Fungifama

The Newsletter of the South Vancouver Island Mycological Society
October 2008

Introducing the SVIMS Executive for 2008

President
Shannon Berch — shannonberch@telus.net, 250-652-5201
Vice President
Richard Winder. — sidewinder@spamcop.net
Treasurer
Karen Rowe — lskr@shaw.ca
Membership
Karen Rowe — lskr@shaw.ca
Secretary
Jean Johnson — jeanwade@islandnet.com
Foray Organizers
Adolf and Oluna Ceska — aceska@telus.net, 250-477-1211
Jack and Neil Greenwell — j.greenwell@shawlink.ca
Fungifama Editor
Heather Leary — hleary@shaw.ca, 250-385-2285
Publicity & Library Manager
Kevin Trim — kevintrim@shaw.ca
Webmaster
Ian Gibson — ig@islandnet.com, 250-384-6002
Directors at large
Rich Mably — rmably@telus.net
Aurora Skala — lagomorphian@hotmail.com
Refreshments Organizers
Marcie Gauntlet — marcichka@telus.net
Peggy Turkanen — howardray@shaw.ca

SVIMS list serve master
Adolf Ceska — aceska@telus.net
To broadcast a message to SVIMS members via email: svims-l@victoria.tc.ca
SVIMS web site: www.svims.ca

Dues: **$20.00 per year** per household, payable in January by cheque made out to SVIMS or by cash at meeting.

Meetings: First Thursday of the month (no meetings December, January, July, and August), 7:00 p.m. sharp at the Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 Burnside Rd W, Victoria. Lots of free parking. The meeting room is near the main entrance door. Non-members welcome.

Just a reminder to pay your dues Cheques can be sent to SVIMS c/o Karen Rowe, Treasurer
4750 West Saanich Rd
Victoria, BC V8Z 3H3

Monthly Meetings:

SVIMS meets the first Thursday of most months. Please remember to bring your own coffee cup

November 6: SVIMS Elections
Rich Mably, *Mushroom photography*
January 24: Survivor's Banquet
February 5: Paul Kroeger, Vancouver Mycological Society, TBA
March 5: Dr. Mary Berbee, University of British Columbia, Establishing the baseline for fungal diversity in British Columbia for times of changing climate

Prez Sez

Imagine my surprise a few weeks ago when, in digging up a garden in our back yard to accommodate an expansion of our hardy fuchsia bed, my husband and I unearthed 8 nice little white truffles (either *Tuber gibbosum* or *Tuber oregonense*). We had no clue that the truffles were there, possibly because we have no trained dogs or pigs to find them. I suppose that the truffles were a gift from our neighbours, or at least from their Douglas-fir tree which seems to be the host for these ectomycorrhiza-forming species. We have not yet eaten any of them as I do plan on taking a close look at them under the microscope and putting at least some of them into the fungal collection at Pacific Forestry Centre.

According to the North American Truffling Society (www.natruffling.org/), "truffles are hypogeous (underground) versions of mushrooms. They don't form a

prominent stem and their spore-bearing surfaces are enclosed. They rely on animals eating them (mycophagy) to distribute their spores, instead of air currents like mushrooms. Truffles resemble small potatoes, often between the size of a marble and a golf ball. There are hundreds of different kinds of truffles, and while none are known to be poisonous, only a few of them are considered to be delicacies by humans."

Although there are over 40 common genera and many species of truffles and false truffles in the Pacific Northwest, truffles and false truffles are not very well known in BC. The fungal collection at the Pacific Forestry Centre (PFC) has only one collection identified as *Tuber gibbosum*, for instance, and that collection actually comes from Oregon not BC; a collection at PFC identified at *Tuber* sp. did come from Victoria but is still waiting (since 1977) identification to species. In the UBC fungal herbarium, the only *Tuber* collection from BC is *Tuber rufum* which was unearthed in 2002 by Tessa a 4-month-old cockapoo puppy and identified by Paul Kroeger a much older non-puppy, friend of SVIMS, and Board Member of the Vancouver Mycological Society.

