A SYSTEM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE NAMES FOR AGARICS AND BOLETES IN NEW ZEALAND (AND AUSTRALIA?)

Geoff S. Ridley

ERNA New Zealand, PO Box 131, Wellington, New Zealand.
geoff.ridley@ermanz.gov.nz

G.S. Ridley (2004). A system for the development of English language names for agarics and boletes in New Zealand (and Australia?). *Australasian Mycologist* 23 (1): 27–30.

During the Mycological Colloquium held at the 17th New Zealand Fungal Foray the use of common names for fungi in New Zealand was briefly discussed. With only a short history and low participation by amateurs in mycology in New Zealand very few common names have been spontaneously created. This is in stark contrast to the large body of these names in European and Asian cultures. Where common names are used in New Zealand they have generally been lifted directly from European and Asian sources (*e.g.* death cap and shiitake). The only source of New Zealand common names is Taylor (1970, 1981) who coined a number of new names for fungi such as fungus icicles for *Hericium coralloides*. The foray discussion of common names prompted me to re-read a recent paper by Huhtinen (2002) on how the Finns produce stable common names and how this could be implemented in New Zealand.

Why should we have common names when we have perfectly adequate Latin binomials? For three reasons, first, we have to accept that for many people Latin binomials exclude them from information. They are intimidated by something that they don't fully understand. As a mycologist it is my role to facilitate the transfer of information from my area of expertise to the general population and if my audience is turned off by Latin binomials before I even get to the interesting information then I have failed. We need to realise that information is layered and that we need to deliver the required layer to the appropriate audience, and if common names help us to achieve this, then so be it. Second, the Basque have a saying '*Izena duen guzia omen da*'—that which has a name exists (Kurlansky 2000). This need for a name is echoed in Australasian literature and lead Bail (1998) to write 'We are not comfortable if a thing we have seen isn't attached to a name. An object can hardly be said to exist until it has a name, even an approximate name'. Equally, that which lacks a common name does not exist for the majority of the population. These sentiments lead the famous evolutionary biologist John Maynard Smith to comment 'It's a very curious fact that people find it impossible to do without a species name'. Finally, Linnaeus invented Latin binomials as short informal names for the longer descriptive phrases that were then currently employed. These shorthand names had such utility that they became the basis for our entire classification system. However, overtime, the Latin binomial has become burdened with historical nomenclature and phylogenetic implication. This burdens results in the changing names that so frustrate amateurs. Similar sentiments were expressed by Nicol (1997) in the introduction to his *Common Names of Plants in New Zealand* when he commented on Latin binomials 'However even these names can change, creating confusion for those not conversant with the latest taxonomic literature'.

When I began to discuss the idea of forming common names I was surprised by the degree of hostility to the concept by both professional and amateur mycologists. The argument against the development of such names was that it was anti science, demeaning to amateurs, and that common names had to occur spontaneously, and could only come from the past. The use of common names for fungi is no more anti science than using apple for *Malus domesticus*. It certainly is not demeaning to amateurs as in my work place the professional forestry scientists rarely refer to *Pseudotsuga menziesii* by its Latin binomial but rather to Douglas-fir, which is further shorthanded to 'D.fir' in both written and spoken communications. The final objections that the names has to have been spontaneously generated in the past essentially means that English is now fixed in time and no new names can be formed, this obviously is not true (McCrun *et al.* 1986, McGrath 2001). Most of the objections to this project revolve around the concept of what is a common name and how they come into being. To escape this preconceived concept I propose to call them English language names instead and to clearly separate them from any existing common names. I note also that the British Mycological Society, in partnership with several other groups, has also followed this approach with the formation of a project 'Recommended English Names for Fungi' (Evans 2003).

What the Finns have proposed and have practiced since 1949 is to use the utility of the short informal name and to produce such names in their own language. The Finnish guidelines are adapted here for New Zealand use:

1. There is one English language name for each taxon. Where other English language names exist they should be discouraged.

2. There should be a logic in name formation based around a common 'generic' name for like taxa. 'Generic' names do not have to correspond with scientific genera, but often they will, and can be based on more general morphology. For example the use of pouch for those secotioid species now scattered through *Thaxterogaster*, *Weraroa* and *Notholepiota*. It is important to avoid the use of fungus and mushroom, except in the latter case for use with *Agaricus* spp. Once this is done then a 'specific' name can be sought.

