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AND LABRADOR

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FORAY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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

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COVER

Inonotus obliquus, near Barry's Lookout, behind Humber Village, January 14, 2015. In the mushroom world being beautiful is not the only way to become a cover girl. Being uncommon works just as well.

As for beauty, it is in the eye of the beholder, and rash judgments about its lack often belie a lack of imagination. Picture the recurrent poremouth design woven into an attractive large carpet, made of silk dyed with mushrooms. What a gorgeous warm delight for the eye! And soft and equally warm for the foot. See p. 7.

See the lead article for more photos of the rarely seen fruiting body of this common conk.

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Message from the Editor

All the best to you on this vernal equinox. The forces of sun, warmth and light are again in ascendancy. If we get a cool spring, as predicted, the unprecedented amounts of snow around here will melt slowly, releasing constant moisture into the soil, making good conditions for mycelial growth and development in the next three months. This might contribute to plentiful fruiting in the autumn. It would also give vascular plants, particularly trees, shrubs and other perennials, good conditions to recover from winter's ravages, heal wounds of frost and wind damage, grow new shoots and copious leaves, to get energy for their main task: to blossom and make seeds. Energy left over can be directed to their mycorrhizal partners for a bumper mushroom crop.

With the new season comes the new foray. Mark the dates from the back cover and get ready. Next issue should have notices, announcements, details and registration forms.

This issue is a bit of a delight, because a 15 year search for the elusive *Inonotus obliquus* fruit body finally came to an end on a fine January day, allowing us to grace the cover with our trophy. The lead article lays it all out.

On page 17 of this issue you will also find a new feature, Poet's Corner. Michel Savard, a new member, mycophile and Governor-General's award winning poet, has agreed to provide us with photos of mushrooms that inspired him to poetry, as well as the words they evoked. Michel

invites others to submit mushroom poetry as well, and is quite willing to share this Corner with all kindred spirits. Please mail your entries to the editor.

Plus many other nice and interesting things.

See you at the Foray!

andrus

Fabulous fruit of famous chaga finally found

Andrus Voitk, Maria Voitk,
Renée Lebeuf, Sir Leif Ryvarden

When he planned his issue on chaga (FUNGI vol 5, no 3, 2012), Britt Bunyard, editor of FUNGI, turned to AV for some photos of the fruiting body of *Inonotus obliquus*. Sadly, AV did not have any. If you read that issue of FUNGI, you would know that these are very rarely encountered. Scouring the world, Britt eventually located three photographers with photos of the fruit body: Tuomo Niemelä from Finland, and Andrei Smirnov and Vladimir Bryokhova from Russia, as well as one photo of spores of North American *I. obliquus* by Vladimir Gubenko. Britt's exuberance spilled onto the editorial page, where he declared, "You won't likely see images of the sexual phase of this fungus anywhere else. And that includes academic journals." Well, now we can add [OMPAHLINA](#) to the small number of publications, academic or not, where colour images of this rarity can be seen. After 15 years of looking for it, we were lucky to stumble upon an intact specimen in the middle of January!

As many things in life, the fun is in the journey, not the arrival. After all the hype, the fruit body was as undramatic as can be. The fruit bodies disappear quickly, reputedly eaten by insects. Possibly because this one fruited very late in the season, when cold weather slowed down any nasty insect, the specimen was very well preserved—frozen, in the middle of January.



Typically, *Inonotus obliquus* fruits on a dead but still standing birch after a successful life as a parasite consuming most of that tree. The fruiting body, quite different from the chaga conks, forms under the bark, and as it becomes thicker, characteristically splits the bark, exposing the poremouths. Although that might argue for wind spread of spores, the mechanics seem so inefficient that another explanation should be sought. Reputedly the fruiting body is seen so seldom because it is quickly consumed by invertebrates. Splitting the bark gives them ready access, and it may be these insects that become the sated and satisfied vectors for spore spread.

We certainly did not expect to encounter this fruiting body in January, and most certainly not in such a small birch as the one with split skin in the middle of the photo. But there it was.

