



The Wisconsin Mycological Society
NEWSLETTER

Volume 31

Number 1

Spring 2014



IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!



Morel Season 2013, a timeline



So, what will 2014 bring?





Wisconsin Mycological Society
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New Berlin, WI 53151

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- WHAT'S COMING IN 2014...TIME TO MARK CALENDARS
- REGISTER NOW FOR THE ANNUAL NORTHWOODS FORAY
- REPORT FROM FALL 2013 DEVIL'S LAKE FORAY

President's Message

After a long, snowy, and cold winter, no doubt we are all looking forward to spring and the possibilities it brings. With spring just around the corner, the foray season is too. To start off the season, we have a couple of forays scheduled for May. Since the morel season is likely to be late this spring, and Memorial Day weekend is early, we have scheduled both forays for the same weekend. Hopefully, many of you will be able to come out for one or both of these. One foray will be in the North Kettle Moraine area, and the other at Blackhawk Ridge. Our group has not been to Blackhawk Ridge for a number of years, and so it will be fun to go back to this historic spot. Be prepared for a good hike. If you visit the WMS website, you can find some photos of our last visit there in 2007.

Before the foray season starts, though, we have several evening events coming up. On April 16, we will have movie night featuring mushroom-themed videos, and May 7 Daniel Winkler will talk about "Mushrooms and Truffles of the Pacific Northwest." Both of these events are taking place at our new lecture location, the New Berlin Public Library. This location seems to be working out well. It is a nice new library designed in the prairie-style and its Community Room is very spacious. Thank you to Fred Kluhsman for suggesting this new location and making arrangements with the library.

We have already had a couple excellent lectures this year at the new venue. In February, our planned speaker, Maxine Stone, from the Missouri Mycological Society, was unable to be with us. Britt Bunyard, who fortunately always has a lecture already prepared, graciously filled in. Britt's talk was not the typical slide show with pretty pictures of mushrooms. It was about the seamier, pathogenic side of fungi with the various rusts, smuts, and the like—

even bat white nose syndrome. We learned about wheat stem rust, coffee rust, cedar apple rust, corn smut, and others. There were many interesting tidbits along the way – such as how ginger snaps, with their strong flavorings, were created to make use of bunted wheat, which is wheat that has been infected by a smut fungus and has an off-flavor and smell. For another example, why do the British drink coffee? Well, it's because they ran out of coffee. Coffee rust was killing off the coffee plants in India, so they started to drink tea and decided tea was not all that bad. Coffee-growing has moved westward to try to keep ahead of the coffee rust, but coffee rust is never far behind and it is now a problem in Latin America.

The second lecture this year was given by Peter Vachuska, who primed us for the upcoming season with "Common Spring Fungi." The several dozen species that Peter showed slides of reminded us that there can be more to the spring mushroom season than just morels. He also pointed out a nice resource for the student of the fungi. It is the book *Mushrooms, Edible and Otherwise*, by M.E. Hard. This is an older book no longer under copyright and is available for reading or downloading at the Project Gutenberg website. A special feature of the book is that it typically introduces the section on a particular mushroom by explaining its name. For example, the book starts out its description of *Lepiota acutesquamosa* by saying "*Acutesquamosa* is from *acutus*, sharp, and *squama*, a scale." In another example, the description of *Tricholoma saponaceum* starts out, "*Saponaceum* is from *sapo*, soap, so called from its peculiar odor." Explanations like this might help the reader better understand the meanings of mushroom names, which might then make it easier to remember the actual mushroom names themselves. Best wishes,

Colleen Vachuska

2014 Spring EVENTS CALENDAR

Wednesday, May 7.....Daniel Winkler, Mushroaming.com and the Puget Sound Mycological Society. Daniel will present **“Mushrooms and Truffles of the Pacific NW”**

Saturday, May 17.....Spring Foray in North Kettle Moraine

Sunday, May 18.....Spring foray at Blackhawk Ridge

Saturday, June 28.....Annual WMS Picnic, Bunyard Farm Always a great time! More info as the date draws near.

