

## History of the AFTOL Classification Project

Updated October 2006

<http://www.clarku.edu/faculty/dhibbett/AFTOL/AFTOL.htm>

This project originated during the preparation of the 2004 American Journal of Botany article by Lutzoni et al., which reported progress of the AFTOL project to that point. In that article, we considered including a revised classification of fungi, emphasizing Ascomycota. Eventually, we decided that it would be better to hold off on a major classification proposal until a broad constituency of fungal taxonomists could be consulted. To that end, we initiated conversations in the summer of 2004 including representatives of AFTOL, The Dictionary of the Fungi, Myconet, GenBank, and others.

Throughout this project, there has been a core group of discussants, who have communicated with the AFTOL/Deep Hypha community. The core group, which has now expanded to twenty individuals, has exercised editorial control over the project. The early members of the core group included David Hibbett, Joey Spatafora, Francois Lutzoni, Rytas Vilgalys, and David McLaughlin (AFTOL PIs), Joost Stalpers and Paul Cannon (Dictionary of the Fungi), Ove Eriksson (Myconet), Joe Bischoff (GenBank), Robert Lücking (Field Museum), and Meredith Blackwell (Alexopoulos's Mycology). Other individuals who joined later include Conrad Schoch (post-doc, Spatafora lab), P. Brandon Matheny and Manfred Binder (post-docs, Hibbett lab), Timothy James (post-doc, Vilgalys lab), Paul Kirk (CABI), Martha Powell (PI, Chytridiomycota PEET project), Thorsten Lumsch and Sabine Huhndorf (Field Museum, Myconet), and Scott Redhead.

We started holding discussions by e-mail at the end of the summer in 2004, with the aim of developing a preliminary draft classification. In March 2005 we met immediately before the Deep Hypha Research Coordination Network (Tucson), and then presented the draft classification for Ascomycota and Basidiomycota and an overview of the project to the Deep Hypha group. Initially, we intended to treat only Ascomycota and Basidiomycota, but at the 2005 Deep Hypha meeting it was decided that the "basal fungal lineages" (Chytridiomycota and Zygomycota) would also be included.

We distributed our first draft classification in July 2005 to a group of 105 "consultants" who represent workers in all of the major groups of Fungi. We received comments from 38 individuals, which we considered as we revised the classification.

We posted a second draft classification on this web site in January 2006. We also presented the second draft classification at the February 2006 Deep Hypha meeting in Baton Rouge. The classification was subsequently revised in two major stages occurring in July 2006 and Sept-Oct 2006. Thus, we now have a third draft classification.

Separate documents available on this site describe the changes that were made to the classifications in response to comments received, and all three draft classifications are posted.

We are currently preparing a manuscript that will present the classification. We have extended a broad invitation to the fungal systematics community (which we repeat here!) to join as coauthors on this publication. While final decisions about the classification and the ms will be made by the principal participants listed above, we will consider all suggestions carefully. Everyone who has agreed to be a coauthor will receive a copy of the ms and will have an opportunity to comment prior to submission. We will also welcome comments from individuals who prefer not to be coauthors on the final publication. Initially, we planned to target *Taxon*, but that journal does not accept classification proposals without a novel analysis. We are considering the *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society*, which also published the revised classification of the “Angiosperm Phylogeny Group.”