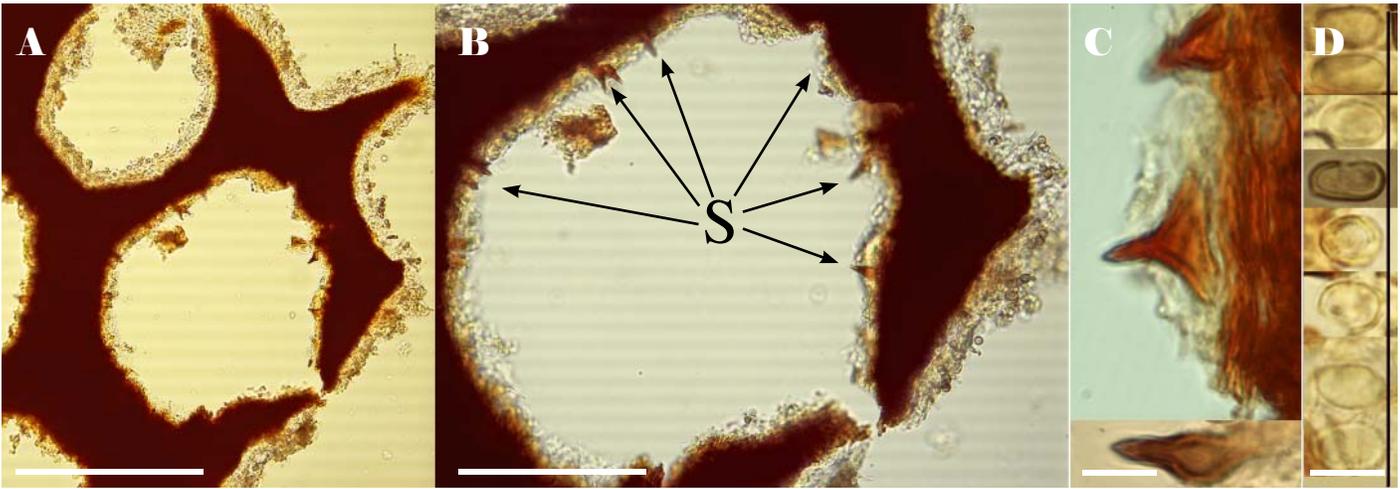


Split bark, partly removed, upper left, and totally below, to show the fruit body. This one measured about 18 × 60 cm and was 2–6 mm thick. It is easy to imagine development of pressure that eventually splits the bark of the dead tree. Pores round to angular, beveled, about 4–5 per mm, tubes 4–5 mm deep. Poremouths yellowish brown, contrasting with the deeper brown of the exposed insides. See cover and next page for detail of the thickness, tube length and pore shape. Also note plentiful frass on cover photo, proving insects were there before the frost set in. In these tubes the spores are formed.



The famous conk, above, known as chaga, is quite different. It is a sterile (no tubes or spores) sclerotium. In most situations sclerotia are used to store food for times of need. This may be so here as well. When the organism sets up home in a new birch, it finds plenty of food, and stores some in nodules along its hyphae. Some of these clump together and burst through weaknesses in the bark to become the conks, sought after by that small segment of the population chasing everlasting life. It follows that most of the reputed goodness in chaga is what the fungus has concentrated from the birch, not the fungus itself. As the tree is consumed by its fungal visitor, the latter runs out of food, and often you see the conks slowly wane, presumably absorbed to feed the aging and enlarging fungus, getting ready to think of fruiting. Absorbed conks leave scars that often become sites of secondary invasion, especially by species of *Phellinus*.





Above: Microscopic characters.

A. Cross section of tubes.
Bar=200 μ m

B. One tube cross section enlarged. Note the setae (S) projecting into the tube. Their function is not known. The hymenium (fertile or spore-producing layer) is essentially disintegrated, with no clear cellular elements seen, except for the setae. The basidia seem to have disintegrated and “real” spores are few—possibly due to earlier insect activity; most came from various invaders. Bar=100 μ m

C. Some setae, enlarged.

Bar=10 μ m

D. Spores: hyaline (transparent) to light yellow 9.2–10.6 \times 5.3–6.7 μ m; Q=1.6. Bar=10 μ m

Below:

