

# EDITORIAL

## The waiting is over

In a development which is both exciting and terrifying, in equal measure, it falls to me, your new interim editor, to introduce Volume 26: Issue 1.

As someone who has been working in the biodiversity sector for over ten years, my main motivation for taking on this role was the opportunity to share the extraordinary work that the field mycology community is doing: generating valuable observation data and advancing knowledge of fungi.

Of course, field mycology is so-called because it *starts* in the field. Further detailed observations are added later with the use of microscopy and imaging technology, sometimes days or even years later, if material is preserved in a private collection or an institutional fungarium. This publication has always played an important role in showing people *how* to study fungi and it's on all of us to make sure that continues. If you have expertise that you would be willing to share as a guest writer for a 'species portrait' or through an introductory article on a particular genus or group of fungi, do get in touch.

Nowadays, some field mycologists are augmenting their morphological observations with molecular data: 'DNA'. The discoveries that the British Mycological Society's DNA barcoding network is making – working in garages, spare rooms and on kitchen tables – are ground-breaking and transforming our understanding of fungi at an ever-quickening pace. The British Mycological Society (BMS) has decided to make Field Mycology fully open access, enabling us to more readily share field mycologists' discoveries with the world.

Being someone who pursued mycology initially as a hobby, I am also motivated by a desire to share the joy and wonder of fungi, their beauty and enigmatic characters. I know that the field mycology community counts many skilled photographers and photomicrographers among our number. I would welcome submissions for 'feature focus' pieces, showcasing amazing and lesser-seen field characters and morphological features of fungi.

Fungi are useful, fascinating and beguiling, and yet have been largely disregarded in the current nature conservation paradigm. I imagine that's something many people reading this will want to change, so it's good to hear from Matt Wainhouse and Rich Wright in this issue about recent efforts to drive fungus

conservation forward and their intention to make this a regular feature.

The Field Mycology publication has always been a space for speaking to these different motivations of the field mycology community. I am therefore happy and more than a little relieved to present this issue to you, with a wide variety of articles.

I would not have had the confidence to take on the editor role without the generous encouragement of Geoffrey Kibby. I gather field mycology (in the lower-case form) continues to more than occupy his time. I hope we'll be hearing more about his discoveries and publication projects in future issues.

I don't think I could have got past my initial feelings of terror, at the prospect of taking on editorial responsibilities, without the support of Alick Henrici and Martyn Ainsworth who have remained very involved in shepherding this issue to publication; David Harries, Jeanette Maddy and Marcus Yeo have also been providing practical input through the editorial team, all of which I have much appreciated.

Many changes have been made behind the scenes to bring you this issue, under entirely new production and distribution arrangements. The BMS Council – informed by advice from the relevant committees – has been very positively engaged in making necessary strategic and financial decisions. The BMS's Executive Officer, Emma Thompson, and her wonderfully efficient team in the BMS Office have also been key players in bringing this issue to your screen or letterbox.

I can explain more about the new publishing arrangements in a future issue, if people want to know. For now, my hope is that, for long-time readers, Field Mycology will still feel familiar; and for new readers it will be easier to find and provide a way in to field mycology for the fungi-curious.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue. If you do, please commend it to all your mycologically-minded friends and relations, so we can regain the publication's previous circulation, online and in print.

*Clare Blencowe*



Fig. 1. The mycophilic lynx which prowls the frontispiece of Battarra's *Fungorum agri Ariminensis historia* (1755). Because your editor loves this li'l guy. Public domain image courtesy of Biblioteca del Real Jardín Botánico, RJB-CSIC (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).