

SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY
200 Second Avenue North, Seattle, Washington, 98109
November 1976

Number 126



REPORT ON THE 13TH ANNUAL EXHIBIT L. McKnight

The 13th Annual Exhibit of our Society which was held on October 16 and 17, 1976 was a great success. According to the Science Center records the attendance was 5,778 (but they did not count all of our members who came in the back door) and paid admissions amounted to \$6,991 (which is shared equally with the Science Center).

This year the preparations went smoothly, partly because more members came during the early days (Wednesday mornings and evening, Thursday and Friday) to help, and some toiled all day long. Friday was a beautiful day which enticed many members to go out and gather fungi for the display. George Rafanelli and Martin Hansen, who coordinated the collecting effort, thank everybody for going out and wearing their red hats and drinking red wine, so that they were not endangered by hunters. The statistics as to what was collected is presented elsewhere in this issue.

The crew which identified and arranged the mushrooms for display arrived early Saturday morning and worked right up to the opening of the doors to the public. And yet other members were ready then to man the various stations and booths and answer the many questions of the public.

On behalf of all the committee heads I want to express **MANY THANKS TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HELPED**. It is impossible to list all members by name, and therefore, we do it in this global form. I am sure that there are not many amateur societies who can count on so many willing hands to produce a show of professional quality as PSMS can year after year. By the way, next year's show will be held October 14, and 15.

Thank you again, even though these two words can hardly express the reward all of our members received from the large turnout by the public who came and appreciated and admired our effort. Let's do it again.

Talking about dedication: Jo and Howard Gillen came all the way from Richland to help with the Annual Exhibit, and Judy Roger did the same from Ocean Shores. That should be an example for many of our local members.

STATISTICS OF THE 13TH ANNUAL EXHIBIT D. Henderson

In 1976 a total of 322 species were exhibited. This compares with 260 species last year. Of these 190 species (in 44 genera) were gilled fungi

Lactarius 17 species
Cortinarius 16 species
Inocybe 13 species
Russula 13 species
Clitocybe 12 species
Pholiota 10 species
Amanita 9 species
Hygrophorus 9 species
Tricholoma 8 species

The non-gilled fungi included the following genera:

Boletus-Leccinum-Suillus group 26 species; Polypores 30 species; Hydnum 14 species; as well as Ramaria and Cantharellaceae.

LOOK!

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT THE DATE OF THE NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

The November Membership Meeting of PSMS will be held
November 15, 1976

instead of the normal meeting date. Mark this change on your calendar and don't show up at the Science Center on the wrong date.

NOTICE ABOUT MEMBERSHIPS AND DUES

Membership Chairman, Ronna Randall-Brown, 4201 - 78th SE; Mercer Island, Wa., 98040, phone: 232 - 8998; is accepting your membership renewals for 1977 at this time. Dues are \$10 for family memberships; \$7 for single memberships, and \$5 for full-time students. By sending your check to her home-address she receives the renewals gradually, and it makes her job easier.

You may also renew your membership at either the November or December membership meeting. Be sure to do it right now, because this year, Ronna will put the new membership roster out early in the year, and if you have not renewed by the end of January your name will not appear in it. But more important, you won't be receiving your Spore Prints after January. This promptness is partly caused by the fact that we did not have any rosters for the many new members who joined PSMS during the Annual Exhibit, and they can't communicate with their fellow members.

Also if your name is not spelled correctly, either in the roster or on the mailing envelope, call Ronna and she will correct it. The same goes for telephone numbers. And most of all, do notify her if you move, so we can forward your Spore Prints.

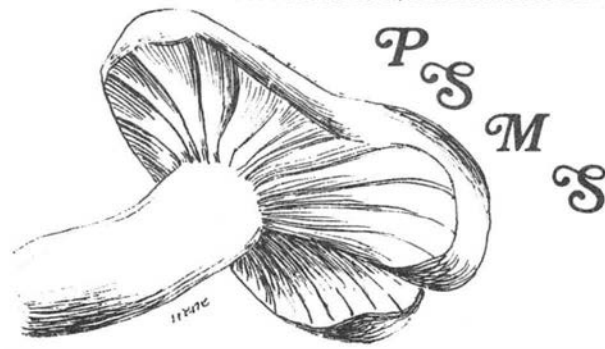
PACIFIC SEARCH

Joy Spurr

If you wish to learn more about this magnificent land of yours, PACIFIC SEARCH is the magazine for you. It is a treasury of information about the pleasures and problems of living in the Pacific Northwest. In the months to come PACIFIC SEARCH will explore many more facets of this special corner of the world, its natural history, Indian heritage, old and new pioneers, its fresh and marine waters, mountains, deserts, forests, plants, animals and MUSHROOMS (a monthly column by Joy Spurr, a PSMS member).

