



Spore Print

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Fungi of Alberta Database of the Alberta Mycological Society

Ask any expert on animals, plants, lichens, or mosses about the number of known species in a region, and they will be able to give you a pretty accurate estimate. Pose this same question to a fungi expert, and the answer will always be very vague and with a large degree of acknowledged variation, something like “perhaps 4,000 species, but there may be as many as 20,000 species”. This is an inherent problem when working with often microscopic, short-lived, difficult-to-identify, or only sporadically fruiting organisms.

FIVE YEARS IN THE MAKING

In 2004, the then *Edmonton Mycological Society* initiated a project to compile all known mycological information in the Province of Alberta, Canada. The aim was to make this information available to the public and assist industry, government departments, and professional and amateur mycologists in the assessment of fungal biodiversity across Alberta.

The project started officially in the spring of 2005. Since then, we have compiled mycological information from various sources, including provincial and federal government departments, educational institutions, the scientific literature, and province-wide foray reports from our Society since its inception in 1987. The first set of data was officially launched early in 2009, and additional data will be released in

the months and years to come. Photographic images will be added to complement the records as they become available.

HOW TO ACCESS THE DATABASE

The database is listed on the left-hand side of the menu bar on our home page (www.wildmushrooms.ws). At the top of the page click on the word “Search” and a new page appears. There are several features here. You can search by collection date, genus, species or by all of these criteria. A bar with the terms “selection map search” and “point map search” will appear. Clicking either one of these will bring up a map of Alberta where you can search for all the fungi found in an area you select or within a selected radius of any “point” in the province.

HOW CAN THE DATABASE HELP YOU?

First, you can find general locations and times when certain mushrooms are found. For example, enter the scientific genus name for hedgehogs, “*hydnum*”, in the genus field or enter the species identifier “*repandum*” in the species field (or enter both) and hit the search button. In either case you will get all the mushrooms recorded in the database by this name. Markers will show up on a map identifying each location where the mushroom has been found. By clicking on the “collection log”, any other information that is available will be shown, such as collection date,

type of habitat the mushroom was found in or the name of the collector. If there is a photograph associated with the particular mushroom you are searching for an icon will appear for you to click on.

Second, you can see what species have been found in a certain area by using the map search functions. Let’s say you are heading out to a certain area of the province to pick mushrooms, for example Lac La Biche. You can specify a search area at the bottom of the page, e.g. 50 km, and then select the Town of Lac La Biche. You will be given a list of all the mushrooms found within a 50 km radius of the Town. This is a great asset whether you are looking for a list of what grows in the area for picking or you just want a list of possible mushrooms to help your identification efforts

WHAT IS COMING IN THE FUTURE?

We have several features we would like to add in the future. These include search features by common name, edibility or medicinal use. Also looking further into the future we would like to see mushroom descriptions added to current information of habitat and collection dates. Ideally we would like a key to the larger macro fungi in the database. If anybody is interested in helping out, especially those of you who are talented word processors, please drop us a line. In the meantime let’s keep on growing our database by taking photos and by coming out to forays to pick and identify mushrooms.





President: Martin Osis

President's Message A good time was had by all — In spite of the awful weather

Due to the late arrival of spring this year, morel season was certainly not the best, at least for me. Yet, I did enjoy some wonderful hours out in the woods meandering through old favourite spots and exploring new areas. Some of these looked tremendous and will be revisited in future years. While the mushrooms did not cooperate for our annual pig roast and pot luck dinner either, a good time was had by all those who attended.

At our most recent foray to the Bow Valley our mushroom display for the Bow Valley Parks Day was very well received, especially by the Parks people. Again while some 50 mushroom species were found, edible mushrooms were not cooperating. However, we did have one unique find which turned out to be a great edible mushroom, *Floccularia albolaripes*. This mushroom somewhat resembles the "man on horseback" except that it has a veil. This is the first time this mushroom has been recorded in the province. Surprisingly, more members from Edmonton showed up for the foray than from Calgary and surrounding area.

.... forays
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In Alberta, August has always been the best and most diverse month of the year for fungi, and with that the most interesting time of the year for our Society's mushroom activities. Our two largest and most exciting events are coming up soon. Our annual exposition at the Devonian Botanic Gardens will be held on Sunday, August 9. This is a great time for members to bring in mushrooms they would like to see names on and view

hundreds of other mushroom species. We will also be officially launching our database that Sunday. So come in, bring along some mushrooms and get a quick lesson on how you can take advantage of our database.

My favourite event, the Alberta Foray, will follow soon after. These forays are so much fun and so very educational. It is the one time of the year we actually have bona fide mycologists you can access to help you figure out what the individual mushrooms are that you have found and learn how to tell them apart. The introductory mushroom course offered at the foray will be especially valuable for all our novices.

Hope to see you out at both these events.

