

SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Number 559 February 2020



GIANT BATCH OF 3,000 TREES IS PLANTED TO BATTLE A DEVASTATING FUNGAL DISEASE PREDICTED TO KILL MORE THAN HALF OF ALL ASH SPECIMENS OVER THE NEXT DECADE

Victoria Allen

The Daily Mail, Jan. 16, 2020

A giant plantation of 3,000 ash trees has been created in Hampshire to tackle a devastating killer disease. Each of the trees planted has been grown from specimens with a high tolerance for the disease ash dieback caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus*



Ash tree.

fraxineus. The fungus is a major threat, predicted to kill over half of all ash trees at a cost of £7 billion over the next decade.

To protect the country's 125 million ash trees, scientists screened more than 150,000 trees that showed resistance to the fungus over five years. The best trees were grown in a nursery before being planted, which could in the future lead to an ash tree breeding program.

It is hoped the plantation will fight off ash dieback, which leaves diamond-shaped scars on the bark of trees, causes them to lose their leaves, and kills up to 99 percent of those it infects.

Nicola Spence, the Environment Department's chief plant health officer, said: "It is vital that we continue to work on securing our ash trees for the future, so I'm thrilled to see the progress."

It is hoped that the ash archive, established with £1.9 million of Government funding, will provide seeds for ash trees which could be sold to farmers and garden nurseries, as well as homeowners.

The last tree in the archive was planted to mark the start of the International Year of Plant Health, a global initiative to highlight the importance of healthy plants and trees.

Biosecurity minister Lord Gardiner said: "The International Year of Plant Health is a timely reminder of the importance of our natural environment and the action that is required, from Government and beyond, to protect our island's rich heritage of trees and plants from dangerous diseases such as ash dieback."

The "ash archive" scheme comes as the *Daily Mail's* Be A Tree Angel campaign, run with the Tree Council charity, is set to see thousands of trees planted nationwide.

"The readers of the *Daily Mail* are conscious of the worth of our trees as demonstrated by them stepping up to the *Mail's* fantastic campaign, which has already enlisted so many and continues to gather momentum for thousands of more trees to be planted."

MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI OFFER NEW CLUES TO FATE OF NITROGEN IN WARMING TUNDRA

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/>, Jan. 13, 2020

Like a long-distance food delivery app with no apparent highway, fungi that associate with shallow-rooted shrubs in the tundra are accessing deep stores of nitrogen being released by thawing permafrost. The findings by Northern Arizona University (NAU) researchers, announced this week in *New Phytologist*, could change scientists' understanding of who accesses nutrients from permafrost, and how.

"This just doesn't fit the paradigm of how we think these plants and their mycorrhizal partners work together," said lead author Rebecca Hewitt from the Center for Ecosystem Science and Society (EcoSS) at NAU. "Previously, we thought only plants with extended root systems could access nutrients near the permafrost thaw front. But we saw that all these plants were using deep nitrogen, whether they had deep root systems or not, suggesting that mycorrhizal partners may provide access to the deep, cold permafrost table."

As researchers race to better understand the carbon cycle and how a warming Arctic will affect the amount of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere, this discovery offers clues about where nitrogen and carbon released from thawing permafrost will go. If the burgeoning plant community in the tundra can access nitrogen as it's released from thawing permafrost, then this fungal connection to the thaw front may be helping to offset carbon losses, since more nitrogen means more plant biomass to pull down carbon from the atmosphere.

In order to see which organisms were gobbling the nitrogen from the permafrost, Hewitt and her team, including senior author and EcoSS professor Michelle Mack, used long needles to add an isotopic tracer, Nitrogen-15, to soil at the "thaw front," or where permafrost meets unfrozen "active layer" soil. This nitrogen isotope is heavier than the more common Nitrogen-14, and, like food coloring dropped in a flower vase, allows researchers to watch exactly where it goes. The team waited 24 hours and then harvested the plants and sampled fungi from shrub root tips and deep active layer soils. When they sequenced fungal DNA and RNA, they could see which fungi had helped plants take up the heavy nitrogen from the permafrost table. Both shallow-rooted ericoid mycorrhizal shrubs and ectomycorrhizal-aided shrubs had received nitrogen infusions from their fungal partners.

