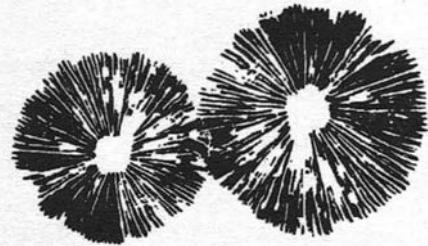


SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Number 302

May 1994



HUNTING A BURN

Mycena News Mycological Society of San Francisco



May symbolizes morels across much of the U.S., and what May newsletter would be complete without at least one morel story. The following article appeared in 1987, presumably written by newsletter editor Pat George.

When hunting for morels in a burn site, remember one thing: Morels fruit where there is ample moisture. Also, not all burns yield morels—especially controlled burns. Note the intensity of the fire by observing the height of the scorch marks on the trees; a fairly intense fire is needed. Another check on the productivity of a burn is to find the densest patch of *Aleuria aurantia* (orange peel fungus), and if there are no morels, don't waste too much time at that site.

There can be a sinking feeling when an anticipated stand of partially burned trees turns out to be mostly barren ground. Don't give up; just look around the remaining downed trees, which offer protection from the sun.

Check under trees around the edge of the burn because of the shade they provide. But don't wander into nonburned ground; an easy guard against this is to check the trunks of the trees. There also can be too much of a burn, a heat so intense that the needles and leaves of the trees have burned off. This leaves a barren, scorched ground with no leaf or needle cover to retain moisture and hence no morels.

Investigate cracks and fissures in the earth as well as burned out root systems within the ground. At times, morels can pop up out in the middle of nowhere in the most adverse terrain.

After finding a productive burn, the best tool one can have is a topographical map of the burn area. From the map, one can determine water courses such as rivers, creeks, ponds, and draws, the lie of the land, and the direction the mountain slopes face. One should first head for as level an area as possible because there is slower drainage. Also, hunt south-facing slopes first and reserve the north-facing slopes for later.

When one first arrives at a burn, one experiences a dark, sinister bleakness. But at a productive burn, that can give way to haunting beauty as one's eyes scan the ground and see hundreds of morels. At first one just stands in awe of the magnitude of the fruiting, but soon that feeling slips into one of both euphoria and greed. If I am alone, I stand there in reverence to have been so blessed, alone with all those morels. Soon the job and joy of picking must begin, and if one is lucky there will be patches dense enough to remain on all fours in

order to pick. At the end of the day, after feasting on the fruits of the day's labor, it is time for resting a weary head where, upon closing one's eyes, a vision of things better than sugar plums dances in one's head.



JAPAN'S MUSHROOM PARK

Cliff Warren

Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz via *The Spore Print*,
Journal of the Los Angeles Mycological Society, April 1994

About 90 minutes from Tokyo is a hotel whose entire culture is based on mushrooms. Founded by Dr. Kisaku Mori, the Mushroom Park and Inn is located at the foot of Mount Akagi, near the town of Kiryu.

Nearly everything in the hotel carries the mushroom theme. The robes provided free in the rooms have a mushroom pattern, so do the carpets, bedspreads, and so on. The gift shop is filled with mushroom-oriented items, ranging from jewelry to key chains as well as dried mushrooms. Even the hot (very hot) spring baths are influenced by mushrooms. A fountain in the center of the soaking pool is shaped like a mushroom, and the water is infused with an essence of mushrooms.

Most important of all was the inclusion of plenty of mushrooms in the meals (except breakfast). Most of the mushrooms are farmed and well known: shiitake, enoki, etc. During my visit (a business meeting in October), about five kinds of mushrooms were served. All very delicious, simply cooked in Japanese style to retain the most natural flavor. Matsutake was not served but could be bought fresh at the local vegetable store for about \$355 per pound!

The hotel is surrounded by forested hillsides, and one can spend many quiet hours roaming them. A real contrast to ultra-busy Tokyo.

Although not plush, the rooms are very comfortable and in Western style (Japanese style may be available). Upper floor rooms have nice views of the surrounding area (best are corner rooms). Prices range from about \$60 to \$130. Tel. 0277 (22)0591 - Tokyo office 03 371-6506.

