NYMS
New York Mycological Society Newsletter
Summer 2019

A Conversation with Artist ANGELINA GUALDONI

Angelina Gualdoni, *Materia Terra*, oil and acrylic on canvas 11" x 9", 2018
This is the canvas upon which the *Strobilomyces floccosus* rests. It is not shown in this image.

On March 3, 2019, I had the pleasure of talking to Angelina Gualdoni at Crystal Flowers, a unique and wonderful Salon Gallery in the Upper West Side. It is the former home, and salon of Florine Stettheimer, an artist involved in the DADA movement. Allison Wade is the current resident and salonniere who lives with the spirit of Stettheimer and the happenings she inspired. What follows is the conversation Angelina and I had amidst her paintings and this rich history…

JP: I see you have an old man of the woods mushroom on top of your painting. I can't remember the latin right now!

AG: *Strobilomyces floccosus*. That's funny. I always feel like the marker of the truly dedicated members of the New York Mycological Society is the ability to recall the Latin names.

JP: If that's the marker, I'm in trouble! (laughter) In your painting, you have these black marks, is that a reference to the texture of the mushroom?

AG: Actually, the mushroom came secondary to the painting. About the black bumpy texture, I am really interested in making the paintings have a strong physical presence. I wanted there to be real body to the painting when you see it in person. I was also thinking about the *materia prima* that the alchemists would talk about, the

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UPCOMING EVENTS

The New York Mycological Society is pleased to present an evening with Long Litt Woon. Long will discuss and read from her recently published memoir, *The Way Through the Woods on Mushrooms and Mourning*.

When:
Monday, August 12th, 6:00 – 8:00PM

Where:
Central Park Arsenal
830 5th Ave. (at 64th St.)
New York, NY 10065
Take the elevator to the 3rd floor

Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing

Long Litt Woon (born 1958 in Malaysia) is an Anthropologist and certified Mushroom Expert in Norway. She went to Norway in her youth as an exchange student. There she met and later married a Norwegian, Eiolf Olsen, and made Norway her home. She currently lives in Oslo, Norway. The author's surname is Long in accordance to Chinese naming tradition.

Long Litt Woon photo by Johs. Bøh

NYMS Newsletter

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Archive copies of the newsletter are available in the Resources section of our website.

Submissions for the next issue of the NYMS newsletter must reach the editor by October 1, 2019. Various formats are acceptable for manuscripts. Address questions to Juniper Perlis, editor. See above for addresses.

Gary Lincoff Memorial Scholarship

Gary Lincoff animated our Mushroom Society over many decades. He educated our membership though his activities as walk leader, author, lecture organizer and lecturer.

For those of us who took a particular interest in becoming more deeply involved in the society and in mycology, he encouraged us and brought us along as mycologists and presenters. He gave us opportunities to give programs during our Emil Lang Lecture Series and at forays where he served as Program Chair.

So it was obvious, when we created a scholarship last February, that it should be named in his honor. With this annual stipend we can continue to bring along new members who become deeply involved in the world of fungi. Their contributions to the field and to our group will bring manifold returns.

The scholarship will fund the registration fee of one our members to one the major forays, NAMA, NEMF, or some other foray that is of interest to the recipient.

We hope that this program will continue Gary's efforts to encourage excellence as we go into the future.

—Paul Sadowski

Sigrid Jakob Awarded the Gary Lincoff Memorial Scholarship for 2019

Sigrid Jakob photo by Tom Bigelow

I take great pleasure in announcing that Sigrid Jakob is the recipient of the Gary Lincoff Memorial Scholarship for 2019. Sigrid's contributions to the club over the past few years have been invaluable — with Mical Moser, Sigrid co-chaired our club's participation in the North American Mycolflora Project (an office which she took over on her own when Mical Moser & Tim Foster relocated to Montreal earlier this year). A number of years ago, Sigrid took on the daunting task of learning the Russula species we encounter in the city and beyond, and thanks to this work, we now are able to attach names to Russula species that otherwise would have been ignored. This year, Sigrid was invited to present a program on Russulas at COMA Mushroom University (a mushroom study program founded by Gary Lincoff and Dianna Smith). Sigrid reprised this excellent presentation, *Not Just Another JAR - An Introduction to Russulas* as part of the NYMS Salon Series. Sigrid is also researching the life and work of one of the great unsung heroes of North American mycology, Gertude Simmons Burlingham. I will conclude by saying thank you, Sigrid! Your dedication to advancing — and deepening — our club's knowledge and understanding of our fungi is appreciated and applauded!

—Tom Bigelow

Remember!

Stay responsibly in touch with us. If your telephone number, mailing or email address changes, please contact Paul Sadowski, Secretary with your new information. On your membership form, please consider going paperless when it comes to receiving these newsletters. Newsletters sent via email (PDF file format) are in color, have live web links, help us contain costs, and use fewer natural resources!

NYMS walks policy: We meet when public transportation arrives. Check the walks schedule for other transportation notes. Walks last 5-6 hours and are of moderate difficulty except where noted. Bring your lunch, water, knife, a whistle (in case you get lost or injured), and a basket for mushrooms. Please let a walk leader know if you are going to leave early.