Zooming out, this study could have implications for researchers and computer models that predict where nitrogen and carbon go at both regional and global levels. Hewitt said that, to date, models that account for nitrogen release from permafrost don't treat it as

cont. on page 3

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CALENDAR

Feb. 11 Membership meeting, 7:30 pm, CUH
Feb. 17 Board meeting, 7:30 pm, CUH board room
Feb. 18 *Spore Prints* deadline
Mar. 3 Voting deadline
Mar. 14 Survivor’s Banquet

BOARD NEWS

Luise Asif

Election Time! Plan to attend the February membership meeting to meet the candidates. We have an exciting group of people running for the board and officers. Bios and pictures are on pp. 5&6 in this issue of *Spore Prints*. Need help navigating our website or help logging in to vote? Marian Maxwell will have a short website navigation session before the membership meeting, February 11, to answer questions and point out highlights. The Survivor’s Banquet is planned for Saturday, March 14, when your new board will be introduced. Remember that PSMS offers scholarships for school programs as well as the Ben Woo grants. The K–12 scholarships are assessed as they arrive, no deadlines. We are looking forward to an exciting year. REMEMBER TO VOTE!

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, February 11, 2020, at 7:30 pm at the Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st Street, Seattle

Our speaker for February is Danny Miller, who will expound on “Surprises from the PSMS Bridle Trails Funga Project.” The Bridle Trails study is a pilot program with the continent-wide North American MycoFlora project in which many PSMS members regularly venture to Bridle Trails State Park in Kirkland to photograph and collect mushrooms for later study. For almost 4 years now, we’ve been going about once every two weeks during the spring and fall seasons, and the first DNA results are now back! Come hear stories of what we’ve found and some surprising discoveries! It’s inspiring to see what interesting work citizen science can accomplish, and we hope it will inspire more people to join projects like this.



Danny Miller

Danny is the Education Chair at PSMS as well as the club Librarian and ID Committee coordinator; he is also an emergency poisoning point person for King County Washington Poison Control. He is member of the Pacific Northwest Key Council, a group of amateur and professional mycologists, and, with Ian Gibson, is a co-author of MatchMaker, the free PNW mushroom ID program for the PC and Mac. He has a big interest in taxonomy and figuring out where all of the mushrooms fit into the fungal tree of life.

Would members with last names beginning with the letters A–L please bring a plate of refreshments to served after the meeting.

SCHOOL BUS GROUNDED AFTER MUSHROOMS FOUND GROWING IN IT

<https://www.financialmirror.com/>, Jan. 21, 2020

CYPRUS - After complaints from Paphos school students about the state of their school bus, Transport Minister Yiannis Karousos took a ride with them to investigate and didn’t enjoy the trip when he spotted mushrooms growing inside.

The Minister sat on the bus with the school kids only to find it in a sorry state of repair with mushrooms growing from the inside of the roof due to the damp conditions on board

Karousos later tweeted that he ordered the school bus to be immediately taken out of circulation pending an inspection because of its unacceptable state.

The minister also posted photos of the antiquated bus that carries pupils from the village of Yiolou, in the district of Paphos.

“Unfortunately, I found it in a very bad condition,” the minister said afterwards. “I want to send a message to all companies carrying passengers because I believe in public transport.”



Financial Mirror

Criticism over the standards for and safety of school buses, and public transport in general, has been a long-running issue.

Permafrost Nitrogen, cont. from page 1

much of a factor at an ecosystem scale. But if all plants can tap this source, that could change.

“The fact that deep nitrogen can be sucked up and retained in plant biomass, or possibly in fungal biomass, means there’s less nitrogen to be swept away into rivers or as nitrous oxide,” Hewitt said.

For Hewitt, the next step is learning more about whether these root-associated fungi are keeping some nitrogen to themselves, and why.

“How much of this nitrogen is being locked up in fungi? We need to learn this to understand how much of that nitrogen pool is available to fertilize plants in the future.”

This spring, Hewitt and Mack also are coordinating the launch of the Arctic Underground Network, an international research network for the synthesis of root and rhizosphere processes in cold soil ecosystems. The first meeting will take place in March during Arctic Science Summit Week in Akureyri, Iceland, with support from the International Arctic Science Committee.

FINDING A FUNGUS THAT’S RIGHT FOR YOU Richard Smoley

<https://www.producebluebook.com/>, Jan. 17, 2020

The Mushroom Council BB #161860 has come up with an amusing way to promote their favorite product: choosing mushrooms by your horoscope sign.

According to the council’s scheme, mild and sensitive Cancers should choose the delicate enoki—perhaps in a warm and comforting Asian-style soup. Grounded and earthy Virgos match with shiitakes, “which may seem modest at first, but... have a strong punch of umami and can be trusted to accent any dish.”