 Martin Osis

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An exciting find at the Bow Valley Foray! The mushroom was found on the forestry trails near the University of Calgary forestry experimental station. Interestingly it was found under Scots Pine planted in the early forties. Scots Pine is a European species not native to Alberta.

Floccularia albolaripes
(G.F. Atk.) Redhead

Cap: 3-15 cm broad, convex, expanding to nearly plane, sometimes with a low umbo; margin incurved becoming decurved at maturity, young sporocarps often appendiculate from veil fragments; surface sticky when moist, appressed fibrillose to squamulose, brownish at the disc shading to a yellowish margin; context thick, white, except a thin yellowish zone below the cuticle, unchanging; odour and taste mild.

Gills: Gills close, adnexed to notched, moderately broad, edges toothed, pallid at first, then yellowish.

Stalk: Stipe 3-9 cm tall, 1.5-3.5 cm thick, solid, becoming stuffed at maturity, equal to tapering to an enlarged base; surface white to cream, at the apex more or less glabrous, covered below with coarse, white scales, the latter often arranged in concentric zones and tending to become yellowish (at least the edges) in age; partial veil cottony-floccose leaving fragments on the young cap margin or forming a fragile,

often torn, superior cottony ring.

Habitat: Solitary or in small groups under conifers.

Edibility: **Edible and very good to excellent, a greatly under-appreciated mushroom.**

Comments: An attractive mushroom, *Floccularia albolaripes* is also distinctive. It is

recognized by a yellowish-brown, appressed fibrillose cap which is often appendiculate with veil fragments when young, ragged gill edges, and shaggy white to yellowish scales on the stipe below the veil.

Description courtesy of Mycoweb.com



Editor's Note

Due to my very busy summer and commitments in two other volunteer organizations, this newsletter is slimmer than is desirable. I will provide you with more diverse articles again in the next edition. Thank you for your understanding.

Alberta Foray

- Time to send in your registrations

It is getting closer! The best mushroom event of the year. This year we are very excited for a couple of reasons. First, we have a great faculty of experts coming from all over the world. With financial assistance from the Edmonton Latvian Society we will have one of Latvias leading mycologists, Dr. Inita Daniele, attending. Dr. Daniele, an expert in gilled mushrooms with a special interest in rare fungi, is a mycologist at the Latvian Museum of Natural history. She has written several field guides to the fungi of Latvia.

Dr. Sean Abbot is joining us from Nevada. Sean was one of the founding members of our Society and his expertise is in Ascomycetes or cup fungi. He has written the Ascomycetes of Alberta, and a key to the Boletes of Alberta. His current

work focuses on the identification of indoor moulds. Paul Kroeger is joining us again after being our 2007 Foray mycologist in Lac La Biche. Paul's expertise is wide, but he loves LBM's (little brown mushrooms), the bane of most other mushroom pickers.

For the first time we will have a Russula expert, Dr. Christine Roberts. Russulas are one of the favourite edible mushrooms of forest animals, no matter how many legs they have. These mushrooms are one of the easiest mushrooms to identify to genus but one of the most difficult to identify to species. Dr. Roberts did her PhD work at the University of Victoria on this genus. Dr. Roland Treu will be rounding out our faculty of experts. Dr. Treu is originally from Germany but now teaches at

Athabasca University. Dr. Treu's expertise is in mycorrhizal fungi and the beautiful little mycenas.

Martin Osis will be delivering the **Introduction to Mushroom Identification** course starting Friday morning. This course will have sessions throughout the whole weekend with both in-class and field sessions. Robert Rogers, renowned herbalist and author of *The Fungal Pharmacy* give a lecture on **Medicinal Mushrooms of Alberta**

Second, we have tremendous habitat for picking around Lesser Slave Lake. A diverse area with lots of old forest stands will provide excellent picking opportunities. This is an area we have never been to before so we are bound to find many interesting new fungi.

A registration form is included on the next page of the newsletter.

Tentative Schedule:

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Thursday, August 20			Arrival and registration (supper on your own)
Friday, August 21	- Breakfast - Orientation - First forays - Introduction to Class Session	- Lunch - Afternoon forays - Introduction to Mushroom ID - Field Session - Introduction to Mushroom ID Key Session	- Supper. - Lecture by Dr. Sean Abbott, "A country mushroom comes to the big city" - Lecture by Dr. Christine Roberts, "Understanding Russulas"
Saturday, August 22	- Breakfast - Morning Forays	- Lunch - Afternoon forays - Introduction to Mushroom ID - Hands-on Session - Mycophagy (Cook and taste)	- Supper - Lecture by Paul Kroeger, "History of psychoactive mushrooms" - Lecture by Dr. Inita Daniele, "Rare and endangered fungi"
Sunday, August 23	- Brunch - Walk around the tables	- 1:00 - 3:00 pm Open House - Lecture by Robert Rogers, "Medicinal Mushrooms of Alberta"	