July 17-20 (Thur-Sun).....Annual Northwoods Foray Bigger and better every year! You won't want to miss out this year. Details and registration coming soon....stay tuned!

Saturday, July 26.....A Midsummer's Foray

Foray leader: John Steinke. Meet at 9:45 am sharp at South Kettle Moraine Ranger Station and drive to the foray location. Bring a lunch. Directions at WMS website.

Saturday, September 6.....Sami Saad Foray at Mauthe Lake

Foray leaders: Peter and Colleen Vachuska

Saturday, September 13.....Devil's Lake / Wollersheim Foray

Foray leader: Britt Bunyard. Last year was the First Annual—and we had great success!

Saturday, September 20.....Glacier Hills Foray

Foray leader: Susan Selle

Saturday, September 27.....Foray at Bigfoot State Park

Foray leader: Dave Menke.

Sunday, September 28.....Annual Foray at Coral Woods (with the Illinois Myco Assoc)

Foray leader: Bob and Judy Kaplan and the IMA.

Saturday, October 4.....Fred Hainer/Tula Erskine Foray at Point Beach

Foray leader: Chuck Soden. Bring a picnic!

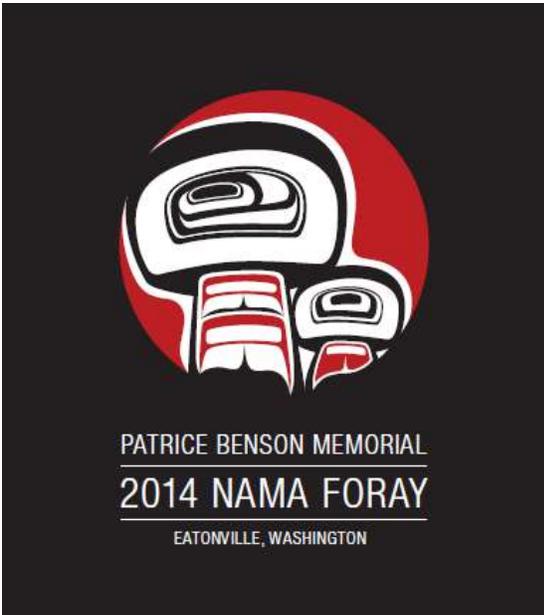
Saturday, October 11.....South Kettle Moraine Foray

Foray leader: Al Bunde

Where is the New Berlin Public Library? It's easy to find, located in the New Berlin City Center, (E. of Moorland Rd. and S. of National Ave.)

15105 Library Lane New Berlin





Make Plans Now to Attend Upcoming Annual NAMA Forays!

The Wisconsin Mycological Society is just one of some 60 clubs that are a part of the North American Mycological Association, NAMA. Each year, NAMA holds an Annual Foray in a different place throughout North America. This year's Foray will be held in the shadow of Mt. Rainier in the Evergreen State—Washington! What better chance to see one of the most beautiful places in the world, all the while surrounded by mountains, tall trees, and mushrooms. Numerous experts will be on hand to lead forays and educate. Expect to see well over 350 wild mushrooms identified and on display.

*****The 2015 NAMA Annual Foray***** is to be held, tentatively, in northwestern Wisconsin near Cable! How exciting is that! Probably a good time to join NAMA. Members of WMS get a big discount. For information visit the NAMA website at namyco.org.

Radical Mycology Convergence, October 9-13, Orangeville, IL

An open invitation to members of the WMS!

Noah Weatherton, who lives in Madison, WI, is one of the main organizers for the upcoming Radical Mycology Convergence this October in Orangeville, IL. To the WMS: we want to reach out to the WI Mycological Society, and see if there is anything we could collaborate on, or if there is anything in the future that would be good to share information about. Here in Madison, we are beginning to organize a mycoremediation project focused on improving the quality of our watershed. We want to make this project a solid and effective installation, hopefully one that can be reproduced in communities elsewhere in our state and region. If you want to find out more about Radical Mycology, or the Convergence, you can contact me, OR we have a few websites you can check out: <http://radicalmycology.wordpress.com/>
<http://www.radicalmycologyconvergence.com/>