Even-handed Libra gets, of course, The Blend (which “combines ground meat and finely chopped mushrooms for meals that are more delicious, nutritious, and sustainable”).

Solid and reliable Capricorn corresponds with “classic and loyal white button mushrooms,” which “are always there when you need them. As one of the most common mushrooms, you can depend on a white button to be at your local grocery store, ready for whatever recipe you have in mind.”

Pisces, on the other hand, “have a strong intuition and tend to focus on their inner journey. Just like the oyster mushroom, they can be delicate and a little mystical.”

Intense Scorpio gets the “happy and energetic” trumpet mushroom because “it may seem intimidating at first” but “when cooked, it has a powerful umami flavor.”

The chart isn’t a model of astrological rigor. Sometimes the mushrooms are matched with your sun sign character, other times with the kind of year you’re supposed to have. I can say from experience that while Scorpios may be headed for a “happy and energetic” year, those words are rarely applied to Scorpios in general.



But then rigor isn’t the point. The list is just another way of getting you to talk and think about mushrooms. Which, as a matter of fact, is just what this article is doing.

“EUREKA MOMENT” IN VALLEY FEVER CASE PAVES WAY FOR NEW RESEARCH, TREATMENT OPTIONS

Kerry Klein

<https://www.bakersfield.com/>, Jan. 19, 2020

[abridged] Hundreds of children and their families cycle in and out of UCLA’s Mattel Children’s Hospital each week, and yet Dr. Manish Butte still remembers the day almost two years ago when he met a young boy who could barely walk or talk and needed a feeding tube to eat.

“We saw these very large lumps on his forehead, and the lumps were full of fungal infection and they were burrowing through the bones of his skull,” Butte said.

Four-year-old Abraham Gonzalez-Martinez was suffering a life-threatening bout of valley fever, a disease caused by inhaling the spores of fungi (*Coccidioides* spp.) that lurk in arid soil in the American Southwest and has been prominent in Bakersfield.

Also known as coccidioidomycosis or cocci, the fungal disease typically infects the lungs but can spread into other organs, the bones and, in the most severe cases, the brain and nervous system.

“He was desperately ill,” Butte said. “He was on multiple anti-fungal medicines, top doses of everything, and the infection was still spreading.”

Today, Abraham is back home with his family in Santa Maria, with his valley fever under control and his life largely back to normal. But that outcome didn’t always seem likely during his year-long stay in the hospital as doctors searched for a treatment that would return him to health.

Severe cocci isn’t unheard of, but Abraham didn’t fall into any groups known to be at elevated risk of the disease, like African Americans, Filipinos, or pregnant women. As far as health officials knew, no one else had fallen ill in a local outbreak, and none of the child’s family members, who might have been exposed to the same conditions, seemed affected.

To investigate, Butte brought in backup: Dr. Maria Garcia-Lloret, another pediatric immunologist at UCLA. “We always say that we don’t believe in bad luck,” said Garcia-Lloret. She and Butte believe there’s always a reason the immune system breaks.

The team counted, sorted, and observed Abraham’s white blood cells, the front lines of the immune system. The doctors didn’t find any genetic defects, so they zeroed in on the T cells, immune cells that fight off infection and disease. There, things got interesting: Abraham’s T cells had been programmed to fight the wrong threat, one that wasn’t even in his system.

It resulted in an immune dysregulation that’s akin to sending a SWAT team into an empty building. “The rest of his immune system was telling his T cells, ‘Hey, we’re fighting a fungus today,’ and the T cells weren’t listening,” Butte said. “They were instead focused on fighting a parasite.”

Butte wondered: What if those T cells could be reprogrammed? And that’s when the team began building momentum.

cont. on page 6

DANISH MUSHROOM STAMPS **Brian S. Luther**

Denmark itself has issued only a few postage stamps showing fungi, which I'm documenting here. Greenland and the Faroe Islands are also part of the Kingdom of Denmark. Both are self-governing and issue their own postage, and both have mushroom-illustrated stamps. I documented the fungus-illustrated postage stamps from Greenland previously (Luther, 2013).

In the following table, M=mushrooms or fungi as the main illustration; FDC=first day cover, an envelope (cover) with the stamp or stamps affixed and cancelled on the date of issue, with the cancel itself often depicting a fungus or fungi, along with a colorful cachet (=cover illustration) of the same theme. All catalog numbers are from the Scott Postage Stamp Catalogue.