During the Whistler Bioblitz this summer, truffle experts Dan Luoma and Joyce Eberhart from Oregon State University identified some sub-alpine truffle relatives and added to the list of species known from the province. Our own SVIMS checklist includes some hypogeous fungi (e.g. species of *Rhizopogon, Alpova*, and *Elaphomyces*). But much remains to be done in determining how many truffles and false truffles we have in BC. Truffles would be a great topic for an invited speaker at a future SVIMS meeting; the more we know about these fungi the more likely we are to start looking for and finding them.

Shannon Berch, President

LOCAL EVENTS AND FORAYS

Paper Creations From Mushrooms Workshop
Saturday, November 8th
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Instructor: Jean Johnson (SVIMS member)
Cost: $35.00 or $25.00 for HCP members (includes $10.00 materials cost)
Glendale Gardens (formerly Horticulture Centre for the Pacific)
505 Quayle Road, Victoria
For more information:
www.hcp.bc.ca and look under Workshops - Calendar of Classes or telephone 250-479-6162

Microscopic Structures of Macrofungi: Little Brown Mushrooms Demystified– and More
November 14-16, 2008

A workshop on the identification of mushrooms, with an emphasis on the use of the microscope in exploring fungal structures relevant to identification, offered at Camosun College by Oluna and Adolf Ceska.

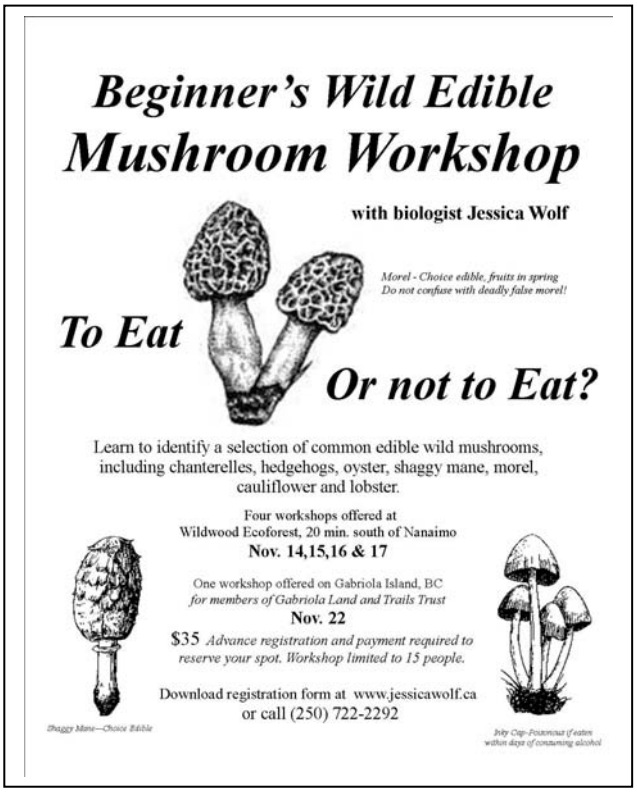
The workshop, which will make use of the compound and dissecting microscopes in the Camosun College science lab, will include an introduction to morphology and taxonomy of the major genera of macrofungi, including photographs of locally occurring rare or rarely photographed species. Attendees will participate in a specimen-collection foray at the rarely-visited Camosun properties in Metchosin.