Door Peninsula Wild Mushrooms Class Offered

September 14-19 2014

Charlotte Lukes, an expert on wild mushrooms, announces Wild Mushrooms of Door County class will be held at Lawrence University's northern campus, Bjorklunden, near Baileys Harbor. The web site is www.lawrence.edu/s/bjorklunden/bjorkseminars. At the site, click 2014 Seminars to download the brochure with information on all Lawrence seminars. Fees are: Sunday-Friday; \$790 double; \$1,055 single; \$385 commuter

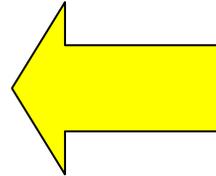
ATTENTION WMS MEMBERS: We Have a New Treasurer! (and your dues are due!)

Wisconsin Mycological Society annual membership dues are collected in December and January. If you have not yet paid, please mail in your dues. Prompt payment of dues helps us better plan Society events.

Unless you have a change in address, email, etc., or if you want to send comments, you do not need to fill out another application form.

To renew membership, just send a check (with your name) made out to WMS for \$20.

Mail your check to:
Peg Oberbeck
WMS Secretary/Treasurer
6707 Maple Terrace
Wauwatosa, WI 53213



At our last lecture, Peter informed us of the Gutenberg website to use when looking up valuable out-of-print mycological texts. This is a GREAT resource and you should check it out. Some discussion was raised during the lecture about recommended books for mycophiles to use for mushroom ID or other sources of information. We hope to occasionally feature recommended reading by some of the WMS members. This issue, we feature the picks of Fred Kluhman and all books listed are available at Amazon.com.

Mushrooms of Northeast North America: Midwest to New England [Paperback] by George Barron

National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms (National Audubon Society Field Guides) [Paperback] by Gary Lincoff

A Field Guide to Mushrooms: North America (Peterson Field Guides) [Paperback] by Kent & Vera Mcknight

Mushrooms of Northeastern North America [Paperback] by Alan E. Bessette (Author), David W. Fischer (Author), Arleen Raines Bessette (Author)

Mushrooms Demystified [Paperback] by David Aurora

100 Edible Mushrooms [Paperback] by Michael Kuo

Mushrooms and Other Fungi of North America [Paperback] by Roger Philips

Edible Wild Mushrooms of Illinois [Paperback] by Joe McFarland & Gregory M. Mueller

Mycelium Running [Paperback] by Paul Stamets

Fascinating Fungi of New England [Paperback] by Lawrence Millman & Rick Kollrath

Mycophilia: Revelations from the Weird World of Mushrooms [Paperback] by Eugenia Bone

FUNGI Magazine edited by Britt Bunyard (WMS board member and WMS newsletter editor).

Britt has a good book review and his writers/editors are experts.

And here is a very good website I like to visit: www.mushroomexpert.com



Shiitakes cultivated on “synthetic” log, courtesy B. Rozite.

6th Annual Shiitake Log Inoculation Event

Saturday May 17 (May 18 alt rain out date)
9am-12 ***date dependent on weather***

\$7.00 per 42 " x 5-9 " Ironwood & Oak Logs
We will be using Shiitake sawdust spawn.
Cold and warm weather strains for all season
fruiting.

Last year we had great weather on the
event day and were able to completely
inoculate all 250 logs in about three hours.
We're committed to approximately 350 logs,
so there will be more logs available this

season. If there are Shiitake mushrooms fruiting at the time of the event, we plan on cooking them up for a little lunch snack. Beer & Water will be supplied. Bring any treats you'd like to share.

FAQs

- 1. How should I dress?** Wear clothing you don't mind getting dirty.
- 2. What if I can't make it that day?** You must show up and help, or can send someone in your place.
- 3. Do I need to bring tools or supplies?** No, all tools, supplies will be already set up.
- 4. How long will the event last?** Approx. three hours.

Three ways to reserve & pay for your logs.

