

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Now that the fall fungi season is past, some are wondering what happened. In August it seemed that abundant moisture would produce much greater than normal fall fruitings. Late August was great in some spots; I saw more fleshy fungi in Waukesha County parks than anytime previously in the past 17 years. September came and the favorable environmental conditions apparently disappeared. Our WMS forays at Point Beach and Mauthe Lake were good, but less than average. The Madison area Blackhawk Ridge foray could be characterized about the same. Early October was also very spotty in the Waukesha area, but some woods were loaded with honey mushrooms and hen of the woods. My most impressive late find was the rather common *Panellus serotinus*. What made the collections unusual were the size and numbers of fruiting bodies; the dark green cap with golden gills is a beautiful combination.

Please take a few minutes during the busy holiday rush to remember the WMS and send in your 1996 renewal dues. Those that joined in September or later are paid through December 1996. In addition to the regular dues form, we have also included something new – a membership interest survey. We would greatly appreciate having these returned with renewals; our goal is to better serve our members, and knowing what the majority of people are interested in helps plan future activities. People joining in September or later are also encouraged to return the surveys. Results of the survey will be available at winter meetings as soon as the final tabulations are done.

Best wishes for the holidays and hope to see many of you at the January meeting. From the looks of winter so far, most will have lots of time indoors to page through field guides and dream of the spring morel season. If you do a lot of cross-country skiing, remember where you saw all those dead elms.

Alan Parker

UPCOMING WMS EVENTS

January 23 Wine and Cheese Social, Member Slide Show (See enclosed announcement.) February 13 NAMA Slide Show
March 13 Lecture: 'Polypores: Ecology, Taxonomy and practical uses' by Tom Volk of the Forest Products Laboratory

All of the above events will be held at the Mitchell Park Pavilion at 7:30 p.m. Detailed notices will be mailed separately.

IT'S RENEWAL TIME

It's time once again to renew your membership with the Wisconsin Mycological Society for 1996. There is a dues form accompanying this newsletter for you to fill out and return to Secretary John Steinke. You can also renew your NAMA (North American Mycological Association) membership at the same time, but note that dues have risen to \$17. Also, we are continuing the tradition started last year of having a little contest for members. Be sure to fill out the other side of your dues form, and you will have a chance to win a mushroom cookbook or field guide. Additionally, please return the enclosed interest survey along with your dues so that the club can consider ways of being more useful to its

members.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please consider writing up any mushroom-related anecdotes or experiences you've had that you think might be interesting to other members — such as good collecting experiences, your first experiences with mushrooms, struggles with identification, or experiences cultivating mushrooms. Other possibilities include discussing your favorite mushrooms and why they are your favorites, or a report on a new field guide or mushroom-related book that you've read. If you don't feel too comfortable with your writing, you can send a rough draft and have it edited.

COOKBOOKS FOR SALE

The WMS recently purchased a limited number of copies of Jack Czarnecki's latest cookbook, [A Cook's Book of Mushrooms: with 100 recipes for common and uncommon varieties](#), to offer for sale to members. The cookbooks have all been signed by Mr. Czarnecki and will be available for sale at the January meeting for a discounted price.

Each of the seven chapters of the book discusses the characteristics and varieties of, and provides recipes for, a different group of edible mushrooms, such as *Agaricus*, chanterelles, ceps, etc. For the most part, the recipes do not seem overly complicated, nor do they require too many ingredients (a quote from the book, "Simplicity is the essence of all good cooking"). Since I like simple, but well-seasoned food, the recipes that most appeal to me are those for comforting and peasant-style food such as Mushrooms with Basil in Potato Sauce, Wild Mushrooms Tuscan Style, Pennsylvania Pasta with Cremini, Spoon Bread with Morel Stems, Wild Mushroom Bread Sauce, and Tomato Soup with Rosemary and Oyster Mushrooms. However, coming from a restaurateur, there are also many recipes involving more gourmet-type ingredients, seafood in particular, such as Lobster Lasagne with Chevre and Morels and Filet of Sole with *Heridium* and Tangerine Peel, and many with an international flavor, such as Mexican Oyster Mushroom Soup, Caribbean Shiitake, and Hen of the Woods with Calamari and Chile Oil on Wet Sesame Rice. Other features of this cookbook: the photographs are beautiful and ambient, and each recipe offers a suggested wine so that you can create your own ambience.

Colleen Vachuska

MAUTHE LAKE FORAY

Chuck Soden

A perfect fall day greeted a group of mushroom enthusiasts on Sept. 16. The weather was cool enough to keep the bugs down with a slight refreshing breeze. One worry was, "Is there enough moisture"?

