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Raven Hill Discovery Center, incorporated in 1991, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

Mission: Raven Hill provides a place that enhances hands-on and lifelong learning for all ages by connecting science, history & the arts.

To: Friends and Family everywhere
From: Cheri and Raven Hill
Date: November 13, 2021
Re: Weekly update

Greetings, Everyone!

Completing the last of the winterizing this week gave me a chance to slow down and take notice of the small touches of color amongst the sea of brown leaves. In the span of a half hour, I had discovered a half dozen fungi peeking out, just waiting to be photographed and shared with you this week!

Fungi are an important group of living things. Yeasts, molds and mushrooms are examples of fungi. Until the late 1800's, all living things were considered either plants or animals. Now, we recognize seven kingdoms, one of which is the Fungi Kingdom.

Fungi are more relevant to our lives today than one might think. First, fungi are vital to the health of planet Earth. They feed on dead organisms and recycle the nutrients back into the ecosystem. Just as in physics, energy is not lost, but merely transformed. It is fungi that are mainly responsible for this vital recycling of life. Second, fungi are slowly releasing carbon back into the environment. They play a part in fighting the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that cause climate change. Third, fungi are responsible for much of our food production. Without fungi, we would not have bread, chocolate, cheese, soy sauce, beer or wine! Fourth, fungi account for many important medical discoveries and finally, they play a role in industrial production of things like vitamins, pigments & biofertilizers. The founder of the Fungi Foundation, Giuliana Furci, says, "Without fungi, the world would not exist as we know it."



*Waxgills or waxcaps produce a waxy upper surface. There are about 600 different waxgill fungi. These mushrooms are for looking only!
Photo by Cheri Leach*

*Baeomycetaceae
lichen-forming crustal fungi*



*Polyporaceae
layers of tubes underneath look like pores
Photos by Cheri Leach*



*Cladoniaceae
food for grazing animals in tundra*



I just had to include this Swahili proverb: "All mushrooms are edible, but some only once."



Photos from Internet

Amadou is a fungal felt or suede of ancient eastern European origin. Fungi, like the horse hoof fungi pictured above, are soaked and then pounded to make a type of felt used for hats and clothing. This artificial leather provides an alternative to animal leather. Amadou is also used in fly fishing for drying out flies that have gotten wet. Might have to try my hand at making some Amadou! Anyone else interested?

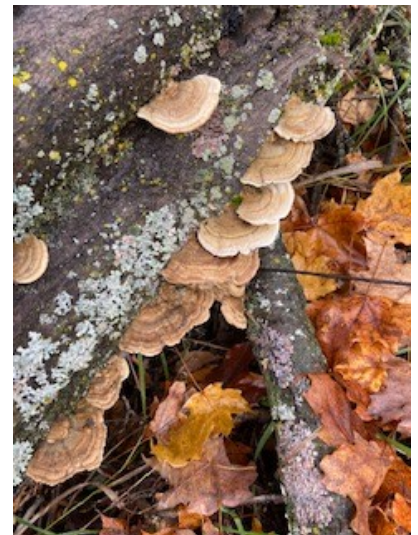
In case you are wondering, the coronavirus that we are currently battling is not considered part of the Fungi Kingdom. Viruses are microscopic organisms that are thought to be a link between living and non-living things. Viruses are not placed in any of the seven-kingdom classification system, but are put in a group of their own, the kingdom **Orthornavirae**.

Remember to visit the Smithsonian **Labor Days: History of Work** exhibit one of these days. Regular weekend hours are noon to 4pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 4pm on Sundays. To make an appointment for other times, call 231.536.3369. **Note:** Although Raven Hill is closed on Thanksgiving Day, the Center will be open from **noon to 4pm on Friday, November 26th**, as part of Thanksgiving break. Consider bringing the relatives out to enjoy a fun afternoon of discovery and exploration over the long weekend holiday!

As a reminder, we continue to ask everyone to mask up while inside Raven Hill, for the sake of the vaccinated and unvaccinated.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

Cheri



This Trichaptum fungi is living on a rotting log, slowly breaking the wood down and releasing nutrients back into the ecosystem.

I have a plant app on my phone called PictureThis. It makes plant (and fungi) identification easy & fun!

Photo by Cheri Leach

Raven Hill Discovery Center is supported in part by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts through a 2022 Operational Grant Award.



*(Left) "Gnome Elf Painting Frog on Mushroom"
—Artist Unknown
Circa 1912*

Connecting science, history and the arts once again!