



# OMPHALINA

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Newsletter of



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# Message from the Editor

## WELCOME

to the first ever issue of **OMPHALINA**, newsletter of Foray Newfoundland & Labrador. Since a few items of information had piled up, we thought it would be more attractive to present them in this format. We do not make a promise to keep it up. This may be the only issue, soon to become a collector's item, so handle it with care!

## CONTRIBUTIONS

are usually solicited by club newsletters. Of course, they are welcome to **OMPHALINA** as well. However, we are a small province and already have two nature magazines, **OSPREY** and **SARRACENIA**. We suspect that establishing a third might be counterproductive, given our small population. In addition, we have ties to **FUNGI**: we serve on its Editorial Board and a subscription is part of the privileges of membership in FNL. Therefore, the

### Editorial policy of **OMPHALINA**

is to support our established journals. Material suitable for a wide general mycophile audience should be directed to **FUNGI**. Material of interest to naturalists of the province should be directed to the **OSPREY** (either "From the mushroom basket" column or general content). Material of interest to wildflower enthusiasts should be directed to **SARRACENIA**.

What does that leave to contribute? Well, if you wish to share something with Foray Newfoundland & Labrador members, primarily of interest to members only, such contributions are welcome here and will be published, subject to the usual editorial decision and attention.

## NAME

The name **OMPHALINA** was chosen because of our logo mushroom. We know that it is currently reclassified as *Arrhenia sphagnicola* var. *fusconigra*, but at one time it was an *Omphalina* and we use the term in its widest sense (sensu lato). By the way, one of this year's faculty, Ed Lickey (see p 5), is looking into these mushrooms with us. We may have new discoveries about our logo mushroom, and possibly even

new reclassification to report in time.

## COVER

In keeping with the *Omphalina* theme, in the widest sense, macromorphologically *Rickenella* may be considered to be an omphalinoid, and *Gyroflexus* is one of several small genera that may be considered a *Rickenella*, again in the wide sense. The mushroom on the cover may be *Gyroflexus brevibasidiatus*, a very uncommon and small mushroom found in *Sphagnum*. The photograph, taken June 26, 2010, comes from one of the bogs outside Stephenville. (We were looking for the still elusive *Liparis loeselii*). It is a primary saprobe, decomposing last year's organic litter among the *Sphagnum* moss. Every mushroom, if dug out carefully, grew on a dead leaf or similar piece of vegetative material (dead blueberry leaf, pitcher plant leaf, grass or sedge).

Well, at least that is what we thought it was. Scott Redhead, an eminent Canadian mycologist, who is an expert on rickenellas and bog mushrooms, is not so sure. He knows a lot more about these mushrooms than we do, so you decide... The find was so exciting and the pictures so pretty, that we thought you would enjoy this cover, even if we have not fully identified the mushroom. If you know these mushrooms, please feel free to weigh in. If we settle on a definitive decision, we shall let you know in a future edition, should there be any more.

## NOTICES

We do not give out member emails, do not solicit and do not promote other events to members by email, even causes dear to our hearts. One useful feature of a newsletter is as a vehicle for notices of interest to members. In this regard, please see the notice regarding a Lichen Workshop on page 4 in this issue.

Happy mushrooming!

andrus voitk

## Membership notice:

1. Your present membership will expire with the beginning of our Foray, Sep 10, 2010. Your subscription to FUNGI, which is part of that same membership, will expire with the upcoming Summer 2010 issue (Vol 3, No 3). Membership is part of the foray fee, and will be automatically renewed, as will the subscription to FUNGI, for members who are able to participate in this year's foray.

2. If you will not be able to attend the foray, but would like to remain a member (and continue getting FUNGI without interruption), please go to our website <nlmushrooms.ca>, download a **Membership Form**, fill it out and send it in with fee. **This should arrive BEFORE the foray on Sep 10**, if you are to get continuous subscription to FUNGI.

Please note that we are not being bureaucratic about the timing, but do the bank transaction only once a year, right after the foray. Transfer of funds and exchange fees are more than the cost of one subscription, so it makes no sense to do it, except as a bulk transaction. That is why, if you join after the foray, your membership does not become effective until the next foray. If you join after the foray because you want to get FUNGI, it is better for you to subscribe directly from the publishers <fungimag.com>.

## Call for help:

We are looking for help with our web page. As it stands, the page is functional. It has all the info we want (and more) in an accessible way. However, it is not particularly attractive to look at, and all info has to be downloaded to look at it. Nothing is readable online. This is appropriate for much of the info, but not all. Some would be nice to read online only, some to read online with an option to download, if the reader wishes to keep a record or mail it to somebody. We have an excellent webmaster, who has kindly given us space and set up the site. However, he is very busy professionally, and does not have the time to do major web site redesign for us. We can change text on the existing pages and add or remove material for download, but need help with the design part.

What we need is somebody, who could design the page for us, so that it looks attractive and shows some pictures of our activities and mushrooms, at least as background. Then, put some material in a viewable format online, ± the downloadable pdf as an option. If you know how to do this and would like to donate your services, we'd sure appreciate it. Once the site is set up, we can probably keep it going, but might turn to you very occasionally for help, so mostly it's a one-time effort, not an ongoing time commitment. If interested/willing, please contact us <foray@nlmushrooms.ca>.