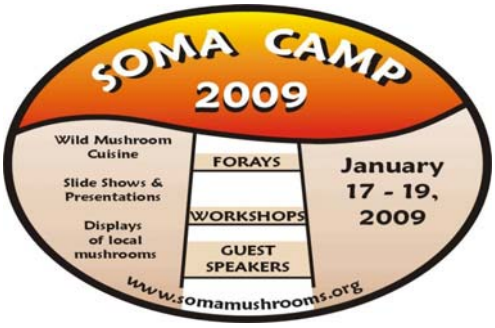
The workshop will be held at Camosun College, 3100 Foul Bay Road, Victoria, BC, Canada, Fisher Building, Room 244. Cost of the workshop is $100 ($60 for full time students). Send payment and registration to Kem Luther 4542 Rocky Point Road Victoria, BC V9C 4E4

FAR AWAY EVENTS AND FORAYS:

Mendocino Woodlands Foray
November 14 - 16
This year's annual MSSF Mendocino Woodlands Foray will take place on the weekend of November 14-16, at the Mendocino Woodlands camp, in the mushroom-rich hills above the town of Mendocino (northern California). The foray mycologist has yet to be selected, but will be announced soon. Planned classes

include mushroom dye, papermaking, identification, photography, and cultivation, including a mushroom kit-making session. Fee of $150 includes lodging, meals, and all forays, classes, and events. Kids under 13 half price (w/ adult), under 5 free. $90 with offsite lodging. Non-members add $25 to the fee. Cabins will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who register early will be given cabins closer to the main lodge.





MYCOLOGICAL WEBSITES

Fungal fun from Taylor Lockwood www.kingdomoffungi.com/mycomyst/page99.html

And images of Taylor's trip to Mexico earlier this year
Click the images to continue the slide show.
www.kingdomoffungi.com/d_pages/m.2008.08/m.2008.08aa.php

MykoWeb
A major new section has been added to MykoWeb. For those of you who are not yet familiar with this terrific site, drop in for a visit. MykoWeb was developed by Michael Wood, and, while it specializes in Western mushroom species, the site features loads of information and lots of terrific images of mushrooms. The latest addition to MykoWeb is a reprint of the famous 1968 compendium on Pholiota spp. by A. H. Smith and L. R. Hesler, the North American Species of Pholiota, published by Hafner Publishing Co.
For details visit www.mykoweb.com/Pholiota/

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Originally printed in Botanical Electronic News May 2008

Distribution of a Mushroom *Tubaria punicea* on Southern Vancouver Island
Oluna Ceska & Adolf Ceska

In December 2001, we found a peculiar, deep red mushroom on an arbutus Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) stump and identified it as *Naucoria vinicolor*. For several years we searched for this mushroom without finding it.

In December 2005, we found this fungus again on a site where there were three Arbutus trees that had it growing on their base. We learned that P. Brandon Matheny and his colleagues were working on this group of mushrooms and we made a more extensive search for this fungus.

With the help of the Department of National Defense (DND), we focused our search on the military areas where we knew, from our previous field work, there were many old *Arbutus menziesii* trees suitable for hosting this fungus. Having

some vague ideas about the phenology of this fungus, we timed our search for late

December and early January.

In winter 2005/2006 we found eight sites with the red mushroom, five of which were on DND property. We collected enough material from a relatively large area (Cobble Hill to Rocky Point) to enable our colleagues to study its morphology. One of us (Oluna Ceska) was invited to be a co-author of a paper that would clarify the taxonomy of this group of mushrooms.

The authors of the paper (Matheny et. al. 2007) concluded that the fungus we found should be called *Tubaria punicea* (A.H. Sm. & Hesler) Ammirati, Matheny, et P.-A. Moreau, and that this taxon is different from *Naucoria vinicolor* (our original identification). Our material collected from southern Vancouver Island was crucial to this taxonomical decision, since Brandon Matheny and his collaborators had no fresh material for DNA analyses.

Our surveys continued in the following winter of 2006/2007. Several volunteers took part in the surveys exploring new areas, and they found eight new sites and extended the known distribution of this fungus from Rocky Point in Metchosin to Little Mountain near Parksville. All these searches were either on private properties, parks, or Crown land. We now know this fungus from more non-DND sites than those on DND properties.

