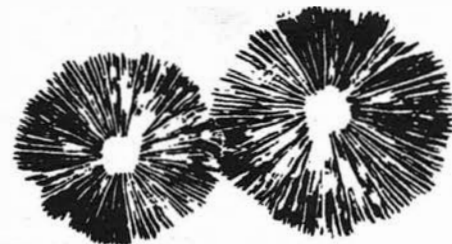


# SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Number 300

March 1994



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dick Sieger

PSMS starts its 30th year this month. We are a sound and vigorous group owing to generations of proficient volunteers.

Kern Hendricks taught us how to manage our assets and helped us build a stable and active membership. This legacy was enhanced these past two years by some highly successful activities. Dennis Bowman worked hundreds of hours with his committee to bring us an extraordinary NAMA Foray. Watching these remarkable people work so hard and so effectively was a delight. Bruce DeLoria led two exhibits that were critical and financial successes. Our Book Sales Committee, led now by the Beth and Harold Schnarre and before by Elizabeth Hendricks, provided substantial income while bringing us a fine selection of books at reduced prices.



As hobbyists, our first love is providing mushrooms for the table. Mary Lynch led us on well-organized field trips, hauling equipment and sharing her skills and secrets. Conservation Chair Ron Post is a leader in the Northwest effort to protect our mushrooms and the forests that nurture them. Patrice Benson and her team of amateur and professional volunteers taught us how to get full culinary enjoyment from our finds. Scott Lieske and his successors led an active and maturing cultivation group as they acquired and built equipment.

A foundation of science keeps PSMS from drifting. Brian Luther has an infectious enthusiasm for mycological taxonomy, and he has trained the finest group of identifiers you will find anywhere. Dr. Joseph Ammirati spent many long evenings away from his family to share his science with us and give us a sense of its discipline. With Carol Smith, he guided our Barlow Pass research project. Lorelei Norvell led PSMS volunteers as they organized the University of Washington herbarium to make its collections accessible to scientists. Russ Parker, with help from Mike Wells, Lyle McKnight, and Lynn Phillips, transformed some ancient parts into five dissecting microscopes and thirteen dazzling compound microscopes complete with oil immersion lenses — all of them suitable for exacting mycological work.

A special thanks to some special people: To newsletter editor Agnes Sieger, who prepared a stream of publications and produces *Spore Prints* monthly; to Dennis Bowman, Bill Bridges, Lynn Phillips, and Mary Taylor, who took on so many projects and solved so many problems.

Thanks to all of you, a legion of volunteers, who make our society so enjoyable.



## CISPUS FORAY

Kathreen Otwell

The PSMS Spring Foray will be May 6-8, 1994, at the Cispus Environmental Learning Center near Randle, Washington. Everyone interested in mushrooms is invited. You don't have to belong to PSMS. For those who missed the recent PSMS microscopy classes, Judy Roger will teach yet another microscope class, and Katie Glew will demonstrate why her lichen class at the NAMA foray last fall was standing room only. Paul Kroeger, past president of the Vancouver, B.C., Mycological Society, will act as foray mycologist, displaying the expertise and encyclopedic knowledge for which he is so well known. See the enclosed handout for details. If you haven't already made plans to come, mark your calendar now, and return the registration form to Foray Chair Kathreen Otwell. It's an event you won't want to miss.

## SURVIVORS' BANQUET

Patrice Benson

March 11 is just around the corner, and the Department of Culinary Arts at Seattle Central Community College needs a firm count by March 4. So if you haven't made reservations for the 30th Annual PSMS Survivors' Banquet by the time you receive this newsletter, call Mary Taylor IMMEDIATELY to get on the list. If you like mushrooms and you like to eat (which includes just about everybody in PSMS), you won't want to miss out on the feast.