The group divided into two parties — one heading for low ground to the south, the other heading for the ridges to the north.

Three feet from the picnic table was the first find, several *Coprinus comatus*. Just reaching the top of the first ridge were several *Calvatia gigantea* along the way. *Laetiporus sulphureus* was very common allowing for some excellent pictures. Several logs were covered with snowy white *Heridium coralloides* glistening in the sunlight.

Meeting back at the picnic area both groups combined and had lunch. Discussions centered around the day's finds. Randy, a new member, had a perfect specimen of *Paxillus atrotomentosus*. Several collections of *Gymnopilus spectabilis* were found that were quite interesting.

Two picnic tables were loaded with specimens for identification. We had a nice collection of *Hygrophorus russula* in all stages of development. The *Strobilomyces floccopus* was very distinctive as was *Suillus sphaerosporus*.

The discussion and identification were getting furious. Names like *Oudemansiella radicata*, *Polyporus radicata*, *Psathyrella velutina*, *Lentinellus ursinus*, *Lyophyllum connatum* were flying. That's when it happened. We had our first mycological drive-by. No, it wasn't a disgruntled mycologist going after a foray leader for misidentification or murdering of a species or genus name, but a member bringing a beautiful specimen of golden yellow *Amanita muscaria* to show fellow members. The foray leader felt relief that the foray ended peaceably because you know how serious some people take their mushrooms.

BLACKHAWK RIDGE FORAY

Tom Volk

Another beautiful day in south-central Wisconsin greeted about 25 members of WMS and their guests at the sixth annual Madison area foray at Blackhawk Ridge on Sept 23, 1995. The fall had not been so wonderful for fungi up to that point, as I'm sure all of you know, but it had rained the previous week, so there was hope for finding some interesting things. There was quite a variety of fungi out that day (I counted more than 50 species), but nothing in large quantity. The red and white pine plantations, which often are large producers of *Suillus* species, were pretty barren. Some edible fungi that we found were *Hypsizygus ulmarius* and *Grifola frondosa*. The most interesting find of the foray was a nonedible fungus, *Coltricia montagnei* var. *greenii* (= *Cyclomyces greenii*). This is a mushroom-shaped polypore with very long gill-like pores — but instead of the “gills” emanating from the stem and going toward the outside, they encircle the stem in concentric circles! It is a very bizarre-looking fungus. This was the first time I had ever seen it.

We also found an additional specimen of an undescribed species of *Laetiporus*, which proved useful for a project we're working on in our lab. We also added 9 species to our list of Fungi of Blackhawk Ridge, bringing the total number of species in our 5-year study up to about 365 species.

The rest of my collecting year in this area was much less than spectacular, although *Laetiporus* was fruiting in abundance everywhere this year. I guess we picked the right year to work on it. As for the other fungi... well... there's always next year...

PIKE LAKE FORAY

Bill Blank

The group met on Sept. 30th at the Self-Guided Nature Trail parking lot located on the eastern side of the park. The rainy weather broke in time for the foray giving us about three hours with which to hunt the wild fungi of the park. We first encountered what looked like evidence of another mushroom picking group: a discarded paper bag full of picked caps (*Amanita*). We later surmised this midden was fairly old and the species picked were poisonous. It turned out to be a good day for collecting edible mushrooms. There were large patches of *Entoloma abortivum* in the maple woods. The Honey Mushrooms were just beginning to flush and picking them yielded a meager but meal-satisfying collection. Hen-of-the-Woods (*Grifola frondosa*) was the prize of the day, with some members going out in the afternoon to look for more. Another interesting find was a clump of good-sized specimens of an *Agaricus* species. Overall it was a fairly successful foray and yielded several display specimens for the Mushroom Fair on the following day.

1995 MUSHROOM FAIR REPORT

Kevin Lyman, Milwaukee Public Museum

The Twelfth Annual Mushroom Fair was held Sunday, October 1, 1995. This year, the fair attracted 932 mushroom lovers. (Note: according to the visitor survey, over 75 of the visitors had never been to the WMS/MPM Mushroom Fair before).

This year's Mushroom Photographic Contest had 23 competitors submitting 101 slides. This year's winners were from Illinois (Downers Grove and Lockport) and Wisconsin (Appleton, Eau Claire, Hales Corners, Menomonee Falls, Milwaukee, New London, Plymouth, Slinger, West Allis). The Frederick W. Hainer Trophy Award went to WMS

member Janice Stiefel (Plymouth, Wisconsin) for her shot entitled "Beautiful Cort." Many of the photographs entered this year were of top quality.

