The Macrofungi Collections Consortium

Unlocking a Biodiversity Resource for Understanding Biotic Interactions, Nutrient Cycling and Human Affairs

The Consortium of Collections Institutions:

35 institutions, including 3 botanical gardens, two natural history museums, and 31 universities from 24 states

Enable innovative research on macrofungi

- **Biodiversity documentation**. The more we know about macrofungal biodiversity, the more we will understand interrelationships of organisms past and current ecosystems

- **Phenology.** Fruiting times of macrofungi will be altered by climate change, and this alteration will have consequences for fungi and associated organisms

- **Invasive species.** Fungal species of interest or concern for ecosystem and human welfare can be identified and tracked with the aid of herbarium records

Project Activities

- Digitize specimens and ancillary data --600,000 records projected; 476,000 completed so far (--77%). Approximately 20,000 fungal images incorporated so far.

- Disseminate data through the Mycology Collections Portal 1,750,00 available (35% more originally projected).

- Partner with the citizen mycology community in for research and education 6 blogs or articles, 40 lectures, demos, open houses.

- Raise awareness about the project within the scientific community (22 presentations).

- Collaborate with other projects (genbank, N.A. mycoflora)
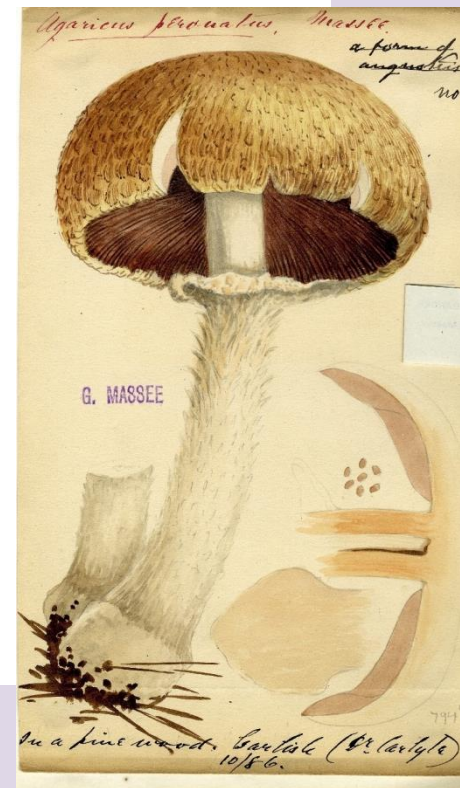
Beyond Digitization

- Comparison of four crowdsourcing platforms (Notes from Nature, DigiVol, Symbiota, Herbonautes)

- Collection improvements –physical improvements to the Coker Herbarium, University of North Carolina

- Outreach/training –teacher training courses, 160+ student participants

- Software modifications (Symbiota-sort records in edit view; incorporate SALIX data parsing techniques)

Lessons Learned

- Labor force. Using undergraduates during the school year as the main labor force for digitization is inefficient. Summer or post-graduate internships work much better.

- Enable each institution to develop its own transcription crowdsourcing activity.