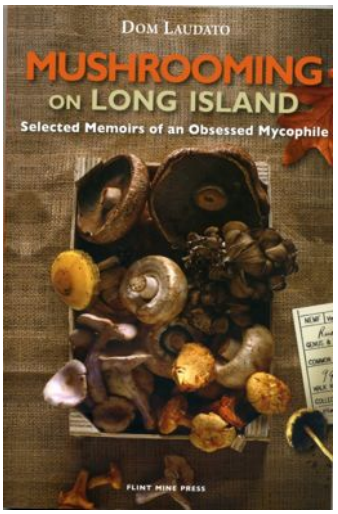
Book Review Corner

"Mushrooming on Long Island-Selected Memoirs of an Obsessed Mycophile"

by Dom Laudato, 2012, Flint Mine Press softcover**,**141 pp



Surprise! It is very fitting and timely that close upon the 40th anniversary of the Long Island Mycological Club Dom Laudato (past President of LIMC) has written a memoir about his love of mushrooms and his journeys and adventures in this realm. Without giving away too much of his story, I'll just give you an overview of the manuscript.

Firstly, it must be said that this work does not intend to be a field guide in the usual sense, although one of its useful features is a seasonal list of commonly found species. Neither is it a complete history of the LIMC, but some historical information is presented. It is a personal memoir, an account of Dom's fascination with fungi, and how he advanced from novice to the presidency of LIMC. Commencing with his early days it rapidly transitions to interest in fungi and then delves into the do's and don'ts of collecting, identifying and consuming mushrooms, complete with recipes. His sketches are scattered throughout to better illustrate certain points, and a series of 24 color photographs of mushrooms are found midpoint. (Those who know him will recognize his characteristic conversational voice.)

Travel along with Dom's adventures with mushroom poisoning and his work with the Poison Control Center, his association and correspondence with mycologists and knowledgeable people in the field, along with some early experiences. Learning the proper way to take notes in the field is another very important lesson on how to ID one's finds and perhaps unearthing a species new to the area. As previously mentioned, the very useful seasonal, month by month listing of mushrooms is a unique and quite valuable tool in the field.

One caveat: species names used are sometimes out of date or synonyms not in common use, which can be confusing to beginners. For example, *Tricholomopsis platyphylla*, has not been in general use for over a decade, and the NA species is now correctly called *Megacollybia rodmanii*, although most NA guidebooks retain it as *Megacollybia platyphylla, a* name that can properly refer only to the European species. Likewise, *Langermania* (sic*) gigantea* is a European usage, and is correctly called *Calvatia gigantea (Giant puffball).* This is a minor point and does not detract from the book's many virtues.

For all members of LIMC who wish to get a sense of mushrooming's early years on Long Island with our club, and to share the experiences of a man who was (and is) as deeply immersed and committed to our mutual avocation as it is possible to be, Dom's book is highly recommended. (Having read other mushroom memoirs, I can say that this one is by far the most interesting and complete.) He has done a great job and I am so happy for him. GO DOM!

("Mushrooming on Long Island" is available for $15.99 plus on Amazon. Through Dom's publisher the price would be about $12 if we buy in bulk, i.e., at least 10 copies. To order, please call or email me if you are interested in getting a copy.)

Peggy Horman

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