

Winter 2004

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WISCONSIN MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

December 2004

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well it's the holidays again and, as usual, most people are rushing around trying to get ready. Gifts to buy, foods to prepare, you know the drill. While I was thinking about this, I started to think about how my own life has become so very rushed. There is never enough time for things anymore. I thought about how I've only managed to make a couple of forays the last few years. I've always loved the forays and the outdoors in general. Communing with nature seems to have sort of a soul cleansing effect as it gives one the ability to take life at its natural speed even if just for a short time. The New Year's resolution thing has always struck me as rather senseless since most people don't follow through anyway, but this year I think I'm going to make an exception and make a resolution myself. I'm going to try to rediscover those things that are most dear to me. If I can't make time for them, then why make time for anything? You know, take time to smell the fungi so to speak. So, I guess it's time to dust off my camera and my hiking boots and get going. As long as there is no snow, why wait?

It definitely looks like we have a great lineup for the winter meetings starting with the wine and cheese social in January and I look forward to seeing many of you there. Don't forget that dues are due once again. The price is still \$15 per year. All in all not a bad deal. Come on, the wine/cheese social alone is worth that!

Here's hoping everyone has a wonderful holiday season but don't forget to save some room for wine, cheese and some camaraderie at the winter meetings! See you soon.

by Chuck Fonaas

WMS EVENTS

January 19 (Wednesday) -- Annual January Wine and Cheese Social and Slide Show. Bring 10 of your favorite slides to share.

February 7 (Monday) -- Winter Mushroom Dinner at Elliot's Bistro, 6PM Drinks, 7PM Dinner, \$45 (Includes all 5 courses, tax and gratuity.)

"Chef Pierre has crafted his menu with respect to French tradition and beauty, while embracing our community's demanding palette and desire for unique ambiance! Pierre takes great care of offering authentic French cuisine and personally meets the dinner guests. I have always been impressed with the rich style of menu offerings and can't wait to see what fabulous dishes Pierre will have in store for us. The ambiance is so warm, you feel you're in a French bistro." ---Steve Shapson, WMS Member

1st course Cream of mushroom soup

2nd course Salad Pornic (fresh mushrooms, peppers, olives, lemon dressing)

3rd course Mushroom Provencale (assorted mushrooms sauteed-garlic-shallot-provencal herbs)

4th course Main Entree: MAKE YOUR CHOICE:

Chicken ala Normande or Beef Bourguignon or Grilled Salmon Bearnaise sauce-potato gratin-tiny veggies.

5th course Dessert: MAKE YOUR CHOICE:

Creme Brulee or Chocolate Mousse or Tarte Tatin (apple)

PLEASE RSVP WITH YOUR CHECK AND YOUR CHOICE OF ENTREE AND DESSERT BY JAN. 14, 2005. REMIT PAYMENT TO:

John Fetzer
1309 S. 73rd Street
West Allis, WI 53214

February 17 (Thursday) -- Steve Nelsen talks on Mushrooming in Japan

March 24 (Thursday) -- Darryl Cox will speak on Morels

April 20 (Wednesday) -- Dan Czederpiltz will speak on Collecting Fungi at the Highest Point in Belize: Adventures at Doyle's Delight.

Members will receive announcements for these events.

DUES REMINDER

Remember, WMS dues (\$15) are payable at year's end. If your newsletter mailing label says (owes 2005 dues) it means your 2005 dues are not yet paid and you will not get your spring foray notices. Please send your dues immediately to: Fred Kluhsman, Secretary/Treasurer; 5315 S. Sunnyslope Road;

New Berlin, WI 53151. Note that WMS dues are \$15 and that NAMA (North American Mycological Association) dues are an additional \$32.

MAUTHE LAKE FORAY 2004
by Martin Sendera

After weeks of sunny, dry weather, about a dozen people gathered on September 25 at Mauthe Lake under dark, threatening skies for the 2004 Sami Saad Memorial Foray. Due to the lack of any recent rain, expectations of finding mushrooms in good condition were quite low, but the Mauthe Lake Recreational Area has a lot of wet, marshy areas as evidenced by the large number of mosquitoes we normally encounter there. There were very few mosquitoes this year. I advised the group to search low-lying areas and logs or stumps near any standing water.