Leaders have discretion to cancel walks in case of rain or very dry conditions. Be sure to check your email or contact the walk leader before a walk to see if it has been canceled for some reason. Nonmembers' attendance is $5 for an individual and $10 for a family.

We ask that members refrain from visiting walk sites two weeks prior to the walk.

Warning: Many mushrooms are toxic. Neither the Society nor individual members are responsible for the identification or edibility of any fungus.

Angelina Gualdoni, *Between the Clock and the Bed*, oil and acrylic on canvas, 70" x 54", 2018

Angelina Gualdoni, *Nightshade*, oil and acrylic on canvas, 20" x 16", 2018

stuff that earth comes out of. And then the earth being what the mushrooms come out of, what the plants come out of. The texture filling the terrarium was the first, and then I was experimenting with different things to put on top of the painting, inspired in part from thinking about Florine's work... When you look at photos of her displaying her work in this space, there are all these crazy frames that she had built to go around her paintings. There was one that she did in a devotional painting to Marcel Duchamp, who she considered her muse, which has his initials MD, MD, MD all around the painting. And I LOVE that painting so much. I don't have a person who is a muse, and I didn't have enough time to make a frame, so I just started thinking that a lot of the inspiration and knowledge for this work is coming out of my time foraging. I had some of these dried mushrooms around from last summer, and I just started experimenting with which painting would be most appropriate.

JP: So mushrooms are your muse?

AG: Yes! You can read it that way. (laughter)

They've definitely been a background portal to this work. I never wanted to paint the mushrooms inside the work, but incorporating them in other ways and using the knowledge they have pointed at has been instrumental to me in this work.

JP: Can you describe that for me? What do you mean that foraging has led you to the work that you are doing, and what we see here in this show?

AG: I can talk about it in a visual way, and in a knowledge based way. So visually — that kind of way that you use your eyes when you are in the forest, when you're scanning for shape or tone or color, depending on what you're looking for. There is this visual experience that's happening where you are really picking out shapes and distinguishing them from noise and texture. And I think about that in the ways I use these patterns that come back to front and create a kind of flicker. And then I set these foreground shapes like the dustpan, or the beaker, or the shape of the plant, against that pattern. So that process of seeing and looking reflects the visual experience of foraging or hunting. And then the knowledge base — this work features plant life mostly and is partially based on imagining possible hybrids of plants that would heal or cure one. It's based on both verified and unverified herbalism. And the way that I started to investigate that was just by going out when it was too early to look for mushrooms in the spring, but there were always plants around, so I would start to identify the plants. I came to love nettles for instance, which are one of my favorite foods now. The mushrooms were a portal to greater knowledge about plants and landscape in general which is what really opened the doors to this work.

JP: It sounds like there is an interplay between foreground and background which reflects your experience of foraging. Is that something you had in your work already and which you recognized while you were in the field, or did that come after your time spent in the woods?

AG: It existed before. In past work I've always been interested in inverting ground, foreground and background. And I would do that optically, making voids, presences, pushing from the subject back. That has existed in my work for a long time. But I think the distinguishing of a figure within a pattern field started happening in a confluence. I never connected the one to the other, but it did happen at about the same time that I was starting to do more foraging.

JP: It's beautiful how you make that work in your paintings. They seem to reveal themselves over time, through the process of looking. And I certainly notice the flicker of foreground and background in the field. It's a trippy thing. Especially in morel season!

AG: Yes! (laughter) Black trumpets are even harder. My favorite moment was before I had even found a morel. And it was this total Schrodinger's Cat situation. I didn't know if it was a good morel spot or not and I didn't know if there were no morels there because they came last week and were gone now, or if there were no morels because they hadn't come out yet, but they'll be here next week, or if there were never any morels there, or if I just couldn't see them. All I knew was that I just wasn't seeing them. That riddle haunted me until I did actually find one. And then I knew, yes, my eyes are capable of seeing morels. (laughter)

JP: I have definitely had that experience!

AG: One of the things I love about going out with other people is that they see what I miss, so my own blindness is pointed out to me.

Angelina Gualdoni, *The Impervious Clock,* acrylic and oil on canvas, 12" x 16", 2018

JP: Well, since you are one of the best finders at morel breakfast, I don't think you are too blind to morels!

We've discussed what influence foraging has had on your work. What kind of influence has your work had on your foraging? Has your ability to visually navigate the landscape been influenced by your time in the studio?

AG: Definitely, because as I get more specific about the plants in the paintings, I think, does this ever grow in this area? I should keep my eyes open for this type of leaf or this type of plant. And honestly, the facebook group is very helpful for that. It's like flashcards. I can see that somebody found something in this region so I know it's out right now, and I know to be aware of it.

JP: I feel like there is an advantage in the field to being an artist because you have trained your eyes to look. You've developed the relationship between looking and thinking in a certain way.

AG: Yeah, absolutely. Although the kind of looking I do in the studio, or as a teacher is more critical, and the kind of looking I do in the forest is more primal. It really taps into a very deep root. It feels very different from the kind of looking I do as an art teacher, which is how I spend so much of my time.

