

## ABSTRACT

Albanian Conference on Biology and Environment (28-30 September 2018)

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### Larger Fungi in Kosovo – Their Distribution, Diversity and Ecology

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Larger fungi (Ascomycota and Basidiomycota) in Kosovo have not been studied systematically and only scarce official data are obtainable. There are also unpublished data for more than a hundred species collected mainly in the area of Germia Mountain. Yet, high fungal diversity is expected considering the variety of climate, vegetation types and substrates. The country lacks both a fungal checklist and a red list along with fungi protection legislation notwithstanding the export of enormous mushroom quantities. The study is part of Rufford Small Grant project and it has been conducted during the period 2017-2018 in over 50 different localities in Kosovo. A practical conservation output of this work is compilation of a Checklist of Kosovo fungi based on collection of fungi species in diverse habitats and their identification. A range of habitats (Macedonian and Bosnian pines, Norway spruce, silver fir, Italian oak, etc.) have been visited, along with national parks, pristine forests and other protected areas in the country (Shar Mountains National Park, Bjeshket e Nemuna National Park, Germia Mountain and Rugova Mountain). Considering the fungi database available and project research to date, information has been obtained on a total of 600 records of more than 280 different species. An updated species list will be supplied in the forthcoming months given that collection season is still underway. High fungal diversity has been established and a number of rare and sensitive species recorded with the current study. The promising results and a lack of earlier data on Kosovo fungi have triggered the decision that the pioneering methodical investigation should continue. Some of the recorded species are rare and interesting, and the following should be pinpointed: *Diplomitoporus flavescens*, *Dendrothele acerina*, *Basidiodendron caesiocinereum*, *Eutypella alnifraga*, *Helvella atra*, *Heterosphaeria patella*, *Microstoma protractum*, etc. All-inclusive documentation pertaining to the project is available on <http://macfungi.webs.com/fungi-of-kosovo>.

**Key words:** larger fungi inventory, distribution, ecology, Kosovo