

SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Number 397 December 2003



*Whatever You Celebrate
in Winter
Have a Great Season!*



MEANY LODGE FIELD TRIP

Don and Cathy Lennebacker

Eighty-five Mountaineers and PSMS members enjoyed a wonderful weekend at Meany Lodge beginning October 25. The weather was absolutely perfect with clear crisp nights, sunny days, and gorgeous colored leaves. This was the year of the bolete. Many people took home *Leccinum*, *Boletus edulis*, assorted *Suillus*, *Hericium*, *Ramaria*, and matsutake. I found my biggest firm *Boletus edulis* ever on the side of the trail. Chanterelles were in very short supply. Many Mountaineers were mushrooming for the first time. They were quick learners. Don and I took out a group including four college girls studying environmental studies. Their enthusiasm was a pleasure. I think we've made some converts. Mary Lynch cooked delicious samples of the various edible mushrooms. This was a great trip even though the aurora borealis was not in evidence despite big write-ups in the newspaper.

HOLIDAY BOOK SALE

Mushroom field guides, cookbooks, children's books—all make wonderful holiday gift ideas! Board members have volunteered to assist at a short December book sale so that our terrific Book Sales gals, Trina Litchendorf and Donna Palomaki, can have fun at our December meeting/party. Many titles will be on sale for just the first hour of our meeting. Then we'll close up the bookstore, so everyone can just have fun. If you have last minute shopping to do for some "fungi lovers" on your list, here's your chance!

A big "Thank You" to Trina and Donna for the terrific job they've been doing all year manning our books sales at every monthly meeting. Thanks also to Karen Behm, who helped with the Book Sales table at the Fall show. It was a big success, owing to all their efforts. Book Sales is another of those "unsung heroes" jobs that take much time and really help our club.

Spore Prints

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PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Annual dues \$25; full-time students \$15

CALENDAR

- Dec. 9 Membership Meeting, "Cookie Bash," Art Show,
and Creativity Contest, 7:30 PM, CUH
- Dec. 15 PSMS Board Meeting, 7:30 PM, CUH
- Dec. 16 *Spore Prints* Deadline (early)

BOARD NEWS

Ramona Owen

Neither rain nor wind deterred PSMS Board members from meeting on November 17. The Fall Exhibit provided the club with some extra revenue, although we spent a bit more than last year. We may look for another venue next year because of rising costs at Magnuson State Park. Membership renewal forms will be mailed out with the December *Spore Prints*. Dr. Ammirati's Sunday evening mushroom ID workshops are ending; his regular ID class will start in January 2004. We now have a website designer, thanks to Steve Bigelow. A Field Trip Committee is forming to plan for 2004. The December "cookie bash" is being organized, with lots of opportunities for member participation. Nominations will be requested for new officers and Board trustees for 2004. CUH is fund-raising to offset the fire damage by setting up a Tile Fund; PSMS will purchase a large tile with our name on it.

PSMS DUES ARE DUE!

It's time to renew your PSMS membership for 2004. Please fill in and return the enclosed membership form along with the appropriate dues. Memberships for 2003 are officially up December 31. Members who have not renewed by February 15, 2004, will be dropped from the membership rolls and will no longer receive copies of *Spore Prints*.



MEMBERSHIP MEETING

"Fungus Felicity," Tuesday, December 9, 7:30 PM, in the Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st Street, Seattle



Holiday "Cookie Bash": Please arrive on Tuesday, December 9, by 7:30 PM attired in a festive mode and bearing a contribution to our fabulous and fancy fungi mini-feast. Sometimes known as the "cookie bash," our December membership meeting is traditionally a finger food event with hors d'oeuvres and sweets of your choosing. There will be three events beyond the eating part in which you may choose to participate:

Slide Show: Please contribute five or fewer of your favorite 2003-ish shots to our share-and-tell show. The subject is up to you, but we all like mushroom-related things! You may e-mail .jpg files to Tony Tschanz (tt@sunpad.com) or Patrice Benson (patrice.benson@comcast.net). You may also bring 35 mm slides to CUH and give them to Tony, our evening's media master, when you arrive.