JP: It's good you have that foundation, your muse of nature. How long have you been a member of the NYMS?

AG: About 3 years.

JP: How has your relationship to mushrooms evolved over that time?

AG: I definitely mostly identify as a pot hunter, looking for delicious things to eat. But I've got to say, the amount of information on conservation, and ecological preservation and other topics I've just stumbled onto just from reading more, is incredibly exciting. Where I started out on a kind of Dionysyan pursuit, it increasing seems to be a framework for looking at and thinking about the future of the world.

Chanterelles' New Best Friend: Sous Vide

by Charles Luce

Ah, Summer — mushroom harvest season! There's also an abundance of produce, and fresh-grown spices too — all spread across a landscape drenched in wretched humid heat. Now, raise your hand if you're just dying to go into the kitchen, fire up the stove, and cook.

I thought not. Even those of us who say, "Eat like our grandmothers" have little interest in cooking like her, which is to say toiling over a sweltering oven.

Enter Sous Vide, the modern appliance guaranteed to prepare astonishing food but never heat up the apartment. Sous Vide machines extract the most flavors from — well, everything — and make them available to your mouth. Mushrooms too? Oh yes. Sous Vide is just about the best friend mushrooms ever had. Particularly that summer fungal fave, chanterelles.

A Sous Vide machine is essentially a water-filled and insulated box equipped with a heater, sensitive thermostat, and gentle circulator. One places food in a water-proof container — usually food-safe plastic — removes all air, then immerses the container into the Sous Vide water bath for a long, long time. Sous Vide temperatures range from around 110°F to just below boiling. Cooking times can run upwards of several days. Ever had "Three Day Short Ribs" in a restaurant? You've eaten a Sous Vide meal.

I acquired a Sous Vide machine about 4 years ago with the intention of using it for proteins. After running through a gamut of beef and lamb, chicken and salmon, a bizarre thought crossed my mind: Why not mushrooms? I had a stash of dried morels, which I was planning to reconstitute in heavy cream. What, I wondered, would happen if I both reconstituted and Sous-Vide cooked at the same time?

There was one obstacle to my plan, the plastic bag. My vacuum sealer balked at anything wet. Meats and fishes had to be patted dry. Even a thin layer of cream would jam the works. My initial solution was to put cream and morels into the bag, freeze them, then seal and Sous Vide. It worked, and the flavor was wonderful. However the cream separated.

Fast forward to July 2019. Not only have I come home with a nice bag of *Chantherellus lateritius*, but my pantry is cluttered with empty mason jars. (I like to can tomatoes, OK?) The next step is obvious. Heavy cream + chanterelles + mason jar + Sous Vide. Time to work out the details. Which I have, and I share, immediately below.

Before going on to the recipe, some notes:

Sous Vide machines are affordable, thanks to their growing popularity. You can get simple heater-recirculation-thermostat devices for under $100, but the complete unit is a better idea if you have enough storage space. Note that you'll need a water-jacket device even with the simple heater-recirculation-thermostat. Here's a website that rates the choices: https://sousvideguy.com/best-sous-vide-machines/.

To use a mason jar you'll need to pre-heat the cream, and to do that accurately you'll need a calibrated thermometer. An instant-read digital model is the best bet, and as usual Wirecutter has recommendations: https://thewirecutter.com/reviews/the-best-instant-read-thermometer/.

It needs saying that you're not actually canning the mushrooms, so the mason jar lids don't have to be new and unblemished. In the same breath I must tell you that jar-cooked mushrooms in cream sauce MUST be refrigerated and are only safe to eat for about 2 weeks. Even at that they MUST be heated to above 140°F before serving.

As for chanterelles, I find that smaller, chunkier *C. lateritius* are more toothsome and tasty than *C. cibarius s.l.* I also like to wash, not brush. That's wash in water. Sacrilegious, I know, but washing removes the grit faster and does not (believe it or not) effect flavor.

Recipe: Mason Jar Sous Vide Chanterelles in cream

Prep time: 15 - 25 minutes
Cook time: 12 - 18 hours
Total hands-on time: < 30 minutes

Ingredients:
1 quart or more chanterelles, cleaned and halved. (If mushrooms are large, chop into pieces small enough to fit into a mason jar)
1 quart or more heavy cream. (DON'T SKIMP! Use the good stuff.)

Equipment:
Sous Vide machine.
1 or more quart size mason jars with lids.
Instant-read thermometer.
Microwave oven or other means of heating cream.

Procedure:
1) Clean and halve, or chop, the mushrooms and loosely place them into the mason jar(s). Add cream to the mason jar(s) to within 1/2 inch of the top. Place filled jars into Sous Vide and add hot tap water to the machine to about the same level as the cream. At this point you're only measuring water, setting its level to adequately cover most of the mason jar(s). You want the jars to be heated evenly, top to bottom, but not covered with water, which might result in them falling over and leaking.