PACIFIC SEARCH makes this special Christmas offer: one year (10 issues) \$8. Published monthly, except January and August.

PACIFIC SEARCH has published a beautiful 8-1/2 x 11" Engagement Calendar for 1977 that includes 14 color photographs..... a magnificent gift for yourself or others. Ask about PACIFIC SEARCH cookbooks and books on nature subjects by Northwest authors. Write to PACIFIC SEARCH, 715 Harrison Street, Seattle, Wa., 98109.



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 Milton Grout (immed. past president)

ALTERNATES Margaret Holzbauer; Mitchell McGuinness.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR Dr. Daniel E. Stuntz

CALENDAR

- Nov. 8 Monday, Fall Class,
Nov. 15 Monday, Membership Meeting, 8:00 pm
 NOTE THAT THIS IS A CHANGE FROM THE
 REGULAR DATE
 Nov. 22 Monday, Last Fall Class, Eames Theater
 Nov. 22 Board Meeting, 8:00 pm
 Nov. 26 Deadline for Spore Print Material; Send all
 articles, art work, photographs to the editor,
 4029 E. Madison, Seattle, Wa., 98102
 Dec. 13 Monday, Membership Meeting, 8:00 pm

BANQUET NEWS Louise Rautenberg

It is not too early to think about our annual banquet coming up in March. Louise Rautenberg, our banquet chairman is hard at work with the preparations. She asks all of our members to save some of this fall's mushroom harvest and donate it for the banquet, so that we again may have mushrooms in most dishes. In future issues of Spore Prints we will keep you informed about location, tickets, etc. etc...

IN MEMORIAM : On Wednesday, October 6, 1976 Josara Hendrickson died of a heart attack. All of us miss Josara's smile and willingness to help where help is needed. She had not been a member of PSMS for too many years, but she was always ready to contribute her time and talent where it was needed.

Membership Meeting

NOTE the change in the date of the November Membership Meeting

Monday, November 15, 1976, 8:00 pm, Eames Theater, The Pacific Science Center.

Program: Ben Woo, first president of PSMS and founder of our society will be the principal speaker. At press time, the topic of his speech had not been determined. And I'd rather not second-guess, but Ben is our expert on the genus Boletus and presently is diligently collecting information for the Russula key. So it will be a real treat to learn from Ben.

Advance Notice for the December Meeting: By popular demand the December membership meeting will follow the format of the last couple of years. It will start with Photography Night featuring Joy Spurr's annual presentation of color slides and prints taken by our PSMS members. This part will be followed by a social meeting. The hospitality committee will be calling YOU and asking you to bring cookies, so start preparing.

BOARD NEWS

H.R.H.

The October Board Meeting took place the day after the Annual Exhibit. The still tired but conscientious Trustees re-appeared at the Pacific Science Center to direct the functions of our Society.

Lyle McKnight, the Chairman of the Annual Exhibit, reported that 5,778 persons saw our Show, and paid admissions (which are shared equally with the Science Center) are \$6,991. The 1976 Show was a success. The good turnout by the public was gratifying to our members and they saw that their work was appreciated. On both afternoons there were lines in front of the ticket booth, and the Eames Theater was crowded. Lyle is going to make a report to our President, and include recommendations for further improvements. (more about the Show at another place in this issue).

October 14 and 15, 1977 were chosen as the dates for the 14th Annual Exhibit.

As most members will have read in the daily newspapers there has been a change in key positions of the management of the Science Center. One turn for the better as far as PSMS is concerned: we have been promised the use of the Eames Theater for our December Membership Meeting. Also the cooperation with the present management during the Show was excellent. No complaints, so far.

The membership chairman, Ronna Randall-Brown reported that 72 new members joined PSMS as well as some who had let their membership lapse for a year or longer.