A. Probable old chaga scar, secondarily invaded by a species of *Phellinus*.

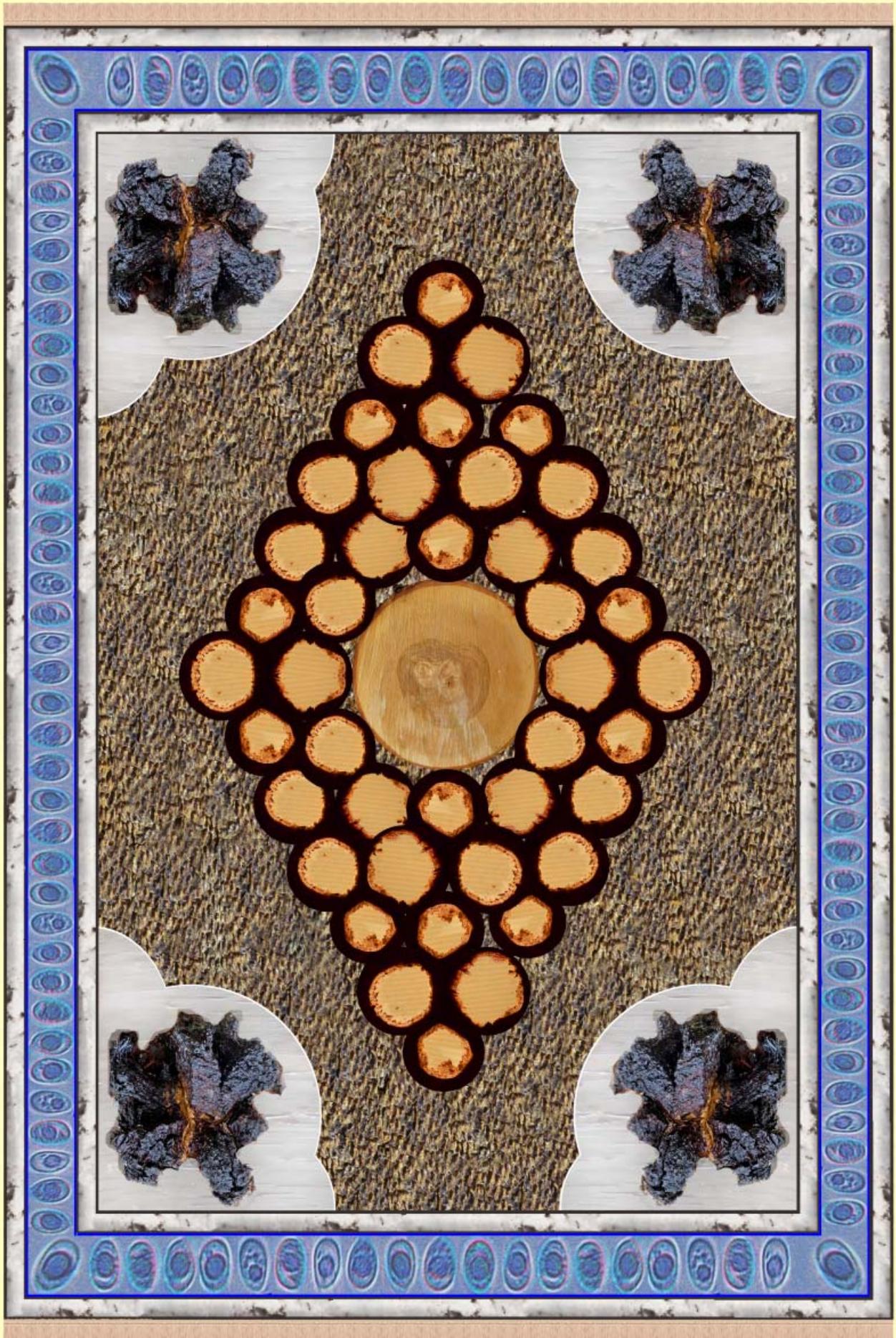
B. Superficially the fruiting body may be confused with the pyrenomycete *Diatrype stigma*, which also grows on decorticate birch and may seem to split the bark.

C. Closer examination reveals that this black, hard crust does

not have pores, but multiple perithecial ostioles, typical of these Ascomycetes.

Next page: Classical Qum silk carpet design based on *Inonotus obliquus*. Inner and outer secondary (white) frame: birch trunks. Primary (blue) frame: spores. Field: poremouths of the fruiting body. Corner blocks: sterile conk on birch bark background. Medallion: pore cross sections surrounding cross section of a birch trunk. Size: 4 x 5.8 m. Price: €36,000.00, contact editor. Oh, that’s for the design. The carpet is extra.





SUILLUS SIBIRICUS



Christiane Corbeil

Photo: Andrus Voitk

English abstract

Suillus sibiricus, is known the world over, Asia, Europe and western North America, as an associate of 5-needle pine; only in eastern North America is it regarded as a partner of *Larix*. It has not been recorded in NL before, yet at the 2014 foray it was a relatively common find. The viscid cap may reach 100 mm, is usually yellowish turning to ochraceous when it expands and often developing reddish brown or vinaceous scales. The stem has a distinctive partial veil and it is normally covered with reddish brown glandular specks. It is vinaceous below the ring and yellowish above. Pores are angular, of medium size, pale yellow turning to brownish yellow. Flesh is yellowish and may stain pinkish or reddish on exposure. Spore print cinnamon brown. Confusion is possible with *S. americanus* under pine, and species of the *S. serotinus* complex under *Larix*. Entre nous, I do not claim immunity against such a trap.

Copious in western North-America, it is rare in the east, recorded from the Sept Îles region and now Newfoundland. In Europe *S. sibiricus* is on the red list of endangered species in eight countries due to loss of habitat. Also known in Asia, it seems to be suffering the same fate in China, Vietnam and Pakistan. Newfoundland is lucky to have protected areas like Gros Morne National Park, where *S. sibiricus* thrives.

En 1938, lorsque Rolf Singer a décrit *Inonotus sibiricus*, il n'avait aucune idée que je serais en train d'écrire ce court texte sur *Suillus sibiricus* à mon retour d'une rencontre mycologique à Terre-Neuve, tenue à Camp Killdevil dans le parc national

de Gros Morne pour être plus précis. De nationalité allemande Singer en tant que mycologue possédait un sens d'observation ainsi qu'une discipline scientifique capable de distinguer les minimales détails qui ont fait de *I. sibiricus* une espèce différente avant

sa publication finale de *Suillus sibiricus* en 1945. C'est tellement facile de regarder un champignon d'en haut et de lui attribuer un nom d'espèce, mais si on prenait la peine d'examiner de plus proche on arriverait à une conclusion toute différent.