Alberta Foray Registration Form

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Email: _____

Option 1: includes all foray events, all meals, accommodation at the College, and T-shirt

\$195.00 per person x ____ persons = \$ _____

Option 2: includes all foray events, all meals (but not accommodation*), and T-shirt

\$140.00 per person x ____ persons = \$ _____

AMS Membership (*due to liability reasons the foray is open to Society members only*)

\$25.00 per individual x ____ persons = \$ _____

\$35.00 per family x ____ families = \$ _____

Total enclosed: \$ _____

T-shirt size(s): Men' S __, M __, L __, XL __, XXL __

Women's S __, M __, L __, XL __, XXL __

* Camping is available nearby, but not included in this registration option.

**Please send your registration form(s)
and cheque(s) no later than August 10 to:**

Alberta Mycological Society
P.O. Box 1921
Standard Life Building
10405 Jasper Avenue.
Edmonton, Alberta. T5J 3S2

Since this is a catered event, registrations after August 10 cannot be accepted.

City of Champignons Wild Mushroom EXPO 2009

EXPO is the Alberta Mycological Society's showcase for the public and our members. As mycological ambassadors, this is our opportunity to strut our stuff, and astound visitors and members with incredible and edible displays of fantastic fungi! This is one of the best learning experiences, as most of the fungi displayed will have names put to them.

On **Saturday, August 8** all AMS members go to their favourite 'shrooming spots, and gather any and all fungi they can find, complete with habitat features, such as moss, logs, conifer cones, etc.

Saturday evening (6 – 8 pm) will find some of us beginning to prepare our site at the Pine Pavilion in the beautiful Devonian Botanic Garden – setting up tables, displays, etc.



Then, on **Sunday**, the mushroom madness begins – we all arrive at 8 am or so with our mushrooms, and help out with the various tasks that will need to be done: assist the identifiers with mushroom and label placements; organize and man various tables: welcome; sales; edible, medicinal, poisonous mushrooms; visitor comments; kitchen, etc. A kitchen will be set up, whereby delicious

mushroom dishes will be sold. An area will be set apart for a slide presentation twice during the day.

Visitors will be invited to a scheduled "Walk in the search for fungi.

All this needs to be

ready to go for 11:00 am, so we do appreciate all volunteers. AMS volunteers will be allowed free entry into the Garden, and will be asked to log their volunteer time at the Sales Desk on arrival and departure. At **4:00 pm, we wind it up**, clean up the site and away we go.

It's not all work – there are slow times during the day when members will have a chance to see the (usually) extensive array of all the fungi found. Even though I've attended the EXPO for many years, I'm always surprised to see a few specimens that I've never seen before. Volunteers will also receive a meal ticket, so you don't have to pack or buy a lunch. Coffee is available.

After our EXPO is over, you may wish to browse the Garden to visit the other offerings too!

More info will be forthcoming by email as this event draws closer. See you then!

 *Melanie Fjoser*

Watch that Soil Temperature – Morel Foray 2009



Site number	Soil temperature (deg. C) at a depth of 6 cm (2 ½")	morels present
1	9	no
2	8	no
3	12	no
4	6	no
5	13	yes
6	10	yes
7	10	yes
8	11	yes

The first of two Morel Forays started out by meeting in Two Hills the morning of May 23. Seventeen participants met in a local restaurant before heading to the St. Paul Grazing Reserve. There a considerable amount of time was spent in searching for the elusive delicacy, but with no success. It was not until we were gathering at the vehicles for lunch when some of our stragglers came across the first morels in a young aspen stand which I had underestimated as suitable habitat. This put a halt to the eating and almost everyone managed to find a few morels.

As usual I took soil temperatures as I wandered through what I considered suitable habitat. The first four locations had no visible morels nor were any found. The last four sites were locations where morels were found. As morels were discovered my interest in recording soil temperatures understandably waned.

Other species noted for the St. Paul Grazing Reserve include:

- Bjerkandera adusta*
- Calvatia booniana*
- Fomes fomentarius*
- Fomitopsis pinicola*
- Ganoderma applanatum*
- Morchella elata*
- Phellinus tremulae*
- Polyporus alveolaris*
- Polyporus elegans*
- Sarcoscypha coccinea*
- Schizophyllum commune*



Foray in Bow Valley Provincial Park



The dandelion picking was excellent – Poplar Creek with a different focus



Give me some mushrooms to identify so I can wake up.

On June 20, a happy crowd of current and prospective mushroom enthusiasts found their way to Pieter van der Shoot's property near Breton, southwest of Edmonton. It was a beautifully sunny morning, and around 11 am we set out for our first Foray to the Poplar Creek Natural Area. As had to be expected due to the lack of rain, we came back virtually empty-handed. On the positive side, we appreciated even dried up specimens and small LBMs we might otherwise not have bent over for. Anyone whose basket was not empty proudly exclaimed "I actually found one!"

