

Book review

Maria Letizia Gargano, Georgios I. Zervakis, Giuseppe Venturella (eds.) *Pleurotus nebrodensis* – A very special mushroom. DOI: 10.2174/97816080580061130101, eISBN: 978-1-60805-800-6, 2013, ISBN: 978-1-60805-801-3. 145 pp., illustrated. Single user price (US \$) e-PDF: 49, print-on-demand (P.O.D): *60, P.O.D + PDF (50% off): *84, *(excluding mailing and handling)

This Bentham e-book is not only dedicated to the title species but also presents other European *Pleurotus* species. Further it promotes general aspects like fungal conversation in a broad sense and it is of interest for a wide audience – not only for mycologists – also for students of diverse biological fields and for politicians dealing with nature conservation or sustainable development.

The book is divided in chapters which can stand alone, written by the editors together with co-authors.

1) Fungal conservation and sustainability in Europe. David Minter summarizes the state of knowledge about fungal conservation related to the CBD (Convention on Biological diversity) reports of the different European governments. He offers useful arguments and thoughts concerning the recognition of fungi as a separate kingdom and their treatment in the public and by public authorities. The study is alerting, as there are still huge gaps in knowledge and a great need for strategies and acting towards conservation of fungi.

2) The genus *Pleurotus* (Fr.) P. Kumm. (Pleurotaceae) in Europe. Zervakis and Polemis present morphological descriptions of all European species of *Pleurotus*, i.e. *P. calypratus*, *P. cornucopiae*, *P. dryinus*, *P. eryngii* and its different varieties, *P. fuscusquamulosus*, *P. ostreatus*, *P. pulmonarius*. Some colour photos are provided. The remaining species *P. nebrodensis* is described in the next chapters. Species delimitation, taxonomic history, economic and medicinal relevance are discussed. A long list of references gives a good overview of the *Pleurotus* literature.

3) The genus *Pleurotus* in Italy and the Sicilian taxa. Chapter three is short and dedicated to the systematics and ecology of the Italian *Pleurotus* species.

4) An outline of the Madonie Mountains (Northern Sicily) - A center of diversity for *Pleurotus* species. Venturella and Saitta go even more in detail and present the biodiversity hot spot Madonie territory in Sicily, where all *Pleurotus* species growing on Apiaceae in Sicily so far, have been found.

5) Historical remarks, original description and last advances on *Pleurotus nebrodensis*. A richly illustrated chapter is dedicated to the history of the discovery and description of *P. nebrodensis*, the biography of the describing mycologist Inzenga, macro- and micro-morphological description and taxonomy of the title species.

6) Cultivation and nutritional value of *Pleurotus nebrodensis*. In this collection of papers the chapter on cultivation and nutritional value of *P. nebrodensis* will be of interest for nutritional scientists and mushroom producers. Cultivation methods as well as main diseases, pests and their control are dealt with together with medicinal and nutritional aspects. Some other examples from China, Japan or Thailand could have been added as these countries are among the leaders in mushroom technology.

7) Market outlook, production chain and technological innovation for *Pleurotus nebrodensis* mushrooms. The final chapter is dedicated to the economic possibilities of developing a marketing strategy and enhancing public perception of *P. nebrodensis* by presenting a project initiated and performed in the Madonie territory combining in situ and ex situ conservation of this highly esteemed rare IUCN red list species. The experience given is local, however, a good example for a strategy to develop a product line and the acceptance of the consumers.

A short index finalizes the book. When browsing I found only very few typing errors. Altogether this e-book gives a nice overview on classical taxonomy and modern cultivation and conservation aspects of *Pleurotus nebrodensis*. I enjoyed reading it.

Irmgard Krisai-Greilhuber
Wien, Austria