



OMPHALINA

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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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COVER

*Lactarius "detririmus", Sep. 28, 2011, Stuckless Pond Trail, Gros Morne National Park; photo: Maria Voitk. **Lactarius detririmus** is a European species that probably does not exist in North America at all. Neither does **Lactarius deliciosus**. At all. The species on the cover is one of a complex in North America that has operated under the name **Lactarius "detririmus"**, and is awaiting new description and a new name.*

For us in Newfoundland and Labrador life is simple: our orange-milk mushroom either turns green or not. If not, it is *Lactarius thyinos*. If it does, it is this species (?complex), for now *L. "detririmus"*, awaiting a new identity. See lead article for details.

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Message from the Editor

August is here, and in the words of Catherine Thayer in the New York Times, July 7, 1901,

With the advent of August comes the season of those edible fungi which are dear to the hearts of epicures. Almost every meadow, and certainly every open wood, is bearing a harvest of gaily tinted mushrooms, which for the most part fall victims to slugs and maggots.

The lead article is our big news—a first attempt to sort out the species complexes in *Lactarius*, section *Deliciosi* (the orange milk lactariuses) in North America. As you see, it has been a long time in preparation. Jorinde Nuytinck was here in 2007, and we are only at the stage of a preliminary report! Sorting out these various taxa across the continent and determining their interrelationship is a long and, at times, confusing process. It is a little frustrating for us to know that we have no correct name for our commonest orange-milk *Lactarius*. The name *Lactarius* “deterimus” is “wrong” in the sense that it applies to a European species probably not found in North America. When we did not know this, it was fine to use the name, but now that we know it, it does not feel good. And with it, its scattered close relatives also remain nameless for a while. Hang in there! They will be sorted out in time, described and named.

As you can see from the lead articles in this issue and the last, there is no risk of unemployment for those choosing the large genus *Lactarius* as their row to hoe. The happy news is that in fact there is an endless supply of work all around, if you are a mycologist. More the pity that there are not an equal number of funded jobs to enable curious minds to get some of this work done.

This issue comes to you on the International Go Topless Day. No doubt very important in some

circles, one has to wonder at the relevance, from one’s mushroom vantage point. However, by all means, happy Go Topless Day to you all!

Inside you will see that the answer to the previously announced competition has now been made public. Just in time, Henry Mann comes back from a Wildflower Society trip in Nova Scotia and sends in this picture for identification. Rather than give him the obvious answer, we thought we should open it up to the readership. For an idea of size, yes, that is the treadmark of a heelprint in the mud, only partly shown on the photo. And yes, the same heel also trampled the mushroom before the picture was taken. According to Henry, it was not his heel. Competition ends Sep 14. Answer next issue.

Happy mushrooming!
andrus



FORAY MATTERS...

SPACE As opposed to the last few years, there are still some spaces left in this year's foray. If you have wondered about registering, go right ahead. As things stand now, you will not be left on a waiting list and we shall be glad to have your company. See the back cover for dates and beginning time, and use the form found on our website <nlmushrooms.ca>.

BLITZ For those able to get away early on Friday to join us, please see the back cover about the mycoblight of Lockston Path Provincial Park. A map of the location is also on the back page. Also note the dramatic park building picture at the height of Hurricane Igor's fury, taken by Lewis Best. Despite the writing overlying the picture, you can appreciate the furor of nature, with waves lapping the Administration Buildings of Lockston Path Provincial Park. To put it into perspective, those waves are from a very small inland pond, not a lake or the ocean!

...ooo...

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will take place 2:00 PM, Sun Sep 30, 2012, at the Terra Nova Hospitality Home. An Agenda and Last year's Minutes will be in your Foray Program. We are proposing some changes (additions) to our By-Laws, to allow the Board to function a bit better. These will be listed in the Program as well. You can find our current By-Laws on our website under "About us", for comparison — we shall not publish the whole By-Laws in the Program.

Also under the By-Laws link on our website is our Policies and Procedures Manual. We have also made

some changes to it. The review and updating of this are Board functions, and do not require Membership approval. However, if you are interested, you can read it: input from any Member is highly welcomed by the Board.

