

The problem of *Lactarius mammosus* Fr.

M. MOSER*

Summary. The true identity of *Lactarius mammosus* is discussed.

The name '*Lactarius mammosus* Fr.' was not much used in the mycological literature from the time of E. M. Fries until 1953. The few citations are either copied from the original description or based on fairly doubtful determinations. Tuomikoski (1953) was the first to use this name for one of the two greyish brown species having a smell of desiccated coconut. These two species were very much confused in the past. The name accepted today by most authors for the smaller and paler species associated with birch is *L. glycyonmar* Fr. The descriptions given by Fries under this name suggest perhaps a mixture of the two species, so alternatively some authors prefer the name *L. cyathula* Fr. for this species.

The naming of the larger and darker species associated with spruce is still more confused. There exist several names which might apply: *L. confusus* Lundell (1939), *L. hibbardiae* (Burl.) Sacc. (*vide* Singer), *L. fuscus* Roll. (1899), and according to Neuhoff perhaps also *L. subumbonatus* Lindgr. (1845). Tuomikoski (1953) came to the conclusion that *L. mammosus* Fr. could be equally well applied to this species, although he had to admit: 'Es muss zugegeben werden, dass unsere Art nicht mit der Beschreibung und Abbildung des *L. mammosus* bei Fries (1867-1884, p. 69, Tf. 170, 2) zusammenfällt. Es scheint jedoch, dass nach Fries niemand einen Pilz gefunden hat, der den von ihm gegebenen Merkmalen einwandfrei entspräche und es ist daher wahrscheinlich, dass Fries' *L. mammosus* dennoch dasselbe ist, wie Lundells *L. confusus*'.

This concept was followed by Neuhoff (1956), Moser (1967), Dennis, Orton & Hora (1960), Reid (1969) and Kühner (1975)—Moser (1955) had accepted it only for an odourless variety of *L. hibbardiae*. It is not the purpose of this paper to tackle the nomenclatural problem of *L. confusus-hibbardiae-fuscus* etc., of these we prefer, at least for the moment, the name *L. fuscus* Roll., as the oldest unmistakable name (Reid, 1970).

When comparing the descriptions by Fries of *Lactarius mammosus* with collections of *L. fuscus*, one must admit that there exist a number of considerable discrepancies which preclude a synonymy of *L. mammosus* with *L. fuscus*.

There is the colour of the lamellae which Fries quotes as 'albidae, dein pallide ferrugineae'; in *L. fuscus*, almost from the beginning, they are ochre to dark ochre (Ridgway, XXIX Cinnamon Buff). There is the colour of the stipe which Fries calls 'albido-pallescens'; in *L. fuscus* the colour is ochre to cinnamon brown (Ridgway Pinkish Cinnamon to Cinnamon). Finally, Fries describes his species as 'inodorus', marked by italics, whereas *L. fuscus* has the characteristic and strong sweetish smell of desiccated coconut. In the literature some statements exist that Fries lacked a keen olfactory sense, but I know a number of examples from Femsjö region which have proved that the odours indicated by Fries are much more reliable than is generally thought, and that species interpretations outside Sweden are often incorrect.

* Institut für Mikrobiologie der Universität, Innsbruck.