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SPORE PRINTS



BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY
200 Second Avenue North Seattle WA 98109
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FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Skunked at Soda Springs - by Bill (Pollard)
Sept. 22/23

Last year several of us skidded and slid on their way over Chinook Pass while traveling to Soda Springs, and it cost our President \$60.00 to be towed back onto the road. Therefore, our outing committee ruled this year's run to the same place should be no later than before, in spite of the dry weather reports.

Everyone predicted a bum run with no mushrooms; they were right. When we arrived Friday the soil was bone dry for more than a foot deep. Friday night it rained and all day Saturday and more Sunday, but I dug down 2 inches and it was dry below that point. The moral is "you can't win them all", but let's admit that 99.50% is a good average.

But there were a couple of bright spots. The Mathews family were enroute when Nettie Mae saw some Coprinus comatus by the side of the road. After a shrill "Whoa" John stopped the car and soon she had harvested a goodly supply of large shaggy manes—the largest was 10 inches long.

Later that same family went up to Bumping Lake where they found a large Boletus and Brian (Luther?) guessed it to be an edulis, but has taken it to Dr. Stuntz to be sure. Big John Mathews has been accepting all congratulations with smiles and bows as though he had done more than stop the car when he was told.

Dorothy Viers found a large patch of Armillaria mellea which she cooked and served during pot luck and most of us changed our opinion about honey mushrooms; we had thought they were blah (mebby the sauteing was special.)

Some Polyporus sulphureus and one white Chantarelle were brought in, but there were only 40 specimens on the table. 54 attended, 50 ate.

Crystal Springs Forest Camp - by Ed Cantelon
Sept. 29/30

The weather was mild, the fire was warm, the coffee was strong, the potluck was beautiful, but the mushroom hunting was not too skookum.

78 members and friends signed the register, 68 gathered to enjoy the potluck. Brian Luther and Charlie Volz identified 84 species. Some members found nice Herkium and Cantherellus subalbidus. Armillaria mellea was found in fair supply but many species did not show well. The Matsutaki (Armillaria ponderosa) were more illusive than usual and even the Russulas were not plentiful. In many areas where in the past years we have found a great bulk of material, this year we found nothing, just nothing. Perhaps we can blame the poor snow pack of last winter and the long dry summer.

Dalles Field Trip - by hosts Shirley and Al Mattivi
Oct. 6/7/8

And a good time was had by all. The Dalles Forest Camp was wet and rainy, but failed to dampen the spirit of 109 guests. Our trip was made even more enjoyable by the presence on Saturday of Dr. Stuntz, who together with Brian Luther identified 120 species. Our special thanks to Brian and Dr. Stuntz.

91 guests were present Saturday night for an outstanding potluck supper. Sunday the sun finally broke through, or was it the visit of Bob Ramsey and his wife Georgia that made it seem that way. The success of this field trip as with many others was due to the inimitable efforts of Pauline and Bill Pollard; we thank you both.



photo, which closely resembles a typical PSMS potluck, shows a 1903 Kings Canyon outing of the Sierra Club and is by George Cosgrave. From the Sierra Club Handbook.





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ALTERNATES Dorothy Conway, Everett Peavey, and Bill Pollard

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR Dr. Daniel E. Stuntz

Membership Meeting

Monday, November 12, 8:00 pm Eames Theatre, Pacific Science Center

Our very own Vice President Phil Roger will give a talk and picture show on The Coral Mushrooms and Friends; that is to say, Friends of the Coral Mushrooms, not the relationship between one's friends and the Coral Mushrooms. Although that might be the topic of a pretty interesting talk too. Now I've known some people. . . There might be some additional lagniappe, as yet unspecified. At the meeting, that is.

THE CAT WHO LOVED CLITOCYBE DEALBATA

It seems that Dick Graham's 4½ month old cat discovered some mushrooms lying on the counter at his home awaiting identification. He ate a cap, and finding it acceptable to feline appetite, ate a second cap. (Stipes didn't appeal?) A half an hour later the poor little thing was violently ill with vomiting, diarrhea, watering mouth and eyes, and constricted pupils.

Ron Requa helped Dick identify the mushroom as Clitocybe dealbata, and therefore the toxin was muscarine. The cat was taken on a hasty trip to the veterinarian where he received an antidote of atropine sulphate and spent the night at the hospital. He seemed completely recovered the next day and came home. He's fine.

The moral of this story is that not everyone knows what's good for that one and keep your finds in a locked cupboard or safe. (Dick Graham is an ex-PSMS-member, and, we hope, a new PSMS member.)

HOW WE COMPARE WITH OTHER SOCIETIES

by Howard Melsen, President

It is interesting to note that, according to a recent survey conducted by Enil Lang of the New York Mycological Society, our Society is the largest of any in the United States. Next comes Oregon followed by Boston, then Minnesota. The smallest was Central New Jersey (16 members), with Los Angeles following (20).

