

Cowichan Lake Foray Recap

Mycelial Network News

Welcome New Members

**Identification Table** 

12

13

14

15



By Bruce Pendergast

Compared to many previous presidents I am not a mycologist and only started learning about mushrooms seriously when I joined SVIMS in 2008. I grew up in a very rural part of Alberta and the only mushrooms my family knew the names of were puffballs and morels which we ate occasionally.

When I did an MSc in population ecology and food habits of grouse, I found that grouse ate significant quantities of mushrooms in August , September and October. I recall being puzzled by this, as the nutrition courses I had taken had indicated mushrooms had little or no nutrient value and my thesis advisors had no suggestions other than "they probably just eat them because they are there". At that time in the late 1960's

### PREZ SEZ

there was relatively (compared to now) little scientific interest in mushrooms.

I think no area of biology has progressed faster than Mycology in the last 50 years and we now know that most ecosystems would not exist as we know them without the fungi which assist the trees to grow while others assist decay so the nutrients are returned to the soil for recycling. The more we learn about fungi in general it seems the more we realize how much is still to be learned.

Who knows, if I had it all to do over again I might have been a mycologist. I joined SVIMS partly because the meetings were held within walking distance of my house but soon found it opened a whole new area of learning as well as a new source of beauty (just look at our calendars) and there are more that are good to eat besides puffballs and morels.

I would like to thank the former members of the SVIMS executive as well as the many volunteers who make the club work so well. I look forward to working with the new executive and volunteers as well. These are listed on the SVIMS website. I hope my stint as president will be, as the song goes, "a good time , not a long time".

# Send Fungifama your photos, articles, comments and ideas! The next deadline for submissions is February 15 email fungifama@gmail.com



THE COVER AND LOGOS WERE INSPIRED BY A CHARLES EDENSHAW PIECE DEPICTING FUNGUS MAN, A FIGURE IN HAIDA MYTHOLOGY. THIS WORK WAS GENEROUSLY PRODUCED AND DONATED TO FUNGIFAMA BY VICTORIA ARTIST SHAWN O'KEEFE, THE ARTISTIC POWERHOUSE BEHIND PHILLIPS BREWING AND MALTING CO. SINCE ITS INCEPTION. SHAWN RUNS ARTIFICIAL FLAVOUR GRAPHIC ENGINEERING, A VICTORIA-BASED DESIGN COMPANY. HIS ART IS ONE PART IRREVERENT PSYCHEDELIA, TWO PARTS REVERENT PACIFICANA. YOU CAN FIND MORE OF IT AT WWW.TRUST36.CA.

# UPCOMING EVENUS

FEBRUARY 4: SVIMS MONTHLY MEETING, PFC SPEAKERS: PAUL KROEGER AND ROBERT ROGERS

FEBRUARY 6: FORAY LED BY PAUL KROEGER, DETAILS TBA

FEBRUARY 6-7: 1ST ANNUAL TRUFFLE FESTIVAL OF BC, UBC FARM & FRASER VALLEY

MARCH 3: SVIMS MONTHLY MEETING, PFC SPEAKER: LUDOVIC LE RENARD

MARCH 19: SVIMS ANNUAL MUSHROOM DINNER, GOLDEN CITY RESTAURANT

APRIL 7: SVIMS MONTHLY MEETING, PFC SPEAKER: JACKLYN DEE

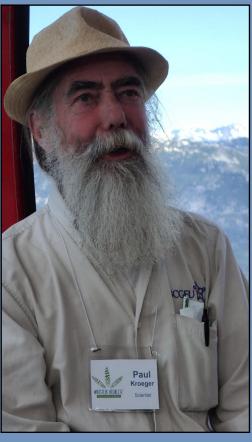
MAY 5: SVIMS MONTHLY MEETING, PFC SPEAKER: MATTEO GARBELOTTO

### SVIMS SPEAKER SERIES

A DYNAMIC DOUBLEHEADER!

To get 2016 off to a fabulous flying start, our first monthly SVIMS speaker will be ... two speakers! And more good news – to make room for two speakers in one night, there will be <u>no business meeting</u> to begin the evening!

