**TITLE (TIMES NEW ROMAN, SIZE 14, UPPERCASE, except scientific names, which should in italic and not all in caps, e.g. *Cora reticulifera)***

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The abstract – NOT including the title, author names, first author email or institutions – should contain a maximum of 300 words. Formatting: Times New Roman, size 12, 1.15 spacing, justify text. The text should be a continuous paragraph, without indentations, subheadings, tables or images. All scientific names must be italicized. Please use this template for preparing and formatting your abstract. Funding may be added at the end, if required by your institution or funding agency. For an example, please see below.

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LICHENOLOGY: WELCOME LETTER**

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It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the 9th International Association for Lichenology Symposium (IAL 9), which will be held from August 1 to 6, 2021 - VIRTUAL. I’d like to personally welcome each of you to the most important event for the Lichenological community. It’s an exciting time for thestudy of lichensas we are confronting a time of many changes and we’re meeting these changes during a time of larger nation-wide and global change as well. The world of Lichenology is an exciting area in which to work, and we’ll continue to meet and bring inspired people together in forums like this, to ensure our conferences remain at the cutting edge. Throughout this conference, I ask you all to stay engaged, keep us proactive and help us shape the future of Lichenology. I’d like to thank each of your for attending our conference and bringing your expertise to our meeting. You, as organization leaders, have the vision, the knowledge, the wherewithal and the experience to help us pave our way into the future. We could not accomplish what we do without your support and leadership. Also you, dear students, are truly our greatest asset today and tomorrow. My personal respect and thanks go out to all of you. Funding: NK (FUNDECT, UFMS), MDF (Peter Buck Fellowship, NMNH-SI).