

Report from the Nordic Lichen Society meeting in Dubingiai in Lithuania

As a tradition, Nordic Lichen Society (NLF) has meeting after two years. This time, the 19th Nordic Lichen Society meeting coincided with the 18th symposium of Baltic mycologists and lichenologists (BML) and therefore it has been decided to join these two events. The joint-event was organized by a team of lichenologists and mycologists from Vilnius. Around 65 participants from 12 countries attended these two very well organized symposia, most of which from the Baltic countries and Russia (Fig. 1). 16 members of NLF participated, however, of them only six persons from the Nordic area (Sweden and Finland). Maybe the time point is difficult for some people, However, to combine the two meetings every sixth year, when the two symposia are arranged coincidentally, gives unique opportunities to visit additional countries and meet new colleagues with similar interests.



Fig. 1. Participants of the the 19th Nordic Lichen Society meeting coincided with the 18th symposium of Baltic mycologists and lichenologists (BML). Photo: Ernestas Kutorga.

Lithuania is well-known for its unique and well preserved areas of wet-land forests. Although the Lithuanian forests have been drained heavily since the second world war and many old-growth forests have been cut since 1990, large areas remain around the town Dubingiai of which many have gradually become protected. All three excursions were held in Asveja Regional Park which was established 20 years ago to preserve the landscape with unique lake system and the historical heritage of the region. Although all excursions were in rather wet forests, the third day excursion to the Blužnėnai forest was still the most serious due to the difficulties in its permeability. Some of the participants had some hope to see any of the 600 breeding pairs of black storks but they had left for southern countries already. On the other hand, the cryptogamic flora was impressive in the autumn silent forests and for us it was thrilling to observe *Cetraria olivetorum* s. l., *Hypotrachyna revoluta* and *Menegazzia terebrata* at the same time. An unusual habitat for *Leptogium lichenoides* – an inundated

stone in rivulet, *Chaenotheca gracilentia* in root system of trees – these are additional examples of our new lichen experiences.

The combined booklet of abstracts for the two symposia contains several interesting contributions, often on the themes nature protection, biomonitoring, new aspects on lichens and air pollution and lichen chemistry, *Usnea* and *Ochrolechia* phylogeny, lichens of Svalbard, recovery of lichens after forest fire, and lichens of calcareous rocks including 137 species new to Finland (MOTIEJUNAITĖ & ADAMONYTĖ 2011).



Fig. 2. Jurga Motiejunaite, leader of the organization team, shows Lithuanian lichens to the Estonian participants Liis Marmor, Edde Leppik and Ave Suija. Photo: Arne Thell.

The Nordic Lichen Society meeting resulted in few changes of the board. Ingvar Kärnefelt takes over as president and will guide the Lund-team organizing next Nordic Lichen Society meeting in the Acharius-town Vadstena, probably the first half of August 2013, whereafter Norway is in turn to arrange. The excursion goal in six years is more uncertain, since Martin Kukwa interestingly showed a will to arrange the symposium of Baltic mycologists and lichenologists in Poland, instead of scheduled Estonia.

And last but not least we can not forget the symposium dinner during the last evening where we were introduced to the best traditions of Lithuanian cuisine. Believe, it was delicious!

Reference

MOTIEJUNAITĖ, J. & ADAMONYTĖ, G. (eds) 2011. XVIII Symposium of the Baltic Mycologists and Lichenologists. Nordic Lichen Society Meeting, Lithuania, Dubingiai, September 19–23, 2011. Programme and Abstracts. Vilnius University, 40 pp.

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