3. Where ever possible use a 'two-word-name'.

4. Avoid simply translating the Latin binomial into English (*e.g.* 'blue and buff Cortinarius' for *Cortinarius malachius*, rather the Swedes and the Finns refer to this as the 'mallow webcap'.

5. Borrow from other languages where they have resolved a problem.

6. The best 'generic' name is often the most conspicuous constituent species (*e.g.* 'the parasol' for *Macrolepiota procera* and subsequently the 'shaggy parasol' for *M. rhacodes*, *etc.*

7. Be inventive to avoid monotonous names (*e.g.* use fire for orange; blood for deep red, *etc.* For instance 'rare waxgill' for *Hygrocybe rubrocarnosa* refers to its red flesh like rare steak (compare pictures in Taylor (1981) and Jacobs (2003)).

8. Existing common names can be converted into the new English language format (*e.g.* the 'reddening fly agaric' (*Amanita rubescens*) has been transformed into the 'blushing flycap'.

9. Always remember that these English language names are for New Zealand and not for any other country unless it chooses to adopt them.

To begin this process the following names are proposed for discussion. I have used Taylor (1981), where identifications are confirmed, and Latin binomials have been updated to conform to Segedin & Pennycook (2001), as a shortlist of agarics and boletes for use in constructing English language names. In constructing 'generic' names (point 6, above) I have looked at common names used in Europe and adapted these where ever possible.

Species (Segedin & Pennycook 2001)	**Plate/fig no. (Taylor 1981)**	**English language name for use in New Zealand**
Amanita phalloides	1/1	death flycap
Amanita muscaria	1/2	scarlet flycap
Amanita opinata	2/3	apricot-gilled flycap
Amanita australis	2/4	straw flycap
Amanita pekeoides	2/5	socked flycap
Amanita nothofagi	2/6	charcoal flycap
Amanita nehuta	2/7	dusty flycap
Macrolepiota clelandii	3/9	bush parasol
Macrolepiota rhacodes	3/10	shaggy parasol
Agaricus bitorquis	4/11	pavement mushroom
Agaricus campestri	4/13	field mushroom
Agaricus arvensis	4/14	horse mushroom
Agaricus praeclaresquamosus	5/15	yellow-footed mushroom
Agaricus xanthderma	5/16	yellowing mushroom
Leucoagaricus naucinus	5/18	smooth parasol
Agaricus subperonatus	5/19	woolly-legged mushroom
Agaricus impudicus	6/20	brown-blotched mushroom