The phenological observations were done with the help of a number of volunteers who visited the *Tubaria punicea* sites in Metchosin, Mill Hill Regional Park, and Observatory Hill. The earliest*Tubaria punicea* fruiting was on October 24, 2006 (Mill Hill), and fruiting continued until January 6, 2007 (Metchosin). There was a second flush of this fungus at the end of March (March 25, 2007 in Langford and March 28, 2007 on Observatory Hill). This second fruiting was suspected to be triggered by the abnormally high precipitations in March 2007.

The investigation of Arbutus trees on southern Vancouver Island yielded 13 sites with *Tubaria punicea*, five of which were on DND properties. A total of 40 Arbutus trees were observed to have *T. punicea* and GPS coordinates were recorded and are online at www.ou.edu/cas/botany-micro/ben/ben393.html.

In spite of the fact that we added quite a few sites, *Tubaria punicea* is still rare. The Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC) that oversees the listing of rare organisms still has not listed a single fungus as rare in Canada. *Tubaria punicea* would be an ideal species for such a listing; however, 'official' rare status for this species is unlikely unless COSEWIC changes the criteria for the listing that apply for animals and vascular plants, mosses and lichens, as they are not suitable for fungi.

Mushroom Photo Essay

Originally published on the Art of Bonsai Project website

By Will Heath

As bonsaists, we spend a great deal of time studying trees in their natural environment. We observe their beauty as we drive past them when we commute and we rejoice in their splendor as we walk through the woods and forests.

Many of us widen our vision even further and see not only the tree, but also the micro and macro environments that the trees grow in. We see the under-story plants, the natural accents, we see the symbiotic relationships that the trees in nature share with the ferns, the moss, the lichen, and other plants. This "sharing" of growing space is what we attempt to duplicate when we use accents in our bonsai displays.

We attempt to match our accents with the bonsai by using plants that grow in the same climate, plants that show the same season presented, and plants that harmonize with the bonsai as well.

Unfortunately, like many people, we have blinders on when it comes to mushrooms. Mushrooms are everywhere and have been a natural accompaniment to trees since before mankind first walked through the forests.

Mushrooms come in many different sizes, shapes, and colors. They are a constant part of nature, some call them the unseen wild flowers because of their latent beauty and striking colors that range from translucent to a complete rainbow of colors including green, blue, red, yellow, brown, white, and variations on all.

In the following photo essay, I will attempt to show the inherent beauty of mushrooms and their usefulness as natural accents for bonsai through the use of photos of mushrooms growing in their natural environment, of some that pay surprise visits in our bonsai pots, and lastly, of some that were cultivated specifically for use as accents and as kusamono.

Afterward, you can decide if we indeed have overlooked mushrooms as accents for our bonsai and if they have a place in our art.

See the photo essay at
www.artofbonsai.org/feature_articles/mushroom.php

An Invitation to Work Together on MushroomObserver.org

Darvin DeShazer & Nathan Wilson
http://mushroomobserver.org

Are you interested in helping to create a worldwide mushroom database?

Would you like to participate in a mushroom related website that allows anyone to contribute their own mushroom photos, participate in conversation about those contributions, and search the site for photos and comments?

There are many mushroom related sites out there and even more mushroom related discussion happening on various mailing lists, chats etc.

Unfortunately, mailing lists and their attachments are transitory.

Personal and even amateur group websites are hard to keep track of or search consistently and few allow general participation. Sites hosted on third-party websites like yahoo groups are at risk of getting unplugged or co-opted in someway that may not be in keeping with the original intent of the site or simply falling into the dustbin of neglected websites.

The community supporting the MushroomObserver.org website would like to invite all interested parties to get involved in creating a common on-line meeting ground for mushroom enthusiasts. It makes sense to have one common site to compare photos and get feedback from others.

We would be happy, with your help, to shape MushroomObserver.org towards better achieving that goal. Much of the ground work is already done.

