

SPORE PRINTS

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**50th Annual
PSMS
Wild Mushroom
Exhibit
2013**

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Spore Prints

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PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Annual dues: single or family **\$30**; full-time students **\$20**

CALENDAR

- Nov. 9 Cultivation workshop, 9 am–4 pm, CUH classroom
- Nov. 12 Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm, CUH
- Nov. 16 Photo Walk, 8:30 am–1 pm (see website to sign up)
- Nov. 18 Board Meeting, 7:30 pm, CUH Board Room
- Nov. 19 *Spore Prints* deadline

BOARD NEWS

Denise Banaszewski

Thank you to all our great volunteers who helped make our 2013 Annual Show a smashing success! We had 3,369 attendees, not including PSMS members, and gained 83 new members. Last year's attendance was about 2,100. As always, the Board and the Show committee chairs will hold a debriefing soon. The ID Clinics have been extremely busy, and will continue through mid-November at least. Danny Miller is working with our advisor, Dr. Steve Trudell, on developing new classes. We have received a Ben Woo Scholarship request for a DNA sequencing study that focuses on Pacific Northwest mushrooms. We are inclined to grant this request if further information is satisfactory. The Board is working on a microscope policy, including use and lending. Finally, there is now an emergency contact field in your profile on the website, which was added in light of Hildegard Hendrickson's disappearance. We strongly encourage you to provide this information, which will be made available only to the very few people who have administrative credentials for our website and will be used only in the unlikely event of an emergency.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, November 12, 2013, at 7:30 pm at the Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41th Street, Seattle.

Our November speaker is Dr. Britt Bunyard. The title of his presentation is "The Good, the Bad, and the Tasty: Fungi that Parasitize." Britt will explore a strange world within a world—the fungi that parasitize animals, plants, and even other fungi. Some of them are even cultivated as delicious edibles. He'll have stunning visuals! You'll laugh! You'll cry! A presentation not to be missed!



Britt is the founder, publisher, and editor-in-chief of the mycology journal *Fungi*, which has the largest circulation of any mycological publication in North America. A former professor of biology, he has taught a range of undergraduate and graduate courses in Evolution, Microbiology, Mycology, Invertebrate Zoology, Biochemistry, and Environmental Science. The focus of Britt's research interests has centered on the co-evolution of macrofungi and *Diptera*, the true flies. He co-authored the recent book *Mushrooms and Macrofungi of Ohio and Midwestern States: A Resource Handbook*. He has published scientific papers in many international research journals and has written book chapters, a patent, articles in popular science magazines, and a full-length book of travel essays from living in Southeast Asia. Britt has served as editor-in-chief of *McIlvainea* and *The Mycophile*, NAMA's journal and newsletter, and is a popular lecturer who regularly takes part in mycological events and forays. He is married and has three children, plus assorted livestock roaming around his Wisconsin farm.

After his lecture we will have some fun. You'll get to taste some huitlacoche, edible corn smut (*Ustilago maydis*), that Britt has cultivated. We will make quesadillas with huitlacoche and then garnish them with the home-made salsas that YOU will make and bring to the meeting. With Britt as one of the judges, he will award subscriptions of *Fungi* magazine as prizes to the contributors of the best and runner-up salsas!

Please bring a sample of your favorite home-made salsa to accompany the huitlacoche quesadillas. Also, would people with last names beginning with the letters L to Z please bring a plate of *Mexican-themed* refreshments to share after the meeting.

50TH ANNUAL PSMS MUSHROOM SHOW RECAP

Milton Tam

This was (and still is) a mushroom year for the ages. Everywhere you looked—in forests, parks, lawns, and vacant lots—big, small, and unusual mushrooms were popping up. This was great news for our 50th Annual Fall Mushroom Show. Hundreds and hundreds of beautiful specimens were found, brought in, identified, and arranged for display, and there was no shortage of edibles for the cooking and tasting demonstrations.



Our third year at the Mountaineers facility brought the biggest crowds ever to our show. The weather for the show weekend was nice, and word of a banner year for mushrooms must have been out

because our show attendance was up by more than 50% this year compared to 2012, and our revenues increased accordingly. With an unprecedented degree of interest shown locally, our show is still one of the largest and most complete exhibits of wild mushrooms in the United States. But with this increase in attendance (to more than 3,300 visitors) there came a downside: it was difficult to even turn around on the floor at peak times and the speakers were overwhelmed with packed houses and people waiting in line to hear them. So success is often complicated by unanticipated problems, which we will need to address and correct before next year's show rolls around.