Spore Prints

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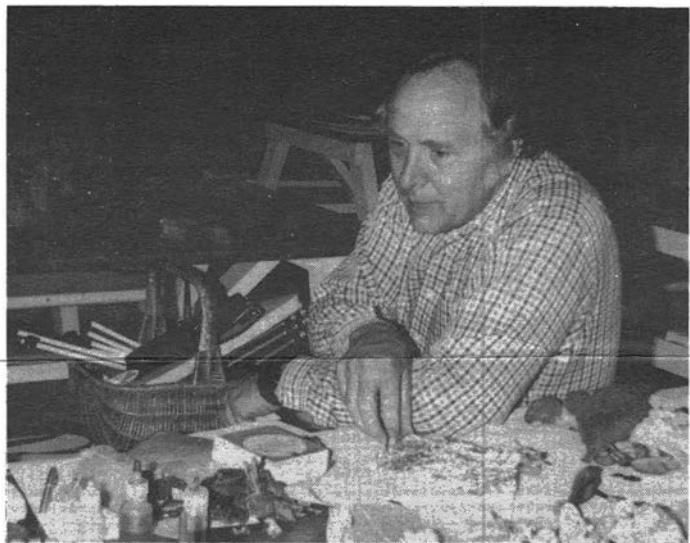
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MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, May 10, 1994, 7:30 p.m. at the Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 N.E. 41st Street, Seattle

Our speaker in May will be Dr. Michael W. Beug, who will talk about "Unusual Mushrooms and Unusual Habitats."



Mike teaches mycology and chemistry at The Evergreen State College and is a member of the Pacific Northwest Key Council. He is also a well-known mushroom photographer. His skill as a teacher, taxonomist, and photographer ensures that his programs are always popular. Come prepared for a treat.

Would persons with last names beginning with the letters R-T please bring a plate of refreshments for the social hour?

CULTIVATION GROUP

Greg Chew

The cultivation interest group met on Sunday, April 10th, along the banks of the Sammamish River at the Bothell home of Rod and Milly Myers. The weather cooperated beautifully as we chipped two-thirds a bale of hay, our fruiting substrate. The straw was pasteurized and inoculated with *Pleurotus ostreatus* spawn bulked up on rye grain. Some 18 bags were prepared.

Enough sun. The spawn went back into the darkness to colonize the straw for about a couple of weeks. At the completion of the spawn run, pinhead formation should occur, and the bags should be brought back into the light. The final fruiting stage in light with misting to keep the primordia from drying should follow in about five weeks cycle time.

In any case, the group will meet Sunday, May 22, at CUH at 1:00 p.m. in the Douglas Classroom. We will be working with *Stropharia* on sawdust substrate.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Agnes Sieger

The field trip format initiated last fall continues this spring. Each field trip will be lead by an experienced volunteer, who will meet with the participants at the field trip site between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. and again from noon to 1:00 p.m. PSMS

CALENDAR

- | | |
|---------|---|
| May 6-8 | Cispus Foray |
| May 10 | Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., CUH |
| May 14 | Twenty-Nine Pines field trip |
| May 16 | Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., CUH |
| May 22 | Cultivation Group, 1:00 p.m., Douglas Classroom |
| May 27 | Spore Prints deadline |
| May 28 | American River field trip |
| June 14 | Membership meeting |

BOARD NEWS

Dick Sieger

Field Trip Chair Pat Williams will be quitting after this spring, and we will need a new Field Trip Chair. Alternate Fran Ikeda was elected to replace Scott Lieske, who is resigning. Beth Schnarre suggested designating someone that people traveling to other places could contact to find out about local mushroom clubs and events. Dick Sieger said that people could contact him. Dick wondered if anybody would be interested in coming down to CUH on Mondays when the Master Gardeners identify plants and doing mushroom identification, both for the public and for PSMS people who have been out that weekend. Patrice Benson was given a \$300 discretionary fund for people who can't afford to participate in PSMS functions. If you really can't afford something, see her. Steve Trudell wanted to bring his Evergreen State students to the PSMS Cispus Foray for free; because of the number of people participating, the board felt that this would impose too much of a burden.

identifiers will be on hand to identify the finds. Participants are responsible for bringing their own food, firewood, etc., and organizing a potluck.

There are two formal field trips this spring, in addition to the Cispus Foray. The field trip schedule and a brief description of each site are given below.

May 14

29 Pines Forest Camp

(elev. 2400 ft, 60 miles NE of Seattle)

Take I-5 over Snoqualmie Pass to exit #85. Follow Route 970 for 4½ miles. Turn left onto Teanaway River Road. Continue about 6 miles to the Bible Rock Children's Camp. Bear right on the Teanaway North Fork Road and continue to Twenty-Nine Pines on the left, just past Jack Creek Road. The leaders will be Steve Handrahan and Mark Schnarre.