First up is one of SVIMS's favourite speakers, Paul Kroeger, making his way over from Vancouver for the annual Kroeger Lecture. His talk, an overview of Kingdom Fungi, is titled "Fungi: A world of wonder beneath your feet". Paul has studied mushrooms for over thirty-five years and is a founding member of the Vancouver Mycological Society. He is a leading expert in field identification of mushrooms of western Canada and has made a special study of "little brown mushrooms" including magic mushrooms and their relatives. He's been involved in many projects and studies about diverse aspects of mushrooms, gaining knowledge about fungal biology and ecology, and biochemistry of toxic, hallucinogenic,



medicinal and edible mushrooms. Paul is a major contributor to the mycological herbarium collections in the Beaty Biodiversity Museum at UBC and has been a research associate of UBC Department of Botany for many years. He's also contributed significant collections to DAOM Herbarium in Ottawa and DAVFP Herbarium in Victoria. He is a consultant for the British Columbia Drug and Poison Information Centre, Centres for Disease Control, and other agencies concerned with mushroom poisonings and fungi in human and animal health. He recently published a book on the mushrooms of Haida Gwaii based on a five-year study. And Paul is always entertaining!

Following Paul is Robert Rogers, hailing from Edmonton with a talk entitled "The Twenty One Myths of Medicinal Mushrooms". Robert Dale Rogers has been an herbalist for over 40 years. He teaches a three year program on plant medicine at Northern Star College, a course he wrote and taught for ten years at Grant McEwan University. At present, he is an assistant clinical professor in family medicine at the University of Alberta. He occasionally teaches at Pacific Rim



College in Victoria on a variety of topics. Robert is the author of over forty books, including "The Fungal Pharmacy: The Complete Guide to Medicinal Mushrooms" and "Lichens of North America". His latest coauthored book is "A Cree Healer and his Medicine Bundle", revealing indigenous knowledge passed down for ten generations. In July 2016 his next book will be released, called "Mushroom Essences: Vibrational Medicine from Kingdom Fungi".



### Truffle Association of BC presents



### BC's First Annual Truffle Festival

### February 6 & 7, 2016

Tickets

https:// www.eventbrite.ca/e/ truffle-festival-of-bctickets-20135279162

For more information see www.bctruffles.ca bctruffles@shaw.ca

Saturday, February 6 At UBC Farm

### Trouble with Truffles

3:00 p.m.

#### A Presentation on

- What are truffles?
- How to grow truffles.
- How to harvest truffles.

In the Yurt

3461 Ross Drive, UBC Vancouver, BC

4:00 p.m.

Tour of the Truffle Orchard

4:30 p.m.

Truffle Dog Demonstration

Cost—\$30 per person

Sunday, February 7 In the Fraser Valley

### Truffle Hunt & Lunch

11:00 a.m.

The Hunt—Cultivated Truffles

12:00 p.m.

The Hunt—Native Truffles

2:30 p.m.

#### Truffle Brunch

Bacchus Bistro,

Chaberton Estate Winery

1064—216 Street,

Langley, BC V2Z 1R3

4:00 p.m.

Tour and Tasting in Winery

Cost—\$80 per person

## MICOSYLVA: Chaining Liberty or Championing Diversity?

by Thomas Witte

magine living in a small town in the countryside with a thriving mycologically oriented tourism industry. Chefs demonstrate novel ways to cook wild mushrooms, and discuss the subtler points of mushroom flavor in cheeses, sausages, breads and sauces. Organized forays encourage tourists and locals to learn about the mythology and natural wonder of the region. People are excited by more than three different kinds of mushrooms.

In this imaginary world, tourists and locals are offered a range of diverse experiences, from foraging in the woods, to factory tours, scientific lectures, fine dining, mushroom beer and a warm bed in a local Inn. Amateur foragers, not sure of what they just found in the woods, can simply walk into a pharmacy and have their precious earthy fruits identified on the spot. Scientists are monitoring the health of local forests with an eye on climate change and a plan to mitigate forest use accordingly. The government is supportive, and so are your neighbours - over half of them self-identify

as foragers. Societal mycophobia is melting and local food security is a priority.

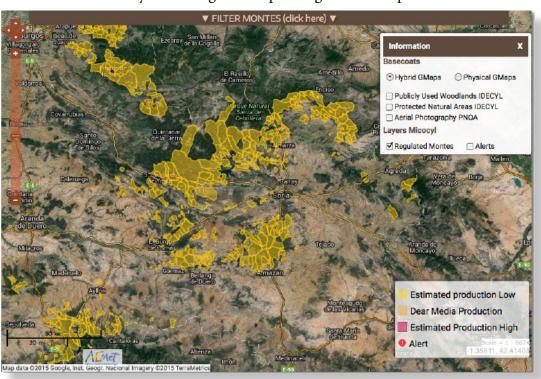
Does this seem crazy? Utopic? Or maybe dystopic? Could it happen on Vancouver Island?