2) Set Sous Vide to 135°F. Pour cream out of the mason jars and into a microwave-proof bowl or measuring cup. Heat cream to 135°F using the middle power setting and checking temperature frequently. You don't want the cream to boil, simmer or separate. Add warm cream back to mushroom-filled jars, place lids on jars and immerse into Sous Vide. Process 12 to 16 hours.

3) Immediately refrigerate cooked mushrooms. They are now ready to be used in all sorts of ways, from pasta sauces to gougère filling. Just be sure to gently heat the mix to the point of simmer before eating.

Final note: Most of the mushroom flavor is in the cream, so be certain to use both cream and mushrooms in whatever dish you're planning. If the mushroom flavor is too intense you can dilute it by heating plain cream first then adding the Sous-Vide mix. You may feel the need to add a touch of salt, some thyme or savory, sautéd shallots, lemon juice or pureed sweet red pepper. It's all fair game!

The Way Through the Woods: On Mushrooms and Mourning By Long Witt Woon

New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2019
286pp.

Reviewed by Mical Moser

We all know how closely death hovers over mushrooms. Not all mushrooms, maybe, but certainly over the subject. A dead tree is a prime foraging spot; a dead animal is always worth checking. There are Dead Man's Fingers and the Corpse Finder. For me, looking at a dying ash or elm or hemlock used to cause me pain (it sometimes still does), so what a relief it was to learn about the vitality at the other end of the loss in the form of oyster mushrooms, enoki, and reishi.

For Long Litt Woon, the connection was even sharper. As she recounts in her book *The Way Through the Woods : On Mushrooms and Mourning* (Spiegal and Grau), after her much adored husband died suddenly, the thing that nursed her back to vitality was an immersion in the world of wild mushroom foraging. Long's book is in turn tender, insightful, funny, and full of useful information.

An anthropologist by training, I was especially impressed with her account of integrating into a local foraging community. She was masterful with her rich ethnographic detail about unwritten rules (such as how to behave when someone shares a spot), and various rites of passage (finding your first morel!). Long lives in Norway and after a class on the subject, she immersed herself by going out on regular walks with the Greater Oslo Fungi and Useful Plants Society. A lot of their mushrooms are different from ours, but most of the group's norms and mores were easy to recognize.

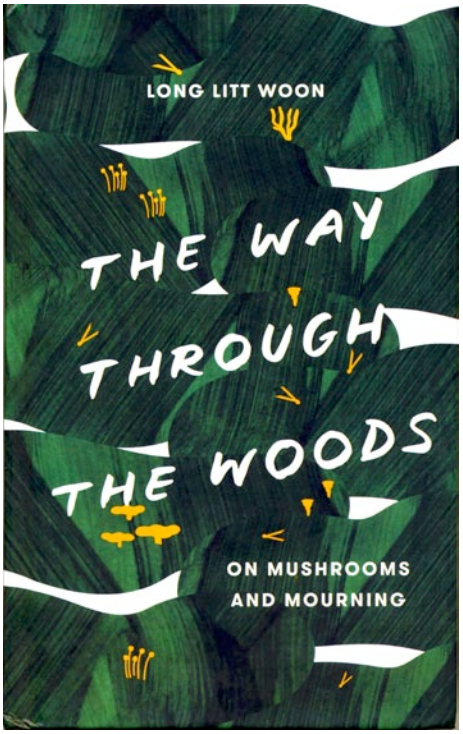
That said, I was equally fascinated by the differences. In Norway, you can become a certified mushroom inspector after learning to identify a specific group of edible and poisonous mushrooms. Long, who is certified, tells us about the 40-hour Inspector's course, the studying, the tradition of waiting a year after completing the course before taking the exam in order to make sure you have knowledge instead of crammed facts. The Inspectors then volunteer to staff tables stationed outside Norwegian forests, where less knowledgable foragers come, often waiting in long lines, to have their mushrooms vetted.

Long's book is all about process — the long process of developing an expertise in a new subject, and the long process of mourning and finding one's way back to friendship, feeling, enjoying food, laughing again, and becoming *interested* in something. For that part of the story alone, I can well imagine giving this book to someone who isn't even interested in mushrooms.

For beginner mushroomers, there's basic information about species, safety, poisons, psilocybin, why it's worthwhile to join a mushrooming group, how to make friends with mushroomers (invite us to dinner!), about the happiness that comes with a slow, focused walk through the forest, etc. There are recipes and a discussion of how Norwegians prepare mushrooms (butter and salt) versus how they are prepared in Long's native Malaysia (sesame oil, soy sauce, ginger).

For the non-beginner, there's all kinds of wonderful insight into how different cultures think about fungus, down to different nationalities disagreeing on whether a species like *Cortinarius armillatus* is toxic! One of Long's most unusual subjects is the way that our olfactory senses — and the scent descriptions we learn to assign to mushrooms — are as reflective of our culture as they are of our noses. So yes, that mushroom may smell like almonds while at the same time, no, you're not wrong if you can't smell it.