Il y a une leçon importante à apprendre de Singer: ne vous fiez pas à la première impression mais prenez la peine d'observer méticuleusement avant de prendre une décision de vos trouvailles et vos conclusions seront d'autant plus satisfaisantes. Il y quelques années en prenant notre marche quotidienne, mon époux et moi, j'ai aperçu à mes pieds un 'PCB' un petit champignon brun. Ma première impression était de poursuivre ma route, mais pour une raison qui m'est inconnue, je me suis accroupie et j'ai cueilli le petit champignon circonspect. A notre surprise nous observions ou nous pensions voir quelque chose de spécial sur le chapeau, mais sans lunette il nous était impossible d'arriver à une conclusion définitive. Une vingtaine de minutes plus tard, arrivé à la maison, c'était la course pour les lunettes avec l'espoir de confirmer notre intuition—oui nous avons trouvé un champignon qui nous avait échappé pour plus de dix ans, *Pluteus thomsonii*.

De retour à notre sujet, *Suillus sibiricus*, un champignon ectomycorrhzien aime s'associer avec *Pinus strobus* L. et *Larix laricina*, dans l'est du Canada. Ce suillus de taille moyenne (jusqu'à 100 mm), son chapeau est de teinte jaunâtre à ocre. A maturité, on peut retrouver

des points brunâtres ou vineux sur sa surface viscido à visqueuse. Son pied cylindrique généralement couvert de glandules brun rougeâtre est orné d'un voile partiel plus ou moins distinct. Il se tache de couleur vineuse sous l'emplacement de l'anneau et de jaunâtre au dessus. Les pores de taille moyenne sont angulaires, jaunes tournant au jaune brunâtre



Pluteus thomsonii

avec l'âge. La sporée est brun canelle et les spores mesurent 8-12 µm X 3.5-4.5 µm. La chair est jaunâtre et peut devenir rosée ou rougeâtre au contact de l'air. Il n'a aucune odeur

mais un goût acide. Au Canada, outre Terre-Neuve et Sept-Îles, *Suillus sibiricus* est trouvé en abondance dans l'ouest de l'Amérique du Nord.

Références

Smith AH, Thiers HD: The Boletes Of Michigan. University of Michigan Press., Ann Arbor. 2005.

Kuo, M. (2007, December). *Suillus sibiricus*. Retrieved from the MushroomExpert.Com Web site: http://www.mushroomexpert.com/suillus_sibiricus.html. Last accessed 5 Dec, 2014.

MycoQuébec, <<http://www.mycoquebec.org/bas.php?trie=S&l=1&nom=Suillus%20sibiricus%20/%20Bolet%20de%20Sib%C3%A9rie&tag=Suillus%20sibiricus&gro=21>> Last accessed 5 Dec, 2014.



Photo: Roger Smith

Il est aussi trouvé en Europe, au Moyen-orient et en Asie. Dans huit pays d'Europe, il est sur la liste rouge des espèces en danger dû à la perte d'habitat causé par le développement de nouvelles pentes de ski et autres

aménagement extérieurs. En Chine, au Vietnam et au Pakistan, il est aussi en voie de disparition dû à la surpopulation.

Heureusement qu'à Terre-Neuve *Suillus sibiricus* jouit d'habitat protégé tel que dans le parc de Gros Morne. J'ai eu la chance de me rendre dans l'est du Canada, sur cet île si chaleureuse et d'identifier ce rare (du moins dans notre partie du monde) et beau bolet qu'est *Suillus sibiricus*. Si c'est lui...



Photo: Roger Smith



The empty skillet

FISHERMAN'S PIE CHAR & CHANTERELLES IN WINE SAUCE

ROBIN MCGRATH

Fisherman's pie is the shepherd's pie of the sea. Arctic char has been a staple of Labrador Inuit for centuries and is still one of the most reliable and desirable fish to be found north of Voisey's Bay. The landlocked variety, such as the one used for this recipe, can be quite small, but seagoing char can weigh up to ten pounds. Although similar to its cousin, the salmon, char is not very oily and has a more delicate flavour, so it goes well with the chanterelle mushrooms that are so plentiful during Labrador's short, warm summers. This simple recipe ensures that the fish does not dry out, nor does it obliterate the flavour of the chanterelles.

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. boned & skinned char or other fish
1 ½ lbs. potatoes
8 oz chanterelles
1 cup stock (fish, veg or chicken)
4 oz. white wine
2 shallots
Parsley
1 tbs. cornstarch.
2 oz. milk or cream
3 + 1 tbs. butter or olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

PROCEDURE

This recipe used char fillet and fresh chanterelles. Cut the fish into chunks and place in a buttered pie plate or low casserole dish. Peel the potatoes and put them to boil. Chop the white of the shallots fine and sauté them with the mushrooms in a tablespoon of butter or oil. When they are tender and the mushrooms have released their juices, stir the cornstarch into the wine, and add it with the stock to the mushroom mixture, stirring until it thickens. Add some chopped parsley, salt and pepper (you may want to omit the salt if you have used a commercial stock). Remove

from the heat and set aside. When the potatoes are cooked, drain them and mash them with the remaining 3 tbsp. of butter or oil, milk and salt and pepper. You may want to hold back a few mushrooms and some parsley to sprinkle on the top of the pie. Pour the mushroom sauce onto the fish, then spoon the mashed potatoes on top and smooth them out to make a crust. Bake in a 350° oven for 40 minutes. If the top hasn't browned, put it under the broiler for a few minutes until it is golden. Serve with a steamed vegetable such as green beans or broccoli, or a side salad.