© 2013 Paul Hill

This year was the first as show co-chairs for Randy Richardson and me. We both enjoyed taking on the responsibilities and challenges that came with organizing and running the event. We were both so relieved when the show was over and realized it was a success! Our speakers—Noah Siegel, Bart Buyck, Denis Benjamin, Steve Trudell, Danny Miller, Marian Maxwell, Langdon Cook, and Daniel Winkler—all deserve a round of applause for presenting uniformly thoughtful, interesting, educational, and informative lectures. Many, many thanks to all our members who volunteered a couple of hours or even their whole weekends to work at the show. We could not have this show without you!

Also, Randy and I would like to recognize the hard work and organizing skills of our committee chairs: Brian Luther (Mushroom ID); Dennis and Jamie Notman (Cooking and Tasting); Marilyn Droege (Arts and Crafts); Nick Herschberger (Mushroom Collecting); Don Lennebacker (Construction and Take-down); Irwin Kleinman and Ken Feldman (Cultivation); Pacita Roberts (Feel and Smell); Carlos Cruz (Crowd Control/Security); Brenda Fong (Hospitality); Katie Glew (Lichens); Wren Hudgins (ASK ME program), Ann Polin (Membership); Sherwood Stolt (Ticket Sales); and John Goldman (Books/Publicity). Forgive me if I have forgotten to thank anyone. By the way, John's outfit the first day with non-matching mushroom-print trousers and tie is the inspiration for a new contest next year: The mushroom attire fashion show! Thank you to guest chef Kathy Casey of Dish D'lish who cooked up a storm of mushroom dishes on Saturday. Kudos to Lisa Page Ramey who designed that striking purple-highlighted show poster that went up all over town, the cards, and the flat-screen TV display in the lobby. A special thanks to Debra Lehrberger who did a splendid job coordinating our volunteers and "floaters" and saw that everyone was given a job to do. Lastly, a very special thanks to our President, Marian Maxwell, who was a one-woman publicity blitz the last week before the show, and who directed the receiving of mushrooms and the categorizing and the assembly of those trays of mushrooms.

Please note that our annual show will very likely be later next year because PSMS will host the annual meeting of NAMA, the North American Mycological Association, in the second week in October 2014 at Camp Arnold near Eatonville, WA. I hope we have a good turnout for the NAMA conference and can also count on everyone again next year to pitch in for our 51st annual show. We still need your skills, enthusiasm, and plain old hard work. It was an amazing ride this year. Thanks again to all. Randy and I enjoyed working with you.

FIELD TRIP REPORT, September 27–29

Brian S. Luther

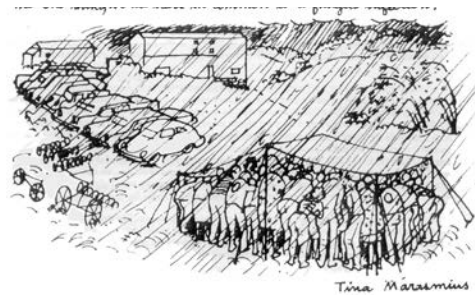
The weather predictions were not favorable for this field trip, located near the Canadian border north of Mt. Baker. In fact, record rainfall was forecast along with high winds and possible flooding in areas. It did rain pretty much constantly, but conditions didn't end up being unbearable at all.

It was a slow process and a long wait for members to get their collecting permits at the Glacier Ranger Station, which delayed people from getting to the field trip location. Forty-five members signed in, and everybody was cheerful and enthusiastic, regardless of the rain.

Hosts Jon Hall and Teri and Robert Stephens did a fabulous job, and Teri had made two large pans of delicious cinnamon rolls like you've never tasted before. They were a real treat and enjoyed by all; there were no leftovers. Extra special thanks Robert, Teri, and Jon for making the field trip so enjoyable. Jon and I got the campfire going first thing in the morning, in the rain; I heaped it with wood all day and it helped.