Volunteers? Please?

# MAAL—Lichen workshop:

Lichens are mushrooms (the vast majority are Ascomycetes). Much like the mycorrhizal mushrooms like *Cortinarius*, that have a photosynthetic partner (usually a tree), they also have a photosynthetic partner. In the case of lichens the partner is not a big tree, but a microscopic alga or cyanobacterium. Because the partner is so small, the entire partner is enveloped in fungal material, not just the root tips, as for mycorrhizal mushrooms. Recognizing this, we plan to add lichens to our foray beginning 2011, organized by our fellow member, Mac Pitcher. If you would like an introduction to lichens before our 2011 foray, Mac will conduct the lichen workshop below.

## MUCH ADO ABOUT LICHENS

is a unique opportunity to learn about lichens with an expert right in the heart of the Avalon Forest where lichens grow profusely. It will take place over the week-end of September 24 -26, 2010 at the **Brother Brennan Environmental Education Centre** off the Salmonier Line on the Avalon Peninsula, Newfoundland. Under the instruction of Mac Pitcher there will be lectures, lichen walks, time spent in the classroom learning to use lichen keys and much lichen trivia. All meals and accommodation will be provided at the Centre and the numbers will be limited in order to maintain an adequate instructor:participant ratio. All this for just \$180. For more information and registration forms go to

<[www.brotherbrennancentre.ca](http://www.brotherbrennancentre.ca)>.

Also, see the recent OSPREY. It has a lichen article by your humble Editor, who knows nothing about lichens. Better attend Mac's workshop.



## PHOTO CONTEST REMINDER

Don not forget about the **Photo Contest**. We shall not reproduce the info here, since it has been sent around before. However, the Rules and other info are downloadable from our website. Right about now you should find plenty of fairy ring mushrooms to photograph. See past notices of others that are still missing. If we could get the few we need, we could produce our poster this year. If not, we shall wait another season, allowing you to submit more pictures, so that we can produce a quality poster of our edibles.

## VIKING FORAY NEWS

Of course, do not forget about our **annual foray**. It is beginning to fill up, but there are still many places available, if you are interested. And until the end of July, reduced fares of the Timely Bird Reduction apply. See our web page for information and Registration Forms.

We feature and list our faculty, because we are proud to have so many eminent mycologist here at our foray. Part of our policy is to try to have ample faculty, so that the identification is civilized and interesting for them. This also allows a much better faculty/participant interaction, so that participants can get benefit from individual contact with faculty, who has the time to answer questions.

Those who were at our 2006 Foray, will remember **Ed Lickey**, who was part of our faculty. Ed is returning this year, as one of a stellar faculty. Much has happened to Ed since he was here last. In 2006 he was a single post-doc, working with Ron Petersen. Since then he has been named Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at Bridgewater College in Bridgewater, VA. He married Charity Boyles and on June 10, 2009, they had a little son, Avery. Our congratulations to the Lickeys. Unfortunately we shall not meet the family this time, but it will be good to

see Ed in Newfoundland and Labrador again.

As well as all the other faculty, of course!

If you were at last year's foray, or if you just wonder what experienced mushroomers, who have been to many forays, think of ours, please see the **Report by Michael Beug** on the next page. Michael is the Editor of *McIlvainea*, the scientific journal of the North American Mycological Association. This is an excerpt of a longer editorial comment and report he wrote for the last issue of that publication, reproduced here with permission. You may wish to read the full text or peruse *McIlvainea* online <<http://www.namyco.org/publications/index.html>>.



This report is also available for download from our webpage. To see what else is published about, by or from our foray, you may wish to consult our webpage <<http://www.nlmushrooms.ca/index.php?page=publications>>.



## ***McIlvainea: Journal of American Amateur Mycology***

### ***McIlvainea, Volume 19***

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#### **From the Editor**

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In September, 2009, I was one of six guest mycologists at the Foray Newfoundland and Labrador held for the second year at the Lion Max Simms Camp in Central Newfoundland (Figure 2).



*Fig. 2. Michael Beug, Tom Volk, Maria Voitk and Renée Lebeuf at Foray Newfoundland and Labrador, September, 2009. © Photo by Roger Smith*

Andrus Voitk is a driving force of that organization and their vision is to bring together the guest mycologists and local mycologists for four days of collecting before the foray begins plus the three days of public events and public forays led by the guest mycologists teamed with local mycologists. A huge data collection team photographs and records the mushrooms and beautiful reports are then published on the Internet. In 2010, this delightful foray moves to The Great Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland (<http://www.nlmushrooms.ca>). Like the Key Council, the goal of the Foray Newfoundland and Labrador is to improve knowledge and information about the mushrooms in their part of the world. It is another interesting model for how amateurs working with professionals can help improve our understanding of Natural History. It would be great to have an article for *McIlvainea* about what they have learned so far. Or do any of you have models that you would like to write about for *McIlvainea*? Amateurs in North America lag far behind their counterparts in Europe and it is clear that there will never be enough funding for professionals to answer the many questions that remain about our natural world.

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Sincerely, Michael W. Beug