Perhaps you guessed: it's real. This system is part of a movement guided by an EU initiative called the "Micosylva Forest Network", and exists in Spain, France, Switzerland and now closer to home, in Quebec. Joaquin Latorre, a representative from Micosylva, visited Victoria in November and spoke with some SVIMS

members, to explain the ideas behind the organization and to encourage a dialogue surrounding the creation of Mycoparks.

So what is Micosylva? In short, it's a publicly-funded EU government initiative. Driven by a desire to regulate forest use, encourage the protection of productive ecosystems, control profit, limit overharvesting, and stimulate research, the EU has created this umbrella group. There are many branches of Micosylva, but ultimately the goal seems to be to grow the economic viability of sustainable forest management. An important part of this is the creation of "Mycoparks" and subsequent regulation of a multi-million dollar industry.

Mycoparks exist in productive areas on both public and private lands. Permits for foraging are issued and "poachers" are fined. Park rangers even measure the size of individual mushrooms in the basket to ensure foragers are operating under best practices and not



An example of a regional map showing updated productivity measurements. Photo Credit www.micocyl.com

picking immature specimens.

Permitting helps to control how many foragers operate in a certain area - generalized maps are created showing productive regions, and are updated frequently so visitors and guides can see where certain species are growing in a given year (see image above). Permits are cheap, running at around

5 dollars per local per year for distinct regions.

What about societal mycophobia? Are tourists in this system not affected by a general fear of poisoning and possible death by misidentification? In this system, foraged mush-

rooms are "guaranteed" with a kind of branding process which shows a professional has confirmed their identity before they can be sold or processed. (One can imagine it would take a single celebrity poisoning to deflate this industry, and thus the "guaranteeing" process mitigates risk in many ways.) In addition to this, the education and foraging side of tourism is simplified, and centers on a dozen easily identified mushrooms such as chanterelles, morels, boletes - keeners

Castilla-y-Leon, a region in Spain, is a successful example of this system. Researchers estimate an industry worth 65 million euros exists under Micosylva's watch. Would it work on Vancouver Island? Does it contradict our basic "North American" desire for total freedom to harvest with minimal government intervention? Would we lose our precious, secret patches?

> On another note, in the wake of fishery collapses in BC, do British Columbians trust government legislators with the capability to assess ecosystems and manage overharvesting?

Or is there a greater goal to be considered: the analysis and protection of fungal diversity in

BC? Even today, logging permits are being issued to cut portions of our last remaining old growth coastal forests on Vancouver Island. Micosylva's protected forest parks offer a model of evolving forest management that is worth a serious look. Encouraging local businesses and entrepreneurs, growing a sustainable economy, and stimulating scientific research - these are all exciting arguments towards protecting local forests.

Could the growth of this mycological industry provide a key economic argument needed to protect biodiver-

> sity on regions of Vancouver Island, or is it an affront to libertarianism? What other forms could it take?

For more information on Mycosilva, visit www. micosylva.com or www. micocyl.com and click on the British flag icon in the top right corner.

See http://en.mycomauricie.com for the North American experiment in Mycoparks...

Lastly, please share your thoughts by emailing fungifama@gmail.com.



Micosylva logo credit www.micosylva.com

"Merca Setas" Is a local marketplace for foraged mushrooms, cooking shows, tips and identification skill-building. Photo credit www.micosylva.com



### A WORD ON THE NE EDITORS...



Photo credit Jill Robinson

**Thomas Witte** is a biology student at UVic and a restorer of Garry Oak ecosystems. He moved to Vancouver Island three years ago from the Yukon, where he spent many years jumping out of helicopters and crashing through the woods looking for gold. Tom loves wilderness conservation and is happiest working to protect biodiversity in BC.

**Euan Thomson** inhabits a serenely chaotic mind. His interest in fungibegan with underagehomebrewing but took a new direction in 2010 after a massive rainfall in Edmonton created the ideal conditions for a prolific mushroom flush. Euan works as microbiologist and chemist at Phillips Brewing and Malting Company and spends his spare time playing music, reading, sciencing, and exploring Vancouver Island, sometimes all at once.