Our state has more societies than any other, and there is a noticeable lack of them in the South. The oldest mycological society in the U.S. is Boston, founded in 1895, followed closely by Minnesota in 1897. The newest listed was Ohio and Washington, both started in 1972.

The New York Society leads in the number of field trips per year with 30 one day trips. Some have two day forays, as we do, but most have only one day trips. Most of the Societies put out some sort of bulletin ranging from an occasional one to quarterly or monthly publications. We put out more than most, with ten per year, leaving out only July and August.

So you can see that we rank close to the top in most respects when compared to the rest of the Mycological Societies in the United States.

CALENDAR

- Nov. 12 Monday 8:00 pm Membership meeting
- Nov. 15 Thursday 7:30 Morel Committee meeting (Dr. Stuntz's Lab.)
- Nov. 19 Monday 8:00 pm Board meeting
- Nov. 23 Deadline for news for Sporeprints
Send to PSMS, 4029 E. Madison, Seattle WA 98102. For goodness sake.
- Dec. 10 Monday 8:00 pm Membership meeting

Members of the Puget Sound Mycological Society (they're mushroom fanciers) have compiled and published a 178-page gourmet guide containing 200 recipes utilizing some 22 species of edible mushrooms found in this area. It's called "Wild Mushroom Recipes," available at \$6.95 from bookstores or the publisher, Pacific Search Books, 715 Harrison St. It's a revision of a 1969 edition.

From the Seattle Times, Oct. 28, 1973.

TECHNICAL NOTES

by Navarre Orth

At Dr. Stuntz's class snack I was munching a piece of coffee loaf. Dr. Stuntz came up and I said, "Oh, Dr. Stuntz, have you had a piece of Dina's coffee loaf? It's excellent." He looked at it wistfully, took a slice and said, "Yes it's good. Everything that's good is either expensive, sinful, or fattening."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again I must make a special effort to tell all how proud I am of the membership who worked so hard on our Annual Exhibit. I have mentioned before how I have told others about how the members of this organization pitch in and work to put on this Show, and, as usual, you did all I said you would.

Just to say thank you seems so inadequate for what you have done, but it is the only thing I know to say to express the gratitude we all have for what each and every one of you have done to make this Exhibit a success.

Howard C. Melsen
President

SHOW WATCHING

To the chairmen of the various committees and their helpers and everyone who labored so hard physically and mentally or both for so many hours in the interest of the 1973 Exhibit "THANK YOU VERY MUCH."

Jim Bennett, Chairman



This year we had a great show, the best in at least three years. Hildah Nolan reports the count as 636 specimens of 86 genera. The mushrooms arrived in beautiful condition thanks to careful handling by the collectors. It was a real surprise to see the huge volume of such beautiful material that arrived at the back door of the Science Center.

Top billing for our show of course goes to Dr. Stuntz and Kit Scates. Their knowledge and dedication shapes the whole effort into a success. To them and to all the rest of you wonderful people who contributed your time and effort, I express my deep appreciation. In this expression, I am sure I speak for the entire organization.

▶ **FOUND AT THE EXHIBIT:** A nice basket, it contained *Agaricus campestris*. I have it. CH 2-6115
Ed Cantelon, Chairman Tray

Arrangement

(Contained? What did you do with the *A. campestris*, Ed? Huh?)



Thank you for all of the wonderful contributions of food for the Exhibit and the wonderful cooperation from those who helped. Everyone was really satisfied.

Judy Roger, Chairwoman
Hospitality



NAMA MOUNTAIN FORAY REPORT AND GOSSIP

On Sept. 7, 8, & 9 the North American Mycological Association (NAMA) held a Foray at the University of Montana Biological Station on Flathead Lake with the North Idaho Mycological Association acting as host. This is the stamping ground of Dr. Orson K. Miller. The guiding light was Kit Scates aided by her NIMA group who supervised parking, handed out brilliant red-orange cards imprinted with a mushroom and "NAMA" for back windows of cars.

Dr. Miller started the Saturday evening panel discussion by saying that he'd led his caravan of cars (consisting of 40 people on their way to the Foray) into Big Forks where they stopped for gas. Locals seeing all these cars with cards in the rear windows asked "What's that, a funeral procession?" "no, no," they were told. "It's part of a group going out mushroom hunting." After thoughtful pause one said, "Still looks like a funeral procession."

There is some difference of opinion as to whether Howard and Fay Melsen were dubbed King and Queen of the event. Some feel that only Fay was royalty, but in that case, who was King and what does it all portend re: sanctity of the married state, fem lib, and all that? Others felt that neither Fay nor Howard were anyone at all (ridiculous, we all know they're someone). Dave and Jennie Schmitt were also reported as being honoraries.