1. Send check to: Steve Shapson, 11611 N. Grace Ct., Mequon, WI 53092
Important: put your email on the check.
2. Paypal payment to:
steveshapson@hotmail.com
3. Pay using your credit card: by calling
Steve at 414-745-5483



6th Annual Wisconsin Mycological Society Northwoods Foray 2014 July 17 (Thursday) – 20 (Sunday)

Welcome to the Northwoods Foray! This foray is open to Wisconsin Mycological Society members and their children (new members are welcome to join at this time, too). This event is fun for the whole family! Recreation—besides mushrooming—includes swimming, canoeing (either on the area lakes or headwaters of the Wolf River), fishing, or wandering the many excellent paths for hiking and biking right outside your door. And then there's the mushrooms. The region features a diverse mix of trees, including beech, hemlock, and mixed hardwoods which leads to a diverse mix of mycoflora.

Once again, we will use the **Little Pine Motel** and Resort, Hwy 32 in Hiles, WI (phone 888-541-4150) as our home base. For those wishing to camp, excellent facilities are just around the corner. The rooms at Little Pine are great—and **they**

give us a super rate for the Foray. But they fill up fast. The Little Pine coordinators will then place all other forayers in comparable accommodations nearby and at comparable rates. **For all accommodations or other info about the area, contact Mark and Julia Ferris, owner of The Little Pine Motel.**

What your fees cover: a fully catered mycophagy dinner on Saturday night, rental of the Fire Hall for four days to use as our home base to meet and display mushrooms, and guest mycologist. Speaking of which, **our Guest Mycologist will be the Field Museum's Dr. Patrick Leacock**, making his third trip to the Northwoods Foray.

Foray goers arriving Thursday afternoon may want join us for a relaxing dinner at Ed's where the food is excellent (especially the ribs!) and affordable (Thursday night dinner is not included in Foray fees). Friday will be our first full day of foraying.

Foray goers arriving Friday afternoon, the Little Pine will take care of you with check-in (even if you arrive while the foray leaders are out in the field). And, Friday evening join us for our splendid Potluck dinner and cocktails (BYO) around the campfire, as usual. Saturday morning and afternoon forays are planned, one of which will go to Lost Lake.

Popular last year: as an alternative to making your own lunch (or stopping off somewhere, or starving), we will again offer **catered sack lunches** (with sandwich, fruit, cookie, chips, and water) for a \$7 additional fee; lunches will be delivered to Little Pine early each morning prior to departure for Friday and Saturday forays.

Following the Saturday afternoon foray, we will have our **Annual Banquet** and slide shows in the Hiles Town Hall / Fire Department across the street from the Little Pine. Banquet and lectures included with your registration fees. **The New and Improved Saturday Banquet** will be fully catered Baked Chicken w/Portabellas over Brown Rice; Vegetarian Option: Portabellas over Brown Rice; Mixed Greens Salad; Pasta Salad; Summer Vegetable Medley (Fresh vegetables); Dessert: Cookies/Bars; Bottled Water/Soda/Milk/Coffee. Beer, wine, liquor are not provided but permitted / encouraged in the Town Hall; bring whatever you like! Following the lectures, plan to relax around the campfire for a nightcap.

Note: drive with caution, there are **MOOSE and Black Bear** in the area.