Mushroom Art Memorial Display: Artwork by our three recently deceased mushroom artists will be on display for viewing only. If you have paintings or other artwork by Elsie Burkman, Tatiana Roats, or Irene O'Connor, please consider bringing them with you to the meeting for our display. Arrive a few minutes early to help arrange your memorial art piece. Ramona Owen will assist and direct the display. You may collect your objects d'art at the end of the evening.

Mushroom Creativity Contest: This activity includes edible mushroom art, which will be consumed after the voting. Any creative objects, clothing, performance art, etc., is fair game. The obligatory theme is fungus. Prizes will be awarded by popular opinion. Everyone has an opinion and a vote! Arrive by 7:15 PM to help set up your art piece.

This is also a chance for you to donate (or unload) some mushroom related objects for our door and art prizes. Please bring your donation wrapped and ready to go. You may place your donation in the boxes under the art display by the north door when you arrive.

Do come and join all of your fungal friends in our "Gateway to the Holidays" annual event. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to phone Patrice at 206-722-0691.

FIELD TRIP TO NEWCASTLE BEACH PARK

Tony Tschanz

October 25 was a nice day for a conveniently close field trip at Lake Washington, just south of the I-90 and I-405 interchange. This first outing after the show let many new members participate in mushroom gathering and socializing among the roughly 40 to 50 people who attended.

A beautiful shelter had plenty of tables and barbecues to grill hot dogs. The manicured lawns were not the ideal place to search for mushrooms (save some Shaggy Manes), but nearby Coal Creek and Cougar Mountain Parks with many trails allowed a nice variety of species to be collected. Everybody went home with at least some *Lepiota rhacodes* for dinner.

Identification of about 40 species was expertly done by Marian Maxwell. The host was Tony Tschanz.

TWANOH STATE PARK FIELD TRIP **Brian Luther**

We had a modest turnout for this traditional Hood Canal outing, and the same can be said for the fungi found. Larry Baxter and I got down to the park just at dawn to reserve and sweep the shelter, get a fire going outside, and clean and arrange the picnic tables.

Our host, Harold Schnarre, arrived about 8:30 AM and in usual fashion had the welcome mat set out, with clean tablecloths in the shelter and coffee and goodies to greet everybody. Thanks, Harold!

The weather was perfect, with a foggy morning, no rain, and some patches of blue sky and a few sunbeams coming through once in a while throughout the day. Hood Canal was so calm it was like glass, and you could see the Olympics clearly. Spawning Chum Salmon were thick in the stream, and that fact was not overlooked by the numerous noisy gulls and other hungry foragers looking for an easy meal of fish.

Only one or two very beat up chanterelles were brought in, and edible fungi were in short supply. The woods in general had few fruiting fungi, probably because of the week or so of freezing or near-freezing conditions earlier. Even very few Russulas were found. Tony Tschanz and Marsi DiGiovanni went over to the nearby Lake Cushman area on the Olympic Peninsula, and Tony came back with a lovely collection of five or six matsutake in perfect condition. For some reason he didn't believe me when I told him that it was a very dangerous mushroom, and I'd need to take it back to do some further research on it (in my kitchen). Hmm...I must be losing my touch. Larry Baxter and Josh Birkebak did a great job helping with identification all day, and we ended up with 80 different species of labeled fungi on display. Interesting finds included several collections of the fragrant and beautiful *Cortinarius percomis* as well as one small *Baeospora myriodophylla*.

Fungi were so scarce that pretty much everybody left before the potluck scheduled for 4:00 PM, and because nobody stayed, it was essentially an un-potluck. It was now getting dark rapidly, and after cleaning up and packing the cars we invited Harold to come over to our cabin, where Larry and his girls were staying for the weekend, for a piece of pumpkin pie.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Karin Mendell

The Fall 2003 mushroom season is now just a memory. We are finally getting all that rain that so many of us wished, prayed, and hoped for—on the heels of our first freezes. So, we bid a fond “adieu” to another great PSMS fall season!

