

# LICHENS IN DEEP TIME (IAL8)



Participants of IAL8.



The 8<sup>th</sup> International Association for Lichenology Symposium (IAL8) was held from 1–5 August 2016 in the University of Helsinki, sponsored jointly by the university and the Finnish Museum of Natural History. The symposium attracted 305 participants from 48 countries, with strong representation from Asian and Latin American countries. The keynote speakers included Silke Werth (Austria), Bruce McCune (Canada), Ward Wheeler (USA), and Markku Kulmala (Finland). Topics of the symposia were wide-ranging, and some were plenary and others held in parallel sessions. These concerned: History of lichen research; Early evolution of lichens; Lichen ecology and biogeography; *Parmeliaceae*; Evolution of lichen symbiosis; Systematics and phylogenetics; Access to lichen biodiversity data; *Peltigerales*; Species

and populations; Lichens in a changing environment; Lichens at extremes; The diversity within; and Lichen conservation. All meetings were held in the spacious Main Building of the University of Helsinki, where there were extensive poster displays, and many opportunities for discussion in the common areas where coffees, teas, and lunches were served to all delegates.

The IAL Dinner was held in the restaurant on Klippan Island where the presentations included advance announcements of Festschriften to Irwin M Brodo (Canada; in *The Lichenologist*) and David L Hawksworth (UK and Spain; in *Fungal Biology*). Participants also enjoyed a garden party in the Kaisaniemi Botanic Garden, and an excursion to Valisaari and Suomenlinna Fortress Islands enabled participants to experience a brief glimpse of

the rich lichen communities that are such an important component of ground cover in boreal regions.

At a General Meeting of the IAL on the Thursday evening, a new committee was elected, with Mats Wedin (Sweden) as President and Ana Crespo (Spain) as Vice-President. The outgoing President, H Thorsten Lumbsch, was thanked for all he had done for the IAL during his tenure. After some debate, it was agreed that the next IAL Symposium would be held in Brazil in 2020.

Lichen research is clearly in good shape, embracing the latest technologies while maintaining established research lines. Marko T Hyvärinen and his team are to be congratulated on organising such a stimulating occasion.



Enjoying the Conference Garden Party.



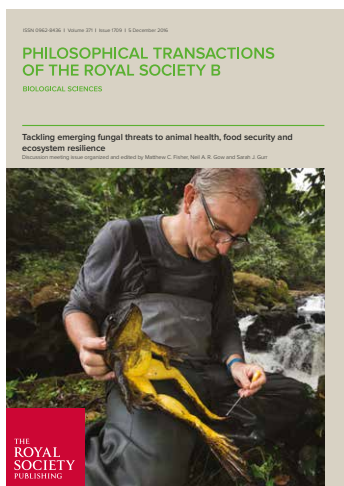
Discussing identifications during the excursion on Valisaari island.



*Cladonia stellaris* and *C. rangiferina* ground cover on Valisaari island.

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## EMERGING FUNGAL THREATS



The papers arising from the Discussion Meeting on “Tackling emerging fungal threats to animal health, food security and ecosystem resilience” held at the Royal Society of London on 7–8 March 2016, with a follow-up on 9–10 March at the Society’s Chickley Hall centre, have just been published on 5 December 2016 as volume 371 number 1709 in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, Section B* (ISBN 978-1-78252-227-0). Individual copies can be purchased for £ 59.50. The meeting was organized by Matthew C Fisher, Neil A R Gow, and Sarah J. Gurr, who also edited this issue.

Eighteen wide-ranging contributions are included, and the issue is a “must-see” for all mycologists concerned with the risks fungi pose to ourselves, other organisms, and our environment. This can be used to show non-mycologists just how important fungi are, and there is also much here that lecturers may wish to draw on in presenting general as well as applied mycological courses.