Wren Hudgins was our field trip guide, leading a group of several beginners out so they would at least have some guidance at first, and this was appreciated. Approximately a hundred species were found and displayed on three picnic tables under the shelter, including a nice diversity of fungi. Many members found at least some chanterelles, and several prime collections of *Gomphus clavatus* came in (without bugs). Jon Hall already had a basket full of beautiful *Boletus edulis* he'd collected on Friday, along with some Matsutake. Maria Gerace brought in a big beautiful clump of *Lyophyllum multiceps*. The winners of the day's beauty contest would have to be a tossup between some gorgeous yellow orange *Hygrocybe flavescens* and *Laccaria amethysteo-occidentalis* with their brilliant purplish gills. *Hygrocybe laeta* was found, and it's so slimy that you could barely pick it up.

The potluck was really welcome and well attended on this cool wet day, with many tasty dishes to help warm us up. Lots of members were wet at the end of the day, but happy.



FIELD TRIP REPORT, Oct 4–6

Brian S. Luther

Because of the situation with the Federal Government, there were concerns that this location might not be available, even though I had reserved it long in advance. I therefore stopped by en route to Eagle Creek the Thursday before to check it out. I talked for quite a while with the campground host, and everything was wide open. That was a relief.

Although it had been raining all week, we got a window of beautiful weather for the weekend. When I arrived at the group camp

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with firewood Saturday morning, I discovered that Bob Myers had already brought a huge load of split fir. Thank you, Bob, for your generosity, which allowed us to keep the fire going nonstop.

Joann Ireland was our delightful host, providing us with delicious coffee and goodies Saturday morning. She even came knowing she'd have some studying to do and was able to squeeze that in, too, along with taking breaks for collecting. Thank you for your contribution, Joann; you know your efforts were appreciated, as always.

Fifty-two members signed in, and I'm guessing they were glad they did, because it was a wind-fall year for fungi in Chelan Co. Wren Hudgins again led groups of beginners out during the day (twice). When they returned, their baskets were overflowing with large White Chanterelles and/or Matsutake. Thanks, Wren!

Three large picnic tables were overflowing with the fungi collected. I counted 147 different species, including many interesting ones. I did table tours on Saturday, discussing the fungi found and giving members a chance to ask questions.

The potluck was great, as usual, and everybody seemed to enjoy the social hour at the end of the day.

MUSHROOM PHOTO CONTEST AND CALENDAR

Paul Hill

We've been inspired to try a fun photo contest and a possible calendar for 2014. This announcement is *not* to set the rules in stone, but to let folks know it is coming and encourage everyone with an interest in photography to start taking pictures this season and saving possible contest entries. PSMS tried a calendar a few years ago; it's time to try again. The Minnesota Mycological Society has been running such a contest and printing a calendar of photos for several years, so we'll be leveraging their experience.



The idea is to have several different categories in which PSMS members may enter up to three different photos in each category. The tentative categories are Pictorial, Technical, Culinary, Activity, Humor, Other. We may re-work the categories as the contest rules develop. We are still working out details, but there will be prizes. There will not be any trips to Hawaii, but expect more than a free calendar to show your family.

One rule the MMS has enforced and we think is a great idea is that photos in the Pictorial Category and the Technical Category *must* have mushrooms identified to genus and species, so when you take a beautiful shot for entering in those two categories take a few other shots. For identification, don't forget to record the cap, gills, stipe, and base, plus any discoloration, habit (grouping), habitat (on wood, nearby trees etc.), smells, and tastes. Only the last two are hard to record with extra shots.

Any calendar we do put together will be created from the various submitted photos. The idea is to publish a 15-month calendar in time for the 2014 Wild Mushroom Show and for the NAMA Foray here in Washington, both in the fall of 2014.

When I arrived at 7:00 am the gate was already open, the shelter cleaned, the lights and water on, and the nearest bathroom open and available. Special thanks to Park Manager/Head Ranger Charlie Korb for allowing us to use this beautiful facility on Hood Canal and to his assistant Rick for getting the shelter in top-notch shape.

Kitty Loceff had the first shift as our hostess and Jim Boril took over as host in the afternoon. Thanks, Kitty and Jim, for all your contributions—getting the coffee and goodies ready and hauling around the supply tubs. New members were especially pleased, because this was unexpected to them. Out of 72 who signed in, we had at least 20 new members.

We had great weather for the day. Wren Hudgins again took a large group out as a field trip guide. Wren has unfailingly attended all our field trips and helped in this function, and novices have been greatly appreciative. We could definitely use more volunteers as field trip guides. This would also make the groups smaller and more manageable.