Mushroom Stamps Issued by Denmark.

Date of Issue	Scott Cat. No.	Value	Value	Subject
11/16/1978	624	1 kr	M	Spiselig Morkel = <i>Morchella esculenta</i>
"	625	1.2 kr	M	Satans Rorhat = <i>Boletus satanus</i>
9/6/2018	1803	9.0 kr	M	KarlJohan Svamp = <i>Boletus edulis</i>

1978 Stamps

In the 1978 Denmark set, both Scott 624 & 625 are labeled with only their Danish common names above and "Sjaeldne Svamp" (=rare mushrooms) below. I've listed the scientific names as well, but DNA studies have



Scott 624 (left) and 625 (right).

changed the names on many morels, so *M. esculenta* is just a guess here for this one. Gerlinger (1991), McKenzie (1997), and Gimeno (1999–2000) all list Scott 624 as showing *M. esculenta*, but these sources were published before comparative DNA studies were performed. The morel of course is edible, but *Boletus satanus* is poisonous. These stamps are small and perforate, with gum.

Over the years I've been surprised to locate five distinct sets of FDCs issued for the 1978 stamps. Two of the FDCs have photo images for the cachet, showing a single mushroom of each (with the corresponding stamp); one has a painting for the cachet, and two others are without a cachet at all.

On the first set with photo cachets, both stamps 624 and 625 are affixed together on one cover; only the Danish common name is given below the cachet and information (in Danish) is printed on the back. The second set with a photo cachet has two covers, each with only one of the two stamps and a corresponding photo cachet; this is titled below with both the Danish common name and the scientific name (in parenthesis), but no information is written on the back. On one of these two sets, the photo images are smaller than on the other, and they show completely different photos for the same species on the cachet.

On the third FDC set, both stamps 624 and 625 are affixed and the cachet is a painted illustration (not a photo) showing two stylized *Amanita muscaria*. The fourth FDC also has both stamps affixed but no cachet. The last set has blocks of four of the same stamp (thus, two covers), but also no cachet, as in the previous FDC.



Three of five different FDC sets for Scott 624 & 625.

The cancel is the same for all of these FDCs; an outline of two of the boletes and two of the morels is shown on each, and there are two complete cancels on each FDC.

So there are a lot of different items to collect for this set. Of the five FDCs I've just described, I'm only showing you three here.

2018 Stamps

In 2018 Denmark issued one mushroom stamp, Scott 1803, in a set of five stamps showing wild food. It is labeled with only the common name "Karl Johan Svamp" (Karl Johan's mushroom), which is *Boletus edulis*. King Charles XIV John of Sweden, who was also at the same time Charles III John of Norway (reigning from 1818–1844), was fond of this mushroom, and he's honored affectionately in both Sweden and Denmark with this regional



Brian S. Luther

Denmark 2018, Wild food booklet Scott 1802–1806.



Brian S. Luther



Denmark 1991 Christmas seal.

Brian S. Luther

1974 Danish Red Cross seals.



Brian S. Luther

Denmark Wild Food FDC.

common name. Only a side view is shown, so you can't see the characteristic bolete tubes under the cap. All stamps in this set are die-cut and self stick. One FDC was issued with all five stamps. There is no cachet illustration on the FDC, but the cancel shows a knife and fork and is titled Vild Mad (Wild Food). The back of the FDC briefly describes wild food foraging in Denmark in both Danish and English.

Cinderellas

I'm aware of three separate sets of mushroom-illustrated seals (non-postage Cinderellas) from Denmark as well, which I thought you might like to see. The first is a 1974 set of Danish Red Cross (Dansk Røde Kors) seals; this is a sheet of 16 different seals, all perforate, with gum, and labeled only with Danish common names. The illustrations were taken from *Mushrooms and Toadstools in Colour* by Else & Hans Hvass (1961), but the actual artist was E. Hahnwald. In 1991 Denmark issued both a booklet and sheet of Christmas seals, with one of eight seals showing a stylized *Amanita muscaria*. In addition, the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) issued a sheet of 30 different Danish mushroom seals in 1999. These are all very colorful, collectible, and quite rare.

If interested, I've also written earlier articles detailing the mushroom stamps known at the time from the neighboring countries of Sweden (Luther, 2014a & 2015) and Finland (Luther, 2014b); Finland has subsequently issued additional myco-stamps.

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Brian S. Luther

Denmark 1999 World Wildlife mushroom seals.