### MENU

#### *Happy Hour*

Pineapple/cranberry sparkling water

#### *Appetizers*

Porcini tart with smoked jack cheese and Madeira  
Lemon thyme gravlax with sauce  
Roasted walnut and Gorgonzola crostini

#### *Soup Course*

Essence of wild mushroom soup with pistou  
(garlic, tomato, basil, Parmesan cheese, and olive oil)

#### *Salad Course*

Spinach with apple/blue cheese vinaigrette  
topped with toasted walnuts

#### *Main Course*

Seared medallion of beef tenderloin  
with crispie potatoes  
wild mushrooms  
and berries

#### *Dessert*

Something fantastic made out of chocolate

Note that three of these courses contain wild mushrooms. We need all the mushroom donations we can get. No matter what you're hoarding them for, they will never taste like they will here. Call Patrice now at 722-0691, and see last year's memories blossom into a culinary miracle.

## Spore Prints

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## MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The meeting this month will be held during the Survivors' Banquet on Friday, March 11, at the Department of Culinary Arts at Seattle Central Community College.

## CARNATION FIELD TRIP

Pat Williams



The first field trip of 1994 will be Saturday, April 2, at MacDonald Park near Carnation. MacDonald Park is on the Tolt River about 1/2 mile south of Carnation in King County. Enter the park on N.E. 40th Street from State Hwy. 203. Watch for PSMS signs on the corner and use the day-use parking lot. We will meet at the main shelter across the suspension bridge at 9:00 a.m. for a general introduction to mushroom hunting. Then we will break into small groups and go out to gather specimens. Identifiers will be available around 10:30 a.m. There should be *Verpa bohemica* under the cottonwoods in the surrounding area. Please bring a mushroom basket, knife, brush, whistle, and compass. Wear shoes suitable for soggy ground and bring rain gear. We will meet rain or shine. You may want to bring coffee and lunch.

## CALENDAR

- Mar. 11 Survivors' Banquet, 7:30 p.m. (social hour, 6:30 p.m.), Seattle Central Community College
- Mar. 13 Cultivation Group, 1:00 p.m., Douglas Classroom, CUH
- Mar. 14 Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., CUH
- Mar. 25 *Spore Prints* deadline
- Mar. 28 Beginners' class, 7:00 p.m., Isaacson Classroom, CUH
- Apr. 2 Field Trip, 9:00 a.m., MacDonald County Park, Carnation, Leader Mike Handrahan
- Apr. 4 Beginners' class, 7:00 p.m., Isaacson Classroom, CUH
- May 6-8 Cispus Foray, Randle, Washington

## CULTIVATION GROUP

Rachel Bruna

The Cultivation Group met outside Uwajimaya's in downtown Seattle and found that there were not a great variety of cultivated mushrooms available for sale. There were shiitake mushrooms, oyster mushrooms, enoki mushrooms, Chinese wood ears, your average garden-variety grocery-store mushrooms, and a wide variety of dried fish products, especially dried anchovies, that were mistaken for mushrooms.

We then went to a local restaurant and feasted on dim sum, drank lots of hot tea, and generally enjoyed ourselves tremendously planning the next meeting.

The next meeting will be Sunday, the 13th of March, at 1:00 p.m. in the Douglas Classroom at CUH. We will be building our spore samples from our cultured mycelium, autoclaving the rye grain, and setting up canning jars for further growth. The following meeting will involve putting the mycelium on substrates for actual mushroom production. Anybody who wants further information can call Greg Chew at 721-3867.

## MICROSCOPY CLASS

Dick Sieger

Congratulations to these folks who completed the mycological microscopy classes and are qualified to use PSMS's scopes: Larry Baxter, Bill Bridges, Jamie Gallardo, Mike Hess, Russ Parker, Lynn Phillips, Ron Post, Beth Schnarre, Harold Schnarre, Glory Thomas, Anne Zimmerman, Pat Williams, Frank Ikeda, Fran Ikeda, Janice Meyer, Don Schultz, Marlene Waldow, Ralph Baum, Bruce Catha, Sara Clark, William Forbes, Henry Lingat, and Wilma Sofranko. Their rapid progress and skill impressed the teacher, Judy Roger.