...ooo...

As you see below, the chanterelles for consumption at the foray have been picked. The *Amanita* at the top was left behind, along with several such small orange amanitas dispersed among the orange chanterelles.



Preliminary report on *Lactarius* species in section *Deliciosi* in Newfoundland and Labrador

Jorinde Nuytinck, Mieke Verbeken, Andrus Voitk

Many North American mushrooms bear the names of European Doppelgänger, but we are beginning to find out that not all are conspecific with those European namesakes. An example is a group of colourful *Lactarius* species, mostly with orange latex that make up the section *Deliciosi* in *Lactarius*. Many North American mushroom guides describe one or both of *Lactarius deliciosus* (L: Fr) Gray and *Lactarius deterrimus* Gröger (the latter either as a separate species or a variety of the first). In 2006 Nuytinck and coworkers reviewed 13 North American species of *Lactarius* sect. *Deliciosi*

and concluded that none of these is found in Europe.¹ Morphology and molecular sequencing confirmed that the two European species, *Lactarius deliciosus*, and *L. deterrimus* are not native to North America. Since Foray Newfoundland & Labrador (FNL) began its annual mushroom forays in 2003, both *Lactarius deliciosus* and *L. deterrimus* were identified up to 2005. After the monograph by Nuytinck et al. in 2006, the approach was reviewed. As a result, *Lactarius thyinos* was regularly identified, and all other collections of sect. *Deliciosi* were labeled *Lactarius* “deterrimus” to indicate that

they come from one or more undescribed species in the “North American *L. deterrimus* complex” (NALDECO).

Curious to define the NALDECO species that fruit in Newfoundland and Labrador, FNL invited Jorinde Nuytinck to the 2007 foray. Since then FNL has supplied Nuytinck’s laboratory with specimens for study. The analyses are not complete, but very slowly a picture is beginning to emerge. We thought that a preliminary report of the current status, even if incomplete, would be of interest to mycophiles in Newfoundland and Labrador.



***Lactarius thyinos*.** **A:** Zonate cap with removable whitish “hairs”, at times pitted (right). **B:** Variation of stem scrobiculation, decreasing from copious (left) to asrobiculate (right). Note typical ochre-orange colour and presence of mucus. Cut surface turns from orange to red, then brown. Never stains green. **C:** A collection of *L. thyinos* found in a pure birch forest. Usually a balsam fir associate in moist alluvial areas of relatively rich soil, often close to bodies of water.

Methods

50 collections from 2004-2010 were examined from three sources: voucher collection in the Foray Newfoundland & Labrador Fungarium, the personal collection of one of the authors (AV), and collections made by the lead author (JM) during her visit. Macroscopic and microscopic examination was augmented by DNA analysis of the ITS region for 35 collections.

Results

19 collections were identified genetically as *L. thynos*. Although there was some variation in the field identification before 2006, all were correctly identified thereafter. The species was commoner toward the southern part of the Island, and has not been collected from Labrador. Genetically it forms a monophyletic cluster with very little intraspecific variation.

16 collections were lumped under the umbrella of *Lactarius* "deterrimus". The main difference between *L. thynos* and the NALDECO species is that the latter all stain green or green-blue, both naturally and after injury.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the 16 collections may represent several genetic NALDECO "species". Using one gene only (ITS) does not permit accurate species delimitation, so that we are unable state their exact number or relationship until other gene analyses are added. In some cases the observed genetic groupings seem to correspond very roughly to morphologic difference in size, cap colour and the degree of blue in the staining reaction. Unaware that there might be such diversity, we did not photograph or make detailed descriptions of each collection, thinking that all or most were the same species.

Discussion

Essentially, the NALDECO species resemble a musical Tema con variazioni: the theme a green-staining orange



NALDECO 1, Tema: Virtually azonate cap, light orange with variable amount of green staining. Ascrobiculate, orange, dry stem. Colour change from orange, to red to green 1, 30 and 120 minutes.



NALDECO 2, var. 1: A variation collected from western and central Newfoundland, in more moist and rich soil. Reddish brown cap, quite obviously zonate, with some scaly pitting like the scrobiculations found on the stem of *L. thynos*.