Around 20 WMS volunteers helped out this year. All are to be thanked for their contributions of time and talent, along with the chefs, face painter, and growers. The Museum's Gift Shop moved their Garden Cart to the second floor hall again this year. Like last year, it was a success. The Garden Cart sold \$1,035 worth of mushroom-related items during the day.

The highlight of the fair was mushroom chef/author Jack Czarnecki of Reading, Pennsylvania. Czarnecki was here to promote his new book *A Cook's Book of Mushrooms*. Also, Stan Tekiela was here to promote and sign his book *Start Mushrooming*. The Munch-a-Brunch in the Museum's cafeteria was a huge success again.

As usual, the cooking demonstrations were a big draw and received many positive comments. A special thanks goes out to WMS member Scott McGlinchey for a great job lining up the superb chefs this year.

Next year's Mushroom Fair (13th Annual) is tentatively set for Sunday, September 29th at the Museum.

FUNGAL NEWS IN BRIEF

- Be careful with your home mushroom-growing projects. You'd be surprised at how much jail time you can get for growing hallucinogenic mushrooms. A letter in the fall '95 issue of *Mushroom* revealed the plight of a mushroom grower, Lewis Atley, who is currently doing 20 years in the Iowa Department of Corrections for growing *Psilocybe cubensis*. He expects to get out on double jeopardy grounds, but he also faces a possible life sentence for the same charges in Florida. Without knowing more details about the cases, these seem like rather harsh penalties (for nonviolent activity). (*Mushroom, the Journal* Fall '95 and the electronic Mushroom News Service)
- In recent years, there have been a number of reports of people becoming sick from exposure to soil fungi, such as occurred last year in central Wisconsin or the year before in the aftermath of the California earthquake. Now to add to that list, a medical anthropologist from Brazil reports that many members of an Indian tribe in the Amazon, the Surui, suffer from infection by *Paracoccidioides brasiliensis*, a soil-dwelling fungus that infects the lining of the lungs when it is inhaled. The Surui were encouraged by the Brazilian government to switch from subsistence crops to the cash crop of coffee. Unfortunately, coffee farming requires intensive weeding year-around, which raises up plumes of soil dust containing the fungus. To make matters worse, the Surui weed with machetes rather than hoes so that they are working closer to the ground and getting even more exposure to *P. brasiliensis*. With more awareness and treatment of the infections, the mortality rate has dropped from 57 of those who become ill to almost zero. Nonetheless, if you ever wondered what effect your morning cup of coffee has on the people who provide it, this report might give you pause. (*Discover*, October, 1995)
- Tom Volk has put the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison on the virtual map with his new work in putting together a wealth of material on the Internet information superhighway. His work started in 1994 while teaching mycology at the University of Wisconsin. In the process of developing the course, he put about 700 of his color photographs of all types of fungi on computer and connected to the Internet so that they could be viewed by any one in the world with an Internet connection.

This November, Tom introduced his new homepage on the World Wide Web. A homepage is a document (containing pictures) introducing the author and his work and, most importantly, providing easy access to other documents and files. For example on "Tom Volk's Fungi" homepage, one can easily access any of the (now around 800) fungi photos mentioned above. One can read a 4000 word article on the state of the genus *Armillaria* and get keys and photos of *Armillaria* species, as well as find out about other work being done at the Forest Products Laboratory. His homepage also provides pathways to other mycological information available on the Internet. For anyone interested, his homepage address is <http://www.wisc.edu/botany/fungi/volkmyco.html>.

- Many plants and fungi enter into a mycorrhizal relationship whereby each benefits the other. These relationships are known to occur in many different habitats from deserts to forests. In many cases, the mycorrhizae help extend

the roots of the plant and enable it to draw more water and nutrients out of the surrounding soil. Thus, one place that scientists didn't expect to see mycorrhizal relationships (and didn't when they looked) is in wetlands, where the plants would seemingly not have much need for extra water absorption. But now Carl F. Friese of the University of Dayton in Ohio and his colleagues have reported in a study in preparation that more than 50 of the plants growing in southwestern Ohio's Beaver Creek Watershed are mycorrhizal. He explained that other studies may have failed to find the mycorrhizal relationships because they had looked at the wrong time of year.