Louise Rautenberg, our banquet chairman, reported that the preparations for the Annual Survivors' Banquet are under way and it looks as if we might be able to hold the ticket price to last year's amount. That is beating inflation.

The supply of the booklet titled: A Compilation of Educational material designed to assist in the identification of Pacific Northwest Mushrooms, prepared by PSMS, which was reprinted this summer (500 copies) is being used at a faster than anticipated rate. The Education Committee agreed to review and update the material so that it will be ready when a new supply will have to be printed.

Our Treasurer, John Mudge, was suddenly called to New York to be with his sick son. We hope the situation has turned for the better by now.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm and the Trustees went home for a well-deserved rest.

Several skilletts of Shaggy Manes were the highlight of the Saturday evening potluck at Tumwater. Del and Ruth Miller found a large patch of the choice mushrooms near the end of the Icicle River road and donated two large pails to the potluck. Everyone pitched in to clean, slice and sauté the delicious mushrooms. The 55 members participating in the potluck thank the Millers for the savory treat. (Others may have contributed additional Shaggy Manes - if so, thanks, and I'm sorry I didn't get your names.) Novice co-hosts, Ron and Pat Richardson, Bob Hanna and Margaret Holzbauer greeted a total of 80 members, many of them young and inexperienced mushroomers. Unfortunately, other activities that weekend called away many of the "oldtimers", notably the Hendricksons and the Schmitts who always contribute so much to the fieldtrip's success. They were sorely missed. Howard and Fay Melsen were the only experts knowledgeable in identification. Fay did the majority of the labeling since Howard had to spend most of the weekend under the hood of his ailing vehicle. Fay didn't get much sleep and was overheard asking if it was possible for a person to get an ulcer in two days. Even while worrying whether they were going to get their trailer home, she identified 67 species. Our thanks to Fay for stepping in as she did. On Saturday, Jack Leonard led a caravan of collectors, and a few smaller groups went out on their own.

The beautiful weather which made the outing on September 25 and 26 so enjoyable, was also generally blamed for the dryness of the area and lack of mushrooms. Most of the successful hunters had gone to higher elevations. One member travelled far afield and collected some nice Boletus edulis from Lion Rock on Blewett Pass. Saturday evening we shared the shelter with a group of Canadians who travelled in style. They hung an electric light powered by a relatively quiet generator and brought in beautiful 4 x 4' of kiln-dried hemlock to burn in the fireplace. One of our PSMS members took some of the leftover blocks home to carve. Some of our members joined the Canadians in a game of Pochino. Early Sunday morning the Melsens started for home escorted by the Bronners and the Perkins. We are happy to report they made the trip with no more trouble.

OUR THANKS GO TO, AND FOR, THE FOLLOWING

Did you know that the publicity for this year's Annual Exhibit was extraordinary. There were short programs on Channels 4, 5, 7, and 11. The October issue of Sunset included a whole page. Both the Seattle Times and Post Intelligencer carried extensive material. And I also have been told that the papers in the surrounding communities had good coverage. All praise goes to our Vice President, Gerry Cone, who handled publicity.

Thank you, Professor James Trappe. Many PSMS members have praised the excellent presentation by Professor Trappe at the October Membership meeting, on the topic "Trees, Truffles, and Beasts." It was our first encounter with subterranean fungi. Not only were we unaware of their usefulness in the field of forestry, but many of us will be watching the beasts (squirrels) come January digging around a tree, in hopes of finding the elusive truffle ourselves.

It was good to see Bill and Pauline Pollard on recent fieldtrips again. We are glad that Bill's health has improved so that he can come out; and thanks to Dick and Lucy Goodwin for bringing them.

On the weekend of October 2nd and 3rd we all headed for the Crystal Springs Forest Camp with memories of last year's bountiful Matsutaki finds. Well, on account of the dry September and the fierce competition from other mushroom hunters in that area, the fungi were rather sparse this year. However the diligent hunter still found some Armillaria ponderosa and Leccinum aurantiacum which was discovered in great abundance on Stampede Pass.

On Saturday afternoon, to dampen our spirits on this fieldtrip it started to rain hard. Secretly we had to admit that we were grateful for that wet stuff since the Annual Exhibit was only two weeks away, and without the rain we might have a meager display at the Show.