## BOARD NEWS

Agnes Sieger

The last meeting of the current board was held at The Ram Cafe and Sports Bar in University Village, beginning and ending with beer and nachos. There was little business. The board voted to hold the Cispus Foray on the date agreed upon. Ron Post reported on the Special Forest Products Conference he attended in Oregon in January. With so much money involved, he feels that the time is past when mushroom societies can have a major influence. Everyone was impressed with his advance copies of the PSMS conservation brochure. Nothing like it is currently available, and a couple of organizations expressed interest in funding its printing. Ron plans to send letters to prospective backers, asking for offers. Election Chair Mary Lynch will be out of town and unable to count ballots. Carol Smith volunteered to help out.

[Following is a summary of the January 1994 conference on special forest products in Hillsboro, Oregon. Contact Ron Post, PSMS, (206) 525-9082, for more details.]

What is a special forest product? Basically, anything that grows in a forest besides timber that someone is willing to pay for. A commercial display at the conference identified 45 products beside fungi with current commercial value! Another, less reputable estimate put the number at 150.

According to Jim Freed of the Washington State University Extension Office in Shelton, Washington, the market for special forest products is increasing dramatically. Japan, for example, is looking to the Pacific Northwest as a source for thousands of species of fungi seen as medicinal or edible. Before commercial interest in these products, harvesting was "just like a mining operation." Now, research into what products exist on which lands is a must, as is a resource management scheme.

Special forest products fall into two general categories: floral greens and wild mushrooms. According to Keith Blatner (WSU), at least 675,000 acres on the west side of the Cascades is available for the harvest of floral greens such as salal, bear grass, evergreen huckleberry, holly, moss, sword fern, dwarf Oregon grape, noble fir boughs, and products from red cedar, white pine, and Douglas fir. On the east side, baby's breath and subalpine fir are harvested. In the tri-state area of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, floral greens are worth \$128 million (1989 figures), and the industry involves up to 10,000 people annually on a part-time or full-time basis. Where do the greens go? The U.S. accounts for 52%, Europe for 24%, local and regional markets for about 18%, and the Pacific Rim for about 4%.



According to Bill Schlosser (Coop. Ext., Orofino, Idaho), wild mushrooms in the tri-state area were worth about \$41 million (1992 figures). Fifty percent of that went to harvesters, 30% went to overhead, and an estimated 7% was profit. The 1992 harvest, in pounds, for the tri-state area was

|       | Morels  | Chanterelles | Matsutake | Boletes | Others  |
|-------|---------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Wash. | 78,000  | 553,000      | 275,000   | 64,000  | 14,000  |
| Ore.  | 900,000 | 581,000      | 450,000   | 370,000 | 150,000 |
| Ida.  | 334,000 | 0            | 99,000    | 47,000  | 4,000   |

Overall, about 17% of mushroom harvesters are involved in picking other special forest products. About 13% are or were involved in the logging industry. Just over 25% are or were involved with the welfare system or collected unemployment. About half are Caucasian, about 40% Asian or Pacific Islanders.

Where do the mushrooms go? The western U.S. accounts for 27% of the market, Asia for 28%, Europe and points nearby for 25%, and the eastern U.S. and Canada for the rest. The markets vary by species; 24% of the matsutake, for example, go to Canada.

A number of landowners and tree farmers called for inventories and management plans for special forest products. And a number of them agreed that the resources exist to accomplish this but "no one is talking to each other." One land-

owner compared the special forest products industry to a "scared covey of quail."

Anecdotally, here are a few examples from the conference of how the industry has grown (blossomed? mushroomed?).