CORTINARIUS CAESIOARMENIACUS

Kare Limatainen

Recently Ilkka Kytövuori, Tuula Niskanen and I described a new *Cortinarius* species, *C. caesioarmeniacus*, from our beloved section *Telmonia*, that section of brown cortis that are reputedly all alike. We first collected this mushroom in 2007 in Gros Morne National Park, along the trail to Stuckless Pond, in the damp coniferous woods before reaching Lomond River. This is now the type collection for the species. We collected it again during the 2007 foray in Butter Pot Provincial Park, then in Québec, and have since found it also in several places in Finland.

OK, all these *Telmonia* species are reputed to look alike, inscrutable. However, if you take the trouble to get to know them at close quarters, spend a little time studying them, you will begin to see them as individuals. The “official” scientific description follows. See if you can use it and the photo to identify this species in your coniferous woods.

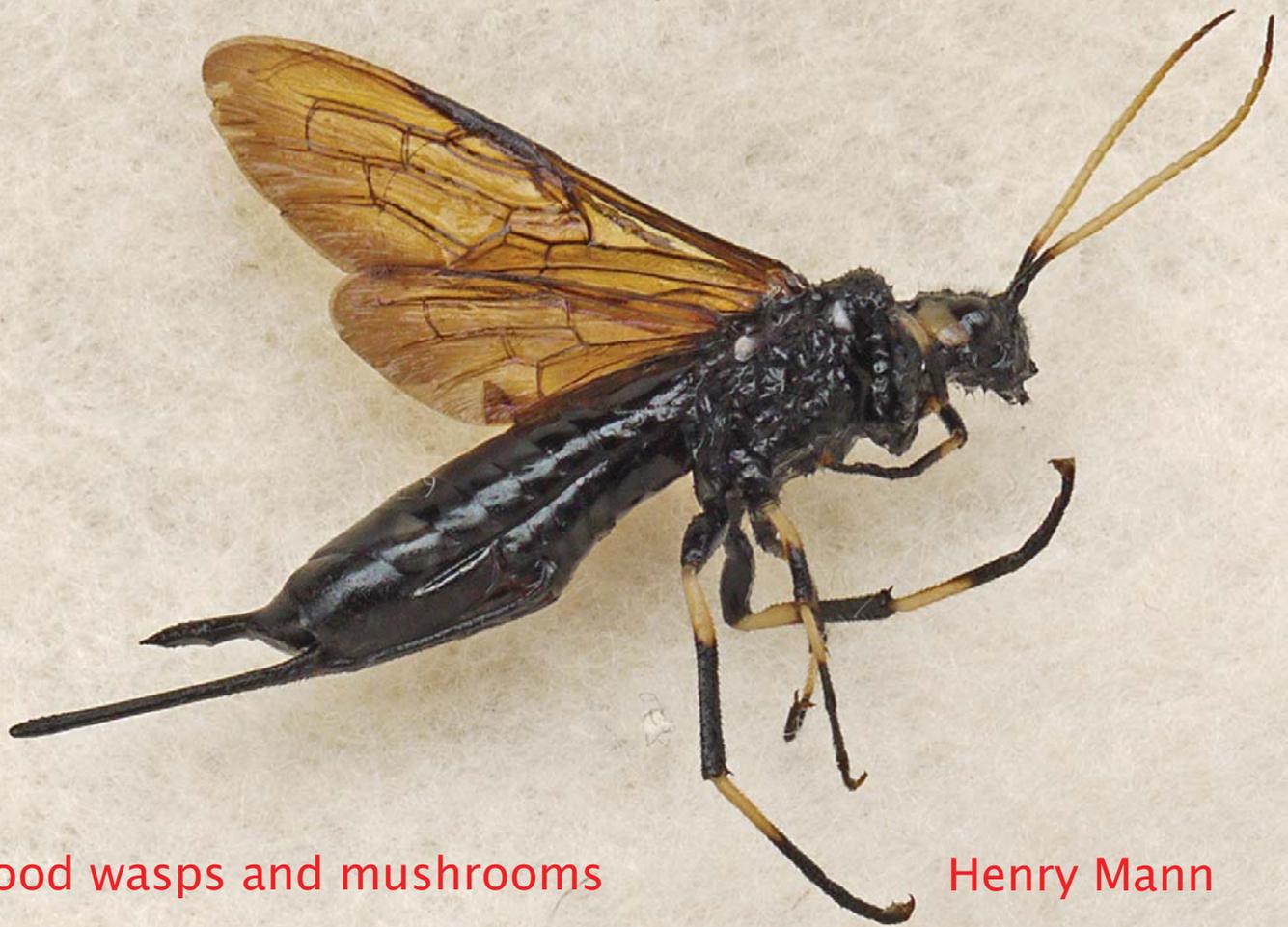
Pileus: 40-75 mm, hemispherical, then broadly

convex to almost plane with an umbo, brown to strong brown, hygrophanous. Lamellae: moderately spaced to almost crowded, at first pale brown to strong brown with a white edge, later brown to strong brown. Stipe: 45-70 mm long, 7-13 mm thick at apex, clavate, at first whitish silky fibrillose, with a bluish tint at the apex, later pale brown. Universal veil: rather sparse, white. Basal mycelium: white. Context: in the pileus brown, in the stipe white to very pale brown, with a bluish tint at the apex. Odor unremarkable. Spores: $8.2-10.2 \times 5.2-6.1 \mu\text{m}$.