She comments, "Wine and beer experts have developed a whole vocabulary to capture the multifaceted aromascapes they encounter when they raise a glass of wine or beer to their noses, but mushroom experts seem to do the exact opposite, *reducing* the olfactory complexity with their limited range of descriptors. I suspect that this is not so much because mushroom aromas are all that different from those of wine or beer, but more because the mushroom community is stuck down a side road in the olfactory landscape." Here, here! She mentions one chef who goes so far as to prepare a paste of flour and water to compare with a mushroom that is supposedly farinaceous. (It's not. Or rather, it is "farinaceous" in the sense of the scent we mean when we use that word but not in the sense of smelling like actual flour.)



Lastly, I need to mention that the NYMS has a cameo in the book with Long's story of walking with Gary Lincoff in Central Park, and she mentions our five borough fungal survey too. I know a number of NYMS members went to the Gary Lincoff Memorial Foray in Chile with Long; for the rest of us, this personal and intelligent book is an excellent introduction.

WHO'S IN A NAME?

Biscogniauxia atropunctata
fifty-third in an ongoing series
by John Dawson

Biscogniauxia atropunctata, illustrated in Beug's and Bessettes' *Ascomycete Fungi of North America* and in Binion et al.'s *Macrofungi Associated with Oaks of Eastern North America*, is a pathogenic pyrenomycete that grows on the trunks of oak trees. One of some 40 species in the genus *Biscogniauxia*, it is found primarily in the southeastern United States, but ranges as far north as Pennsylvania.

The generic name *Biscogniauxia* is difficult to correctly spell and pronounce, and though its form is that of an eponym, it is not obvious whom it commemorates. It actually honors a Belgian botanist, Alfred Célestin Cogniaux, who was a renowned expert on plants in the families *Cucurbitaceae* (gourds), *Orchidaceae* (orchids) and *Melastomaceae*. But what is the 'Bis' all about, and what contributions did Cogniaux make to mycology?

As explained in the article "Biscogniauxia" by Dave Malloch,[1] it was the German botanist Otto Kuntze who coined that name. He could not simply call the new genus he created *Cogniauxia*, because that name had already been applied by the French botanist Henri Baillon to a vine in the gourd family. Nor could he use the name *Neocogniauxia*, which the German botanist Rudolf Schlechter had preempted as the name for a genus of orchids. So he resorted to the prefix 'bis-', meaning "a second time" or "again". As to pronunciation, the name Cogniaux appears to be of French origin. If so, then *Biscogniauxia* ought presumably to be pronounced bis-cone-YO-zee-uh.

Cogniaux was born on 7 April 1841 in Robechies, a village near Chimay in the Ardennes forest region of Belgium. He received his primary schooling there before enrolling in the normal school in Nivelles, which he attended from 1858–61 and from which he earned a secondary teaching certificate. During the next eleven years he then taught mathematics and natural science in several Belgian schools. He married in 1865 and was the father of two daughters.

Cogniaux never earned a college degree and was entirely self-taught in botany. But his interest in that field was so great that in 1862 he helped to found the Royal Belgian Botanical Society, and through it he became acquainted with many other Belgian botanists of note. Ten years later, on the basis of his participation in that society and on the recommendation of its chairman, he was hired as an "aide-naturaliste" by Belgium's Jardin Botanique de l'Etat.

At the state botanic garden Cogniaux worked to establish herbaria, first for phanerogams and then for cryptogams, including fungi — apparently his only connection with mycology. He also began studying dried specimens of species of *Cucurbitaceae* and was recruited to assist with work on the publication of the *Flora Brasiliensis*, "the largest flora ever produced, issued in 130 parts over a period of 66 years".[2] He was the author of parts IV–VI of volume III of that immense work, devoted to the *Orchidaceae*, which appeared during the years 1893–1906.

In the meantime Cogniaux's observations on the *Cucurbitaceae* were published as part of the Prodromus of A-P de Candolle,[3] work for which Cogniaux was awarded the Prix quinquennal of the Société de Physique et d'Histoire naturelle de Genève in 1879. Despite that honor, however, Cogniaux resigned from the botanic garden the next year, apparently due to disagreements with the garden's director, and returned to teaching, first in the town of Jodoigne and then, from 1884 until his retirement in 1901, in Verviers. He retired to the village of Genappe outside Nivelles, and in 1903 was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Heidelberg. He died in Genappe on 15 April 1916, in the midst of World War I.

In retirement Cogniaux devoted his energies to continuing his botanical work, which he had never given up. Indeed, all of his most important publications appeared after his resignation from the botanic garden. In addition to the two works mentioned earlier, he was the author of *Melastomaceae* (1891) and coauthor of the 1019-page treatise *Les orchidées exotiques et leur culture en Europe* (1894) and of the two-volume works *Dictionnaire Iconographiques des Orchidees* (1896–1907) and *Cucurbitaceae-Cucurbiteae-Cucumerinae* (published posthumously in 1924).

Following his death Cogniaux's large private herbarium, containing over 1200 specimens of *Cucurbitaceae* and nearly 4000 specimens of *Melastomaceae*, was acquired by the National Botanic Garden of Belgium.