Once again, I hope that all of you, new and seasoned members, got to take part in some of the wonderful adventures we sponsored. Though it was yet another lean season for choice edibles, PSMS provided many fantastic opportunities for our members to study, collect, identify, cook, and savor wild mushrooms.

Our Fall Mushroom Exhibit was a smashing success, thanks to the delightful Gary Lincoff. Many members got to attend the Breitenbush Mushroom Conference. Still others attended the PSMS/The Mountaineers foray at Meany Lodge and reported good times and great food! All of our field trips, though not blessed with prolific amounts of edible mushrooms, were attended by 35–50 participants. Many commented on how much they enjoyed these outings. A special thanks to Ross and Val Othus, who, along with Cathy and Don Lennebacker, are our “always available hosts and hostesses” for so many of our field trips. Thanks to all the other hosts (Doug U'Ren, Karen Kelly, Harold Schnarre, Tony Tschanz, and Ron Post) and those who helped with ID as well.

We would also like to send a special “Thank You” to Dr. Joseph Ammirati, Dr. Michelle Seidl, and Dennis Oliver, who once again gave generously of their time and expertise for Sunday night identification practice sessions throughout the Fall. Thanks also to Hildegard Hendrickson, Patrice Benson, and our other “regulars” who showed up, assisted with training new identifiers, and generally helped make these sessions such a great success!

I would like to take a moment, again, to thank all of our wonderful volunteers who make all these activities possible. We are truly blessed with generous and amazing members, who share their love for mycology and our organization by giving their time to work as teachers, identifiers, field trip schedulers, and hosts. Additionally, all of our members who participate in these field trips and forays give generously of themselves, helping with cooking, cleaning lodges, and campgrounds. I'm continuously amazed by the amount of shared effort that make all of our activities so successful! It really is one of the reasons this group has continued to grow and prosper over the years. If you missed the opportunity to take part in some of the events this fall, be sure to remedy that this spring! I would especially encourage all our “identifiers in training” to plan to come and spend at least one field trip assisting with identification, giving back to the organization some of what you've learned. Share your new-found knowledge with other PSMS members! Thanks, everyone, for another great season!

Happy Holidays to you all!

2004 PSMS ELECTIONS

The positions of President, Treasurer, and five Board members are up for election next year. The election committee—Joanne Young (206-633-0752), Pacita Roberts (206-362-2713), and Hildegard Hendrickson (206-523-2892)—are asking for nominations for these positions, which run for a term of two years. Any PSMS member can nominate himself or herself or a fellow member (but you need their permission). All of us are PSMS members because of our passion for mushrooms, the outdoors, and good fellowship. Our society is assisting us in our endeavors, and its future depends on continued competent leadership and management. The more you participate in PSMS, the more you get out of it. Please contact a member of the election committee and volunteer to run for one of the open positions.

MUSHROOM ODORS **R. G. Benedict & D. E. Stuntz** *Pacific Search*, September 1975

The far-roaming pothunter may encounter 27 different odors in fresh mushrooms that grow in the Pacific Northwest. In the words of Jimmy Durante, “The nose knows!”

The keys and descriptions in the average mushroom field book tell little or nothing about the characteristic odors of certain mushrooms that could give additional clues to their identity.

Sometimes a specimen contains only traces of the chemicals responsible for its aroma. You need to split or cut the fresh mushroom and immediately smell the inner cut portions. Carry notepaper with you on which to record any odor you may detect, along with other identifying features, and insert this record in the collection sack with the specimens.

Though odor perception and definitions vary widely among individuals, mushroom odors are arbitrarily divided into three groups: pleasant, neutral, and unpleasant. Although there should be no

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Odors, cont. from page 3

disagreement within the “pleasant odor” group, some readers undoubtedly would shift some of the neutral odors to “unpleasant” or vice versa.

Odors in mushrooms usually arise from volatile essential oils that contain mixtures of chemicals like esters, aldehydes, ketones, and amines. A simple example of a pleasant-smelling compound is ethyl butyrate, the odor of pineapple. Examples of aldehydes are compounds like formaldehyde and acetaldehyde, which give off pungent, unpleasant smells. In some cases more than one chemical in the same group, or representative chemicals of more than one group (e.g., both esters and aldehydes), may contribute to the combination.