Ecology and distribution: In mesic coniferous forests. Producing basidiomata in late summer and autumn. Widespread, to date known from Europe to Eastern North America.

The name refers to the bluish tints in the basidiomata and affinity with *C. armeniacus*.

Now you have all the information—dare to take up the *Telmonia* challenge!



On wood wasps and mushrooms

Henry Mann

With a piercing shriek I was summoned to the back deck on a sunny August day to witness an ominous insect with a colossal stinger fluttering amongst the patio chairs. Like any biologist would, I immediately captured and pickled the specimen in alcohol, so transforming the study of life into "deadology" (the study of pickled specimens), a practice too common in my profession. Identification was relatively easy for such a large insect (50 mm from antennae to tip of "stinger"). It turned out to be the white-horned wood wasp (*Urocerus albicornis*) common in the boreal forest across Canada. And the supposed gross "stinger" projecting from its butt was not a stinger at all, but an ovipositor for injecting eggs into the wood of trees, giving this group its other common name, horntails. So, despite its startling and dangerous appearance, the wood wasp is harmless, at least to humans.

Much more important than its appearance or names is its ecology, "how it makes its living" in the boreal forest. Twenty-three species of wood wasps are known from North America

and all have symbiotic relationships with white rot wood decay fungi. After mating, females use their long ovipositor to drill into the wood of trees to deposit eggs. Along with the eggs, asexual fungal spores and fungal fragments stored in glands called "mycangia" are also inserted, as well as a mucus that is toxic to the tree in some species and which may promote fungal growth. The fungi grow within the tree by breaking down (decaying) the wood while the hatched larvae feed on the fungi and tunnel through the trunk encouraging fungal spread. Larvae do not have enzymes to break down and digest wood so they are completely dependent on the fungi for their food source. Female grubs accumulate fungal material in special organs which is transferred to the mycangia of the pupating adults.

At least four wood decay fungi are known to be symbionts of wood wasps, *Cerrena unicolor* and three species of *Amylostereum*. *A. chailetii* on conifers is recorded in the NL Foray lists, and perhaps the other two species, *A. areolatum* and *A. laevigatum* also

occur in Newfoundland. *Amylostereum* is the fungal genus symbiotic with *Urocerus albicornis* and a number of other horntail species. Its fruiting bodies occur as thin crusts on dead standing or fallen conifers. Another wood wasp species (*Tremex columba*) uses the fungus *Cerrena unicolor*, one of our most common and easily recognized polyporous bracket fungi growing on hardwoods, especially birch.¹ Other wood decay fungi, including the brackets *Trametes versicolor* and *T. pubescens*, have also been isolated from wood wasp mycangia.

Most of our native wood wasps are not considered to be serious forest pests because they tend to seek out trees that are already stressed or dying from other damage or disease. Considered from a total forest ecosystem perspective the mutualistic relationship between wood wasp and decay fungus is probably beneficial by promoting and hastening tree decay and recycling of nutrients. The wood wasp requires the fungus for food and the fungus gets a very efficient means of asexual dispersal into new



sources of food.

We often tend to think of a forest as a collection of trees and other miscellaneous organisms, but when we look more closely we see a complex interacting meshwork. Without the seemingly “minor” players like mushrooms and wood wasps, and thousands of other species, there may well be no stately trees and no forests as we know them!

Reference

Sturgeon W: The Amazing Life History of *Cerrena unicolor*, The mossy maze polypore. *OMPHALINA* 3 (3):3. 2012.



Illustrations

Top: Underside of an actively growing *Cerrena unicolor* on birch. The soft, white, felty edge is evidence of active growth. Note the maze pattern of the “pores”.

Middle: Topsides of the same brackets. Again, the soft, white edge is readily seen. Algae, another organism tied into the relationship, is a common resident on the caps of smaller bracket fungi.

Bottom: *Amylostereum chailletii* from the 2009 Foray. This is the organism tied to the organism in the title banner. Photo: Roger Smith.

Title banner: *Urocerus albicornis* in quiet repose on soft felt after suffering an alcohol related death.



Leucopaxillus of NL

Andrus & Maria Voitk



Unless we are away, it would be highly unusual for a week to go by without a walk through the birchwoods behind Humber Village. For some reason these birchwoods are not very mycodiverse, so that after 15 years of constant lookout for mushrooms, one might think that one has seen all they have to offer. At least that should be true for big fleshy and obvious mushrooms, especially if there are a lot of them. Therefore, if you find a new species, one you have not seen before, it immediately becomes worthy of attention.