1. The Forest Service publishes guides to making a living by harvesting special forest products and is actively engaged in reacting to demands for "sustainable" yields of special forest products.
2. In a few areas, Federal permits for mushroom pickers were increasing 200-300%, or more, from one year to the next.
3. Pressure is on lawmakers to keep regulation off the heads of the commercial interests. There was a lot of talk about "too much regulation." I say, "Hah! Show me!"
4. Big land owners such as Weyerhaeuser are investigating ways to get a more varied economic gain from their lands, but they are worried about the industry being "unreliable" and especially about liability, safety, and labor issues.
5. There is growing pressure for long-term leasing of "rights" to pick mushrooms and other special forest products, even on public lands. I'm keeping my eye on this. My feeling is that the public cannot be excluded from public lands, whether commercial interest or pot hunter. Right now, limits are being placed on both, and as far as I know there is no attempt yet to promote "exclusivity." But let's stay aware!
6. Partly because of haphazard attempts to regulate the mushroom industry, special forest products have received less attention from the law-enforcement branch of the government than from other branches (in Washington, but not Oregon).
7. Washington State law-enforcement agencies are responsible for protecting the rights of landowners, not mushroom processors. This point was made by more than one speaker, and it is one we should all remember as the hordes descend. It is easy to assume that everyone feels it's okay to harvest everything off public lands. This is not the case. In the Winema National Forest, for instance, one manager attempts to rotate sections of commercially valuable mushroom lands in and out of the harvest. This is, indeed, a conservation approach. Let's support this type of thing!
8. There was general agreement that two trends are occurring right now, but much disagreement about their specifics: (1) The "wild wild west" period of harvesting mushrooms and other forest products is inevitable (if it hasn't happened—or ended—already) (2) Because of the increasing number of harvesters, it's time NOW to gather baseline data and start research into a number of special forest products. Margaret Dilly saw this coming a decade ago, and we can thank her for that.
9. The Oregon Mycological Society conservation committee has made an excellent survey of their membership. I'll copy one of their newsletters and make it available at PSMS meetings.

*If this month's Spore Prints looks a little different, it's because it was printed on the Society's new 600 dpi LaserJet. We've tried to keep the look as similar as possible, but we're still learning. For those of you with special printing needs, the printer is also available for other PSMS projects.*



"What are all these mushrooms? Wouldn't it be good to know which, if any, are edible?" These questions are universal with all-beginning mushroomers. Gilbert and Alice Austin asked them when walking their piece of forest land on Mason County's Hartstine Island. Each September, October, and November, with temperatures and rainfall at their norms, fungi seem to light up the forest floor. To find answers to these questions, Alice and Gilbert sought out PSMS back in 1981. Since that time, they have been involved in a range of the Society's activities, beginning with a year as field trip chairs.

In retrospect, Alice observed, "Our field trip activity was extremely good for us. First, we were at *each site*, which gave us familiarity with the PSMS hunting areas; second, we met and became acquainted with many more PSMS members than we otherwise would have. And, with the weekly field trip identification table, we were able to see, examine, and learn more than we otherwise would have."

Gilbert's term as PSMS president ended in 1990. A milestone in which he takes considerable satisfaction was the completion of the club's financial and tenure commitment

with the Center for Urban Horticulture. The fund raising, which began during the incumbency of Coleman Leuthy, assures the Society of a "home" well into the next century.

The Austins have had a home near Snoqualmie since Gilbert's retirement from the U.S. Information Agency. Prior to retirement, they lived and worked either in the other Washington or in one of several foreign cities. First was Bombay, then Calcutta, India, for 6-1/2 years; subsequent to India, they experienced assignment in Islamabad, Pakistan; also Ankara, Turkey, and Helsinki, Finland. Gilbert learned to speak Urdu and Finnish. Their friends, determined and avid hunters, took them on forays. They never anticipated that years later they would become devotees.

While the Austins have hunted in and beyond areas generally favored by PSMS, they return most often to their acreage on Hartstine Island. "It's familiar, it's convenient, and it's usually productive—at least for chanterelles," says Alice.

A sign of the times is that even on their own, well-posted, property, they find increasing problems with unauthorized picking. People go after what is termed "brush-salal and huckleberry—but also harvest mushrooms when available. Also, there are people hunting for commercial or individual use. They have had the experience of being threatened, even ordered off of their own property. One group thought to threaten them by saying they would "tell Austin" if they didn't leave. They knew the name from the posting. On another occasion, a deer hunter shouted that he would turn them in to the Mason County Sheriff. The norm, however, is peaceful solitude.

The Austins are glad to have made the choice, following retirement from the Foreign Service, of returning to what is "home" and to their children, grandchildren, and new friends like those in PSMS.

Alice spent her childhood in San Juan Bautista, California, but she has long since earned her stamp as a Washingtonian. Gilbert was born here. He states that, "My father was a logger and farmer, my mother the offspring of Finnish immigrants. This is a fine place to be."

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