Paul and Katherine Anson, Rick White, and yours truly were hosts for the outing. The identification was done by Jennie Schmitt in her usual competent manner. At one point she had to be forced closer to the fireplace when her teeth were shattering and she had turned blue from being so cold while the wind blew through the shelter. The hosts had the advantage of moving around and tending to the hot coffee pots. Somehow the count of specimens found and of members and guests participating in the outing and potluck was not taken. To accommodate everybody for the delicious potluck in the shelter, we had to move the specimens outside under a tree, and also set up the salad and dessert serving table outside under a plastic cover. But a good time was had by all. Monte Hendrickson, Dave Schmitt, Ed and Ella Cantelon, and Agnes and Dick Sieger took the newcomers out, many on their first outing. Our thanks go to these and all others who pitched in when help was needed.

All of us who enjoyed the warm fireplace on Saturday evening did not know that we would reminisce with Josara Hendrickson for the last time and death would take her the following Wednesday. We have one consolation, she enjoyed herself and had a good time.

Dalles Fieldtrip Report H.R.H.

It was the first time since our family has gone to the Dalles Forest Camp on a PSMS fieldtrip that deer hunting season had not started, and we could explore new mushroom hunting areas. Because in prior years we always went into Mount Rainier National Park (to be on the safe side). Again, on account of the dry weather it took hard work to find specimens for the identification table and the pot. On Saturday the weather was lovely and many people turned out for the fieldtrip. Fay and Howard Melsen, Irene Nelson, and Al and Shirley Mattivi shared the host duties, with Howard also doing the identification. And again I saw numerous people helping out either when they were called upon or on their own. Our thanks are extended to all of them, even the ones not named. The potluck dinner was well organized and had delicious and ample food. Most people ate outside at the tables around the shelter since the sun was still shining. However, during the night a steady downpour hit the roofs of the Rv's, and not too many people went out on Sunday. The beautiful weather this fall has just spoiled us. The few who did go out found a good quantity of Leccinum aurantiacum. Again the actual number of specimens identified and fieldtrip participants was not counted. We will have to improve on this. But the long line at potluck indicated that the usual number was present.

After potluck numerous mushroom and other tales were exchanged around the fireplace. On a PSMS fieldtrip you know you are with friends.

The following article is printed for your information only, and is not an endorsement by PSMS but rather an enforcement of our educational slogans: "Know the genus Amanita" and "Identify Beyond Any Doubt." PSMS does not in any way encourage the eating of poisonous and/or hallucinogenic mushrooms by novices (ed.)

AMANITA : THE MUCH-MALIGNED GENUS Greg Wright

The genus Amanita contains perhaps the most stately and beautiful of mushrooms. It also contains, as almost every mushroom hunter knows, the most deadly of mushrooms. But few people realize that Amanita is one of the best genera in providing edible mushrooms.

Out of about 50 species of Amanita described in mushroom guides, only two groups of several species each are known to be poisonous. Worst is the phalloides group, which contains protoplasmic (cell-destroying) liver and kidney poisons and has caused many excruciating deaths. This does not mean you will die if you eat one of these mushrooms; I have been told that the mortality rate with the best hospital care is now about 5%. Reports from people who ate phalloides-group mushrooms (some of these reports posthumous) state that the flavor is excellent; hence even the deadly Amanitas have good edible qualities. Fortunately, the two phalloides-group mushrooms in western Washington, A. phalloides, the Death Cap, and A. verna, the Death Angel, are both rare here. But this also means hunters will have to be especially alert to recognize them when they are found. Of the phalloides group, only A. ovoidea in Europe is known to be edible, although even A. virosa, the Destroying Angel, sometimes contains very little poison.

The second poisonous Amanita group includes A. muscaria, the Fly Agaric, A. pantherina, the Panther Cap, and A. gemmata, the Jonquil Amanita. Mushrooms in this complex can be very unpleasant, but rarely are enough eaten to cause more than part of a day of upset. Moreover, these species are often eaten intentionally, either for their intoxicating effects, or for food after peeling and parboiling. Following the latter procedure, I ate a cap and a half of A. muscaria and found it to be mild and fish-like in flavor and without any ill effect. Someone else who ate muscaria from the same location (Aspen, Colorado) without parboiling had the singular experience of the coursing of a sickening feeling from his stomach through the length of his intestines with final release in diarrhea. This was accompanied at one stage by the inability to see clearly beyond four feet, but there was nothing of the hoped-for hallucinations. A. pantherina can be particularly severe, sometimes causing the eater to become temporarily berserk, or, as in one case, causing such disruption of body functions that the person was sure he was going to die, and such disruption of mental functions that whether he died didn't matter to him. Even the pleasant-looking A. gemmata has caused its share of trouble, being responsible for deaths in Chile. In Europe it is reported as edible except in large amounts. In the U.S. it is not known to be poisonous, but its treachery is that it hybridizes with A. pantherina, producing mushrooms of intermediate color and poison content. Another mushroom in the muscaria group, A. frostiana, occurs in the eastern U.S. and is eaten regularly by some people.