We usually split into two groups, but this year everyone stayed together and headed south. We soon came across some clusters of honey mushrooms that were a little old but not desiccated. I think this raised hopes of better things ahead and the group soon splintered into several smaller ones. Those of us who had collected there before knew that this was a good place to find the delectable little black trumpet, *Craterellus cornucopioides*. They grow on the ground in loose clusters. I was only able to find a few dried remnants this year.

I wasn't having much luck so I headed back to the parking lot around 11:30. The dark rain clouds had drifted off and I had to endure yet another sunny, pleasant day while waiting for the others to return. Most of the group sauntered back a little past noon. Someone recognized Steve Nelson's vehicle, yet nobody saw him that morning. We waited a while, then moved to the picnic area to have lunch and examine our finds.

It's often surprising how many types of mushrooms just a few people can find in a couple of hours even when the weather doesn't cooperate. Despite the dry conditions, about 35 species were collected including some very fresh *Fuscoboletinus spectabilis*? and a few *Leccinum scabrum*.

I thought the most interesting find of the day was the false truffle later identified as *Melanogaster variegatus*. I had never seen these before; which is not surprising since they're small, cocoa brown, and easily missed in the leaf litter. They have a pleasant, hard to define odor.

Steve eventually showed up along with his wife Adrienne. They had arrived late and headed north along the trail. They found some fresh, young *Psathyrella* sp. and a few other fungi that weren't found by the rest of the group.

Before calling it a day and heading home, everyone agreed to wash their vehicle before the next foray -- this being the only proven method to guarantee rain.

THE MONCHES WOODS FORAY

by Bill Blank

The Monches Woods Foray on September 18 at the Norman Chester Scientific Area was new and improved with picnic tables, restrooms and ample parking with a short access to the main trail. This stretch of land extends to the river and beyond. I tried to be in two places at once when I motored over to the Ice Age Trail segment and looked for anybody that showed up at our old spot; I hope I didn't miss anybody. The directions should have mentioned the ballpark.

It was very nice out that day and the 2 to 3 mile walking trail yielded some mushrooms. It was good to get back on the cross country ski trail, and because of the dry conditions, we could walk to the Oconomowoc River. But, alas, even the river bottom area held few mushrooms.

There was a lively discussion around the picnic table afterwards. With the new facilities, there were shades of Point Beach. There was even a concession stand, although open only during ball games. The river area seems more accessible now, and in a wetter year may yield more mushrooms. And then there's that thought of a baseball game. Thanks to the Monches Recreational Association for opening up these facilities and talking to us as we looked over our small find of mushrooms.

NOTES ON THE MADISON FORAY AT DEVIL'S LAKE S.P.

by Chris Reyes

On October 2nd, the Madison Interest Group held it's Devil's Lake Mushroom and Lichen Meander. Tom Volk couldn't make it, but Diane Derouen provided her mushroom expertise and Matt Nelson and Marie Trest (and some other grad students) shared their lichen knowledge. We had probably between 12 and 20 people participate.

Here's the list of fungi we found (as complete a list as I could make):

Trametes versicolor (turkey tail)
Stereum sp. (false turkey tail)
Hericiium sp. (lion's mane)
Scleroderma sp. (earthball)
Lycoperdon sp. (puffball)
Hypsizygus tessulatus (elm oyster)
Russula spp. (3 different species)
Crucibulum (laeve?) and Cyathus (stercoreus?) (birds nest)
Schizophyllum commune (split gill)
Chlorociboria aeruginascens (blue stain)
Bisporella citrina
Daldinia sp. (carbon balls)
Scutellinia scutellata (eyelash pixie cup)
Amanita sp.

Tremella sp.
Auricularia sp.
Exidia sp.
Panellus sp.
Xylaria sp. (dead man's fingers)
Marasmius sp.
and many LBM's

Partial listing of lichens (spelling guesstimated from someone else's handwriting):

Dermatocarpon
Leptogium
Physcia aipolia
Physcia millegrana
Phaeophyscia pusilloides
Phaeophyscia rubropulchra
Flavoparmelia caperata
Flavopunctelia flaventior
Flavopunctelia soledica
Punctelia rudecta
Parmelia sulcata
Myelochroa aurulenta
Cladonia
Evernia mesomorpha

Slime molds:

Lycogala
Stemonitis
Hemitrichia?

