

Newsletter

February, 1994

Inaugural issue Vol. 1 No. 1

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The newsletter of Vancouver Island's first amateur mycological Society

SOCIETY INFORMATION

Officers:

President:	Hannah Nadel	544-1386	
Vice President:	Bruce Norris	743-5192	[messages]
Secretary:	Susan Thorn		[unlisted]
Treasurer	Gilles Patenaude	642-4566	

Directors (members-at large):

Brenda Callan	592-0380
Christin Geall	361-1882
Henrik Jacobsen	652-2386

Newsletter editor:

Richard Winder	642-7528
Lynn Solomon	360-0006

MEMBERSHIP & MEETINGS

If you would like to be member of the society, please contact Gilles Patenaude (642-4566) for payment of dues (\$15.00 Canadian per year per family, \$10.00 for seniors and students). Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. sharp on the first Thursday of every month (or thereabouts) at the Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 W. Burnside Rd., Victoria B.C.

NEWSLETTER

Published monthly, for now. Editor's address: Richard S. Winder, 5614 Woodlands Rd. R.R #1, Sooke, B.C. V0S1N0, or Lynn Solomon, 1413 Fernwood Rd., Victoria, B.C. V8V 4P6. This newsletter is formatted using "The Publisher" on an enhanced Commodore Amiga 1000 with an ALPS Allegro 24-pin dot matrix printer. Submissions are welcome in the following format: Amiga Dos files, IBM Dos ascii files, Macintosh files, Xmodem/Kermit/Ascii file transfer, E-mail (Intenet RWINDER@A1.PFC.FORESTRY.CA) or, of course, typed and sent by Snail (regular) mail).

COVER:

Fungus man. We thought a West Coast theme would be suitable for the first issue. It is a drawing of an argillite plate carved by Charles Edenshaw circa 1890, depicting the Haida myth of the origin of women. Fungus Man is paddling the canoe with Raven and another figure in the bow.

WELCOME

Welcome to the inaugural issue of our society's newsletter. Of course, neither it or the society has an official name yet, but that will soon change. Look for regular columns such as Richard's Woodlot (our version of an Editor's corner), Upcoming Events, etc., as well as timely features dealing with what may be fruiting in this season and other extra features. If you have comments, suggestions, corrections, or especially contributions and stories, you are encouraged to contribute to what will probably become Vancouver Island's premier mycological record.

RICHARD'S WOODLOT

I decided to call the editor's column Richard's Woodlot because for each issue I intend to mention the fungi that happen to be growing at my place (the south slope of Mount Brule in Sooke). While it won't necessarily be a huge or representative sample, it may help some people with their foray plans (and it will help me brush up on fungal identification).

On to this month's selection. I'll just list ephemeral forms, leaving the wood-decay fungi for a dry month. Oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) are just beginning to form on some logs I inoculated outdoors a year ago. I also found a fairly large patch of scarlet waxy caps (*Hygrocybe punicea*) growing under some cut stumps of Douglas fir. Witch's butter (*Tremella mesenterica*) is fairly easy to find, as are some l.b.m.s (little brown mushrooms) among which are some that are probably *Marasmius scorodoni* and some species of *Mycena*. I found one tiny little mushroom that looks like it is probably a species of *Collybia*.

If you have reports from your own place, be sure to forward them to me for inclusion in this column. Any other suggestions, comments, or contributions regarding this newsletter are welcome. I'm just getting my computer system organized to the point of being able to handle this letter, so please bear with the technical difficulties. Here's hoping that we have a successful society and a good mushrooming season ahead of us.

-RSW

SOCIETY HIGHLIGHTS

The last general meeting was held on Feb. 3, during which the society set the wheels of organization into motion and elected officers. Paul Kroeger, from the Vancouver Mycological Society, gave an excellent presentation on what it's like to be involved with a mycological society. One point to stress for the next meeting on March 3 at the Pacific Forestry Centre: **ATTENDEES MUST ARRIVE AT 7:00 P.M. SHARP** in order to be checked in by the security guard (it is **IMPERATIVE** that visitors leave the building by 10:00 p.m.).

The executive committee met on a very windy 16th of February at Brenda Callan's house. A number of issues were discussed, including: a mailing address for the society (it was decided to check into the possibility of using the B.C. Royal Museum for this), Society setup legal fees (it was decided to search for volunteer legal expertise to assist us in forming the society- if you have any, or know of anyone who could volunteer, please let us know), preparation of the constitution (President Nadel will draft a constitution during the next month, to be voted on by the membership), and Coffee, Tea, and Cookies (we are asking that a few attendees of the next meeting bring some cookies, munchies, etc. for the end of the meeting).

