PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY B BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond. B 1969 **255**, 579
doi: 10.1098/rstb.1969.0029

Larger fungi of the Solomon Islands

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During the Expedition I collected or recorded the presence of some 800 species of basidiomycete and larger ascomycete. The wet weather in the early part produced good crops of fungi in the lowlands of San Cristobal and Kolombangara, and they gave the impression of being main runs of fungus, such as happens in the tropics after periods without rain. On the return from Popomanaseu, however, the end of a better run was met on the way through the forest where the path descends from Parina to the Sorvohio (Chovohio) River. It produced several species not encountered before, but it was quickly curtailed by dry weather. The difficulty is that, without a reliable meteorological record, the mycologist cannot choose an 'autumn season', such as March to May or August to October in Malaya. Though 5 months in the Solomons lead me to think that my general conclusions are reliable, yet on account of the very brief times during the year when most of these organisms become visible, a great deal more exploring is needed to reach finality.

The mycological resemblance of the forests, just as the phanerogamic, is that of Malaysia attenuated. Several conspicuous genera of the eastern tropics seemed entirely absent. Thus no species were found of *Amanita*, *Russula*, *Lactarius*, *Cortinarius*, *Boletus*, *Cantharellus*, *Craterellus* and *Thelephora*. Maybe the absence of Fagaceae, with which one generally associates these genera, was the cause, and there may be no mycorrhizal fungi in the Solomons. The ultrabasic forest of *Casuarina papuana* seemed extremely poor and, remarkably, no specimen of *Thelephora ramarioides* Reid was seen under *Casuarina equisetifolia*, though this fungus occurs habitually in thousands along the roots of this tree on the shores of Malaya and Borneo. The montane forests of *Dacrydium* and *Podocarpus* were likewise as unproductive as in Malaysia. The only *Inocybe* was found on the occcasion near the Sorvohio River where it was abundant, yet species of this genus, just as the smaller boleti and russules, can be found out of season in Malaya. None of the very small species of *Agaricus*, so common in western Malaysia, was found. No specimen of the termite agaric *Termitomyces* was seen. Only one specimen each was found of the tropical form of *Oudemansiella* (*Collybia*) *radicata* Fr. and *Armillaria mellea* Fr. *Xylaria* was abundant but not in great variety.

By contrast *Lepiota*, *Collybia*, *Mycena*, *Omphalina*, *Marasmius*, *Pluteus*, *Entoloma*, *Clitopilus*, *Coprinus* and *Trogia* were abundant and well-represented. Clavarioid fungi were frequent and the very massive *Ramaria solomonensis* proved that the island forests could support luxuriant humicolous fungi. Most of the Malayan species of *Lentinus* were found and *L. tuber-regium* was common, though I never met this in Malaya or Borneo. Comparable is the case of *Paraphelaria*, which has been sporadically recorded from Java eastwards. *Gomphus retisporus* of Malaya was found on Kolombangara and San Cristobal. A very large species of merismatoid *Hydnum*, as yet undescribed according to Dr R. A. Maas-Geesteranus, grew not infrequently in the secondary forest, as in Malaya, and by the Sorvohio I collected a large *Sarcodon* which I had previously found only on Singapore Island. The large bright pink phycomycete *Glaziella vesiculosa* Berk. grew commonly among the dead fronds of coconut palms near the sea-shores.