoundland and Labrador, through

- Department of Environment and Conservation
  - Parks and Natural Areas Division
  - Wildlife Division
- Department of Natural Resources
  - Center for Forest Science and Innovation

People of Canada, through

- Parks Canada
  - Terra Nova National Park
  - Gros Morne National Park

Model Forest of Newfoundland and Labrador

- Forest Communities Program

Memeorial University of Newfoundland

- Grenfell Campus
- St John's Campus

Quidi Vidi Brewing Company

Rodrigues Winery

LICHENS added this year!

FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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