NALDECO 3, var. 2. Cap 0.8-2.6cm diameter, azonate, dry, usually with small nipple, light straw coloured. Stain colour greenish blue. Known from a relatively exposed sandbank on the west coast. Early genetic results place this tiny mushroom close to the robust *L. chelidonium*, found elsewhere on continental North America.



NALDECO 4, var. 3: Large strawcoloured, azonate cap, greenish blue stain. Orange gills turn brown with age, exposure. From hyperoceanic barrens on west coast.



NALDECO 5, var 4: orange azonate cap, yellow gills, orange ascrobiculate stem, greenish blue staining. From central Labrador.

species, surrounded by several variations. All but one are about the same stature as *L. thyinos*, not glutenous, with an azonate cap and ascrobiculate stem, show green or blue staining, and turn from orange to red, then green or blue after injury. They grow in coniferous woods, often with spruce, in dryer, poorer soil. NALDECO 1 states the theme. This relatively common morphologic presentation may or may not encompass some cryptic genetic species with the same or very similar macroscopic characteristics. Subsequent illustrations present morphologic variations that seem to have some ITS genetic support as distinct from other NALDECO “species”.

Both the term NALDECO, and the numbers

assigned these examples are terms of convenience, not valid taxonomic concepts. Investigation of these Newfoundland and Labrador taxa began before 2007. It seems that even in our small region, with relatively little biodiversity, there is the possibility of several different species in this section. This suggests that the section is probably still undergoing active genetic change. The complexity of delimiting the entities and tracing their relationships becomes even more daunting, when trying to fit them to similar data across continental North America—a work that is going on simultaneously.

This review shows the direct application of scientific investigation to local practice. Unaware of the world distribution of the species in sect. *Deliciosi*, FNL was content to apply names from available texts to its finds. When a study appeared pointing out this as erroneous, a change took place in FNL’s identification and taxonomic practice. We are anxious to learn further developments.

Summary

1. We can identify *L. thyinos*, a common species here, with confidence.
2. For the time being we are forced to refer to all other species in sect. *Deliciosi* as either *Lactarius “deterimus”* or NALDECO species. We have evidence that there are several species within this complex, and are working on delimiting them.
3. The European taxon *Lactarius deliciosus* does not exist in Newfoundland and Labrador (or elsewhere in North America); the same is probably true for the European *L. deterimus*.

References

1. Nuytink J, Miller SL, Verbeken A: A taxonomical treatment of the North and Central American species in *Lactarius* sect. *Deliciosi*. *Mycotaxon*, 96: 261-307. 2006.



The Bishop's Sketchbook



COMPETITION SOLVED: *Rhytisma salicinum*

Andrus Voitk



In our April issue we announced a competition with the above picture. Since a prize was recklessly offered, our Treasurer noted with pleasure that there were no entries up to the deadline. That said, please let the record show that we bent over backwards to allow some lucky member to walk away with a coveted chanterelle T-shirt.

First of all, the title instructed the reader to “identify the **FUNGUS** in the picture”. Please note the use of bold print capitals to show that we asked for the fungus, not the mushroom. Thus you were at liberty to ignore the *Inocybe* from the *dulcamara* complex. That is good, because a microscope would be needed to narrow the *Inocybe* to species. In fact, you now had at least three choices: The obvious *Inocybe*, the *Cladina*

lichen species in the middle of the picture. And the black things on the leaves at the top, indicated by the yellow circles. As if that were not enough, we also left a huge set of clues in the instructions. The language was so stilted that surely the reader must have wondered whether it was trying to say something else:

“The aim is to ensure that even the most **sallow** of amateurs will have a **smooth** path for his or her efforts to **bear beautiful fruit**. Efforts to **tar** the judge by disgruntled competitors will result in disqualification of their entries on the **spot**.”

If you guess that by “fungus” we meant those black spots, now circled in yellow, you are right. Yes, that is **WILLOW TAR SPOT FUNGUS!** It is printed in red now so that you can readily see that both words, tar and spot, also appeared in the instructions.