The intensive search made us hungry, so we returned to Pieter's, where we enjoyed the various lunches we had brought along. As usual, Pieter had set up a large table and benches in a sheltered area behind his house. No one seemed to be in a big hurry to get back to the woods. We sat around, chatted, some had their first drink, and Zenon's

guests were busy braiding solstice head wreaths from dandelions, which were very plentiful everywhere. Mid-afternoon we made a large fire and soon after placed the BBQ pig on a spit over the fire.

A group of people went on another foray, this time on Pieter's property with Pieter as the guide.



Roast pork and pot luck dinner time.

Again pickings were very slim, and when we reached the beaver dam Pieter always insists on crossing, some of us decided that this was the perfect moment to turn back. In the meantime Martin had managed to find quite a few shrivelled up



Enjoying the sunny afternoon.



morels, while Zenon came back with some oyster mushrooms. The weather was still beautiful, and everyone enjoyed sitting near the fire.

As we waited for the pig, people got their pot luck dishes ready and started snacking, and once the roasted pig was ready, there was no holding back. The selection of dishes was delicious as always, and it is always nice to discover new concoctions and get inspired for future culinary experiments. After supper we moved back to the fire, where we sat and talked until the rain chased us back to the shelter. Eventually it was time to go to bed, which was either in Pieter's house, a tent, or the back of a vehicle.

All in all it was a nice way to spend the longest days of the year, even if the mushrooms were hiding.



Wine was easier to find than mushrooms.



Pepperonis were a popular item.

Don't Forget to Bring your Camera along – and Use It!



*First Overall - 2008 Photo Contest
Hericium coralloides by Linda Kershaw*

The photo contest is still on, and the best time of the year for mushroom pictures is just beginning.

We are looking for pictures in three categories:
-best poisonous mushroom picture;
-best documentary pictures (one picture or series of pictures); and
-best overall picture

If you are not sure which category to submit your pictures for, don't worry about it. We will assign them to the appropriate categories.

Deadline for submissions is September 30, 2009. Further details on who to submit your pictures to, prizes, etc. are yet to follow.



*Second Overall - 2008 Photo Contest
Lycoperdon perlatum by Jeanette Gasser*

AMS Calendar of Events for 2009

March

20 **President's Dinner**
Location: NAIT Ernest's Dining room

21 **Annual General Meeting**
Location: NAIT

22 **Polypore Foray**
Natural Region: Boreal Forest
Location: Edmonton: Whitemud Park North, access from Fox Drive

April

22 **Regular Meeting**

May

30 **Morels, Verpas and Spring Agarics**
Natural Region: Aspen Parkland/Boreal Forest
Location: St. Paul Grazing Reserve

27 **Regular Meeting**

June

20/21 **Volunteer Stewardship Commitment**
Natural Region: Lower Foothills
Location: Poplar Creek Natural Area Campout

24 **Summer Evening Foray**
Location: Edmonton River Valley

July

18/19 **Summer Fungi**
Natural Region: Lower Foothills
Location: Bow Valley Provincial Park, Kananaskis

22 **Summer Evening Foray**
Location: TBA
Natural Region: Edmonton River Valley

August

1/2 **Mushroom Identification Course**
Natural Region: Foothills near Hinton
Location: Blue Lake

08 **Pre-Exposition Forays**
Natural Region: All Regions
Location: Your choice.
 Mushrooms to be collected for EXPO

09 **City of Champignons Mushroom EXPO**
Location: Devonian Gardens

20/23 **Alberta Foray**
 Leccinum, Russula, Lacatrius and other Agarics
Location: Grouard, Northern Lakes College

26 **Summer Evening Foray**
Natural Region: Edmonton Area
Location: Devonian Botanic Gardens

Please Join Us!!

All forays are undertaken at your own risk. You are responsible for transportation and accommodation.

September

05 **Leccinum, Russula, Agarics**
Natural Region: Foothills near Calgary
Location: Cochrane

11/13 **Foray - NFLD and Labrador**
Natural Region: Boreal Forest
Location: Central Newfoundland - Max Simm's Camp

12/13 **Foothills Foray**
Natural Region: Foothills
Location: Weald Provincial Recreation Area

23 **Regular Meeting**

25/27 **Chanterelles, Lobsters Galore!**
Location: The Fungi Festival, Shuswap, BC

October

28 **Regular Meeting**
 Mushroom Cooking Demonstration
Location: NAIT School of Catering

November

26/29 **NAMA Annual Foray**
Location: Lafayette, Louisiana



General Member Meetings

Fourth Wednesday as listed above -

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Riverbend Library