[1] One of the principal sources for this profile, published in *Omphalina IV:1* (January 13, 2013), pp. 3–6. My other primary sources were the biographical sketch of Cogniaux on the website of the Belgian National Botanic Garden, http://www.br.fgov.be/PUBLIC/GENERAL/HISTORY/cogniaux.php and the memoir "Un orchidologue belge digne de mémoire: Alfred Cogniaux (1841-1916)" by Pierre Jacquet in *L'Orchidophile 157* (2003), 167–171. The portrait of Cogniaux reproduced here appears in all three of those articles.

[2] Quoted from http://www.severens.net/Auteurs/BiografieAuteurs/AuteursC/Celestin_Alfred_Cogniaux.html. Nevertheless, Cogniaux rarely if ever left Belgium and never set foot in South America.

[3] Described in installment 16 of this series.

Biscogniauxia marginata, Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx, April 5, 2015

Biscogniauxia mediterranea, Seton Falls Park, Bronx, February 16, 2019

The Genus Biscogniauxia in New York City

By Tom Bigelow

Biscogniauxia, a member of the family *Xylariaceae*, has a worldwide distribution with over 50 species recognized, three of which the New York Mycological Society encounters on city walks. Distinguishing features of the genus include tissues that do not release pigment in KOH (unlike, for example, *Daldinia* and *Hypoxylon*); ascospores that are (for the most part) unornamented, and that are usually dark brown to black, and feature a germ slit. Other genera of carbonaceous, applanate members of the *Xylariaceae* that we routinely find in New York City are *Camillea*, *Diatrype*, *Hypoxylon*, *Whalleya*. With a little bit of practice, these genera can usually be readily separated using macro features. The genus name is not descriptive of the fungus, rather it is named, in an odd fashion, for Belgian botanist Célestin Alfred Cogniaux (see John Dawson's article on the previous page).

In their monograph of the genus, Yu-Ming Ju et al. affirm that all species of *Biscogniauxia* are pathogens of angiosperms, infecting their hosts bark when they are in a weakened, compromised state due to disease, age, and primarily, drought. But that is not the end of the story, as *Biscogniauxia* are also facultative saprophytes, that is to say, while they spend most of their life-cycles as parasites of living bark tissue, they also continue to degrade wood after the host has died.

The three species of Biscogniauxia found in New York City, are briefly discussed below.

Biscogniauxia atropunctata is one of the most commonly encountered fungi in the city, where we see it primarily on oak and beech. It is easily recognized by its silvery-white applanate stromata, dotted with black ostioles. In age, the silvery-white surface erodes revealing the entirely black tissue below — at which point it can superficially resemble species of *Diatrype*. Gary Lincoff bestowed the common name "The Biscuit" to this fungus (a homophonic play on the famously unpronounceable genus name), which quickly took hold in the NYMS.

Biscogniauxia marginata is usually found on trees in the family *Rosaceae*. We see it on dead branches — attached or on the ground — of old apple, crab apple, serviceberry trees. Fruit bodies are small, raised, disc-shaped, having a slightly concave surface. They bear a passing resemblance to tiny hockey pucks. This fungus is commonly referred to as Nailhead Canker by arborists.

Biscogniauxia mediterranea While there have been vague suggestions of this fungus occurring in NYC for several years, it was first confirmed only this past February in Seton Falls Park, Bronx. It has since been found in Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx, as well as in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, and High Rock Park, Staten Island, where it has been collected on beech and oak. The stromata are applanate, black, and can appear somewhat shiny. It has a roughened surface due to coarse, nipple-like ostioles that project beyond the stromal surface. The margin (edge) of the stroma can be noticeably raised and thickened — a feature we've seen in all of our collections, but which is not always present. In keeping with Gary's common name for *Biscogniauxia atropuncata*, Ethan Crenson dubbed this fungus Biscotti.

Keep an eye out for these and similar fungi on your next walk in a city park — and let a new world reveal itself to you!

Biscocgniaxia atropunctata, Red Hook, Brooklyn, April 12, 2012

Glossary

Applanate: flattened, horizontally expanded
Ostiole: a small pore or opening through which spores are discharged.
Stroma: a mass of fungal tissue that has spore-bearing structures either embedded in it or on its surface.

References

Ju, Y.-M, Rogers, J.D., San Martin Gonzales, F. & Granmo, A. (1998). "The Genus Biscogniauxia." Mycotaxon, 66: 1-98.

