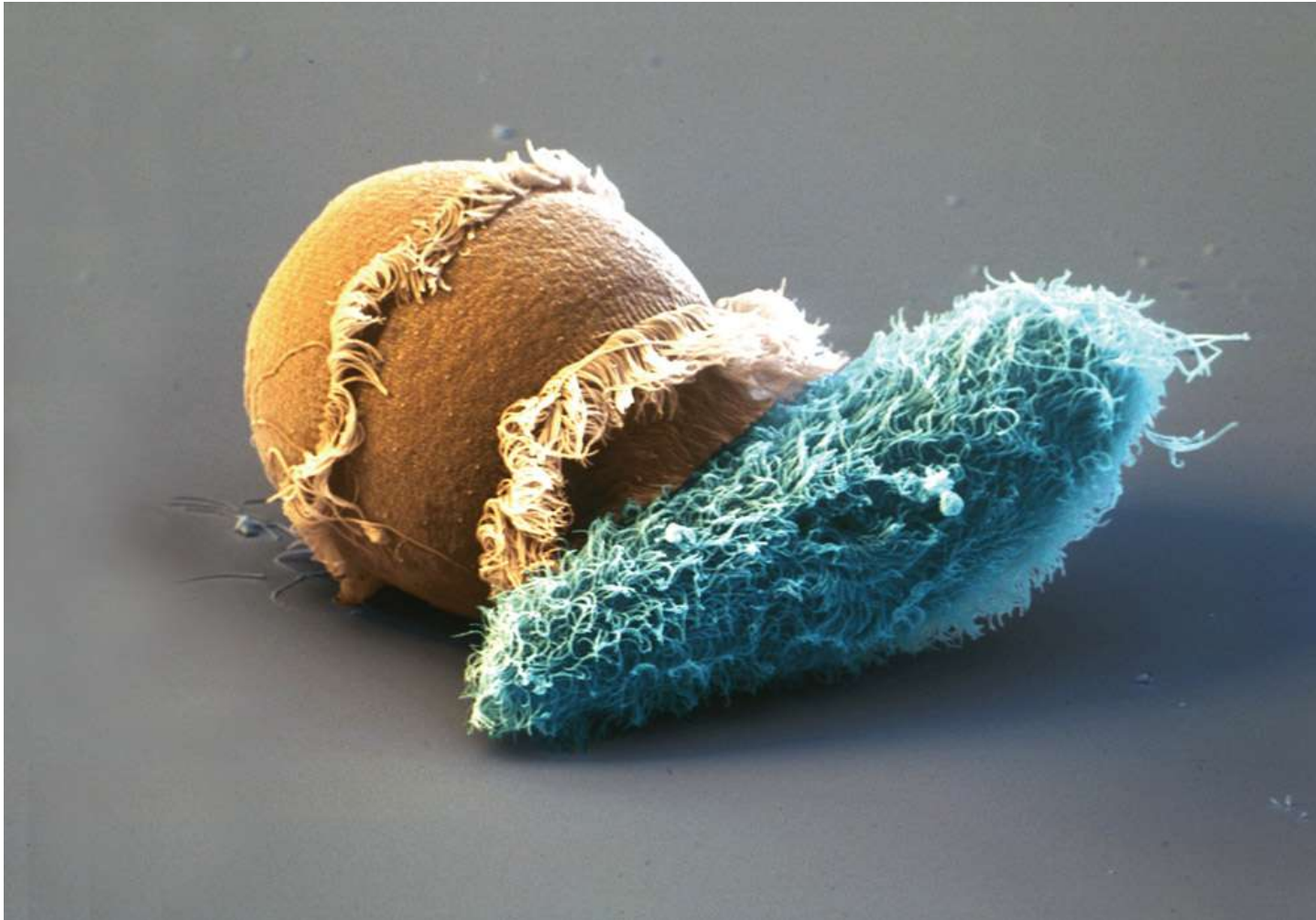


19.6 Ecology of Fungi

KEY CONCEPT

Fungi recycle nutrients in the environment.



19.6 Ecology of Fungi

Fungi may be decomposers, pathogens, or mutualists.

- Fungi and bacteria are the main decomposers in any ecosystem.
 - decompose dead leaves, twigs, logs, and animals
 - return nutrients to the soil
 - can damage fruit trees and wooden structures



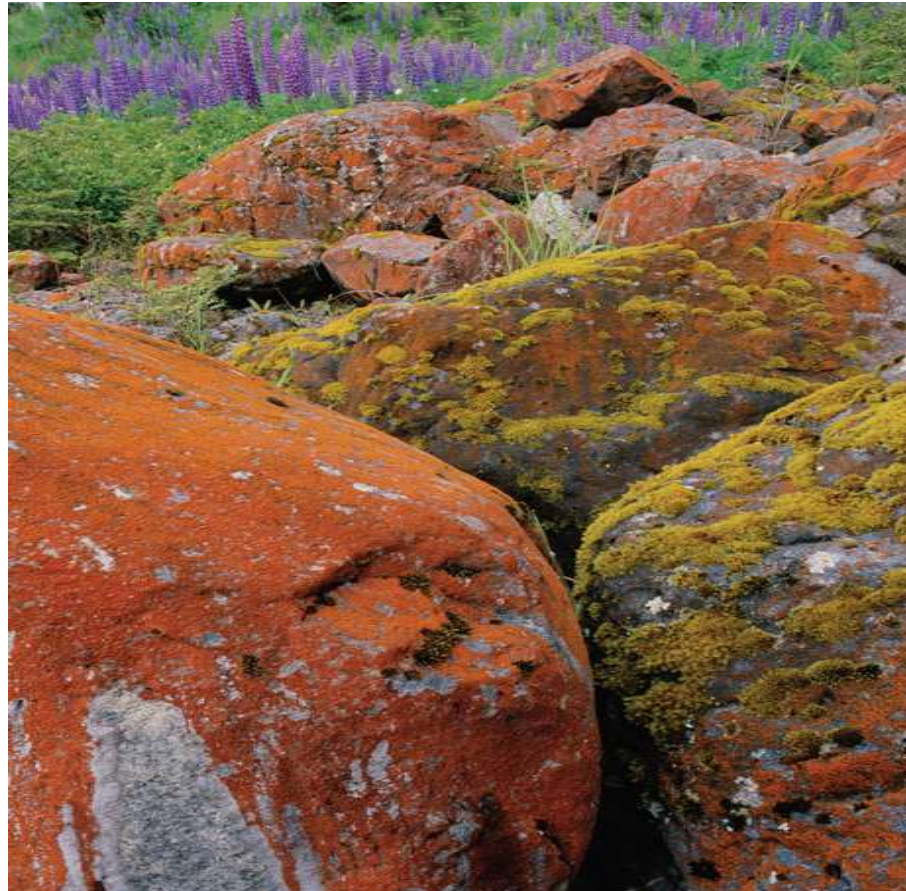
19.6 Ecology of Fungi

- Fungi can act as pathogens.
 - human diseases include ringworm and athlete's foot
 - plant diseases include Dutch elm disease



19.6 Ecology of Fungi

- Fungi can act as mutualists.
 - lichens form between fungi and algae
 - mycorrhizae form between fungi and plants



19.6 Ecology of Fungi

- Fungi can act as mutualists.
 - relationships form between fungi and some insects



19.6 Ecology of Fungi

Fungi are studied for many purposes.

- Fungi are useful in several ways.
 - as food
 - as antibiotics
 - as model systems for molecular biology