This finding indicates that mycorrhizal fungi have a role to play in the functioning of wetlands and that protection and encouragement of such fungi in this habitat is important. (Fungus: Ally of Desert, Wetland Plants Science News, October 14, 1995)

THREE RATHER DISTINCTIVE COLLYBIA SEGREGATES

by Steve Nelsen

Collybia was long used as a repository for white-spored species which did not belong anywhere else, and included many species which were clearly unrelated to *dryophila*, which is the core of the modern concept of the genus.

Collybia hygrophoroides Pk. is uncommon enough that it is hard to find a lot of information on it, distinctive enough to be definitely recognizable, and is well worth knowing about. It has a deep brick-red smooth conic to expanded cap, rather broad off-white gills, and a reddish-tinged, longitudinally striate, twisted, solid, and tough stem which is rooting. The spores are elliptical and turn dark blue in Meltzer's solution. Peck noted that young specimens look rather like *Hygrophorous (Hygrocybe) conicus* and named it accordingly. Both the cap margin being straight on the stem when young (instead of curled under the rest of the cap) and the amyloid spores exclude it from modern *Collybia*. Its closest relative is *C. umbonata* Peck, a similar species which grows under coastal redwoods in the Pacific Northwest, and both were transferred to genus *Coralorhiza* by Lloyd. This genus is not known in Europe. *C. hygrophoroides* is reported to fruit in May to early July in hardwood ravines from New York to Illinois. Kaufmann provides a good description but only a very poor photograph of two aged specimens viewed from below the cap so only the striate stem may be seen well, and Graham copies the description as well as showing a line drawing obviously made from Kauffman's photograph with the addition of a suitably conical button. Smith, Smith and Weber give a more modern description of it (but curiously omit the fact that the spores are amyloid, which threw me off the trail for a while), and also do not show a drawing. I have only seen a single specimen once, during a very dry period on May 30, 1992 at Haskell Noyes Woods (parking lot near the corner of GGG and SS in Fond du Lac County). I would be interested in knowing if others have seen this well-marked species, which appears when other mushrooms that grow on the ground in woods are not prevalent.

Collybia lacunosa Pk. is a name apparently based on a misidentification (Kauffman says Peck originally put it in *Tricholoma*, but that it is "half-way between *Omphalina*, *Collybia*, and *Panus*", and he put it in *Collybia*). The name has been changed to *Cyptotrama chrysopeplum* (Berk. Curt.) Singer. It is apparently the only Great Lakes representative of this mostly subtropical genus. It is fairly common, and easily recognized because its convex cap and stem are bright yellow, with a furfuraceous "bran-like" covering, the gills are whitish and rather thick, and its unusually tough stem is attached to wood. It is well described in several manuals, and is common in early summer in Sauk County.

The genus *Crinipellis* was erected by Patouillard for a small group of little species which had been stuck into *Collybia*, but which resemble *Marasmius* species with hairy caps and stems. Although the spores do not turn color in Meltzer's solution, the hairs turn dark reddish brown (described as being pseudoamyloid or dextrinoid). I have not been able to figure out where the dividing line between two of the species is supposed to come. *Cr. stipitaria* (Fr.) Pat. is smaller (0.5–1.2 cm. cap diameter) and lighter, with a pallid ground color and tiny brownish scaly patches of hairs placed radially on the cap, and with a depression in the center having a small blackish

sharp bump (a papilla), while the cap of *Cr. zonata* (Pk.) Pat. is larger (1–2.5 cm. diameter), hairier, and darker, having a tendency to show concentric zones in the cap in age. Baxter's Hollow clearly has both of these species, as well as *stipitaria* var. *setipes* Pk. (as described by Kauffman), with impressively long stems compared to the small cap diameter. There seems to be more or less a continuum of the degree of hairyness of the cap, and I have seen a specimen of what appears to be *zonata* as large as 5 cm. All the specimens that I have seen have a papilla, although if the cap is hairy enough its color is that of the hairs. Kaufmann notes that stem color is very variable, and that they darken considerably when wet. *Cr. campanella* (Pk.) Singer is also small (to 2 cm.), but quite pretty and more distinctive, with a cap that long remains bell-shaped, bright chestnut-brown colors, and typically grows on dead conifer twigs which are still well above the ground. I have not seen it at Baxter's Hollow, but it occurs at Newport State Park in Door County.