On the first of August, 2014, we came upon a group of ten big fleshy mushrooms that we had not seen before. Then, surprise! We came upon a second group, even larger. Within ten days, we

found at least six groups ranging in size from 7-17 fruit bodies.

Caps were various shades of orangey tan, felty, dry, with inrolled margins until maturity, ranging in size from 5-35 cm. Gills yellowish cream, crowded, sinewy to notched, with many tiers of lamellulae. Stems were white, robust, with a large swelling at the base. Flesh was white, firm, compact, with a not unpleasant odour, and went untasted by these scientists. Spores were spiny to warty.

This keyed out to *Leucopaxillus tricolor*, a saprobe decomposing deciduous duff, first described by Peck in 1888. Renée Lebeuf and the Québec group have also noted its penchant for sudden appearances in abundance separated by decades of absence. Remarkable!

To our knowledge, we only have one other species in the genus, *Leucopaxillus giganteus*. It is much more common, and we know several locations where we can find it regularly, year after year. In the woods it appears in great arcs, mostly under conifers. It, too, is a saprobe, decomposing duff, and has a somewhat unpleasant odour.

Caps are white, felty to dry, the margin inrolled at the edge only, and soon rolls out as the cap expands and lifts up to assume the shape of a giant funnel. Size ranges from 6 to 44 cm. The cap is described as turning beige to brown with age, something we have not observed here. Gills are decurrent, crowded, white to cream, and the white to cream stem is

somewhat cylindrical or slightly enlarged at the base. Spores are smooth. This species fruits late in the season: all our records are from October.

Although they have some similarities, their existence as members of the same genus has been a bit troubling to some mycologists, and not without reason. Recent phylogenetic analysis has shown the genus to be polyphyletic (contain several unrelated species).¹ *Leucopaxillus giganteus* and some similar species have been placed into the resurrected genus, *Aspropaxillus*. Thus, its currently correct name is *Aspropaxillus giganteus*. Current analysis finds *Leucopaxillus tricolor* on the same branch as *Lepista nebularis*, as a very close relative, but a transfer to *Lepista* was not made, so that for the time being its correct name remains *Leucopaxillus tricolor*, even though it no longer fits the strict concept of that genus.

Reading about these species revealed that *L. tricolor* is edible. Unfortunately we didn't know that at the time, and now we may have to wait 50 or more years before we find any again for a taste. If food at the old folks home gets really monotonous, we may have to fry up one of the fungarium specimens while we wait.

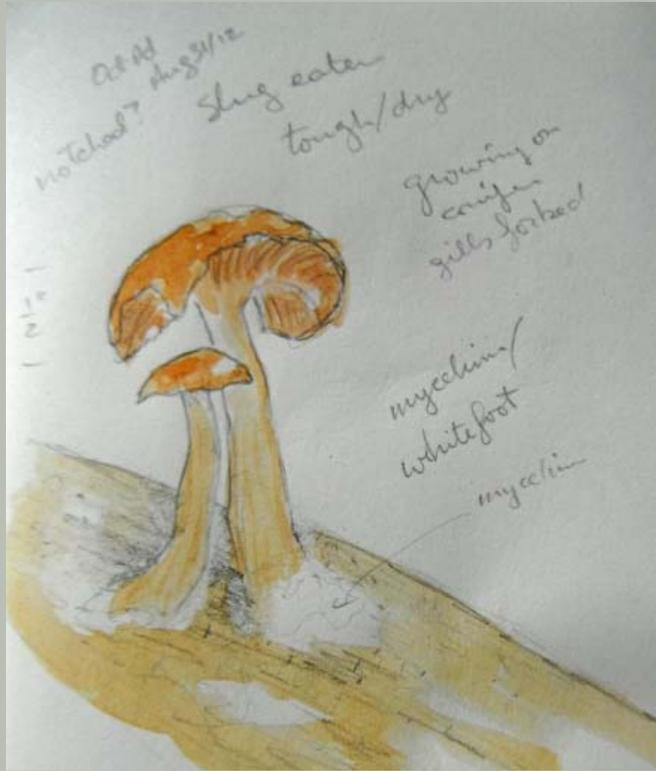
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1. Vizzini A, Ercole E, Contu M: A contribution to the ITS-LSU phylogeny of the genus *Leucopaxillus* (/ trichalomatoid clade, Agaricales) with three new genera and notes on *Porpoloma*. *Mycosphere* 3:79-90; Doi 10.5943/mycosphere/3/1/10. 2012.





The Bishop's Sketchbook



POET'S CORNER

Michel Savard



PLEUROCYBELLA PORRIGENS

Pleurote étalé

Angel Wings

Il pousse aux géants foudroyés,
ces ailes blanches, pures telles la mort,
et comme elle rongées par le vol.

*

You grow wings on struck-down giants,
as white and pure of heart as death,
and similarly consumed by flight.

HYGROPHORUS SPECIOSUS

Hygrophore remarquable

Larch Wax Cap

Candide, interdit de plaisir,
l'hygrophore bave, ébahi.

*

Splendid in your candid pleasure, you drool,
you ooze, dumbfounded with delight.



