

# MYCOLOGICAL NEWS

## Truffling South of the Border

Most major lineages of fungi have evolved a hypogeous (truffle) fruiting habit. Recently, thanks to support from an NSF grant, mycologists from the US and Mexico teamed up during September 14-25, 2007 for the first of three Mexican truffle expeditions aimed at documenting the biodiversity of *Tuber* and other truffle species in Mexico. 'Team Truffle' included students and researchers at Duke, Harvard, Oregon State University, Universidad Autonoma de Tlaxcala, Instituto de Ecologia, Xalapa and the Instituto Tecnológico de Ciudad Victoria.

The mountainous forests east of Mexico City are well known for their high biodiversity, rich ethnological history, and numerous scenic volcanoes. This first expedition to the hills above Xalapa and Tlaxcala, Mexico visited over 15 sites and made over 150 collections of hypogeous taxa from Oak (*Quercus*), Pine (*Pinus*), Douglas-Fir (*Pseudotsuga*) and Fir (*Abies*) habitats.

Hypogeous species of Ascomycete (*Tuber*, *Genea*, *Gilkeya*, *Genabea*, *Hydnotyra*, *Pachyphloeus*, *Elaphomyces*), Zygomycete (*Endogone*), and Basidiomycete (*Gautieria*, *Hysterangium*, *Rhizopogon*, *Cystangium*, *Melanogaster*, *Leucogaster*, *Sclerogaster*, *Trappea*, *Mycolevis*, *Macowanites*) fungi were collected, along with many epigeous species. Many of these are likely to be new species, and will be described in publications with collaborators. Collections were photographed, described



**Genea collected under *Quercus***

and tissue was sampled from interesting taxa for DNA analysis. The expedition team also visited the mycological herbaria and laboratories of collaborator institutions including Instituto de Ecologia, Xalapa (host: Gaston Guzman) and the Universidad Autonoma de Tlaxcala (host: Arturo Estrada).

The pursuit of truffle diversity in Mexico will continue in 2008 with a field trip to north central Mexico (Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Victoria, Tamaulipas), followed by an excursion to the southwest (Oaxaca / Chiapas) in 2009. The group also plans to host at least one workshop on truffle diversity at a future meeting. This project is funded by NSF award # 0641297 'REVSYS: Phylogenetic and Revisionary Systematics of North American Truffles (Tuber, Ascomycota)' awarded to R. Vilgalys at Duke University.

Participants in the 2007 US/Mexico truffle expedition included (from Mexico) Gaston Guzman, Arturo Estrada Torres, Jesus Garcia Jimenez, Gonzalo Guevara Guerrero, José Luis Martínez y Perez, Rosario Medel, Flor Ramirez, Miguel Muñoz, Alejandro Luz Kong, Adriana Esquivel Montoya, Gema Flores Galinda, Margarito Castillo, Fret Cervantez Diaz; (from USA) Jim Trappe, Matt Smith, Efen Cazares, Greg Bonito, Rytas Vilgalys, Liz Henderson.

—Gregory Bonito  
gmb2@duke.edu  
—Efen Cazares



**The three amigos Jim Trappe, Matt Smith, Greg Bonito strolling alongside oak/pine truffle habitat**



**Truffle hounds – left to right - Flor Ramirez, Jim Trappe, Guevara Guerrero, Gaston Guzman, Jesus Garcia, Rosario Medel, and Efen Cazares.**