If the obvious is too brutal, perhaps a more subtle clue? The colour coded word **sallow** is odd in the context, more awkward than is the norm even for this author. But **sallow** means willow, and specifically the kind of willow parasitized by **WILLOW TAR SPOT FUNGUS.**

Now, you may not recognize the leaves as a willow. Conveniently a catkin is evident in the top of the picture (blue circle). Not only does that tell you this is a willow, subject to attack by **WILLOW TAR SPOT FUNGUS,** but to John Maunder it was enough to identify the willow as *Salix glauca* Linnaeus var. *callicarpaea* (Trautvetter) Böcher. Is that enough of a clue? Well, it was to John, who added to his identification, “Is that ‘Tar Spot Fungus’ on the leaves?”

OK, so you do not relate to pictures and English is not your strong suit: you prefer the classical tongues. Fine. The scientific name for **WILLOW TAR SPOT FUNGUS** is *Rhytisma salicinum*. Salicinum means of willow, a give away: right away you are handed willow. Find the other colour coded words in the instructions. Rhytisma means wrinkled and the opposite of wrinkled is **smooth**, which is also the meaning of the specific epithet of the willow, glauca. *Callicarpaea* means **beautiful fruit**. All these terms were carefully worked into the instructions only to help your focus on the tree, see the black spots, identify the fungus and win the coveted T-shirt.

You were also asked to provide a short story about this fungus. Something like this:

Rhytisma salicinum is an ascomycete, specific to some willows, especially the group called sallows. It is not systemic, but infects the leaves only. A smart parasite, it does not do major damage to the host tree, and its major impact is cosmetic: marring ornamental trees. The organism feeds from the leaves, drops with them in the fall, and wakes up in the spring to make apothecia producing more spores to be carried up to new willow leaves. Thus, a way to eradicate or reduce the infection is to rake up and burn all dead leaves in the fall, year after year. Do not make the mistake of putting them in the compost. Composting temperatures do not get high enough to kill the spores, so if you want to

get rid of the self-generating infection, burn the old leaves and keep them raked up.

There are many similar organisms, the most familiar being maple tar spot, *Rhytisma acerinum*, particularly affecting introduced decorative Norway maple in our area. Willow tar spot is quite sensitive to pollution, but maple tar spot is not that fussy, and will grow even in as big a polluted metropolis as our Sin City.

If you recognize weird fungi, understand the way they work and know their life cycles, you can control them in those ornamental trees you do not want marred with their presence, while delighting in their diversity elsewhere in nature.



Current appearance of *Rhytisma salicinum* on *Salix discolor* (pussy willow), collected by the Main River Aug 7, 2012. Later the lesions become thicker, blacker, and shinier.

Fungal homewreckers & vandals

Andrus Voitk

Another look at behavioural classification. What if we created a larger group, **Cadastroclastes** (property destroyers from the Greek cadaster, property, and clast, break), which we subdivide into **Oikoclastes** (homewreckers from oikos, home) and **Vandales** (vandals)?

Fit your own ideas to the schema, write a short story about them, add a picture, and submit it. Maybe we can even scrounge up a prize or two, in addition to instant fame via publishing. For an idea, turn the page to see how this author fared with the same assignment.

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OIKOCLASTES

- **Peziza domiciliana**
- **Serpula lacrymans**
- Your # 1
- Your # 2
- Your # 3
- Your # 4

VANDALES

- **Agaricus bitorquis**
- **Coprinus comatus**
- Your # 1
- Your # 2
- Your # 3
- Your # 4

NB! THIS IS NOT A "REAL" CLASSIFICATION, BUT A HALF-WHIMSICAL EXAMPLE OF HOW ONE MIGHT CLASSIFY FUNGI BY BEHAVIOUR. REMEMBER, BEHAVIOUR DOES NOT RESPECT LINEAGE OR LOOKS, SO THIS APPROACH LUMPS SOME STRANGE BEDFELLOWS FROM THE TRADITIONAL POINT OF VIEW. THAT SAID, LOOKING AT ORGANISMS BY BEHAVIOUR GIVES SOME INSIGHTS NOT EVIDENT FROM OTHER RANKINGS.

