

Book Review

Gulden, G., Mohn Jenssen, K. & Stordal, J. 1985: *Arctic and alpine fungi*. Part 1. — 62 pp. Grönland Grafiske. ISBN 82-9 91 301-0-7.

Gulden, G. & Mohn Jenssen, K. 1988: *Arctic and alpine fungi*. Part 2. — 58 pp. Grönland Grafiske. ISBN 82-991301-1-5.

Senn-Irlet, B., Mohn Jenssen, K. & Gulden, G. 1990: *Arctic and alpine fungi*. Part 3. — 58 pp. Boksenteret, Oslo. ISBN 82-991301-2-3.

Schumacher, T. & Mohn Jenssen, K. 1992: *Arctic and alpine fungi*. Part 4. — 66 pp. Benjamin Sts & Trykk, Oslo. ISBN 82-991301-3-1.

The four parts of the series *Arctic and Alpine Fungi* being reviewed here were published at two to three year intervals between 1985 and 1992. The first part, written by the Norwegian mycologists Gro Gulden, Kolbjörn Mohn Jenssen and Jens Stordal, deals with Agaricales, mainly from the Norwegian mountains, while the second part, co-authored by Gulden and Mohn Jenssen, is concerned with Agaricales from Svalbard. Part three has been written by Beatrice Senn-Irlet, a Swiss mycologist from Lausanne, and Gulden and Mohn Jenssen, with the focus this time on alpine fungi from the Canton of Berne, Switzerland. The operculate discomycetes from central south Norway are the subject of part four, which is the work of Trond Schumacher and Mohn Jenssen.

Information is given at the beginning of the volumes on the phytogeography of the alpine and Arctic areas and on the fungus genera to be examined. Altogether, the descriptions of fungi in the four parts cover 25 species belonging to several systematic groups. The choice of species in each volume is based on the fungus flora prevailing in the localities, zones and habitats selected for study.

Except for two or three, Kolbjörn Mohn Jenssen has taken all the photographs in the series. His decision to show the fungi growing in their natural habitat enhances the informative value of the photographs. In almost all cases the characteristics of the fungi show up well, and the arrangement and colour composition are good. Use of the same photographer lends a degree of uniformity to the series, which taxonomically is somewhat heterogeneous.

Important macroscopic characteristics are described beneath the photographs, while the microscopy, including drawings of spores and other microscopic structures, is

presented on the reverse side of the page. The drawings are based on the specimens depicted in the colour photos. To concentrate all information on a single sheet was a good solution, and in most cases the information is fully adequate for identifying the fungus in question. The microscopic drawings are sometimes rough and overly general, even while occupying considerable space on the page, and the inclusion of more detail in the drawings would have been an improvement. A number of high quality SEM graphs are reproduced in the fourth part of the series, but normal microscopic photos alongside the drawings would have been useful as well.

Each of the four volumes offers information about the ecology and distribution of the fungi. The nomenclature is dealt with to some degree, and the references to the literature should assist the reader in finding new information. It would have been helpful, however, if the authors of articles had been mentioned as well, not just the series and volume of the article containing the description. The lists of references at the end of each volume are cumulative and together cover all four parts.

Since the volumes are bound only with a plastic spine, pages can easily be rearranged into any order (alphabetical, systematic) the reader wishes. Despite a reordering citing of the volumes in later literature will still be possible since the volume number and year of publication are printed on each page.

The layout and print are of high quality, which not surprisingly is reflected in the price. Volumes like these become instant classics of course. Mycologists will welcome the series as filling a real need. Until now there has been little literature, furnished with photos and drawings, allowing the identification of alpine and especially Arctic fungi.

It is to be hoped that the editors will go on to produce new volumes. Every new photograph and description assists our understanding of Arctic and alpine fungi. To compare the concepts of fungus flora in the Arctic and alpine areas in Europe is exceedingly useful. The next step will be to look to other continents.

The books may be ordered from Soppkonsulentent A/S, Lyngveien 3, N-1430 As Norway.

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