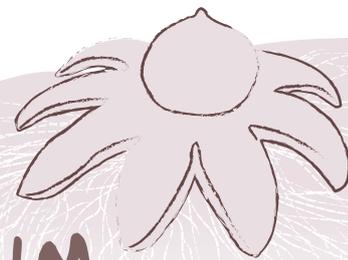


DABAS KONCERTZĀLE 2020.

ZEMESZVAIGZNE

GEASTRUM



Fungi dye

Diāna Meiere, mycologist

The world of fungi is diverse and colorful. Can we preserve parts of this volatile colorfulness? It turns out that we can!

Dyeing different types of fibre using plants is an ancient and widely known craft. However, little is known about mushrooms as a source of dye. Some fungi may have been used as a dye, while lichen, also being a part of the fungi family, has been used for this aim long ago.

The process of dyeing is not particularly complex, merely for a person to succeed at dyeing with fungi, he needs to develop skills of a mycologist. Not all fungi are ready to share their color- the bright examples of fly-agaric and russula actually contain very little pigment and these will only provide yarn in

the so-called champagne color, showing only a little difference from its initial version. However, if one knows what to search for and where to go during this search, through experiments the new world of fungi dye will start to open up.

Yellowish tone is the most common in the fungi yarn palette. Many of them are strong and long lasting. The champion of yellow color is the Pine dye polypore, also known as the velvet-top fungus or the cowpie fungus. While it's young and growing, a bright sun-yellow dye can be obtained. If it is etched by iron – beautifully green.

Red and orange tones can be found with web-caps. Many web-cap species have bright red or orange bodies – those are the ones you should be looking for. In autumn the “correct” web-caps can be found in large numbers in pine forests. They can be dried and used up later. Dried red-gilled web-caps are great for dyeing yarn in a fire brick color, but if a small speck of acid or alkali is added, it changes the colour of the yarn completely.

The stalks of aged boletus can turn out surprisingly useful – they hold yellow and olive green dye.

Aged earthballs in autumn can be surprising with their beautiful dark brown color.

Not all is known about dyeing yarn with fungi, therefore countless surprises await the ones who take up this path.

For example, the yarn that has been dyed in particular fungi, similarly to the body of this fungi, is luminescent when seen under a UV light.

The yarn that has been dyed with the common orange lichen completely swaps its color in sunlight. Lichen must be first kept in a diluted ammonia for a longer stretch of time. Afterwards the yarn is dyed by heating it. Finally – if the pink dyed yarn is dried in the shade, it remains pink, however, if it is dried in the sunlight, the yarn turns out light blue.

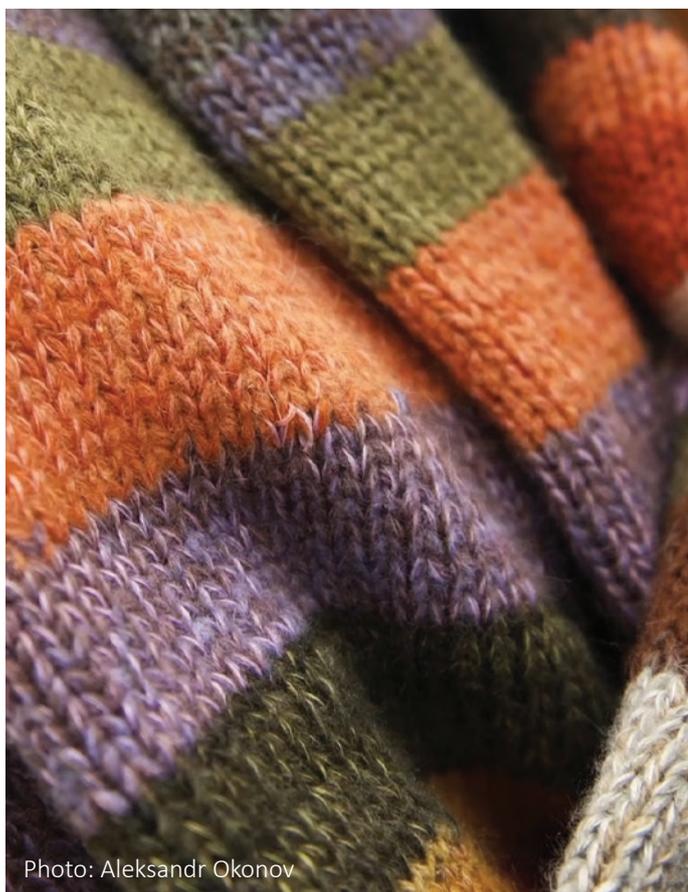
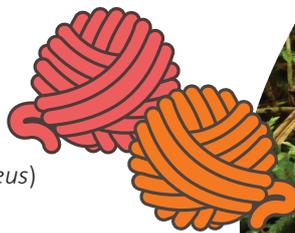


Photo: Aleksandr Okonov



Common Earthball
(*Sclerodema citrinum*)
Photo: Diāna Meiere



Red-gilled Web-cap
(*Cortinarius semisanguineus*)
Photo: Diāna Meiere



Pine dye polypore
(*Phaeolus schweinitzii*)
Photo: Andris Soms



Purple Dye Polypore
(*Hapalopilus nidulans*)
Photo: Diāna Meiere