As we have seen, fungi can be classified many ways, not only “the scientific” way. Classification serves us, so whatever helps us understand them, is a legitimate choice. For example, we may consider classifying a group as homewreckers such as *Serpula lacrymans* [OMPHALINA 2(9):13-15] and *Peziza domiciliana*. It may seem strange to lump an ascomycete with a basidiomycete, but if classification helps us understand our world, lumping by (destructive) behaviour can be surprisingly useful. It brings together two fungi that thrive in our artificial domestic environment, require organic material, moisture or a leak to get started, and share common humidity, temperature and calcium requirements. If we understand the needs of one, we understand the needs

of the other; understanding their needs gives us the ability to control them.

Peziza domiciliana (loose translation: household pancake mushroom) may seem sedate, but google it on the Internet—you will find it gleefully digesting carpets in houses, trucks and cars, on plaster in basements and toilets, and in many other amazing circumstances.

Knowing its needs, we could grow it, were it a choice edible. Alternately, if we wish to eradicate it or even prevent its occurrence in our home, all we need to do is to eliminate the conditions in which it thrives.

We accept destructive behaviour from mushrooms because one of their main functions is to decompose



Peziza domiciliana happily growing in a corner by our shower at our Annual Foray in 2009. Initially it was so round, smooth and symmetrical, and felt so rubbery that this author thought it was some new synthetic device used as a temporary plug for a leak!!! It gave the game away by growing and becoming wavy as the foray progressed, something even this author knows synthetic patches avoid doing.

organic matter. Vandalism implies wanton destruction, i.e. random, without obvious benefit to the perpetrator, carried out through the use of brute force, not the subtle sprinkling of enzymes of mass digestion (EOMD).

Famous for bursting through city roads, driveways, parking lots and tennis courts is *Agaricus bitorquis*, a relative of the common supermarket button mushroom, *Agaricus bisporus*. *A. bitorquis* is a fleshy, squat, medium-sized darkspored mushroom with a stubby stem and free gills. Its telltale feature is a double ring, although most of the time this is not obvious. Its heartbreaking habit of breaking through hard surfaces identifies it. This veteran self-mutilator also cracks its cap with changing weather.

The other mushroom known to break pavement, albeit not as often, is *Coprinus comatus*, commonly known as shaggy mane. It is a tall lawn mushroom with a fragile stem and cylindrical shaggy cap [OMPHALINA 2(5):7-9]. As opposed to *A. bitorquis*, who may act alone, *C. comatus* takes a cladistic approach and does its damage in very large gangs. This mushroom is also a self-mutilator: after sporulation, it autodigests into a black goopy mess.

It is interesting to note that classification by acts of vandalism is reasonably successful for these two mushrooms. Both are white, have a ring and black spores, and are known as good edibles. Both also grow in urban areas and concentrate toxins. If you regularly collect them from the city to eat, they can quietly poison you over time, thus adding a little pernicious murder to their list of antisocial behaviour. Whereas the brutality of their vandalism is overt, their seditious poisoning is so covert that nobody will suspect them.



Headstrong *Agaricus bitorquis* breaking up the pavement of the Queen's Highway 431 in Newfoundland. Appearance of a resulting splitting headache is probably related more to alternating rain and heat than compensable work-related injury.

As a mushroom grows, its tissues are moist and expnsile, giving way to the required stretching. If this is followed by a dry period, growth stops. The skin of the cap dries out and becomes fixed in size. Should moisture return, the mushroom will grow and swell again. The fixed skin is no longer able to expand. When the pressure of growth becomes sufficient, it splits the skin, allowing for more expansion. This leaves the cracks seen in the mushrooms on the picture.



A troop of 157 helmeted *Coprinus comatus* share the heady experience of butting in unison through the pavement of the Newfoundland Power Corporation parking lot in St. Anthony. Photo: Aaron Beswick, *The Northern Pen*.