HUGE thanks Jill for of work Fungifama and to Stanley her years generous assistance during this transition period. We are in your debt., Jill. Anyone interested in contributing to future issues can contact us at fungifama@gmail.com. We are always looking for news articles, scientific findings, original artwork, photographs, event writeups and other content. Submissions are required by February 15, April 15, July 15 and September 15.



Photo Credit Thomas Witte

One more big **THANK YOU** to the wonderful Brenda Callan for touring SVIMS members through the Pacific Forestry Centre's fascinating herbarium in December.

### 2015 NEWFOUNDLAND FORAY IN **GROS MORNE NATIONAL PARK**

e took advantage of our trip to the Newfoundland foray to spend six weeks in the Maritimes during which other highlights were Fundy National Park and the Norse Site at L'Anse aux Meadows at the tip of the Great Northern Peninsula.

The Foray in Gros Morne National Park at Killdevil Camp was over the weekend of Sept 25 to 27. The fungi club there covers all of NFL and Labrador so doesn't have

monthly meetings and the annual foray also covers off all the main annual activities. Although we arrivedFridayeveningtheclubexecutiveandexperts



had been there since Tuesday and had already collected several hundred species and some

displays were already set up. Bruce and I were excited to find several specimens behind our sleeping cabin of an unusual parasitic gilled mushroom (Asterophora parasitica) that grew on the top of a large Russula (Russula mustelina).



On the Saturday, the participants were divided into six foray teams to visit different areas in the park. We took a bagged lunch as the foray was from 9:00-3:00. The foray we chose was forested and



at a higher elevation than the others. The species were superficially similar to here but taxonomically quite distinct. A common lactarius for instance looked like a small short stem Russula except for a deep indentation on top. Safety was a priority and every one was issued an orange cap and whistle and a checklist was used not only at the beginning and end of the hike but at a midpoint as well. Each team had a guide, an identification expert, a data recorder and a check in, check along, and check out person. We really felt well looked after and all this on an island with no wolves or cougars. Also

correlated to the number of experts was the number of specimens recorded-remarkable 1575.

Of course the Ceskas were there and Oluna was established as an expert to be consulted on the other side of the continent too.



Photo credit Bruce Pendergast

Thanks to the people of Rocky Harbour and the surrounding region for the wonderful hospitality!

# MUSHROOMS, MUSHROOMS,

Article and Photographs by Thomas Witte

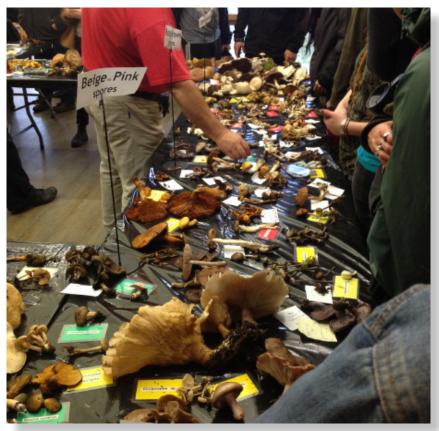
his year's mushroom showcase at Swan Lake on November 1st was by all accounts a "fruitful" event. Record numbers of enthusiastic folk showed up to see what Southern Vancouver Island forest floors are pushing up.

Outside the front doors of the nature house, visitors were warmly welcomed with a sample of freshly sauteed mushrooms, cookies and tea.

Inside, there were around 220 species identified on tables, organized by spore colour. Coloured tags were used to identify edible, inedible and poisonous species. Our society experts were kept busy all throughout the event, as the tables were loaded with fungal fanatics - to say nothing of the parking lot outside the building!

Many thanks to the organizers, the collectors, the folks at the Swan Lake Nature House, and all other volunteers who made this event memorable and part of a banner year for the club. It was a record breaking fundraiser for donations, calendars sold, and new members myceliated! There's no time like the present to be part of this society, and we look forward to another exciting event next year.







by Kem Luther

The 2015 Metchosin MycoBlitz began the evening of November 6. A large audience packed into the District Council Chambers to hear Oluna and Adolf Ceska talk about their ten years of research on Saanich's Observatory Hill.

At 9:00 am the next morning, ten invited experts and eighty guests assembled in the parking lot outside of the Metchosin District Office. Over the next three hours they would survey four key Metchosin properties and bring back 280 mushroom samples of 165 different species. Some of the samples were significant finds. In the decayed trunk of a Blinkhorn Nature Park arbutus tree, Kevin Trim found a clump of dark red *Tubaria punicea*, a mushroom that Oluna Ceska had helped to document in a mycology journal.