Various workshops, lectures, and demonstrations were included. Box lunches were passed around. Scavenger hunts and mushroom contests occurred. Apparently the NIMA has an actual NIMA song that is sung to the tune of 'Clementine' (I'm a NIMA, I'm a NIMA, From the north of Idaho). By the time all this filters back to the home front it's difficult to be sure. The editor disclaims all responsibility for this report and if anyone from NIMA or NAMA wants to know where we are, editorially or otherwise, we're in Ethiopia, or Bogalusa, La. As a matter of fact, we might well be, so don't expect to call us at the last moment with important news. So there.

Photo by M. Frank Strauss: The packers, Hetch Hetchy Valley, 1906. From the Sierra Club Handbook.

CAP YOUR NEXT DINNER WITH DELICIOUS MUSHROOMS (cont)

This article is from the March issue of Prevention magazine.

Pick Them, Grow Them, or Buy Them

There are three ways you can provide mushrooms for your table. You can grow your own, you can develop mushroom hunting skills and pick your own, or you can purchase commercially grown mushrooms (*Agaricus campestris*) at the market.

Mushrooms growing in the wild have additional amounts of iron and niacin. A seeking — and picking — acquaintance with wild mushrooms can add interest to any foray in the fields and woods and zest to the meal afterwards — if you know your mushrooms, Dr. Clyde M. Christensen points out (*Horticulture*, Nov., 1960). Although there are 4,000 species of wild mushrooms, you need not be an expert to become sufficiently familiar with some of the choicest and most common kinds you can eat with perfect safety.

Dr. Christensen suggests these two simple rules:

1. Learn thoroughly the characteristics of some of the common unmistakable edible kinds, and

2. Pick only those that you definitely know are good and wholesome. If you are doubtful, leave them alone. This is no more difficult than recognizing the faces of your friends in a crowded street. An excellent source of information on wild mushrooms is the *Mushroom Hunter's Field Guide* by Alexander H. Smith (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan).

Growing your own mushrooms can be a fascinating and rewarding adventure. With one of the kits that are available complete with soil and spawn, you can grow an organic crop of ripe mushrooms in your hall closet, under your sink, or in your basement. Mushroom Supply Company in Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania can provide them for prices starting at \$3.95.

If you prefer to buy your mushrooms in the market place, look for those with unopened caps. These

are the freshest. But as long as the mushrooms feel dry and firm, they are perfectly fresh. Small brown spots, or opened caps simply mean that the mushrooms are ripe. If you plan to store the mushrooms in your refrigerator, the American Mushroom Institute suggests that you place them on a shallow tray or rack. Dip a large soft paper towel into cold water. Wring about half dry and lay this towel over the mushrooms. Moisten the towel each day. They will keep fresh for days this way if stored in the refrigerator on a shelf which allows cold air to freely pass around them. Do not place them on the bottom of the refrigerator or against anything.

If you prefer to cook the mushrooms before storing so that you always have them ready to add a delectable touch to your soup, stew, roast, liver, hamburger, pizza, or almost anything you're planning for dinner, then add a quarter cup of water to a half pound of fresh mushrooms. Add one tablespoon of lemon juice with a piece of the rind (only if the lemon is organic). Stir in a little kelp or salt. When the steam rises and the water begins to bubble around the edge, reduce the heat to simmer and place a tight lid on the saucepan. Simmer for only five minutes. Cool and store in the refrigerator. When prepared in this way, the mushrooms will stay white and delicious.

Buy Them Fresh and Freeze Them

When mushrooms are available at a good price, you may want to buy a lot and freeze them. Mushrooms freeze easily and retain their nutritive value in the process, according to a report of the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station (Bulletin 417). If you buy the mushrooms in sealed rigid containers, simply freeze them in the original containers. Do not clean or prepare them at all. They will keep for about a month. Or you can either broil or sauté large mushrooms' caps till they are half done. Cool them on a wire rack. Now place them cups side down in rigid containers, seal and freeze. To use them, simply thaw and finish the broiling or sautéing at low heat. Pieces, slices and buttons may be prepared the same way. Store them in portions only large enough for one recipe.



For a living shelf, the species illustrated above is rather glamorous. It's a rich carmine red, and so glossy it might have been lacquered. Actually, it was. Members of this genus (which is quite common in the tropics) varnish themselves by exuding a clear, resin-like material which dries into a brittle, waterproof coating over the top. Moderately resilient, it can be pressed down gently as if it were a layer of varnished cardboard. The genus name means Shining Skin.

The hymeneal layer on the under surface is made up of round pores (as opposed to *Daedalia* which have 'labyrinthine' pores). One member of the 'Shining Skin' genus is familiarly known as the Artist's Conk (or Fungus) because the white undersurface immediately turns brown wherever it's touched by pencil or fingernail. This is not due to a chemical change. Instead, the thin layer of pale tissue is pressed down against a dark background.

Many conks (bracket fungi) are perennial, and will grow larger year by year. Unless they are needed for study or exhibit it's a good idea to leave them where they're growing—on the tree (even though they are killing it by causing heart rot.)

Answers: Ganoderma oregonensis 'Varnished conk', Ganoderma applanatum 'Artist's Fungus'