That's all that I have written down. I very much enjoyed the foray as always.

WISCONSIN MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY 4TH ANNUAL FALL MUSHROOM DINNER REVIEW by Deb Jansen

On Monday, November 1st, 2004, our group again paid tribute to the mighty mushroom at the Riversite Restaurant in Mequon, WI, hosted by Chef Thomas Peschong. We received a menu ahead of time, so we could look forward to how wonderful this meal was going to be... a nice prelude to the actual event... and to refer back to it, as the various courses were being served... a nice addition to the meal.

The night began at the cash bar with assorted champignon amuse -- bouche or "taste tickler's". There were three appetizers. We sampled crostini topped with Hen of the Woods, spicy shiitake served in a puff pastry, and champignon with avocado, which was a white cap mushroom stuffed with a guacamole type dip. Many people loved the spicy shiitake puff pastry, which was the only warm

appetizer in the bunch, and was really quite spicy. One guest stated it provided a "lingering hot taste in my mouth". The crostini were also excellent. Another diner quipped "It was a marriage between a happy, little bread and a blushing mushroom." The avocado stuffed mushroom put an interesting, refreshing twist on the guacamole theme. Two quite ordinary items combined into one very eclectic little package.

After about an hour, we were seated for dinner in the elegant party room with a huge chandelier above us and a stately hutch filled with exquisite china beside us. First, came the rolls in a basket. Most of the time, they are just that, rolls in a basket. But these rolls, were served hot, crunchy hot. There were also different varieties of rolls. The one I took had a little butter and salt over the top. It was wonderful. It was here that I realized this dinner was going to be one of the best we've attended at the Riversite.

Our first course was Risotto made with Porcini and Lobster Mushrooms and including chargrilled Zucchini, Sea Scallops, and Truffle Oil. It was out of this world. One of the best risotto dishes I have ever eaten. Again, something that could be ordinary, transformed into something superb. It also was served hot and had an excellent flavor. The scallops were pan caramelized and seared to perfection. The zucchini were perfectly grilled. Another dinner guest commented it was "to die for".

The second course consisted of golden Chanterelle and Goat Cheese Toast, with Field Greens, Caramelized Onion, and Aged Balsamic Vinegar. Diners' comments included: "The caramelized onions were a sweet counterpoint to the salty goat cheese." "The more you eat, the better it gets." "The honey flavored toast stayed crispy." The mushrooms were plentiful and were served in chunks. This salad was a mushroom lover's dream come true.

As our entree, we enjoyed Roasted "Country Farm" Quail stuffed with "Field and Forest" Shiitake Duxelle, roasted Red Potatoes, and Melange of Fall Vegetables. The presentation was fabulous. The delicate quail was elegantly covered in bacon with an aromatic duxelle of shiitake, onion juice, poultry stock, balsamic vinegar and pulverized mushroom stems. The presentation was mouthwatering.

The last course was Chocolate Pecan Jack Daniel's Cake with Jack Daniel's Chocolate Sauce. No mushrooms, but equally brilliant with the other courses. By this time, we were so stuffed, we hardly could talk... about the excellence of this meal.

This was a great time for Chef Thomas Peschong to come out of the kitchen and to describe the meal in detail. That is what makes a Mycological Society dining experience unique, when the chef comes out of the kitchen and talks with us.. I love hearing about the details of the meal, about how at the last minute, one mushroom never came to be, so another equally satisfying mushroom was substituted... or about the coupling of the wines with the meal. Chef Peschong was also presented with a mushroom king crown, which serves as a

traveling trophy between the chefs.

Another bonus about the evening was the abundant wine served table side. There were both white and red table wines, nothing extraordinary, but they went well with the meal. As the night went on, the waitresses kept pouring. It was nice not to have to shell out another \$25 for a flight of wine. However, I understand it is nice to have "just that right wine paired exquisitely with just that right flavor." As with any purchase, I was also looking for a good value in the meal and this was it.