Most everybody found lots of Chanterelles (yellow and white) right within the park, as well as several large *Leccinum aurantiacum*. One member found a large, choice Matsutake. A big assortment of non-edible species were brought in for ID. They covered several picnic tables. Many new members said they had a great time.

The potluck was excellent, and there was a bit of competition for room right in front of the big fireplace, which was kept roaring all day.

INTRODUCTION TO MUSHROOM CULTIVATION

Milton Tam

When: Saturday, November 9, 2013

Where: Center for Urban Hort., Douglas Classroom

Time: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Instructors: James "Animal" Nowak and Milton Tam

Cost: \$60 plus \$20 materials fee

Maximum number of participants: 16

This workshop is designed as an introduction to mushroom cultivation and covers several methods for those thinking of growing mushrooms for food and/or as a hobby. We will first review the principles and techniques of sterile cultivation and what equipment you will need. You will then start mycelium growing in Petri dishes and inoculate your sterile growing bags with shiitake and *Hericium sawdust* spawn. You will also assemble oyster mushroom kits using the nonsterile table-top method pioneered by PSMS and also using cold-pasteurized straw. For those interested in outdoor cultivation, we will discuss log inoculation and cultivation, and then we will move to a site off-campus where we will inoculate beds of wood chips with *Stropharia* and morel spawn.



The course includes:

Textbook: *The Mushroom Cultivator* by Paul Stamets and J. S. Chilton.

Worksheets: Details on a variety of cultivation techniques, recipes, material choices, glossary of terms, and technical references.

Cultivation kits: You make and get to keep a shiitake kit, a *Hericium* (Lion's Mane mushroom) kit, two oyster mushroom kits made with recycled newspaper, one oyster mushroom kit made with cold-pasteurized straw.



Cultures of mycelium: you will keep the Petri dishes you inoculate with tissue from mushrooms.

The course will cover the following:

- Introduction to fungi and cultivated species.
- The essentials of cultivating any mushroom species.
- The specifics of growing shiitake mushrooms on logs (practical):
 - Selection of logs
 - Inoculation
 - Waxing
 - Spawn run
 - The harvesting cycle, shocking, fruiting, and resting
 - Pests and diseases.
- The specifics of growing oyster mushrooms on substrate bags (practical):
 - Selection of substrate
 - Inoculation
 - Spawn run
 - The harvesting cycle
 - Pests and diseases.
- Inoculating mulch beds
- Domestic and small-scale production of gourmet mushrooms.
- Contacts and references.

CITY MUSHROOM PHOTO WALK, Nov. 16, 2013

Paul Hill

Join us for the next mushroom photography walk in Seattle. We had fun opening the mushroom season last spring with a photo walk, so let's do it again and round out the fall season with another walk. We'll be meeting at a city park on Saturday, November 16, 8:30 am–1 pm. All levels of experience are invited. Bring more equipment than you can carry or just bring a camera in your pocket.



© 2013 Paul Hill

We'll start with some beginner discussion of taking photos and then break into smaller groups to look for mushrooms and practice taking photos. It's free, but space is limited to avoid too many folks trampling around in the same park. Sign up soon on the PSMS website, so we know how many are coming and how much coffee and morning snacks to buy.

FUNGUS ABSURDUS

It was a weird month for magic mushroomers, as the following three stories—all via The Spore Print, L.A. Myco. Soc., October 2013—attest.

Man, 41, Rips Off Own Penis While High on Magic Mushrooms

Mirror.co.uk, June 26, 2013

A 41-year-old man ripped off his own penis while high on magic mushrooms. The naked man was found screaming in the street at around 1 pm on Tuesday by police responding to a burglar alarm at a school in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Officers discovered the man kneeling outside Ypsilanti Middle School, bleeding from the waist down with parts of his genitals ripped off.

The man, who had smashed a window at the school but taken nothing, was rushed to hospital along with his dismembered body parts, Police Sergeant Geoff Fox said.

Fox added that the man is now recovering at University of Michigan Health System after his ordeal. "In terms of vital signs, they were as low as they could go without being dead—I could only assume due to the blood loss and the shock and trauma to the body," he said.

The man, from Columbus, Ohio, later told detectives he had bought hallucinogenic mushrooms earlier in the day while visiting friends near to the school.