The infamy of the phalloides and muscaria groups of Amanita has cast a shadow over the entire genus, even though almost none of its other members are known to be poisonous, while many are known to be excellent edibles. A few Amanitas do enjoy high esteem in some regions among some people, such as the colorful A. caesarea, Caesar's Mushroom, named after

the emperor who made it part of his cuisine. Italians who immigrated to the U.S. West Coast adopted the similar A. calyptroderma, the Cocorra, as its replacement. A. rubescens and A. ovoidea are other Amanitas valued for food in parts of Europe. Even A. muscaria is valued for food in parts of Russia and eastern Europe, a tradition which has been imported to Cle Elum and a few towns in Washington.

Many mushroom hunters know that certain Amanita species are edible, but follow the policy of avoiding all Amanitas for fear of misidentifying a poisonous one. This policy is recommended by many authors of mushroom guides, which leads to statements like this one by Alexander Smith, in his discussion of A. calyptroderma: "Apparently one of the best edible fungi known, but I refuse to recommend it because it is an Amanita." From my own near-tragic experience I learned the wisdom of this advice. In southern California, both a white form of A. calyptroderma, and A. ocreata, a slightly colored counterpart of A. verna, grow in association with live oak trees. I collected a pile of what I thought was calyptroderma, but before cooking it I went over the mushrooms feature by feature to obtain a written description. I recognized my mistake only after eating a bite of one of the mushrooms to record the raw taste, at which time I noticed a slightly acrid aftertaste which I hadn't noticed in calyptroderma I had eaten previously. I hurriedly applied potassium hydroxide (KOH) to the cuticle and got a yellow reaction characteristic of A. virosa but not of calyptroderma. Finally, I placed some spores in Melzer's reagent (iodine solution) and determined that they were amyloid (turned blue) -- characteristic of the phalloides complex but not of calyptroderma. At this point I rushed to the hospital, where I was given an emetic and a strong laxative -- hard on the digestive tract but a blessing to the liver and kidneys.

I'm not the only one who has made such a mistake. Italians in Northern California have sometimes found A. pantherina with the cap's universal veil patches washed off by rain, and mistaken these for calyptroderma. In recent years, A. phalloides has become widespread in the San Francisco area, and it has been mistaken for calyptroderma. It's also a good bet that A. muscaria with its cap warts washed away (or the European variety aureola lacks warts to begin with) has been mistaken for A. caesarea. But avoiding the poisonous Amanitas isn't as easy as following a policy of avoiding Amanitas in general. Many people eat Lepiota rachodes or Lepiota naucina, yet the former looks like species in the Amanita solitaria group and the latter looks like Amanita verna. A similar situation obtains with the popular Fried Chicken Mushroom, Lyophyllum multiceps and decastes, which can be very hard to distinguish from Entoloma lividum, which is severely poisonous (the latter is distinguished by its pink spores, but these are often late in maturing). I have even seen people (including myself) who have previously collected Cantharellus cibarius, the common Chanterelle, mistake it for one of seven other species (Cantharellus floccosus, C. kauffmanii, Hygrophorus aurantiacus, Omphalotus olearius, Chroogomphus tomentosus, Hygrophorus saxatilis, and Phyllotopsis nidulans). My feeling is that you are taking a chance in eating almost any wild mushroom, and if you are knowledgeable and observant enough to distinguish edible Lepiotes, Lyophyllums, and Cantharelli from poisonous look-alikes, then you can just as confidently distinguish most of the edible Amanitas.

(to be continued next month, wherein Greg describes eight groups of Amanita, and tells of his findings of eating various Amanitas, i.e. as to their flavor and toxic or non-toxic effects.)