- Anyone can add their own images of mushrooms.
- Anyone can make a comment or suggest a new name for any mushroom observation.
- Anyone can contribute to a shared database of mushroom descriptions.
- Anyone can make species lists for a location, event or any other purpose.
- Anyone can generate a list of fungi found by clicking the check boxes.
- Anyone can compare all photos of the same species.
- Anyone can vote on any species name.
- Anyone can see a location map of where the collection was made.
- Anyone can get the full source code for the website and participate in its development.
- There are no financial hooks.

Conceptually the site is similar to Wikipedia, but with an emphasis on recording individual records of people finding and identifying mushrooms. As of July 2008 there were over 350 registered users and more the 15,000 images from all over the world.

Mushroom Observer is not intended to replace the websites for existing mushroom

groups. These serve a very valuable purpose of providing a common place for people in a given area who know each other to organize local events and share their local experience. Mushroom Observer strives to complement such sites by providing a larger context for these groups to share and record their discoveries in a lasting way, and compare their findings with findings from other similar groups. It is a living mushroom field guide on the web which we are all building together.

Sgt. Kenwood's Old-Tyme "Chicken"Marsala reproduced from the July/August 2008 issue of Mycophile

Ingredients:
Olive oil or butter
2 teaspoons minced garlic
3 cups sliced fresh chicken mushrooms (Laetiporus sulfureus)
1/2 cup flour
12 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts (optional in case you're short on the mushrooms)
3/4 cup chicken broth
3/4 cup Marsala wine
1/4 cup water
1.5 Tablespoons corn starch

Method:
1. Heat a small amount of olive oil or butter in a saute pan over high heat. Add garlic and single layer of mushrooms to saute. When sufficiently cooked, set aside in bowl.
2. Combine flour and seasonings in a small bowl. If using real chicken, pound the chicken breasts to 1/4 inch thickness, lightly coat with flour and saute in olive oil or butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook chicken 3 to 4 minutes per side or until cooked through. Set aside and keep warm.
3. Bring broth and wine to a boil in saucepan over medium heat. In a separate bowl, combine water and corn start, then stir into broth mixture. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently, until thickened and clear. Stir in mushrooms. Cut chicken into bite-size pieces and top with mushroom sauce to serve.

Announcing a new book from the University of Iowa Press: Mushrooms and Other Fungi of the Midcontinental United States, second edition, by D. M. Huffman, L.H. Tiffany, G. Knaphus & R. A. Healy. 384 pages, 300 colour photos, 21 drawings. $39.95 US paperback
http://www.uiowapress.org/books/2008-spring/huffmansecond.htm

Farmers and Farmees: The evolution of the agricultural partnership
-or- When Broccoli Bites back
Juliet Pendray
Reprinted from the July/August Issue of Mycophile

Over a century or so ago humans began studying the fungicultural practices of certain kinds of termites, beetles and ants; growing fungi as food for their colonies. Over the years we have learned more, marvelling at these insects' sophisticated crop management systems, and at the sheer length of evolutionary time they have been successfully cropping their chosen food.

More recently, however, exploration of how these fungi, insects and even their garden pests alter each other's behaviour, anatomy and lifecycles leads to some interesting speculation about our own human/crop agricultural relationships.

In an Attine[1] ant colony, the ants work hard at activities familiar to most human farmers and gardeners: They remove weeds, apply pesticides and fertilizers, rotate crops, clear new fields, examine for pests, sow "seedlings," mow down escapees and transport the mature harvest to feed the tribe. Leaf-cutting ants (higher Attines) transport heavy loads of carefully cut out leaves over long distances to feed the fungal crop. The ant farmer has evolved some advantages we lack, such as the ability to grow and transport pesticides in a special spot on its own body, and to use sensitive antennae and mouthparts to detect healthy growth and identify invading species. However, the basic activities and goals are very similar.