Oregon Man Trips on Mushrooms, Shoots Cop's Gun

Reviewjournal.com., July 31, 2013

A man who was high on mushrooms entered the Beaverton, Oregon, city hall, struggled with officers, grabbed and fired a sergeant's gun, and broke a pair of handcuffs before he was finally subdued by nine officers, police said. Police say they used a stun gun seven times, but it had no effect on 18-year-old Jared Steven Leone, who had been living in Seattle.

Surveillance video shows Leone initially struggling with three officers when he allegedly grabbed Sgt. Robert Davis' gun and fired. No one was injured by the bullet, which hit a wall. The video shows other officers arriving to try to subdue Leone. Davis suffered a shoulder injury.

Leone told a clerk he had overdosed on mushrooms, according to police.

Waitress Says Restaurant Owner Force-Fed Her Magic Mushrooms

Pamela Engel

Nypost.com., July 2, 2013

A former waitress at the West Village chicken restaurant Sticky's Finger Joint is claiming that her boss forced her to eat "magic mushrooms" on the job without telling her what they were, *The New York Post* reports. The complaint says part owner Paul Abrahamian told 19-year-old Sofie Rasmussen that he wanted her to try a new recipe before he shoved the 'shrooms in her mouth and put his hand over her lips. He allegedly did this in the kitchen of the restaurant in front of the entire staff.

Rasmussen told the *Post* that at first she didn't realize what she was eating. Afterwards, she said: "I felt weird. I was floating. I really didn't want to talk to customers. I was being goofy. I was tripping, and I had one or two hours left on my shift."

The complaint says Abrahamian threatened to fire her if she reported the incident. She quit in December, after three months of working there.

BEAUTIFUL OLD GERMAN CIGAR BOX LABELS WITH MUSHROOMS

Brian S. Luther

Fungus-illustrated postage (worldwide), miscellaneous myco-paper ephemera, and old postcards with fungi have been one of my passions since 1980. I recently brought to your attention a category of paper ephemera called Cinderellas (Luther, 2012), and in my commentary I described some of the many different groups within this heading and provided a few color examples.

One of the more fascinating subgroups of these various items that I collect are tobacco-related paper products, including old fungus-illustrated matchbox labels, match books, cigar bands, cigarette cards, and cigar box labels. I showed you color photos of several different examples in the article mentioned above, but didn't include any color photos of cigar box labels.

I thought you'd be interested in seeing this absolutely gorgeous set of old German cigar box labels I found years ago. The brand is Feuerkopfe, or literally "fire head" in German. I can't be sure of the exact date and it's not indicated anywhere on the labels, but from my experience they appear to be from the first few decades of the 20th Century (1900–1930). These labels were in different spots on the box of cigars: lid, front, sides, edges, and most likely from the inside of the box lid and inside edge as well. Some have staple marks indicating that's how they were secured to the box. Each label was individually numbered, and I've arranged them in chronological order.

The illustrations show stylized *Amanita muscaria*. In the late 19th century and early 20th century, images of *Amanita muscaria* were considered good luck symbols in Europe and were frequently used to adorn postcards and other artifacts from that period. This is a peculiar situation, in light of the fact that this species is obviously a well-known poisonous mushroom. One possible explanation could be that this species was ground up and added to milk, then left out for house flies to consume, which killed them. Hence the common name "Fly Amanita." The favorable use of this mushroom, combined with its cheerful and attractive appearance, probably contributed to an association with good luck over time.

Reference

Luther, Brian S. 2012. An introduction to fungus illustrated Cinderellas. *Spore Prints* 486 (November), pp. 6–7. On-line and in color at www.psms.org.



FEDERAL SHUTDOWN

We all know about the effects of the recent Federal shutdown personally and locally, but here are a couple you might not have heard about.

Shutdown Hits White House Garden

<http://www.businesstimes.com.sg>, Oct. 17, 2013

WASHINGTON - Oh, Mrs Obama, how does your garden grow?

During the government shutdown, apparently wildly. The White House Kitchen Garden, planted with great fanfare by the First Lady and the National Park Service in April 2009, is now gangly and weedy.

The garden's unruly state was first reported by Eddie Gehman Kohan, who blogs about White House food policy and has posted day-by-day updates of the garden during the shutdown. Wild mushrooms have begun to grow, she wrote. Weeds have sprouted. Sweet potatoes are unpicked. It is not the usual state of the picture-perfect garden, which had its own spread in *Better Homes and Gardens* two years ago.