Event Schedule

THURSDAY		July 17, 2014
All Day	Registration Scouting foray sites	Little Pine Motel Office, Hiles
7:00 PM	Dinner (additional fee)	Mainstreet Ed's in Argonne
FRIDAY		July 18, 2014
All Day	Registration	Little Pine Motel Office
9:15 AM	Packed Lunch Pickup (extra, \$7 per day)	Little Pine Motel Office
9:30 AM	Morning Foray Scott Creek Trail, 5.5 mile drive Pine Marten Trail, 4.8 mile drive	depart from Hiles Fire Department
1:30 PM	Afternoon Foray Seven Mile Campground, 19 mile drive	depart Hiles Fire Department
7:00 PM	Pot Luck Dinner - Charcoal, grill, firewood provided - Bring dish to share - Bring your own plates and beverage	Little Pine Motel Fire Pit
SATURDAY		July 19, 2014
9:15 AM	Packed Lunch Pickup (extra, \$7 per day)	Little Pine Motel Office
9:30 AM	Morning Forays Lost Lake & Assessor's Trail, 1 hour drive Giant Pine Trail, 5 mile drive	depart Hiles Fire Department
1:30 PM	Afternoon Foray Little Pine Lake, no driving Pine Lake Campground, 2 mile drive	depart Hiles Fire Department
6:00 PM	Social Hour - Bring your own alcoholic beverages	Hiles Fire Department
7:00 PM	Mycophagy Dinner - Catered by Oneida Village - Bring your own alcoholic beverages	Hiles Fire Department
8:30 PM	Evening Lecture and slide shows - Welcome from the President - Guest speaker - Slide shows from members	Hiles Fire Department
SUNDAY		July 20, 2014
9:30 AM	Morning Foray TBD	Hiles Fire Department
12:00 PM	DEPARTURE	

2014 Northwoods Foray Registration Form Page 2 of 2

Required Fees	Cost	Total
Foray Registration ❖ Required for each adult foray participant ❖ Includes Mycophagy Dinner ❖ Children under 10 are FREE	___ x \$ 50	
Late Fee – Registration Due June 15, 2014	\$10	
Optional	Qty/ Cost	Total
Dinner Reservation (Thursday, July 17)	___ Reservations	Pay @ Restaurant
Packed Lunch (Friday, July 18) ❖ Sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie, water	___ x \$ 7	
Packed Lunch (Saturday, July 19) ❖ Sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie, water	___ x \$ 7	
Motel Reservation (Check in / out: July 17 / 20) ❖ @ Little Pine Motel or equivalent accommodations ❖ Contact Little Pine Motel for all accommodations bookings or other assistance		
Total (all prices include tax)		

Comments & Special Requests

Checks payable to: **Little Pine Motel and Resort**

Mail to: **Little Pine Motel and Resort
9245 Hwy 32
Hiles, WI 54511**

NOTE 1: You must be a fully paid member of the WMS to register for this event. Little Pine will not accept your registration if not a member. They will not accept membership dues and applications to join WMS either.

NOTE 2: Foray registration due June 15, 2014.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Little Pine Motel coordinating the event and collecting our fees? The foray over the years has grown from 20 to over 50 people. In order to support the increased popularity we have asked the Little Pine Motel to help with the coordination to ensure the event is well run and people get timely answers to their questions.

The hotel reservations will be “@ Little Pine Motel or equivalent accommodations” what does this mean? Reservations for the Little Pine Motel will be on a first come first serve basis. Once the motel is full Mark will work with businesses in the area to find equivalent accommodations at the same price. Mark will contact you directly before booking you in an equivalent accommodation. In the event that equivalent accommodations are not available Mark will work with you to on alternative arrangements.

I want to share a room to save money but I do not have a roommate? Indicate your requirement in the “Comments & Special Requests.” Mark will contact you and help match you with someone else wanting to share a room.

What do the Foray costs cover? The objective of this event is to keep costs low and cover the event costs. Neither the Society nor any individuals make money from this event. Nor is any Society money used for this Foray. Fees cover guest speaker, fire hall, Mycophagy Dinner and coordinator costs.

Can I give my registration to a Wisconsin Mycological Society board member or turn it in during the summer picnic? No! No! In order to avoid problems with lost, misplaced or late registrations we ask that everyone register **directly with The Little Pine Motel.**

Are there other things to do in the Hiles Area? Yes! Lots! Make a comment on your registration form about your interests and Mark will help with the coordination and planning. You can also contact Little Pine Motel @ **(888)541-4150 or guestservices@littlepinemotel.com.**

I want to go camping, what options do I have? You will need to make your own camping arrangements. Here are some options. Several families with children will be at Seven Mile Campground due to the nice beach.