May 28-30

American River Ski Lodge

(elev. 3100 ft, 130 miles SE of Seattle)

To reach the American River Ski Lodge, drive east on Route 410 over Chinook Pass. About 17 miles past the summit, turn right onto Bumping Lake Road 174. Turn right again after ¼ mile, and turn right to go uphill and through the gate. Continue for ½ to ¾ mile to the ski lodge. A \$5.00 camping fee will pay for the weekend. This is a good area for morels and *Boletus edulis*. The leaders will be Mary Lynch and Irwin and Millie Kleinman

MEET THE BENJAMINS

Inga Wilcox



Denis, Graham, Craig, and Vivien Benjamin

What brought Dr. Denis Benjamin and his family to Seattle? Had he heard of PSMS in Johannesburg, South Africa? Of course not! Having received his medical degree in Johannesburg, he came to the University of Washington's Medical School for postgraduate studies, to specialize in pathology. In 1974 he accepted a position at Children's Orthopedic Hospital (Now Children's Hospital) and has been there ever since.

Denis remembers the day the family visited the Seattle Center. It started to rain and a sign advertising the Annual Mushroom Show in the Science Center invited them to get out of the rain. They stumbled in and promptly became fascinated by what they saw. A membership in PSMS followed and involvement in the study, harvesting, and preparation of wild fungi ensued. Denis served on the PSMS Board and as Education Chair for a number of years. He enjoyed meeting newcomers and introducing them to the world of fungi. He is delighted to see new faces in the group and feels we have overcome the slow "post-Daniel Stuntz" period in the organization.

His wife, Vivien, and two sons share his interest in fungi to various degrees. All enjoy hunting and dining on these delectable morsels. He and his hunting partner, Denny Bowman, have many tales to tell, and indeed Denis Benjamin is a writer of essays relating amusing, frustrating, and unusual experiences. One unforgettable occasion: Denis and Denny came upon a patch of *Tricholoma magnivelare*, a ring about 30 feet in diameter with a count of close to 200 specimens. Their cameras had been left in the car, but neither wanted to go back to retrieve them. Returning to that site again and again, they never came upon another fruiting.

Writing has been part of Denis' life for a long time, editing papers in medical school, writing medical articles, and writing essays for his enjoyment. He is just finishing a book to be published later this year: *Mushrooms, Panaceas and Poisons: The Health Effect of Mushroom Eating*. This is addressed to the intelligent layman.

One of his other hobbies is gourmet cookery. A luncheon at the Herbfarm in Fall City with Patrice Benson led to writing a letter to the owner and offering to teach a course in mushroom cookery and other wild foods. It was accepted and enjoyed by those participating.

His favorite hunting patches are disappearing because of both logging and the encroachment of housing during the last five years. Out of his original 15 chanterelle patches, only one is left. He no longer hunts on the Olympic Peninsula. He feels that newcomers, though, must put in the miles, by car and on foot, to become good at finding fungi. Dues must be paid.

FRIED RICE

Patrice Benson

2 C uncooked rice	4 oz ham or bacon (optional)
2 C or more sliced morels	2 eggs, seasoned with salt and a few drops sesame oil
1 C peas	2 Tbs soy sauce
4 sliced carrots	1 Tbs sesame oil
4 scallions, green onions, or small leeks	1 Tbs vegetable oil

Cover rice with water, then slowly pour off, leaving rice. Add 3 C water, bring to boil on high, reduce to low, cover, and cook 18 minutes. Turn heat off and leave uncovered for 10 minutes. Cool. Sauté eggs and cut into pieces. Sauté each vegetable or meat. Heat pan, add 1 Tbs vegetable oil. When pan is hot, add rice, heating and turning it until it is hot. Add back vegetables and meat. Stir fry to combine and reheat them. When hot, sprinkle with soy and sesame oil. Serve immediately.

THE AMANITA PANTHERINA ARE OUT

Most people know it's spring when the daffodils and tulips blossom and the trees start budding. Dr. Denis Benjamin knows it's spring when the *Amanita pantherina* stories start coming in. He reports he's heard of three poisonings so far this spring. The most severe was a 25-year-old man in Tacoma, who consumed the mushroom intentionally as a recreational drug. He suffered seizures and dropped into a coma, but fortunately recovered without damage. The second was a young child, also from the Tacoma area, who went into deep sleep and woke up just fine. The latest was a 65-year-old man from Centralia, who became very disoriented; he also recovered. Ahh, spring in the Pacific Northwest.