Another value in the meal was that the mushrooms were abundant. When we go to a "Mycological Society" event, being mushroom lovers, we expect ample supplies of mushrooms. This meal had them.

It was another fun filled social event. It was wonderful to sit with old friends and to meet some new friends and..... anticipate the next, wonderful mushroom dinner in spring.

HUNTING FOR HENS IN NEW ENGLAND by Steve Shapson

My wife (MJ) and I toured New England this past fall. The colors were spectacular and the mushroom finds were equally rewarding. Before we left, I searched the web for the local mycological societies to find out if there were any forays which coincided with our trip.

We arrived a bit early for the 10 am start. I looked around at the treetops, hoping to see a lot of oaks and maples, but the forest was mostly pine, strewn with a few oaks and maples, and young trees at that.

The Maine Mycological Association was hosting their annual fall foray led by world renowned mycologist Dr. Sam Ristich. Sam did some of the writing in a few of the mushroom books we all use. He was quite a character at 90 years young. He was feisty and very very knowledgeable about mycology. He began his introduction by saying, "salom or shalom". I think he was trying to say Shalom, the Hebrew word for welcome. No one picked up on it `cept for me. He did look Jewish after all. Hell, he looked like I will when I'm 90. I commented to my friend Karl on it. I told Karl, "I'm going to look like that in 20 years." Karl replied, "You look like that now." I was mortified but tried to maintain my composure. After all, MJ and I were representing the WMS.

Sam went on for some time with his presentation. He even had a timer on the ground so he didn't talk all day. He was a cute older dude. Full of life and vigor. At the end of the opening presentation, we were introduced to the group and asked all about morels. "We envy you in Wisconsin. There are very few morels here." Another member asked where Wisconsin was. I began to talk a bit about mushroom cultivation, and told the group we're envious of all the large oak forests in New England.

Since we had brought two new friends that we were staying with in Kennebunk, Maine, we wanted them to find edibles so that they would be hooked. Our friends, Karl and Nina, are excellent gourmet cooks and mushroom lovers.

We entered the woods together, but MJ ended up by herself, while Karl, Nina and I went our way into the hilly, moist woods. After searching for about an hour, and not finding anything edible, Karl joked that maybe I knew nothing about hunting edible mushrooms, thus he and Nina would have been better off going with MJ. I had previously told Karl how great the Hen of the Woods mushroom is for cooking. We didn't find any, and the three of us were a bit disappointed.

Upon exiting the woods, I remarked how I hoped MJ had found something edible. So, upon seeing her, she ran up and was excited about her finds. In her bag were black trumpets, and combed tooth.

Walking past a wood chip pile in the parking lot, MJ spotted a patch of fresh edible Lepiota. Then, another woman walked up and asked us if she could give us some of her Hens, since she finds so many. This woman told us she finds so many Hens she doesn't know what to do with them all. I failed to tell her that they sell for \$18-\$25 per pound at farmer's markets and restaurants. Of course we said yes and gave them to Karl and Nina. Our friends went home happy, with some edibles and a grocery bag of Lepiota woodchip mycelium to start their garden mushroom patch.

Our trip then took us to Bar Harbor, Maine. Or, as they say in Maine, `bah hahbah'. While we were driving into the town, both MJ and I saw out of the corner of our eye a large mass which I thought was an over ripened Hen. We turned around and after inspecting it, found it to be very fresh. This was just the first Hen we found in New England.

We found more Hens in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts. We spent much time hiking, since this is one of our outdoor passions. While in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, we saw so many oak forests, we wanted to stop all the time and run into the woods.

Since it was the first week in October, we knew that the larger oaks would be giving up their Hens. In a couple of days, the trunk of our rental car was filled with fresh Hens. When we stopped to eat in a town, we searched for the more eclectic cafe, which would be willing to accept a Hen as part of our dinner. At one B&B in Vermont, the owner/chef cooked up some of the Hen in the homemade omelets that we and the other guests quickly consumed. Another restaurant cooked up part of our Hen with the most incredible sauce. We were dumbstruck with the flavor of the dish. This restaurant even had Hen of the Woods on an older menu.

We did get strange looks from some of the patrons at one restaurant. Most of the restaurants were willing to accommodate our wild requests. We tipped well. After all, how many people walk into a restaurant holding an unusual shaped

`thing'? I joked with one patron that we always bring our food with us and have restaurants cook it.

