

# Notes from the 2018 NEMF Samuel Ristich Foray

by Jessica Benson Evans and Sue Lancelle

At the end of July, five members of PVMA made the 6-hour-plus journey by car to Geneseo, NY, to attend the 42nd annual NEMF Samuel Ristich foray. Held on the grounds of SUNY Geneseo and in a variety of state parks and natural areas in the surrounding towns, this foray brought hundreds of amateur and professional mycologists together for a long weekend of fun and fungi.

What is it like to attend a NEMF foray? Exciting, educational, exhilarating, eye-popping, exhausting! There are evening programs, lectures and workshops throughout the day, and several trips to local hot spots daily for collecting adventures. There is always a mycophagy event and a shop with fungi-related merchandise, from T-shirts and guidebooks to tinctures, cultivating supplies and crafts. The fungi that are collected on the local trips are identified by experts and then placed on display tables, sorted by groups. At various times, experts in the various groups of fungi give “table talks” about the collections.



PVMA members Dale Callaham, Dianna Smith, Sue Lancelle, Jessica Benson Evans and Brenda Clark at the NEMF foray

This year, there were several emotional tributes to Gary Lincoff during the evening programs by many people who knew him best, including our own Dianna Smith. Gary was an outsize presence at the NEMF forays and he will be deeply missed.

Conditions were generally dry out in the woods and on the trails (this was before the rains set in!) but foray participants still found a wide variety of interesting and unusual fungi to collect and bring back to the display tables. Of the 494 species recorded at this year’s foray, 59 were new to NEMF collection! These new species

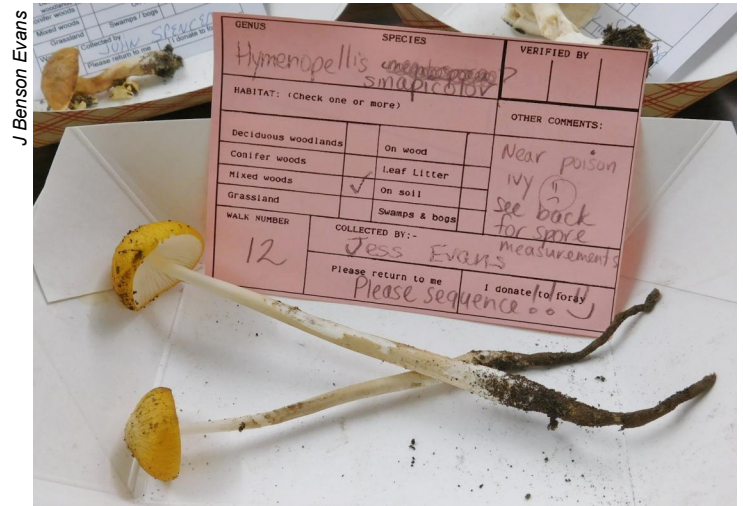
included two particularly interesting ones that Jess brought in to the display tables from her walks.



Middle Falls at Letchworth State Park, often called the "Grand Canyon of the East." Several of the collecting walks were in this beautiful park.

First, she found a beautiful *Amanita* species in wet conifer woods: the only walk site that weekend that felt damp at all! Based on its morphology -- striate cap margins and a sack-like volva at the base – she called it “*Amanita* sect. *Vaginatae*” and dropped it off at the display tables. Rod Tulloss, a noted *Amanita* expert, believed it to be *Amanita luzernensis*, a species carrying a provisional name until it is published. That night, at the evening program, she was pleased to receive one of the “best of the day” awards from Rod and the mycology team for this specimen.

A second find was equally exciting; along a dry sandy trail ringed with poison ivy, Jess happened upon two beautiful specimens of *Hymenopellis*. Club



J Benson Evans

*Hymenopellis sinapicolor* on the display table

members may be familiar with *Hymenopellis furfuracea*, which we see frequently on club walks throughout the summer. While *H. furfuracea* has a tan cap, these specimens had a bright lemon-yellow cap! She believed that she had something very interesting. Carefully, avoiding the poison ivy, she collected them, taking care to get as much of the rooting stem as possible. You can see these long, rooting portions in the picture on the previous page.

Back at the display tables, Jess caught the attention of Timothy Baroni, who you may recognize as the author of *Mushrooms of the Northeastern United States and Eastern Canada* (2017). He suggested *Hymenopellis sinapicolor*, a species originally described from Arkansas, but not very commonly collected anywhere. Jess went to the microscopy lab and made some spore measurements, which helped confirm the species determination. Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club's mycologist, Garrett Taylor, generously took on the task of drying these specimens and getting them sent off for DNA sequencing.

directly adjacent to Middle Falls at Letchworth State Park.

J Benson Evans



*Lactarius indigo*

While Jess and Brenda enjoyed heading out on the local collecting trips, Sue and Dale attended lectures and workshops. Dianna did some of each! Lectures were by such notables as Tim Baroni, Roy Halling, Noah Siegel, Rod Tulloss, Renee Lebeuf, Bill Yule and others. Workshops included mushroom crafts, dying, paper making, tincture making and cultivation, truly something for everyone.



Old friends Tim Baroni and Barbara Thiers. Tim graciously signed several copies of his guidebook for PVMA members. Barbara is the director of the herbarium at The New York Botanical Garden and has agreed to accept the vouchered specimens from our citizen science project for permanent storage at the Garden.

Jess also collected *Lactarius indigo*, a beautiful *Lactarius* that has bright blue milk. The specimens were found right on the front lawn of the Glen Iris Inn, a hotel perched



Roy Halling gives a "table talk" about the boletes found at the foray.

Next year's NEMF gathering will be held from August 1-4, 2019, at Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania. Although it is some time away, consider putting it on your calendar now! A foray is a great way to totally immerse yourself in fungi with like-minded folks.