

A Mycological Tourism and the Role of Fungi in Rural Tourism and Ecotourism

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DESCRIPTION

Mycological tourism is a way of living experiences associated with fungi. This kind of experience seems to be magical, healthy, adventurous or simply contemplative of those fantastic fruitful ones that are in the ground or under it, which may or may not be edible. Fungi are integrated into different ecosystems contributing to their equilibrium through the decomposition of organic materials to the survival of different organisms and other ecosystems. Conceptually the offers linked to mycological tourism are: Rural tourism, ecotourism, gastronomic, scientific, cultural, wellness or health. From the construction of the offer mycological tourism contemplates a series of activities such as the collection of fungi for recreational purposes, knowledge and contact with wild spaces; this generates an immersive experience for tourists, who value disconnection, learning and awareness-raising by nature. In this perspective, mycological tourism must take advantage of the opportunities offered by the need to visit and inhabit rural areas or less intervened where people of different ages and conditions integrate leisure, rest, knowledge, the disconnection and the mindfulness. It is observed that the collection of wild mushrooms is carried out as an activity for a long time; however, the tourism that promotes this activity is relatively new with a specialized character. In this scenario, some questions arise that invite us to reflect: What kind of study is being developed in mycological tourism? What potential dimensions should we explore to have a broader and specialized vision of mycological tourism? Together with Alba Viana-Lora we explore possible answers, which are extracted from a bibliometric analysis and a systematic tourism and mycology using databases on

the Web of Science and the specialized software VOSviewer. With these methodological tools it was considered to investigate from the word "touris" and in extension the concepts of "fungi", "fungus", "mushroom", "mycolog" and "mycetolog". As a result of the analysis, the most cited authors and the dimensions of analysis of the investigations were identified. We found 29 authors with an average of 4 authors per publication, which indicates that scientific production is in the hands of a network of authors who relate to each other.

However, edible mushrooms are increasingly a product required in gastronomy, generating a variety of recipes and culinary uses are much desired. This has produced that there are events and festivities associated with mushrooms where the riches of mushrooms in the nutritional field are discovered.

Mycological tourism contributes to show significantly the culture of villages and rural areas that have developed a social dynamic associated with the consumption and collection of mushrooms. In this direction the development of experiences can be linked to physical activity in the natural environment, to the recreational participation of the collection and also to the development of educational and scientific activities. Mycological tourism can contribute to practices that can minimize the impact of the activity on the environment and orient towards responsible tourism. There are pending challenges for the development of mycological tourism, which requires more studies associated with its characteristics and its social, environmental and economic impacts. This will allow us to build better experiences, meet the types of tourists who love mushrooms and mycological tourism is complemented by other activities in natural and rural areas.

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