The search groups returned to the District Office grounds at noon. They brought their mushrooms into the Council Chambers and placed them on sorting tables. While the experts began to arrange and label the fungal finds, searchers went down the hill to Metchosin Community House, where the Metchosin Biodiversity Project had arranged a bring-your-lunch film festival. Attendees watched the film Know Your Mushrooms, which combines material from the famous Telluride Mushroom Fest with animation, archival footage, and a neo-psychedelic soundtrack by The Flaming Lips. They then viewed the "Andy and Kem Fabulous Fungal Film Fest", a collection of mushroom clips from the Internet that was premiered at a spring SVIMS event.

At 2:00 pm, MycoBlitz guests made their way back up

the hill to the Metchosin District Office to see what the experts had done with their mushrooms. They found labeled specimens laid out on tables representing the four surveyed properties. Crowds pressed around the displays to touch and smell the mushrooms they had helped to collect and to chat with the experts about what they were looking at.

At the end of the show, everyone pitched in to restore the room to its original condition. Experts drifted over to Andy and Mairi MacKinnon's house for a final supper together. Later analysis of the day's data revealed that the third MycoBlitz had added 33 species to the tally of Metchosin fungi. The 400 species of mushrooms in the database are now almost 20% of the total of 2180 species found in the five bioblitzes and three mycoblitzes, making mushrooms the largest single category of known Metchosin organisms.

A complete report of the MycoBlitz and dozens of pictures from the event can be found on the website of the Metchosin Biodiversity Project at http://metchosinbiodiversity.com.



Tubaria punicea. Photo credit Luke Mikler

### COWICHAN LAKE FORAY

OCTOBER 23-25, 2015 By andy mackinnon Photos by adolf and oluna ceska



his year's SVIMS Cowichan Lake Foray (October 23-25 2015) was terrific fun, as always. (Thanks Heather Leary, and all who helped make it such a success!) And it was sufficiently close to Hallowe'en that I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised by one particular mushroom.

On the Saturday one group forayed along the Schenstrom plot trail on the Cowichan Lake Research Station grounds. We collected many interesting mushrooms that morning, and over the course of the afternoon we put names to them on the collection tables. Well, most of them. One mushroom stubbornly resisted identification.

As so often happens, our irreplaceable mycologists Oluna and Adolf Ceska took the specimen home with them from Cowichan Lake, and Oluna continued



Cheilocystidia of H. vinosophyllum

to work on identification. Imagine my delight when Oluna eventually identified the mushroom as *Hebeloma syrjense*, one of several *Hebeloma* species commonly called "Corpse Finder". The collection is documented by the Ceskas at: http://mushroomobserver.org/observer/show\_observation/221239. David Arora ("Mushrooms Demystified") describes the genus *Hebeloma* as " ... yet another faceless and featureless collection of brownish mushrooms." Well, OK, they are among the most LBM-ish of all LBMs (little brown mushrooms). But several species are commonly collected growing on animal corpses, which is pretty cool.

Hebeloma vinosophyllum has been found growing on buried corpses of cats and dogs (Sagara 1976) and a crow (Fukiharu et al. 2000). H. syrjense has also been

documented growing on buried corpses (Carter and Tibbett 2003). The benefit for the mushrooms seems to be not so much the corpse, but the nitrogen released by the corpse's decomposition. Indeed, this group of corpse-loving mushrooms is sometimes called 'ammonia fungi', though it's not at all clear that ammonia is the form of nitrogen that these fungi are seeking.

By the time the mushroom was identified, the precise collection location was lost, so any opportunities to excavate around the mushroom, seeking a corpse, were lost. However, there's always next year! Perhaps at



H. vinosophyllum spores

the next Cowichan Foray we can look for *H. syrjense*, mark its location, and organize a corpse search party? I'd suggest midnight, with headlamps and shovels. Who's in?

Carter, D.O. and M. Tibbett. 2003. Taphonomic mycota: fungi with forensic potential. Journal of Forensic Sciences 48(1): 168-171. Fukiharu, T., G. Yokoyama and T. Oba. 2000. Occurrence of *Hebeloma vinosophyllum* on the forest ground after decomposition of crow carcass. Mycoscience 41: 401-402. Sagara, N. 1976. Presence of a buried mammalian carcass indicated by fungal fruiting bodies. Nature 262 (5571): 816.