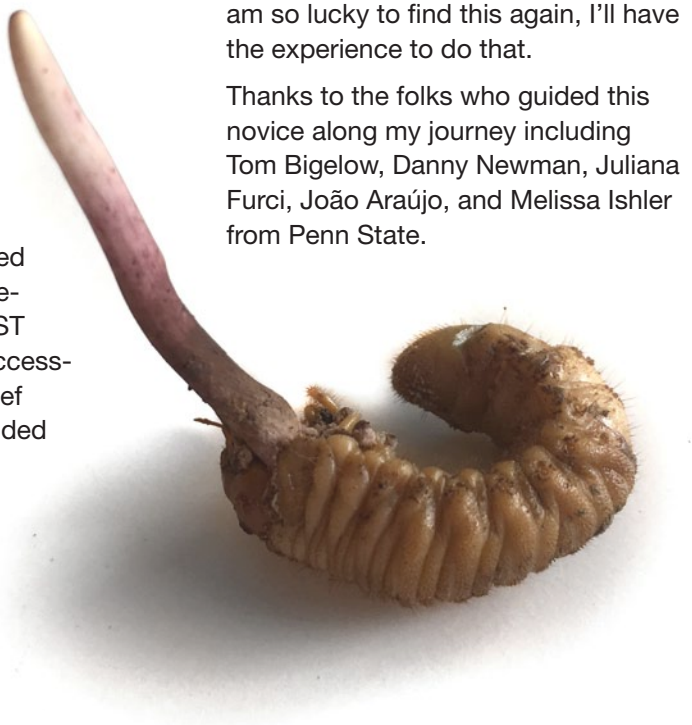
Finding a Cordyceps

by Gerry McDonald

This spring was a slow one for me. I had ankle replacement surgery on March 11th and despite being non-weight bearing for quite a while, I found ways to be outside. During mid and late April, I scooted around on my butt and edged several of the flower beds in front and around our upstate rural home. On a sunny day toward the end of April, I happened to be sifting compost as my wife Carol and I were readying some vegetable garden beds. As I sat on the ground next to the 2-year old pile, and sifted shovelfuls of compost into a wheelbarrow, I could see a pretty big grub on the screen that looked to be biting on a stick. I picked it up and after a pause, I realized I had found my first Cordyceps. The grub looked so fresh and alive but it wasn't, it had been commandeered.

Being in a precarious spot with no camera phone, I set the grub off to the side in the shade nearby. About an hour later, Carol went and got my phone and after knocking off most of the dirt, I snapped a couple pictures and put the grub in a small jar that and brought it up to the house where I dried it in a sunny window. In retrospect, this was a mistake, but we'll get to that later. Doing what any mushroom groupie would do, I posted the pictures on facebook. Soon after, Tom Bigelow suggested it might be something similar to *Cordyceps ravenelli* and he posted the 1941 *Mycologia* article "*Cordyceps stylophoroa* and *Cordyceps ravenelli*" by E. B. Mains. The size and shape of my specimen was much smaller and a different shape than that given for *C. ravenelli* so I figured it wasn't that. I contacted Danny Newman at Tom's suggestion and he thought it could be a *Purpurocillium* species and suggested I post the pictures on mushroomobserver.org and on the Cordyceps facebook page. Danny and a friend from Chile both referred me to João Araújo, a researcher from Penn State. João thought that although the specimen might resemble *Purpurociliulium*, it was immature and lacked the taxonomic features to make an identification. Yet, despite the coloration, he thought it might be something similar to *Ophiocordyceps melolnthae*. João said the best way to get an identification was to sequence the DNA.

João arranged for me to send a sample to the Penn State lab. The technician said the DNA had not been degraded and was of good quality for testing. In early July João analyzed the DNA sequencing results. He made a BLAST comparison of two successfully amplified genes (tef and RPB1) and concluded the species I found is an *Ophiocordyceps* belonging to the *O. ravenelli/ O. nigrella* clade. He thought it had the potential to be a new species but in order to confirm, it would require a morphological comparison. Unfortunately my specimen was immature and lacked the necessary morphological traits that would be used to compare it to previously described species.



This brings us back to that sunny day at the end of April when I found the specimen. In retrospect, what I wish I had done was set up an incubator like spot in the nearby compost pile where I could have placed the specimen and let it continue to mature. If I am so lucky to find this again, I'll have the experience to do that.

Thanks to the folks who guided this novice along my journey including Tom Bigelow, Danny Newman, Juliana Furci, João Araújo, and Melissa Ishler from Penn State.