Agaricus purpureoniger	6/23	bruised mushroom
Agaricus bambusae var *australis*	6/24	bamboo mushroom
Armillaria nova-zelandiae	7/25	olive honeycap
Armillaria limonea	7/27	lemon honeycap
Heimiomyces neovelutipes	8/28	bush shank
Oudemansiella australis	8/29	porcelain slimecap
Lentinula novaezelandiae	8/30	bush shiitake
Tricholomopsis rutilans	8/31	plum woodknight
Marasmius atrocastaneus	8/33	chestnut toughshank
Crinipellis procera	8/34	tall horsehair
Leucocoprinus fragilissimus	8/35	yellow parasol
Mycena leaiana	8/36	sticky helmet
Mycena pura	8/38	lilac helmet
Collopus subviscosa	8/39	citrus-shanked helmut
Mycena ura	8/40	crimson helmet
Gliophorus viridus	10/42	verdigris waxgill
Gliophorus versicolor	10/44	rose waxgill
Hygrophorus salmonipes	10/45	salmon waxgill
Hygrocybe procera	10/46	amber waxgill
Hygrocybe striatolutea	10/47	straw waxgill
Humidicutis luteovirens	10/48	olive waxgill
Hygrocybe rubrocarnosa	10/49	rare waxgill
Russula albolutescens	11/51	creamy chalkcap
Russula miniata	11/53	pinky chalkcap
Russula acrolamellata	11/54	ugly chalkcap
Russula griseoviridis	11/55	dreary chalkcap
Lactarius sepiaceus	12/56	chocolate milkcap
Lactarius umerensis	12/57	rubbery milkcap
Lactarius clarkei	12/58	suede milkcap
Lactarius tawai	12/59	bullseye milkcap
Entoloma perzonatum	13/60	zebra pinkgill
Entoloma peralbium	13/62	white pinkgill
Entoloma hochstetteri	13/63	blue pinkgill
Entoloma sulphureum	13/64	sulphur pinkgill
Entoloma decolorans	13/65	blue-shanked pinkgill
Entoloma haastii	13/66	bruised pinkgill
Pluteus velutinornatus	14/69	ornate doilycap
Volvariella speciosa	14/70	common scabbard
Dermocybe canaria	15/73	canary webcap
Cortinarius bellus	15/76	jaffa webcap
Cuphocybe olivacea	16/77	olive flatfoot
Rapacia mariae	16/78	ghostly webcap
Descolea gunnii	16/80	pleated cooper
Inocybe strobilomyces	16/83	scaly fibrecap
Bolbitius muscicola	17/84	deceiving corncap
Gymnopilus junonius	17/85	giant flamecap
Pholiota adiposa	17/86	scaly flamecap
Galerina patagonica	17/87	nippled logger
Agrocybe parasitica	17/88	tree swordbelt
Coprinus disseminatus	18/89	sociable inkcap
Coprinus comatus	18/92	shaggy inkcap
Coprinus atramentarius	18/93	the inkcap
Stropharia aurantiaca	19/94	scarlet roundhead
Stropharia aeruginosa	19/95	verdigris roundhead
Lacrymaria lacrymabunda	19/98	weeping widow
Hypholoma fasciculare	19/99	sulphur woodtuft
Weraroa erythrocephala	20/100	scarlet pouch
Weraroa virescens	20/101	spindle pouch

Tympanella galanthina	20/102	cottonbud pouch
Thaxterogaster aurantiacus	20/103	bumpy pouch
Thaxterogaster epiphaeus	20/104	golden pouch
Thaxterogaster porphyreus	20/105	king's pouch
Notholepiota areolata	20/106	aero pouch
Suillus granulatus	21/107	sticky-bun bolete
Chalciporus piperatus	21/109	peppery bolete
Paxillus nothofagi	21/110	beech rollrim
Austroboletus lacunosus	22/111	flecked bolete
Austroboletus niveus	22/112	snowy bolete
Tylopilus brunneus	22/113	cocoa bolete
Mucilopilus violaceiporus	22/114	yellow-pore bolete
Tylopilus formosus	22/115	velvet bolete

I have only dealt with the agarics and boletes. However this system could be extended to cover the other groups illustrated in Taylor (1981).

Comments would be greatly appreciated and should be forwarded to the author.

References

Bail, M. (1998). *Eucalyptus*. Text Publishing Co., Melbourne.

Evans, S. (2003). Recommended English names for fungi. *Mycologist News* (May 2003), 8. Insert in *Mycologist* **17**.

Huhtinen, S. (2002). Common names for fungi—including a common logic? *Field Mycologist* **3**, 42–45.

Jacobs, L. (2003). Six degrees of doneness. *Cuisine* **99,** 56.

Kurlansky, M. (2000). *The Basque history of the World.* Vintage, Random House, London.McCrun, R., Cran, W. & MacNeil, R. (1986). *The story of English.* Faber and Faber, and BBC Publications, London.

McGrath, A. (2001). *In the beginning. The story of the King James Bible and how it changed a nation, a language and a culture.* Hodder and Stouton, London.

Maynard Smith, J. (2003). Games and theories. *New Scientist* **178 (2399),** 48–51.

Nicol, E.R. (1997). *Common names of plants in New Zealand.* Manaaki Whenua Press, Lincoln.

Segedin, B.P. & Pennycook, S.R. (2001). A nomenclature checklist of agarics, boletes, and related secotioid and gasteromycetous fungi recorded from New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* **39,** 285–348.

Taylor, G.M. (1970). *Mushrooms and toadstools in New Zealand.* A.H. and A.W. Reed, Wellington.

Taylor, G.M. (1981). *Mushrooms and toadstools.* A.H. and A.W. Reed, Wellington.