### MYCELIAL NETWORK NEWS PRESENTS...

### <u>Macical mystery tour, 100,000,000 B.C.E.</u>

urns out fossilized amber is good for more than merely dinosaur cloning. Researchers at Oregon State University report in next month's issue of Palaeodiversity that a close relative of the notorious fungal genus Claviceps, responsible for ergotism, infected grasses 100 million years ago. This makes the psychoactive scourge a likely part of the ankylosaur's morning routine. Throughout human history, ergotism has been responsible for famines and mass psychedelia following infections of grain stores when bakers were forced to use "black rye" in their doughs.

Dr. George Poinar, Jr. and colleagues identified the fungus infecting an amber-preserved grass floret from a mine in Myanmar. A glance at the floret (above) reveals a black mass growing out of the top. On closer inspection (below), the researchers showed this mass to be a The fossilized grass floret with Paleo-



On close inspection, the fossilized mycelial structures become apparent. Adapted from Poinar et al 2015,



tangle claviceps shown by the arrow. Scale bar = of my- 1.6mm. Adapted from Poinar et al, 2015,

The structure of the mass and its presence in a grass floret suggest a relationship to the mined whether this organnamed ism,

celium.

is "some variation among the concentrations of the toxic principles among species ... [but] it is not possible to state how toxic the fossil ergot was." Dr. Poinar pointed out that observing fungal pathogens in assocation with their plant hosts, particularly intact mycelium or spores, is quite rare. In this case, the identification of the ergot was

*Paleoclaviceps* 

the research group,

produced the al-

kaloid compounds that give rise to er-

gotism. According

to Dr. Poinar, there

by

straightforward given its exquisite preservation.

This study is relevant not only to mycology but also to scientists researching the evolution of grasses; prevailing evidence has until recently suggested that grasses appeared after the dinosaurs went extinct. This study Claviceps genus, contributes to the ever-growing body of evithough it hasn't dence that dinosaurs and grasses may have coyet been deter- evolved... with a little help from their friends!

> Poinar Jr., G., Alderman, S, Wunderlich, J. 2015. One hundred million year old ergot : psychotropic pounds the Cretaceous? Paleodiversity

Figure 4.

## Common Bird's Nests of the Pacific Northwest

by lan Gibson

SPECIES	NEST	INTERIOR	EGGS	HABITAT
Crucibulum laeve	0.5-1.2 cm high, yellow- ish to cinna- mon-brown, velvety at first; short-cylindric	whitish to grayish or pale brown	attached by cord, whitish to buff	sticks, vegeta- ble matter, not soil or large logs
Nidula niveotomentosa	mostly 0.4- 0.6 cm high, white-shaggy, mug-shape	gold brown	in gelatinous matrix, no cord, mahoga- ny-brown	bracken ferns, in moss, on wood, sticks, berry canes
Nidula candida	0.5-1.5(2) cm high, brown-shaggy, flower-pot- shape	white to yellow- ish or brown	in gelatinous matrix, no cord, pale to gray or brown	wood, sticks, berry canes, herbaceous debris
Cyathus striatus	commonly 0.7- 1.0 cm high; brown-shaggy, inverted cone	wall radially pleated, brown- ish gray	attached by cord, grayish or grayish brown	sticks, wood, vegetable mat- ter, manure
Cyathus olla	1-1.5cm high; not shaggy, shape variable, mouth often flared or wavy	often trans- versely ridged, sometimes longitudinally ridged; grayish	attached by cord, pale to blackish	soil, wood
Cyathus stercoreus	0.5-1.0(1.5) cm high, brown-shaggy, mostly inverted cone-shaped but variable, rim usually cir- cular	not pleated; gray	usually at- tached by cord; black	dung or ma- nured ground

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Conrad Dietiker

Ratha Hin and Andy Cunningham

Christine and John McClarnon

Anissa Catam and Victor Blancard

Susan Wright

**Beverly Vreeswijk** 

Scott Henderson

Marilyn McNamara

David Walde

Jake Kerr

Gail Dolyn

Patty Bell

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Moralea Milne

Eric Fischer

Kirk and Leslie O'Brien

Karen Lithgow

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- Click the link at the bottom of any SVIMS email: http://lists.vifa.ca/mailman/listinfo/svims
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and enter your email address into the "unsubscribe" field

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