

Funga

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01. Southern Bracket *Ganoderma australe*, Oldborough Ture. Graham Martin.

Funga is a new word that we must all start using. *Funga* provides a new and important way of thinking and referring to the natural world. *Funga* signals the fundamental importance of the kingdom of Fungi in the diversity life on Earth.

It is not very many years ago that Fungi were classified as part of the plant kingdom, the Plantae. Indeed, the *Oxford Book of Flowerless Plants* (Brightman 1966), which may still sit on the bookshelves of many Biological Recorders, devoted half of its pages to Fungi, and the idea that fungi are plants still lingers in unexpected places. A recent advertising email from the Natural History Book Service (NHBS) listed a new fungi book under the section heading “Flora”.

So, there is clearly a need for an umbrella term that collectively refers to Fungi. In recognition of this we are now asked to think of the 3Fs: *Flora*, *Fauna* and *Funga*. In short, *Funga* refers to the fungi of a particular region, habitat, or geological period. Like *Flora* and *Fauna*, the term *Funga* will usually be qualified, for example, “The Funga of Worcestershire” or “Grassland Funga of Worcestershire”.



02. Conical Brittlestem *Parasola conopilus*. Graham Martin.

Use of the term *Funga* was recommended by The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2021 and was officially adopted by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) in August of this year (2023). It was argued that the term should be adopted, “to recognise and protect fungi on an equal footing with animals and plants in legal conservation frameworks”.

The term has also been adopted as the name of a recently established non-profit organisation (www.funga.earth) which aims to, “harness forest fungal networks to address the climate crisis”.



03. Velvet Shank *Flammulina velutipes*. Graham Martin.

Clearly, Fungi are moving to centre stage when it comes to thinking about the key issues that face life on earth. We must all recognise this by adding *Funga* to our lexicons and to our spell checkers.

References

Brightman, F.H., 1966. *Oxford Book of Flowerless Plants*. Oxford University Press.

Funga website. Available at: <https://www.funga.earth>. [Accessed 26.11.23].

Images

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