Little Pine Lake Nicolet National Forest

- 5 minute drive from Hiles Fire Department; many members stayed there last year
- Does not take reservations, first come first serve; pit toilets & no showers
- Larger campsites with some privacy, water access but limited beach
http://www.forestcamping.com/dow/eastern/niccmp.htm#pine_lake

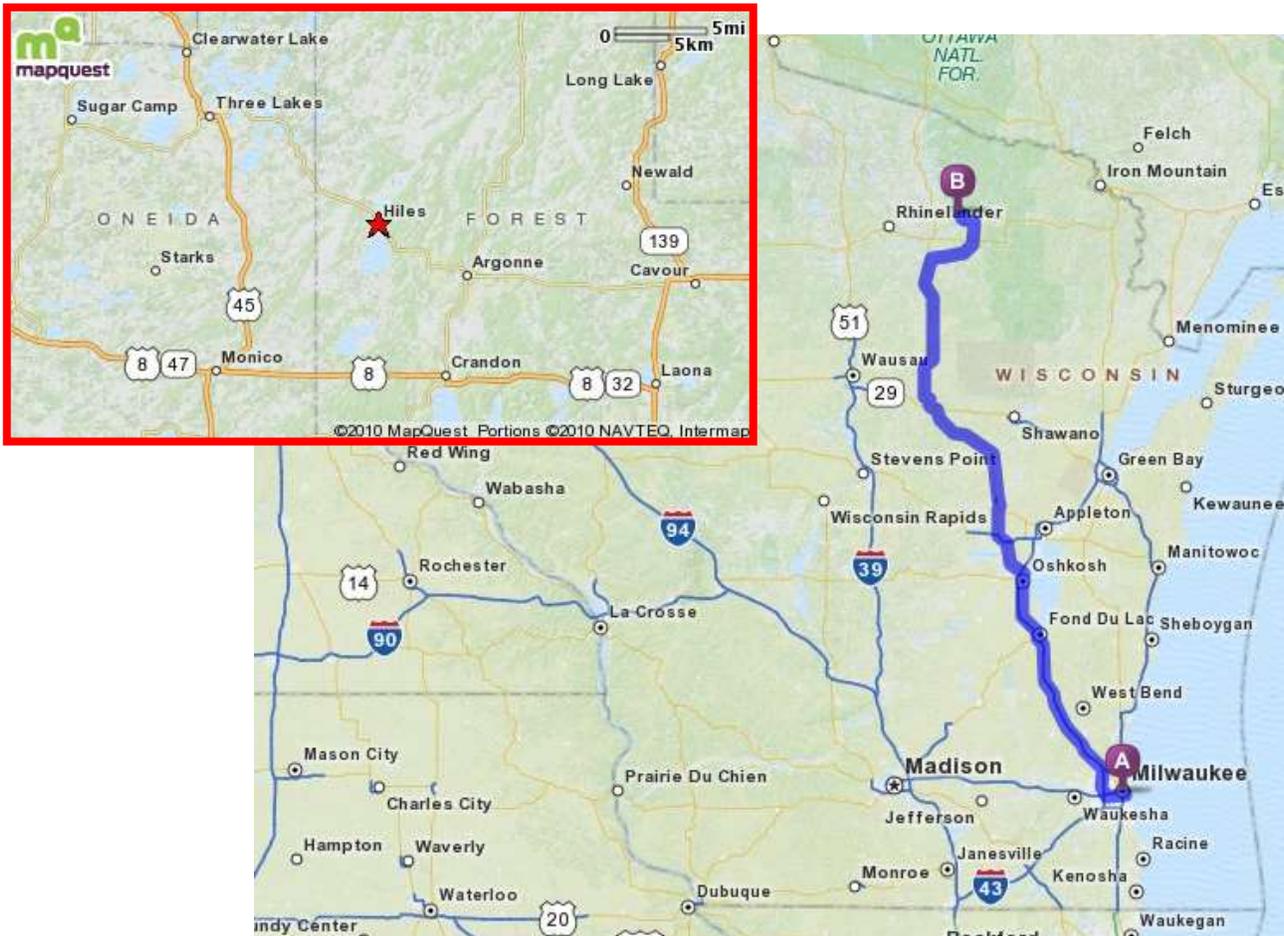
Hiles Pine Lake Campground

- 5 minute drive from Hiles Fire Department
- Accepts & recommends reservations; has showers & toilets
- Small campsites with limited privacy, water access but limited beach
- <http://www.campingpinelake.com/index.htm>