**MUSHROOMS 101: A Beginner's Guide
to the Major Genera of Fleshy Fungi
HYGROPHORACEAE (The Waxy Caps)**

by Brian McNett <bmcnett@linknet.kitsap.lib.wa.us>
(reprinted from Mycoinfo 8/16/95)

There's little (macroscopically) other than the waxy gills of this family of mushrooms to distinguish them from the white-spored Tricholomataceae. As a group, they are small to medium sized, generally terrestrial mushrooms with smooth, often brightly colored and viscid caps. They are not brittle or chalky like the Russulaceae. Though the gills are thick, they aren't blunt or fold-like as in the chanterelles (Cantharellaceae). Waxiness is not always an obvious characteristic, so it may take some experience before the beginner can easily observe it. Two or three genera are recognized based upon the microscopic structure of the gill tissue. Older texts lump the entire family into a single diverse genus *Hygrophorus*, which is now restricted to those species with gill hyphae which diverge from a single central strand. As a field microscope is generally beyond the means of the average amateur, most practical field guides (such as Arora's comprehensive Mushrooms Demystified) treat the family as a single entity, while retaining the modern naming conventions. Although there are many species within this family which are considered edible, a few that are regarded as choice by some, and none that are dangerously poisonous that I know of, only a devotee of Charles McIlvaine would consider them ideal for the table. The words "slimy", "slippery", "insipid", "sordid", "bland", and "flavorless", are almost universally applicable.

Camarophyllus (interwoven gill tissue) consists of small to medium sized fruiting bodies, usually with white or dull-colored caps. The caps are generally not viscid, or if they are, then only slightly so. The gills are decurrent (descending the stalk), thick, quite well-spaced and only somewhat waxy. The stalk is dry and there is no veil. *Camarophyllus pratensis* is rated highly in Europe, and robust specimens might possibly be harmlessly confused with chanterelles, except that it is readily attacked by maggots. Others of the genus are also edible, but are either flavorless, medicinal tasting, or simply not common enough to be collected for the table.

Hygrocybe (roughly parallel gill tissue) consists of small to medium sized fruiting bodies, normally brightly colored and quite waxy, with dry to moist, viscid or slimy caps. The gills are obviously waxy, free (not attached to the stalk) to adnexed (only narrowly attached), adnate (broadly attached), or sometimes decurrent [This represents almost the entire range of gill attachment, so I can't recommend it as a feature for identifying the genus. However, if you can determine that the mushroom is a *Hygrocybe*, the gill attachment might help determine what species]. The stalk is slender and often hollow; no veil. *Hygrocybe* contains some of the most beautiful mushrooms with colors ranging from bright red to brilliant green. Although mostly harmless, as edibles I hesitate to recommend the genus. (*H. punicus* (Scarlet Waxy Cap) is an efficient concentrator of cadmium. *H. conicus* may be slightly poisonous.) However, the genus as a whole is highly photogenic, and in particular, *H. psittacinus* (Parrot Waxy Cap), which emerges as a glossy-slimy bright green, and then goes through a confusingly dramatic color change as it ages.

Hygrophorus sensu stricto "in the strictest sense" (divergent gill tissue) consists of medium sized to fairly large fruiting bodies, usually white or dull colored, with viscid or slimy caps. The gills are only slightly waxy, well-

spaced or close, adnate or decurrent, typically white or pale colored. The fleshy stalk is rarely hollow, and often adorned with pointlike scales or granules at the apex. Some specimens have a slimy or fibrillose veil. These are the largest mushrooms in the Hygrophoraceae. Some specimens might be mistaken for *Russula*, except for the softer flesh and waxy gills. *H. subalpinus* is about the least slimy, and its robust stature, and spring fruiting habit (when few other agarics are available), makes it a potentially tempting delicacy, however I've never been tempted, as I'm normally distracted by morels during that season.

RECIPE:
CHICKEN HUNTER-STYLE
by Joanne Pasek

- 1/2 cup dried porcini or other mushrooms
- 1/4 cup brandy or chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 chicken drumsticks plus 2 chicken thighs
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1/4 cup red wine
- 1 can (1 lb.) diced tomatoes with liquid
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- salt, pepper to taste

Combine mushrooms and brandy in a bowl; set aside until liquid is absorbed, about 30 minutes. Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a medium skillet. Add onion and garlic, and saute on medium heat for 5 minutes. Dust chicken pieces with flour, add to skillet, and brown both sides. Remove chicken from skillet. Add red wine and cook over high heat, scraping up any browned bits.

Return chicken to skillet. Add mushrooms and any remaining brandy, tomatoes with liquid, and rosemary. Stir. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until chicken is very tender, about 45 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove rosemary before serving, if desired. Serve over boiled potatoes or pasta. Makes 2 servings.

Categories: [1991 - 2000 Newsletters](#) | [Permalink](#)