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Valley Fever Breakthrough, cont. from page 3

Garcia-Lloret, who specializes in allergic diseases, suggested Actimmune, a drug treatment for immune disorders that promotes the T cell Abraham needed. It worked—sort of. “He was getting better. We were reasonably satisfied,” she said. But still, too many of Abraham’s cells were running the wrong program. She continued digging around and found another drug, a relatively new one named Dupixent that’s also meant to treat immune disorders.

As far as the doctors know, it had never before been used on valley fever. They tested it first in Abraham’s cells in the lab, then in his body, and bingo: “We saw that his skull bones were all healing, and you could see immediately that all the lumps of a fungal infection in his body were fading away,” Butte said.

Together, the drugs had simultaneously suppressed Abraham’s dysfunctional T cells and boosted those that could attack the fun-

gus. Seeing them work together in Abraham’s body “turned out to be one of those eureka moments,” Butte said.

Within a few months, Abraham’s lumps and lesions had disappeared. He began eating and playing, and he talked more. Finally, after 11 months in a hospital bed, he returned to his mother and older sister in Santa Maria in early 2019.

His doctors plan to start weaning Abraham off his many drugs in the coming months. They hope someday he’ll be done with them for good. One can imagine the kindergartner himself also wants to be rid of needles, so that maybe he can just focus on normal kid concerns: his favorite animals (flamingos), his favorite color (red) and, of course, pizza.



Election

For our elections, **we vote online electronically**. Voting ends on March 3 at midnight.

This year we will be voting for a Vice President, a Treasurer, and five Trustees for the years 2020–2022. Please read the following candidate profiles carefully.

How to Vote Electronically: Go to the PSMS website at www.psms.org and click on “Members’ Page” under the heading “Membership.” You will need to log in with your username and password. If you have forgotten your password, please fill out the section “Forgot your password?” at the bottom of the page and click on “Reset your password.” If you cannot remember your username, contact Pacita at membership@psms.org or Marian at outreach@psms.org.

Scroll to the bottom of the member’s area page to “Member’s Area Features.” Under the heading “Interaction” click on the link “Elections.” This will open the ballot for the 2020 PSMS election. You may now make your selections. Be sure to click on “submit” on the bottom of the ballot when finished.

Election

Please note: Biographies in *Spore Prints* may have been abbreviated owing to space considerations. Please see the online ballots for the bios as originally submitted.

It will be helpful to have your *Spore Prints* issue with the candidates and bios available to view when voting. You may only vote once. There are two votes per family membership, but you will each have to log in separately and use your individual user IDs to vote.

If you have any questions or confusion about voting, please contact Marian Maxwell at outreach@psms.org.

Voting by U.S. Postal Mail: We will mail ballots to members who do not have computers. These mailed ballots need to be returned in person at the February meeting to Pacita at the membership desk or to be mailed to Marian Maxwell at 14269 145th Pl SE, Renton, WA 98059. Votes mailed after March 3 will not be counted.

Please contact Marian at outreach@psms.org if you have any difficulties voting.

Results: Election results will be announced at the Survivors’ Banquet.

Vice President **Marion Richards**



I have served on the PSMS board for the past year and am on the welcoming team at our monthly meetings. I have offered mushroom dye demos at our shows and led the dye workshop at the Ben Woo Foray. I have also participated for several seasons of our Bridle Trails Survey. I enjoy meeting new and current club members and want to welcome everyone into the wide range of mushroom and lichen interests! I want to continue to expand that knowledge.

Paul Hill Vice President

A PSMS member since 2006, I have hosted field trips, spoken at the Mushrooming 101 classes, run mushroom photography walks in local parks and at the Ben Woo Foray, and served on the board of directors. Now I’d really like to be the point person for getting interesting, entertaining, and diverse speakers related to fascinating world of mushrooms, the most important job of the Vice President. Vote for Pedro, wait make that Pablo; Vote for Paul!





Brenda Fong

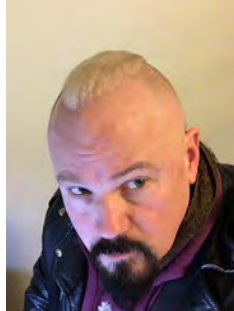
Treasurer

Since joining PSMS in 2000, I've been a volunteer on various committees, but primarily on Hospitality, where I serve as a co-chair. From 2007 to 2011, I had the opportunity to serve 2 terms as a Trustee on the PSMS board. Outside of PSMS, I handled accounts payable and receivables at a small firm and held two non-consecutive terms as the treasurer of a small for-profit club. I look forward to the chance of helping PSMS in a different capacity as its Treasurer.