TOLT RIVER FIELD TRIP

Brian Luther

The first field trip of the season started out right, with a large group of enthusiasts showing up at McDonald Park on Saturday morning, April 2. Brian Luther gave a welcoming introduction and spoke about *Ptychoverpa bohemica*, discussing basic features of identification and habitat as well as the numerous adverse reactions association with eating "verpas." He also talked about cottonwood trees—their habitat, identification, and use by native Indians. Steve Handrahan led the main group out while Brian waited for late comers. Brian took them down to the main group (about a mile away) and entertained questions. Bill Bridges assisted. Most people seemed to find at least one or two verpas. Some good edibles that also showed up included a few nice collections of inky caps (*Coprinus atramentarius*) and oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*). In all, 19 species were identified on the table. Beautiful or unusual species that showed up were scarlet cups (*Sarcoscypha coccinea*), the beautiful violaceous *Peziza praetervisa* (growing on an old fire pit), and the rare *Baeospora myriadophylla*, a lovely and unusual lilac-mauve colored fungus.

One of the first-time participants was a young girl named Comedy. As everyone was leaving, Comedy indicated that she had so much fun that she wanted to stay.

The following species were collected:

- Baeospora myriadophylla*
- Bovista* sp.
- Coprinus atramentarius*
- Coprinus micaceus*
- Coriolus versicolor*
- Daedaleopsis confragosa*
- Helvella* sp.
- Lycogala epidendrum*
- Mycena* sp.
- Omphalina* sp.
- Naematoloma fasciculare*
- Peziza praetervisa*
- Peziza* sp.
- Pleurotus ostreatus*
- Polyporus elegans*
- Ptychoverpa bohemica*
- Sarcoscypha coccinea*
- Ustulina deusta*

This has been going around Germany for a few years:

Two boys were in a woodsy area, collecting a basket of mushrooms. A very proper lady approached and peered into the basket. "Do you know what these are?" "No, ma'am." "Well, you *must* know what they are or you could become very ill, even die!" The boys thought about this for a moment, then the older one said, "It will be all right, ma'am. We're going to sell these."

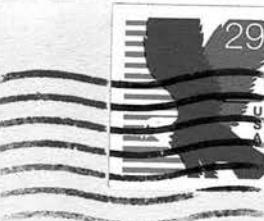
— contributed by Bob Ramsey

For Sale Cheap: Standard Ben Woo mushroom drier. Phone Joy Spurr evenings at 392-6768.

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STOP THE PRESSES!!!

THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT MESSAGES JUST
DIDN'T MAKE THE SPOREPRINTS DEADLINE;
OUR APOLOGIES TO THE EDITOR...

The STUNTZ FOUNDATION, in cooperation with the Puget Sound Mycological Society is sponsoring the first annual Stuntz Foundation Memorial Lecture on June 3, 1994 at 7pm at Johnson Hall. The Invited speaker will be Dr. David Largent, a former student of Dr. Daniel Stuntz and Professor of Botany at Humboldt State University. He is the author of the How to identify Mushrooms to Genus I,II,III series, as well as numerous other books and publications, the latest of which is, Entelomtaceae of Western North America. The topic will be his new book plus the added subtitle Sex and the Pink Spored Mushrooms. It's something that you won't want to miss. Parking is convenient, just use the underground lot off of 15th at 40th.

Cispus

PLEASE NOTE that it is not too late to get your reservations in for the Cispus Foray which occurs on May 6,7,8 1994 at the Cispus Environmental learning center in Randle, Wa. Paul Kroeger will be the foray Mycologist, and we will have lots of talented and entertaining related naturalists and cooks for your learning pleasure. You can now use your credit card in association with all PSMS purchases and reservations, due to our entering the MODERN AGES! Call Kathleen Otwell at 820-5479 and leave a message to register. Car Pooling is a possibility, so sign up soon (we need to order the food...). There will be an unusual contest called "Ike-shrooma"; which is kind of like IKEBANA, or Japanese flower arranging. Bring your accompaniments such as pots or special twigs or sacred stones to complete your entry. Lots of other materials will be provided for the uninitiated. In addition there will be nature walks scheduled as well as a Ranger Naturalist speaker, microscopy, lichenology and mycophagy. Please plan on attending and bring a good attitude as well as the usual rain gear and sleeping bag.