WORKSHOP

At the executive meeting, it was proposed that the April meeting could be in the form of a beginner's workshop, where a few members could volunteer to prepare a 5 minute presentation on selected topics. Some of the topics that were suggested included: What is a fungus? What is a spore print? What is the anatomy of a mushroom? A year in the life of a basidiomycete... How do I tell an edible mushroom from a poison one? What is symbiosis? How do I pick mushrooms? What do I do about a case of mushroom poisoning? We need volunteers to make this work, so start planning...

MOREL MORSELS

Soon, it will be the time of year when people turn their thoughts to... Morel hunting! In case you've been thinking about hunting morels (fungi which are classified in the discomycetes and also known as sponge mushrooms), I thought I would include these tidbits.

If you are going to go morel hunting, I highly recommend the book "A Morel Hunter's Companion: A Guide to the True and False Morels of Michigan" by Nancy Smith Weber (TwoPeninsula Press, Lansing, Michigan). It contains everything you could possibly want to know about sponge mushrooms, their history, their cultivation, their taxonomy, and, yes, recipes for eating them.

I've heard lots of stories regarding where to hunt for morels. Some people look for them in old apple orchards, near swamp edges, old fire sites, or anywhere that limestone is plentiful. Gilles Patenaude says that they were quite plentiful near elms dying from Dutch elm disease. One of the most unusual stories I've heard regarding morels on the Island comes from a zoologist who reported a fabulous, dense, profusion of them growing on an old, moss-covered midden (middens are areas where natives discarded heaps of oyster and clam shells). If anyone would like to see information concerning artificial morel cultivation, please see me, because I have some of it. - RSW

QUOTES

"Old mycologists never die- they just slowly rot away..." -anon.

"[*Hygrocybe flavescens*] would make a colorful and novel addition to a salad."

-unknown author

"So would a banana slug."

-David Arora

LITERATURE

The February issue of Smithsonian has an article on Oregon's wild field mushrooms.

Brenda Callan also advises that there may be a new report out soon concerning the economics of wild mushroom hunting in the state of Washington.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 3

Society General meeting

NOTE TIME CHANGE

7:00 P.M. SHARP at the Pacific Forestry Centre 506 W. Burnside, Victoria. Featured speaker Scott Redhead, Agriculture Canada's foremost agaricologist, will speak about his research on West Coast fungi.

March 20

Equinox foray for bluets and morels in the Lake Cowichan area. Please contact Bruce Norris for further details.

April general meeting

Beginner's workshop

Weekend of April 9-10

A Spring discomycete hike is being organized to take place in Thetis Park. Those who are keen to learn their morels and Verpas should contact Brenda Callan.

MEMBERSHIP

There are about 90 members and prospective members of the society. Once the list of members has solidified (and once the editor gets some much-needed sleep), a full list of names will be published. For the curious, the following areas are represented: Mill Bay (2), Ganges (2), Victoria (59), Brentwood Bay (4), Duncan (1), Shawnigan Lake (1), Sidney (5), Clearwater (1), Cobble Hill (2), Saanichton (4), Pender Island (1), Vancouver (1), Sooke (4), Metchosin (1), and Lake Cowichan (1). It appears as if we are off to a flying start. See you all on the third. -RSW

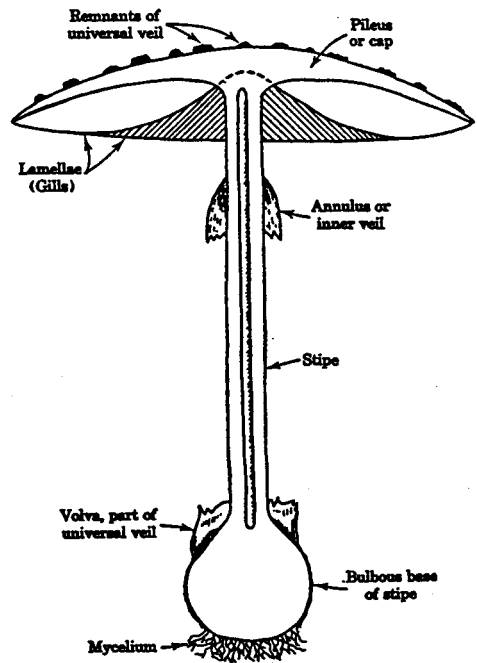


FIG. 128. Structural features of a mature fruit body of *Amanita*, in diagram.