Trustees

Hans Drabicki

Aircraft engineer and part-time forager, I've been a PSMS member since 2008. Since then the club has become a network of friendships. As a member of the board, I look forward to devoting my time and energy toward developing, coordinating, and promoting those unique PSMS events that bring us all together.



Anne Tarver

I joined PSMS in 2014 and love how welcoming, helpful, and informative our members are. As a trustee since 2017, I have worked to serve the diverse interests at PSMS. I especially enjoy working to preserve access to the areas we use and on finding new opportunities for our club to give back through volunteer projects that help maintain those areas.



Hallie Magrini

Mushrooms inspire me artistically and because of their natural benefits. For 7 years I've been an active volunteer, in earlier years by hosting field trips and supporting annual show set-up. Last year I got trained as a field guide. I hope to help make volunteering with PSMS even more accessible for its current and new members alike.



Marcus Sarracino

I stumbled on a *Laetiporus conifericola* 5 or so years ago, and my fate as a mycophile was sealed. I have learned a great deal from PSMS, have hosted multiple field trips on both sides of the Cascades and have started guiding PSMS forays. It's been a privilege to learn and serve with you all and now I would like to continue with service on the board."



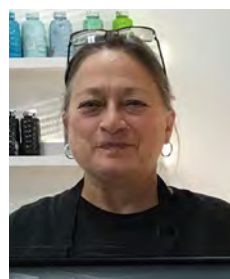
Milton Tam

Milt previously served as PSMS Vice President and as a trustee. He currently chairs the Cultivation Committee and is co-chair of our Annual Fall Mushroom Show. He believes that "fun" is an integral part of "fungi," and if elected he will serve as your advocate to improve and expand club activities, classes, and interest groups.



Marian Maxwell

I have served on our Board of Trustees in the past & would like to serve again. I have found that as the Outreach Chairperson, being on the board helps me to stay on top of events happening in PSMS. I am passionate about continuing to promote our mission to further the appreciation of fungi within our group & community.



Parker Olson

An alternate board member this past year, I understand the dynamics of the board and the needs of the PSMS members. I have 4+ years of experience in management consulting and can help the board create and follow a strategic plan, prioritize the use & investment of our assets, and develop a feedback program to best listen to our members needs.



OVEN POLENTA WITH ROASTED MUSHROOMS AND THYME

Claire Saffitz

<https://www.bonappetit.com/>

Ingredients

- 1½ lb. mixed mushrooms (such as crimini, shiitake, oyster, and/or maitake), torn into 1-in. pieces
- 4 sprigs thyme, plus leaves for serving
- 6 garlic cloves, smashed
- Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 TBs unsalted butter
- 1 cup polenta
- 4 oz. Parmesan, finely grated, plus more for serving
- 1 TBs red wine vinegar
- Flaky sea salt

Preparation

Place racks in upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat to 325°F. Combine mushrooms, thyme sprigs, and garlic on a large rimmed baking sheet. Season generously with kosher salt and pepper; drizzle with oil. Toss to coat mushrooms, then spread out in an even layer. (Make sure not to crowd the mushrooms on the baking sheet; otherwise, they'll steam instead of getting crispy.) Transfer to upper rack in oven and let mushrooms roast while you prepare polenta.

Bring 4½ cups water to a simmer in a large ovenproof saucepan over medium-high heat. Add butter and a generous pinch of kosher salt and whisk to melt butter. Gradually add polenta, whisking constantly. (Gradually incorporating the polenta into the water is key to preventing clumps.) Return mixture to a boil, immediately cover pot, and transfer to lower rack in oven. Bake polenta, shaking baking sheet with mushrooms occasionally, until polenta is tender, 25–30 minutes.

Remove polenta from oven. Crank up oven temperature as high as it will go (but don't broil). Continue to cook mushrooms until crisp around the edges, 5–10 minutes longer.

Meanwhile, carefully uncover polenta and whisk vigorously, scraping bottom of pan, until polenta is smooth and thick. Gradually add 4 oz. Parmesan, whisking constantly until melted and incorporated; taste and season with more kosher salt and pepper. Cover and keep warm over low heat while mushrooms finish roasting.

Remove mushrooms from oven; drizzle with vinegar. Toss to coat; let cool slightly.

Divide polenta among bowls and top with mushrooms, thyme leaves, sea salt, and more Parmesan.



Alex Lau

Election issue.
Remember to vote!

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