Some obvious advantages for the fungi include being provided with a constant supply of food, and protection from parasites and other environmental hazards. When researchers looked closer, they saw signs that characteristics have evolved which more complexly and directly act upon

the fungi's agents of comfort and success, the ants.

For example, in the more evolved Attine ant/fungus relationships, the fungus produces nutritionally perfect packages, bunches of swollen mycelia tips termed gongylidia, which ant harvesters pluck like grapes and feed to the larvae. By creating these packages the fungus effectively encourages the ant towards harvesting parts selected by the fungus, as if an apple tree were giving us apples to discourage the making of applewood furniture. As well, this promotes the ant's practice of weeding out competing species from its gardens: Although the mycelia of a similar fungus species might be tasty, it probably can't compete with easily accessible, extra tasty, "redi-serv" gongylidia.

Also, as a crop, fungi transform vegetation and excreta into more digestible mycelia, much as our vegetable crops transform energy from sun and soil, or as we transform manure into edible mushrooms. Over the grand span of time, improvements in "communication" between the fungi and the insect partners have evolved. The nutritional content of the fungi has changed in ways that affect the health and biochemistry of the insect farmers. This in turn influences the composition of the insect excreta, which is a major fertilizing agent for the fungi.

The Attine ant tribe and their Lepiotaceous[2] fungi partners have a history together that spans 50 million years. For about the same period, Termite tribes have been feeding Termitomyces fungi to their larvae, and Ambrosia beetles have been lining their burrows with an Ambrosia fungus larder for even longer.

By comparison, our scratchings at the turf to produce beer, vodka, tortillas, bread and broccoli au gratin, is merely a faddish new activity. Like lovers new to each other's needs, we offer our crop partners fancy test-pesticides, try them out on fertilizers with temptingly different nitrogen proportions and even attempt to cut out the competition by trying to gene-proof seeds against the interference of other organisms. While we have institutions of learning dedicated to advancing our understanding and skills in manipulating the crops we associate with, I doubt there are any courses discussing the potential results of our crops learning more about us.

We can grocery bag the broccoli stalks and easily laugh at the thought of a vegetable, with the brains of …er… a vegetable, having any influence upon such a cerebellum-endowed lifeform as ourselves. Or we can pause and remember that the vegetables have had a mere 10,000 years or so to learn how to influence us. We've certainly given a select number of species great population advantages, set them up in their own hothouses and such … but perhaps they've not had enough time to learn how to chemically select our offspring for broccoli-positive behaviours.

Should we worry that we are potentially not the only host species for these veggies? How can we prevent being slowly killed off in favour of, say, deer or bunnies? Only time will tell: Tune in again at the end of this Cenozoic Era for the exciting new developments!

NOTES:

[1] Attine ants are a tribe within the larger subfamily of Myrmicinae in the Ant family Formicidae.

[2] Almost all of the fungi species associated with different Attine ant species have been identified as Lepiotaceae family ancestors or relatives, from Leucocoprinus and Leucoagaricus genera.

With thanks to Dr. Robert Bandoni for kindly providing suggestions for changes to the text.

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SVIMS Mushroom Show – Sunday, October 19, 2008

Submitted by Jean Johnson

According to the Times Colonist, our area has had 153 mm less precipitation to date than last year. As one member put it "the mushrooms are a little thin on the ground right now", and this was somewhat reflected at the Club's Mushroom Show at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. Despite that, there were 137 different fungal species represented and we have to thank **Kevin Trim** for a lot of those. He even brought in his polypore collection to add drama to the table display.

photo: Mabel Jean Rawlins
Shannon and Berch and Jean Johnson compare mushroom necklaces

Our loyal scientific mycologists helped to ID and explain the mysteries of the Fifth Kingdom but they were a bit thin on the ground, too. **Shannon Berch, Oluna Ceska,** and **Richard Winder** spent all day in the ID bull pit and **Erin Feldman** and **Kevin Trim** got in there and helped, too. We certainly missed **Christine Roberts, Bryce Kendricks, John Dennis** and **Renata Outerbridge.** John and Renata are probably having their own version of a mushroom show in Poland.