Seven Mile Lake Campground

- 15 minute drive from Hiles Fire Department
- Does not take reservations, first come first serve; pit toilets & no showers
- Larger campsites with some privacy, large sandy beach
- http://www.forestcamping.com/dow/eastern/niccmp.htm#sevenmile_lake

What if I have any questions or special requests? You can use the “Comments & Special Requests” box on the registration or contact Little Pine Motel @ **(888)541-4150 or guestservices@littlepinemotel.com.**



Directions to Little Pine Motel from Milwaukee

Estimated Driving Time: 4 hours, 16 minutes *Total Distance:* 235.43 miles

START Milwaukee WI US

1: Start out going SOUTH on N MILWAUKEE ST/US-18/WI-32 toward E WISCONSIN AVE. Continue to follow N MILWAUKEE ST/WI-32.	0.18 miles
2: Turn RIGHT onto E CLYBOURN ST.	0.33 miles
3: Turn SLIGHT LEFT to take the ramp toward I-43/I-94 E.	0.57 miles
4: Merge onto I-43 N via EXIT 1C toward GREEN BAY.	119.32 miles
5: Merge onto US-141 N via EXIT 192A toward MARINETTE/IRON MOUNTAIN.	39.56 miles
6: Turn LEFT onto WI-64.	20.15 miles
7: Turn RIGHT onto WI-32/WI-64. Continue to follow WI-32.	36.40 miles
8: Turn RIGHT onto US-8/PINE ST.	0.07 miles
9: Turn LEFT onto US-8.	0.36 miles
10: Turn RIGHT to stay on US-8.	0.07 miles
11: Turn LEFT onto BEECH ST/US-8. Continue to follow US-8.	6.12 miles
12: Turn LEFT onto CR-G.	10.88 miles
13: Turn RIGHT onto WI-32/WI-55. Continue to follow WI-32.	1.40 miles

END 9245 State Highway 32 Hiles WI 54511-9065 US

New in 2013 Devil's Lake Foray, a review

By Britt Bunyard

Last fall the WMS convened on Devil's Lake State Park for what's sure to become an annual event. I came up with the idea of doing a foray and winery outing, as several other clubs in North America do similar events. Devil's Lake is a great spot to go for a hike but in the fall it can be very dry, thus the backup plan of heading to nearby

Wollersheim Winery. Last fall the winery trip never happened as Mother Nature was good to us, supplying ample moisture. And the mushrooms responded in kind. They were everywhere! Let's hope we have similar weather this fall 2014 when we plan to return to Devil's Lake. **(Mark your calendars now.)**

Colleen did very well to prepare a species list for us and you will note many familiar fall mushrooms and more than a few interesting rarities. Probably everyone's favorite were the tiny walnut mycenas (*Mycena luteopallens*)—they're often not seen but were everywhere during our foray. Probably my personal favorite find was *Stropharia (Leratiomyces) squamosa*, with its fiery red-orange color contrasting beautifully with its grey gills. Another interesting find—and it was just a few steps from the foray ID table—was the ash bolete,

Gyrodon (Boletinellus) merulioides. This strangest of boletes is likely familiar to most but has an as-yet not fully understood lifecycle that seems to involve ash trees and an insect parasite of the trees. Pretty much every slime mold group was represented. Edible varieties were numerous: hen of the woods, chicken mushroom (2 species), many giant puffballs, edible boletes, smooth lepiotas—even chanterelles!