Musings on Mushrooms and The Spotlight Being Shown Upon Them

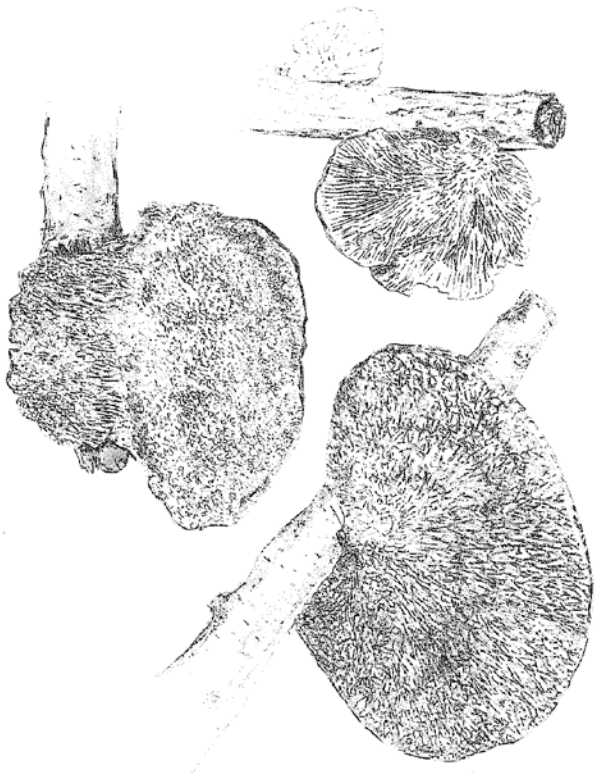
By Emily Sundberg

Though eroticism came in many forms in 2017's *Phantom Thread*, there is something about the scenes where the main character, Alma, interacts with mushrooms that is especially tantalizing for all of the senses. It comes in many parts: foraging for food for her lover Reynolds Woodcock, carefully cooking it for him while fingering through the pages of a research book about mushrooms, and then feeding them to him in a carefully prepared omelette which then poisons him in just the right dose. Yes, the fashion and dramatic relationship in this movie were wonderful, but the food scenes seemed to hit viewers right at their culinary Achilles heel. And, so, mushrooms entered headlines through the movie, which went on to win an Academy Award.

If it was any other ingredient that poisoned Woodcock, say expired milk or a broken pill, would audiences have responded in this way? I think not. There is something about the natural world, especially mushrooms, which attracts us. If Lewis Carroll didn't have you dreaming about mouthfuls of the things after reading *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, then perhaps Mike Teavee's mom sticking her hand into mushrooms made of frosting in *Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory* made you think of the growths in a delightful way.

Online Ceramics, a streetwear brand with a focus on graphic shirts, recently posted a photo on Instagram of a new shirt that has the words "Hunt Mushrooms Not Animals". Another says "I See Mycelium" in a Tarantino-esque font. Both resulted in conversations in the brand's comments section that surrounded the need and want for these shirts in particular.

And they're not just being represented more publically, they're being grown in the flashiest of spots. Chef Danny Bowien's trendy downtown restaurant, Mission Chinese Food, is a staple to certain scenes of New York. If you're not staring at someone's glowing neon MSG margarita, you're staring at their flowing neon hair. But the restaurant also boasts a glowing miniature mushroom farm. I recently read in The New York Times about a store in Venice that boasts a live mushroom garden in the store. The clothes? I don't remember. But they aren't the point. The mushrooms get people in the door.



Dedaeleopsis confrigosa, graphite on paper by Leah Krauss

Catskill Weekend 2019 October 4-6

We are returning to Soyuzivka (Soy-ya-`zyou-ka) in Kerhonkson, NY for our Catskill Weekend. Soyuzivka is a Ukrainian Village Resort in the heart of the Shawangunks west of New Paltz.

Our Society has spent autumns hunting mushrooms in this area and hopes this autumn will be as productive as it has been in years past.

The weekend begins with a Friday night travelers' buffet supper at the Main House Dining Room where all meals will be served.

We have reserved the Kiev Lodge, a beautiful house that sleeps 18-20 people in single & double rooms. The house features a spacious living room and a balcony offering a magnificent view of the Catskills to the north. Should we exceed that number we'll take another lodge to handle overflow.

Saturday starts with breakfast, followed by a foray in nearby forests. We'll split up into a couple or three groups. After a lunch, we'll do more foraging in the area. We'll have a mycology session in the late afternoon followed by Saturday night dinner. Sunday we'll have a breakfast before breaking for our return trip to New York with stops along the way for mushroom hunts in the Shawangunks.

We estimate the cost of the weekend to be $245.00 for single occupancy $195.00 for double occupancy. Prices are per person and include food and lodging. We will accept a small group of Saturday commuters who can join us for breakfast, lunch & dinner for $75.00

Contact Paul Sadowski for further details pabloski1@verizon.net. Note: a $100 deposit should accompany the printed reservation coupon, payable by check to NYMS. Reserve no later than September 23, 2019. Send an email pabloski1@verizon.net to let Paul know you have sent your reservation in.

This weekend is open only to NYMS Members in good standing.

For further information on Soyuzivka visit their website http://www.soyuzivka.com

For bus transportation visit Short Line Bus.

Paul Sadowski
205 E. 94 St., #9
New York, NY 10128-3780

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Individual– Membership Renewal $15.00 (before April 1, 2019); New membership $20.00
Family– Membership Renewal $25.00 (before April 1, 2019); New Membership $30.00
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Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009
or go to http://www.newyorkmyc.org/new-member-signup-information/ to sign up via PayPal

NAMA MEMBERSHIP

Through the NYMS, members can optionally also get North American Mycological Association membership at a discount.
Visit: http://www.namyco.org/join.php
Join or Renew as a member of NYMS (affiliated club)

Chanterelle Weekend July 26-28, 2019 RESERVE BY JUNE 1, 2019
Send non-refundable deposit of $50.00 per person by check made payable to **NYMS** and mail to:
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❑ Check here to get your NYMS newsletter in color PDF by email and by regular mail ❑ By email only, paperless.

RELEASE

I hereby release the New York Mycological Society, any officer or member thereof, from any legal responsibility for injuries or accidents incurred during or as a result of any mushroom identification, field trip, excursion, meeting or dining, sponsored by the Society.

Your signature(s) _____ Date _____