Cortinarius semisanguineus

Whenever I walk a forest trail in late summer or early fall, I invariably find *Cortinarius* species (corts). With over 2,000 species and counting, *Cortinarius* is considered the largest genus of mushrooms in the world. Foray NL's cumulative species list includes about 130 corts, more species than any other genus represented in the province.

Identifying mushrooms as corts isn't too difficult. Look for a web-like veil covering young gills or veil remnants along the cap rim and stem of more mature specimens. A hand lens helps when looking for marginal cortina. If there is any doubt about it being a cort, collect one and look for the telltale cinnamon-brown spore print. Identifying corts to species is often much more difficult. Even expert mycologists have been seen scratching their heads and tossing unidentified corts aside. There are, however, some *Cortinarius* species that have distinguishing features that make identification easy, even for an amateur. We have already discussed *Cortinarius armillatus*, one of my favourite mushrooms (OMPHALINA, Vol 2, Issue #1). Another favourite is *Cortinarius semisanguineus*. Looking at the gills is always surprising and a reminder of the importance of gill colour and attachment in identifying mushrooms.

Cortinarius semisanguineus (Fries) Gillet (1874),

is currently placed in the subgenus *Dermocybe* along with other corts that have brilliant colours (especially of the gills), non-hygrophanous dry cap, and dry cylindrical (non-bulbous) stem. It is usually mycorrhizal with conifers, but can be found with birch. Typically *C. semisanguineus* grows in groups or scattered on moss-covered coniferous or mixed forest floors anytime from late summer to October.

Cortinarius semisanguineus has a yellowish to cinnamon brown cap. Convex in young mushrooms, with age the cap becomes broadly convex, flat, or broadly bell-shaped, often retaining a darker or reddish tinged sharp central bump while sometimes becoming lighter along the margins. The cap is dry and often covered by tiny matted fibrils. *C. semisanguineus* has a yellowish cortina that covers its young gills. The mushroom is distinguished from other corts by its nearly blood red gill colour—hence

Cortinarius semisanguineus. Photo: Pieter van Heerdon



Cortinarius semisanguineus





Cortinarius semisanguineus



Cortinarius sanguineus. Photo: Roger Smith



Cortinarius sanguineus. Photo: Roger Smith

the specific epithet *semisanguineus* and the common name, the half-blooded cort. The stem is typically 5-10 cm long and 1.5 cm thick, equal and silky. It is usually pale yellowish often turning reddish and darker toward the base. A rusty ring zone, remnants of the cortina, may be present or completely absent. An overmature *C. semisanguineus* loses its reddish gill colour and the cap tends to flatten, curl upward along the margins and split, giving it a much different appearance from the more youthful stage. Like most corts, it is not considered edible.

C. semisanguineus is not the only red-gilled cort: *C. sanguineus* also has red gills, but as the name suggests, it is blood-red throughout, cap, gills, flesh and stem.

Because it is so common, *C. semisanguineus*, along with some related *Dermocybe* species, is a favourite mushroom of dyers. It produces a range of reddish to muted brown earthen tones, depending on the freshness of the mushroom when picked.

When you are out on a woodland trail this fall, you are likely to encounter a variety of corts. Take the time to look at their gills. You might be in for a real surprise.

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FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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Headquarters: *Terra Nova Hospitality Home*

September 28-30, 2012

Registration begins at 4:00 PM. Before then Registrars are at the Lockston Path Mycoblitz, so be patient, if you arrive aearly!

NB: FOR THOSE ABLE TO MAKE IT, THE FORAY STARTS WITH A MYCOBLITZ of LOCKSTON PATH PROVINCIAL PARK SEE MAP, BELOW. DEPART'S ADMINISTRATION BLDG (UPPER PICTURE) 12:00 NOON, SHARP, FRI, SEP 28, 2012.

That was not the mighty ocean, but a small inland pond whipped up by Hurricane Igor. So, if there's a hurricane, bring boots. For inside.

BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH, AS THERE IS NO STORE NEARBY. IF YOU CAN'T MAKE IT, SEE YOU AT THE TN HOSPITALITY HOME FOR THE RECEPTION!



For more information, Registration Forms &c, see our website:

www.nlmushrooms.ca