We don't know who to thank for receiving and sorting the mushroom specimens on Saturday afternoon and evening, but we know that **Adolf Ceska** and **Oluna Ceska** had a lot to do with it. Our apologies for not mentioning any others who also helped.

Karen Rowe set up the membership table and also sold the calendars that **Rich Mably** brought in to the room just under the wire. Although he wasn't at the show, **Rich** came through with a gorgeous 2009 SVIMS calendar to sell. How can he make each calendar more beautiful than the year before? This year's entries are truly stunning.

photo: Heather Leary

There was no children's Stamp Corner or mushroom tasting this year (we certainly DID miss **John Dennis**) but in their stead an Art Show and Sale was held, organized by **Jean Johnson** and assisted by **Kevin Trim** and **Mabel Jean Rawlins. Kevin Trim** submitted his concrete garden shrooms, **Pauline** made stained glass mushrooms, **May Kald** designed 31 different gift cards, **Mabel Jean Rawlins** had 3 different greeting cards, **Karen Rowe** made pearl and Sterling silver earrings, **Anne Friedinger** displayed three complex natural collages, and **Jean Johnson** showed mushroom paper made from *Ganoderma applanatum*.

Bill Chalmers from Western Biological in Langley did a roaring business selling his starter kits for shitake and oyster mushrooms. He even left an oyster bale and two shitake bags, which will be given out at the SVIMS November meeting.

Many thanks to the folks who provided food and goodies for our volunteers: **Joyce Lee** for her wonderful hot squash soup;

Chris Tomaschuk for freshly made Spanikopita; and **Zora Creery** for yummy Egg Salad Sandwiches. All the food was gobbled up and enjoyed immensely by our volunteers.

photo: Heather Leary
Richard explains mushrooms to mushroom show visitors

This was the year of the "smelly mushrooms". There was an unusually large, "old spicy socks" smelling Pine (*Tricholoma magnivelare*) with a cap measuring 22 cm (8.5 inches); *Rhodocybe nuciolens*, which smells like a spicy nut; *Marasmius salalis*, growing on salal leaves with a "knock your socks off" garlic bouquet; and a *Cortinarius traganus*, which prompted a debate between Richard Winder and Shannon Berch. Apricot or pear scent? After two days out of the woods, it just smelled pretty high!

As usual, at the end of the Show, **Ian Gibson** comes to enter all the fungal species in our Club's database. He marked down 137 species which is at the low range for the Mushroom Show which has had up to 200 species recorded. Many members stayed to help clean up afterwards. After sharing with the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, our wooden mushroom gathered $137.50 in donations. The unofficial attendance count was almost 400 people and we attracted six new members. The First Annual Art Show and Sale brought in $160.00 and a portion of that will be ear-marked for a special project (scholarship, anyone?).

We hope that everyone who contributed gets thanked so if there are any errors and omissions in this summary, please let us know. The people who attended this event, whether SVIMS members or members of the public, all enjoyed themselves. And some of our mushroom specimens lived on –recycled by **Rene Zich** for the **Galiano Mushroom Show** on October 26th.

SVIMS welcomes new members!
Susan Abrill-Russek
Emmy Borsboom
Diane Campbell
Arthur Coyne
Nancy Davis
Molly Eichar
Mark Faulkner
David Jenkins
Anne Munier
Bruce Pendergast
Sue Weiss

Cowichan Lake Foray
October 3 – 5, 2008

The annual Cowichan Lake Foray at the Cowichan Lake Research Station was a success despite the rainy weather. An enthusiastic group of over 30 forayers found 120 species.

Photos by Heather Leary

Lee finds chanterelles in the rain

Helga shows off her finds.

Oluna describes the mushrooms collected.

Lynn searches for lobsters.

Fun in the lounge.

Karen helps identify mushrooms.