While at Walden Pond near Boston, we found another couple Hens. We were in heaven. But, while entering the park, we saw an older man leaving the park carrying a large plastic bag. I just knew it was filled with `our Hens'. I stupidly asked him if he was mushroom hunting. He said no and looked back a couple of times before getting into his car. Damn. I knew he had Hens in that bag.

And, at the Boston's Arnold Arboretum, I found two fresh Hens under some bushes, growing off the root of a large white oak nearby.

We were staying in Boston with my sister and her husband, and they thought we were a bit nutty that we had to cook our Hens for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

The lesson is if you take a trip to New England in the fall, there will be plenty of Hens and Chickens there (though we didn't come upon any chickens). In Massachusetts, outside of Boston, the majority of the thick forests just off the highways are older oak.

The Hens we didn't eat were loaded into two large grocery sacks and brought back to Milwaukee, safe and sound to share with others. We know better next time to bring an extra suitcase.

I'm sure we missed some Hens. It was hard to leave New England, but we'll be back soon.

BOLETELLUS
by Steve Nelsen

Boletellus was segregated from Boletus by Murrill in 1909. Murrill tried to introduce another new genus, *Ceratomyces*, in the same year, and to which he wanted to transfer the principal species now put in *Boletellus*. *Ceratomyces* was ignored by other mycologists, who distribute Murrill's genus mostly into various parts of *Boletus*. *Boletellus* was kept as a genus, although Smith and Singer "strongly disagreed" about how to define it. Smith wanted only to admit species with "spores striate, ridged, or winged" (that is, spores having ornamentation oriented along the long axis), that agree with Murrill's type species, *Boletellus ananus* (Curtis, 1848) Murrill 1909, a Southern species that was not found in Michigan by Smith and Hesler, and thus might be unlikely to find in Wisconsin. Singer also included species with other ornamentation. Smith and Hesler also include *Boletellus chrysenteroides* (Snell 1936) Singer 1941, a species that can only be definitely told from *Boletus chrysenteron* by examination of the spores, and two more species first described in 1971 that also look like *chrysenteron*, *pseudochrysenteroides* and *intermedius*. They also, however, include the wellmarked and striking *Boletellus russellii*, described by Frost in 1874 as a *Boletus*, transferred

to *Ceriomyces* by Murrill in 1909, and only stuck into *Boletellus* by Gilbert in 1971 (who thus disagreed with the mycologist who erected both *Ceriomyces* and *Boletellus*). Nevertheless, Gilbert's view prevailed, which means he gets his name listed along with Frost's [until, perhaps, someone can convince people to transfer this distinctive species to yet another place. Lohwag already tried to erect a new genus for it in 1937, *Boletogaster*, but failed; his suggestion was ignored by later mycologists]. Nomenclatural gymnastics aside, *Boletellus russellii* is easy to identify from its astonishing stem, and uncommon enough to make every time we have seen it an event worth remembering..

RECIPE: PICKLED MUSHROOMS

by John S. Komosa

Fresh wild mushrooms --- younger firmer ones preferred. I've used what I find around the MIDWEST: *Boletes*, *Leccinums*, *Suillus*, *Cantharellus*, *Tricholoma flavovirens*. *Armillarias*, *Grifola frondosa*.

Clean, remove skin if necessary. Don't use bug infested ones. Boil for 1/2-1 hr. Discard water. Rinse in cold water to harden.

Use water, vinegar, sugar, salt, pickling spices, garlic, onions, carrots, sweet pepper, cauliflower.

Peel, clean, slice veggies. Boil them in a vinegar and water mixture with spices till they are almost soft. It depends how acidic you want it; I mix 3/4 water & 1/4 vinegar.

Add mushrooms and bring it all back to a boil. While still hot, put the mixture in clean hot (sterile) canning jars; seal tight.

Will stand for a long time. I have some years old! To eat cold as appetizers or a side dish. Enjoy!

p.s. These mushrooms were presented at a mycophagy table at the MONAMA'99 - the 5 dishes in the middle. (not the first one without any vinegar; nor the last one with too much vinegar)

END