LENTINELLUS MICHENERI

Andrus Voitk



Lentinellus micheneri is one of two species of *Lentinellus* we have recorded in the province. The other, *L. cochleatus*, has been dealt with in the past (OMPHALINA 3(2):12). Neither species is very common here. *L. cochleatus* has been collected on dead birch around our home on the west coast, whereas *L. micheneri* seems to like northern climes, recorded on dead alder from Labrador and the Great Northern

Peninsula. Both photos from Konrad Brook, Labrador.

As most *Lentinellus* species, the stem of little *L. micheneri* is usually, but not always, eccentric to lateral. Its tell-tale signs are growth on wood (only alder recorded here), small size (cap less than 2.5 cm diam.), tan colour, sawtooth gill edges, white sporeprint, and finely spiny spores.



THE MAIL BAG

OR WHY THE PASSENGER PIGEONS ASSIGNED TO SERVE THE LAVISH CORPORATE AND EDITORIAL OFFICES OF OMPHALINA GET HERNIAS

As ever, it is difficult to guess which content resonates enough with readers to generate mail. Interestingly (because unexpected) the soil fungi issue generated more comments than normal. Here are a selection, mostly in order of appearance. But first, an interesting question related to truffles in our soil.



During a thaw in December I came upon these two holes dug in the woods by a squirrel under a black spruce. One hole was empty, but in the other was what looks like a nibbled truffle. Is this possible?

Michael Babcock

Ed note: Yes, Michael, this is possible. It looks like a species of *Elaphomyces* or deer truffle (elapho = deer). Soil sampling isolated two sequences of *Elaphomyces*. Like your mushroom, neither was identified to species, but I daresay, had you kept yours, we might be able to identify it a bit closer. Indeed, it is a hypogeous ascomycete (underground sac fungus, i.e. a truffle), but, alas, not the expensive and desired edible (even if the squirrels beg to differ). Some of these are parasitized by another ascomycete, *Elaphocordyceps*, which gives away the location of its mycorrhizal host by the club-like fruiting bodies around spruce. For pictures and a brief discussion, see [OMPALINA 2\(8\):5, 2011](#).



Thank you and congratulations on the articles about global distribution! It is most interesting to see that many of the species occurring in NL also match European species.

Gro Gulden

Ed comment: Thank you. So far, we have European species in NL only if they are also found at least in northeastern NA. Therefore, either NA and Europe share some common taxa, or the algorithms used in the study sought out European material to make the “most convenient” matches. Optimal procedure for regional identification may differ from that designed to assess global distribution.

Thanks very much for the issue of *OMPHALINA*. Nice to see the summary of the global soil fungi work, and I also appreciated a look at your newsletter because of my involvement with the Australian Fungimap group, which has a focus on field mycology.

Tom May

Did you know that there’s a Global Fungal Red List workshop currently taking place in Sweden, and that *Sarcosoma globosum* is one of the species— all of which are purportedly rare—proposed for international protection? I’ve found *Sarcosoma globosum* once in Maine, and I think Kathie Hodge has found it near Ithaca, New York.

Larry Millman

I bet you do have *Sarcosoma globosum*; you just haven’t found it yet. I have seen it in Ontario and New Brunswick, always with old-growth spruce. Considering it’s in Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia it would be surprising for it to be absent in Newfoundland. But maybe it’s associated with porcupines.

Dave Malloch

Ed comment: Gentlemen, we have it on good authority (see editorial of the last issue) that “the presence or absence of *Sarcosoma globosum* in some remote corner of the world is of such marginal interest that it hardly warrants the [attention of real scientists]”. Given its preference for old growth spruce, the sortie to that habitat was the time to look for it in NL, but our enthusiasm and curiosity in this regard were spurned. These areas are not easily accessible and organizing a trip expensive, so that another opportunity is unlikely in the near future.

Oh, and no porcupines in Europe, where *Sarcosoma globosum* also grows, so there goes a good theory!

I read about soil sampling with great interest. I have been working with Dr. Joe Ammirati on a study of *Cortinarius* in *Quercus garryana* (Oregon white oak) forests of the Columbia River Gorge since 2007, a joint project with Tuula Niskanen and Kare Liimatainen, (familiar faces at Foray Newfoundland and Labrador). For years, I had tried unsuccessfully to interest someone in doing an analysis of the soil of these forests to see how soil fungi compare to what I have been collecting above-ground.

In May, I was over-joyed when Tuula and Kare asked me if I would be willing to take soil samples for DNA analysis—a dream come true! I took 40 samples from *Cortinarius* hotspots I have identified over the past seven years. Trying to avoid saprotrophs, I removed the litter layer before sampling. The dried soil is now in Finland and I eagerly await results. Photo by Janet Burkhart of me at one of the sites.

Michael Beug



Thank you for this excellent issue!

Rytas Vilgalys

Thanks for your really, really great newsletter.

Donna Mitchell

Nice “heavy duty” issue of *OMPHALINA*. This must have taken much time and effort. I note that the call has gone out for an assistant/associate editor. I understand, am sympathetic with this turn of events, and want to make it crystal clear that I am not applying.

Henry Mann

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