"National Park Service employees are only watering the kitchen garden as needed," Jennifer Mummart, a spokeswoman for the park service's National Capital Region said in an e-mail. "And, yes, this is consistent with how we are caring for other managed landscapes during the shutdown." (Apparently, watering the garden is "essential," weeding is not.)

Federal Shutdown Affects Matsutake Gathering

Lee Juillerat Dave Martinez

Klamath Falls *Herald and News*, Oct. 11, 2013

The price for Matsutake mushrooms typically varies on a day-to-day basis, but a confluence of factors has made this year's price structure even more volatile.

Prices, which had been stalled at \$5 a pound for No. 1's, the best quality matsutakes, were up to \$14 a pound Thursday night. They're expected to rise as suppliers needing to fill contracts offer higher prices before the High Cascade season ends Nov. 3.

Unusually, problems created by the federal government shutdown are impacting this year's harvest.

Instead of initially buying \$200 season permits, many pickers buy half-season permits for \$100 and wait to see if it's financially worthwhile to buy second half-season permits. The government shutdown, however, means pickers can't buy second half-season permits.

Mushroom buyers Debra and Roy Harris of Keno estimate this season began with 4,000 to 5,000 pickers. They believe the numbers have declined to about 2,000, with significantly fewer each day.

The exodus, according to the Harrises, stems from law enforcement concerns. Some pickers who have remained in Chemult, with or without permits, say they have been harassed by Klamath County Sheriff's deputies and Fremont-Winema National Forest law enforcement officers.

"A lot of them are leaving because they've been getting ticketed and intimidated," she said. "I'm so disappointed with our justice system. The cockiness of these deputies is so unprofessional. It's getting to the point where it's dangerous." She questions why the Forest Service is not able to staff personnel to sell permits but is continuing to provide law enforcement staff.

WINNER ANNOUNCED IN MUSHROOM COOK-OFF

<http://www.beachconnection.net>, Oct. 21, 2013



LINCOLN CITY, OR - It has been a great season for wild mushrooms on the Oregon coast this year, and Lincoln City's 5th Annual Wild Mushroom Cook-Off in early October did not disappoint either. Seven Oregon chefs competed for the title of "Best Wild Mushroom Dish" as voted on by the over 400 mushroom lovers in attendance.

In the People's Choice voting, first place was awarded to Chef Ged Aydelott of Pelican Pub and Brewery in Pacific City for their Wild Mushroom Pie. Second place went to Chef Jason Jobe of Vivian's Restaurant in Lincoln City for their Wild Savory Mushroom Flan. Third place went home with Chef Randy DePorter of Lincoln City's Beach Town Deli for their Wild Mushroom Risotto Cakes.

An abundant variety of wild mushrooms was available for purchase at the Wild Mushroom Cook-Off provided by Peak Forest Fruits of Banks, Oregon, and the Cook-Off featured learning opportunities for everyone from first-timers to experts, including an information booth and a lecture on wild mushrooms provided by the Lincoln County Mycological Society. The Mycological Society also led forays into the local woods following this year's cook-off to provide a hands-on opportunity to learn more about wild mushrooms and identification.

PENNSYLVANIA MUSHROOM HUNTERS FIND BODY

George Mattar

Bucks County Courier Times, Oct. 20, 2013

FALLS - Police are investigating what they call a suspicious death of a person whose skeletal remains were found Saturday. The decomposed body was found shortly before 4 pm near an abandoned lumber yard in Falls off M Y Lane.

Falls Lt. Hank Ward said a couple looking for mushrooms was walking on the property near the former Haddonfield Lumber Co., which is in a small industrial area off M Y Lane off Bridge Street.

"They were walking along the tree line and saw a green tarp. They picked up the tarp and found skeletal remains," Ward said. "They called 911 and we responded."

Ward said the remains are so badly decomposed, it is still unclear what gender the person is. "It is definitely human remains and we are calling the death suspicious, but we won't know more until an autopsy takes place," he said Saturday.

FUNGUS THREATENS THE GIN AND TONIC

Mark Halper

Smartplanet.com., June 21, 2013

via *The Spore Prints*, L.A. Myco. Soc., October 2013

If they remake "Casablanca," Rick's lament could be that there are NO gin joints in all the world.