(complete foray species list continues on the next page)



Devil's Lake SP List

Aleuria aurantia
Amanita bisporigera
Artomyces (Clavicornia)
pyxidata
Crepidotus crocophyllus
Daedaleopsis confragosa
Daldinia concentrica
Ductifera pululahuana
Favolus alveolaris
Flammulina velutipes
Fomes fomentarius
Ganoderma applanatum
Grifola frondosa
Gyrodon (Boletinellus)
merulioides
Hygrophorus cantharellus
Hygrophorus praetensis
Laccaria ochropurpurea
Laetiporus cincinnatus
Laetiporus sulphureus
Lentinellus ursinus

Boletus bicolor
Calvatia gigantea
Camarops petersii
Cantharellus cibarius
Lepiota acutesquamosa
Lepiota cristata
Leucoagaricus naucinus
Leucopholiota decorosa
Lycogala epidendrum
Lycoperdon perlatum
Melanophyllum echinatum
Mycena leaiana
Mycena luteo-pallens
Panellus serotinus
Pholiota aurivella
Piptoporus betulinus
Pluteus cervinus
Polyporus badius
Polyporus elegans (varius)
Polyporus squamosus
Psathyrella velutina

Climacodon septentrionale
Clitocybe (Lepista) nuda
Crepidotus applanatus

Schizophyllum commune
Scleroderma areolatum
Scleroderma citrinum
Scutellinia scutellata
Stemonitis sp.
Stereum complicatum
Stereum ostrea
Stropharia squamosa
Suillus granulatus
Trametes versicolor
Trichaptum bifforme
Tricholomopsis rutilans
Tubifera ferruginosa
Tyromyces caesius
Xylaria polymorpha



SHEBOYGAN CHAINSAW ARTIST'S FORTE IS ... FUNGI!

SHEBOYGAN — Chris Graf has traded in his scalpel for a chainsaw. Lucky for his former patients, the well-known retired urologist also traded in human subjects for wood.

Graf, 84, a longtime art lover and collector, has spent the last nine years turning stumps of wood into works of art — rough-hewn mushrooms, to be exact — and donated them or given them away to friends and family.

His mushrooms now reside in 16 different states, they've been used in fundraisers for a variety of causes and he delights in the time he spends in his wooded retreat creating them, Sheboygan Press Media reported.

The odd part is how it all started — with a cancer diagnosis.

In 2004, Graf was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, an incurable cancer of the bone marrow. Even for a health care professional, it was a frightening time. “I didn't know what to do,” he said as he sat in his makeshift workshop amid chain saws and wood carvings. “There were four logs like this sitting out there and I said, ‘I'm gonna make some mushrooms.’ So I made four mushrooms. I gave them to my friends and they liked them, I guess they were just kind of being nice to me.”

He made some more and gave those away too, including to a neighbor who had once given him puffball mushrooms out of her garden. They were a hit every single time.

Graf, who took classes in mushroom identification with his late wife, Janet, and has always loved the edible fungi, kept carving mushrooms right through his stem

cell transplant, a heart attack in 2006 and the chemotherapy that continues today.

Since 2004, Graf has carved about 200 mushrooms out of a variety of woods, including birch, pine, walnut and even a log that washed up on the beach.

“I give them all away but I take no compensation,” he said. “If people want to do that, I have them make a contribution to the (Sharon S.) Richardson (Community) Hospice, (John Michael Kohler) Arts Center, their church or some benevolent organization.”

The Black River Advancement Association in the Town of Wilson has been the recipient of Graf's mushrooms in the past and has added them to its annual silent auction fundraiser, said President Scott Schreiber.

“They're very popular,” Schreiber said. “Chris is well known in the community. It's a good addition to our silent auction. People enjoy them. My mom has one.”

Graf is considering gifting his 202nd mushroom, by far the biggest he's attempted, to the association when he finishes it this fall. The donation would be in memory of two old friends from the Black River neighborhood — the late Fred Hainer, who taught mushroom identification, and the late John Kohl. [Editor's note: Fred Hainer was a founding WMS member and there is an annual foray in his honor.]

Graf, whose medical career included thousands of vasectomies in addition to countless other procedures, said there's no contest between using his scalpel and wielding the chain saw. “Well, I'm helping more people with a scalpel,” he said. “The way I help them is better. But I give away mushrooms and (people) love them. As I think about my life, I gained happiness and fulfillment by helping others.”