Amines always contain the element nitrogen. The simplest organic one is methylamine. This substance has a smell similar to, but more unpleasant than, household ammonia.

We begin with the pleasant aromas and, where known, provide an indication of some of the chemical compounds involved.

Edible mushrooms with the pleasant aroma of almond extract are *Phaeolepiota aurea*, *Hygrophorus bakerensis*, *H. agathosmus*, and *Agaricus sylvicola*. Non-edible fungi with similar odor are *Russula laurocerasi* and *R. foetens*. The odor of *R. foetens* changes as the mushroom ages and becomes extremely disagreeable, in fact, nauseating. Almond-extract odor probably results from a combination of chemicals that include benzaldehyde and close relatives.

Several species of mushrooms, none of which have culinary interest, exude a fragrant or sweet odor. Among the spine fungi, the sweet smell of *Hydnellum peckii* helps to set it apart from related species. *Clitocybe morgani* and *Mycena odora* bear a tutti-frutti chewing gum smell. Burnt sugar is a rare scent in the fleshy fungi, but is well documented in *Hebeloma sacchariolens*.

The spicy fragrance of *Lactarius helvus*, only rarely found on the Pacific coast, is an odd combination of cinnamon and gunpowder smoke. The distinctive smell of *Pholiota squarrosoides*, a wood-inhabiting fungus, recalls cinnamon buns. Without doubt an analytical chemist could extract cinnamaldehyde or cinnamic acid from this fungus.

Grape soda pop aroma has been noted only in *Squamanita odorata* and *Clitocybe clavata*, the grape clitocybe. Japanese forms of *C. clavata* have been known to cause illness when an alcoholic beverage is consumed with the mushroom. The aroma of specimens in our region is probably due to methylanthranilate, the compound used to prepare synthetic grape flavor.

Most common of the pleasant aromas is anise oil. It occurs in *Agaricus augustus*, *A. pusillus*, *A. micromegethus*, *A. niveus*, *Clitocybe odora*, and *C. suveolens*. Some of the tough, woody fungi of the genus *Lentinus* also give off this pleasant smell. A well-known representative of this genus is *L. lepideus* which grows on dead stumps and logs in fall. Anise oil contains anethole. It is sometimes used in pharmacy as a laxative, frequently combined with licorice.

Fruity aromas, uncommon in fleshy fungi, are best represented by pear and apricot. The fragrance of pear is found in *Inocybe pyriodora*, *Cortinarius fraganus*, and *C. fragrans*. An apricot-like scent emanates from *Cantharellus cibarius*, the popular yellow chanterelle.

Lactarius camphoratus, an uncommon mushroom in this area, has the sweet aromatic odor of fenugreek. A legume, native to Europe, produces these seeds, which serve as an ingredient in curry powder and in artificial maple flavoring.

The subtle, aromatic odor of *Armillaria ponderosa* [= *Tricholoma magnivelare*] and *A. caligata* is reminiscent of tincture of benzoin. Benzoin is a dry, brittle, fragrant resin from certain plants that grow in Java and Sumatra. It is used in perfumes and medicines. Local mushroom hunters refer to this odor as the “matsutake odor” or pine scent. (“Matsutake” is the Japanese name for *A. ponderosa*.) Chemical compounds isolated from the Japanese matsutake are methyl cinnamate and matsutake alcohol.

Many fleshy fungi have no characteristic odor. Others have a difficult-to-define combination of light but pleasant aromas, often referred to as the typical mushroom odor. Familiar specimens of this type are *Collybia dryophila*, *Flammulina velutipes*, *Lepista nuda*, and the *Agaricus bisporus* that you find in your favorite supermarket’s produce section.

to be continued next month

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A big thank you to the hosts of the fall field trips: Doug U’Ren, Karen Kelly, Harold Schnarre, Tony Tschanz, and Ron Post. Good job. Our club runs on volunteers, and it’s folks like you that make it all possible.