It's the first day of summer, and devotees of the gin and tonic are staring down a disease that threatens to obliterate their classic hot weather elixir.

Yes, mother nature is playing party pooper again. This time, she's spreading a fungus that is attacking juniper trees, which yield the berries that give gin its flavor. No juniper, no gin.

"Juniper is in serious trouble," said Plantlife Scotland, a Scottish charity supported by Prince Charles that has asked the public to help monitor the decline of juniper trees in Britain. The U.K.'s Forestry Commission is also on the case of the conifers.

Not so merry berries. The juniper berry, from coniferous juniper plants and trees, faces a fungal enemy.

Among the problems: A fungus called *Phytophthora austrocedrae* is so much on the rampage that according to *The Telegraph* it could "wipe out" the already shrinking population of the U.K.'s native juniper trees.

"Although juniper used in most commercial gins is largely from Eastern Europe nowadays, the British population is key to survival of the whole species," *The Telegraph* claimed.

Shudder at the thought of a world with no gin. Tennessee Williams, *The Great Gatsby*, Somerset Maugham, and Raymond Chandler could not have done without. James Bond would lose his signature refreshment, as his martinis feature gin and vodka.

Gin drinkers of the world unite! Fight back against *Phytophthora!* As a side benefit, the sooner you stamp it out, the sooner you won't have to pronounce it.



<http://www.screened.com/>

"Of all the gin joints in all the world, she walks into mine."
Rick's Lament, Humphrey Bogart in "Casablanca."

PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOMS UNCLAIMED

Post Independent, Oct. 16, 2013

A misdirected postal package that had a return address for the Glenwood Springs *Post Independent* office sat unclaimed for two months before staffers made an unexpected discovery this week. The package was opened on Monday to reveal an undetermined amount of suspected psilocybin mushrooms.

The U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail package had an original postal date of mid-July and a recipient address in South Bend, Indiana. The package was turned over to police.

SNAKE FUNGAL DISEASE FOUND IN SOUTH CAROLINA

<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/>, Oct. 11, 2013

A copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*) found in Spartanburg County has tested positive for Snake Fungal Disease (*Ophidiomyces ophiodiicola*). This is the first verified case of Snake Fungal Disease in South Carolina.



The copperhead, which exhibited symptoms of fungal infection, was retrieved by scientists from the Copperhead Institute. The snake subsequently died and was submitted to the United States Geological Survey's (USGS) National Wildlife Health Center, where a necropsy was performed. Results indicated the presence of Snake Fungal Disease and dehydration as the cause of death.

"The emergence of Snake Fungal Disease is of great concern. It is being detected more and more frequently in wild populations," said S.C. Department of Natural Resources herpetologist Will Dillman. "Those populations may not be well equipped to deal with a novel pathogen."

Snake Fungal Disease has been identified as a potential threat to wild snakes and has been associated with significant population declines in some species in the Northeast. The USGS reports that increased numbers of snakes from the eastern and mid-western United States are showing signs of fungal dermatitis and are being submitted to the National Wildlife Health Center.

AUSTRIAN WOMAN DIES AFTER MISTAKING DEATH CAP FOR PARASOL MUSHROOM

Austrian Times, Oct. 14, 2013

A 78-year-old woman died after eating poisonous mushrooms in Bad Sauerbrunn in Burgenland, Austria.

Around ten days ago Herta Tkalcsics went looking for mushrooms in the woods. Her husband gave her a Parasol Mushroom (*Lepiota procera*) he had found and which she prepared in the evening for dinner. But she had failed to realize it was not a Parasol but a poisonous Amanita Death Cap (*Amanita phalloides*).

Her husband, Karl Tkalcsics, said he suspected a mix up with the mushrooms but could not understand how it could have occurred.

"My wife knew all about mushrooms," he said. "She also knew about the Amanita Death Cap mushroom. I really don't know how she mixed them up. She even said at the hospital she couldn't believe she could mix up the mushrooms."

"I know the mushrooms, but I didn't check; otherwise she would have been offended. After she ate the mushrooms she was sick and had diarrhea, but she did not want to go to hospital."



She only went to the doctor the next day, who immediately sent her to hospital in Wiener Neustadt. She died four days after eating the mushroom.

Lepiota procera



Amanita phalloides

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