

CONTENTS

- 1) MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT by Chuck Soden
- 2) UPCOMING WMS EVENTS
- 3) CHANGE OF ADDRESS
- 4) ANNUAL MEETING BRINGS NEW PRESIDENT by Colleen Vachuska
- 5) SUMMER FORAY by John Steinke
- 6) PHOTO FORAY by Chuck Fonaas
- 7) GREENBUSH FORAY by Peter Vachuska
- 8) THE ZEN OF MUSHROOM PICKING
- 9) MYCOBRIEFS by Colleen Vachuska
- 10) KAUFMANN'S "PRINCE OF CORTS" by Steve Nelsen
- 11) RECIPE: MUSHROOMS WITH SOUR CREAM contributed by Donna Naujokas
- 12) HAPPY MUSHROOMING by Joanne Pasek

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Excitement best describes the feeling as I look forward as your new president. We have excellent leadership in the newly elected officers and board of directors. I'm sure that with this core of people the club will continue to grow.

We must never forget why this club was initially formed. The reason was to help educate the public about mushrooms and mycology. We will strive to meet that goal through mushroom fairs, mini-festivals or one-on-one questions and answers by knowledgeable club members. This interaction between club members and the public will help our club continue to grow.

Summer forays have been fruitful this year depending on where you were hunting and the amount of rain. The time frame for finding certain species of mushrooms seems to be running about two weeks ahead of normal. Chanterelles were done by the time the normal prime picking time arrived. This is just a hint in case we have any pot hunters that might want to check their favorite spot a little early. Nothing worse than a mushroom hunter caught napping.

Happy hunting and I'll be with you at the fall forays.

Chuck Soden

UPCOMING WMS EVENTS

September 19 Monches Woods Foray. Led by Bill Blank.

September 26 Bristol Woods Foray. Led by Dave Menke. Meet at 9:00 A.M.

October 3 South Kettle Moraine Foray. Led by Harold Korslin. For this foray we will be joined by the Illinois Mycological Association.

October 10 Frederick Hainer Annual Foray — Point Beach State Forest. Led by Tula Erskine.

All forays start at 10:00 A.M., except for the September 26th foray. Separate announcements with more details have been mailed or can be found on the internet using the WMS webpage or going directly to <http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/7331/forays98.html> Note that THE FORAY ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE PRINTED DOUBLE-SIDED this time, so be sure to check both sides of the flyers and you will see we are having at least as many fall forays as we usually do.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you move or have a new address, please tell us about it. Send your change of address notice to: John Steinke, S92 W32460 Hwy NN, Mukwonago, WI 53149-9304. John maintains the mailing list for the WMS. Early renewals for 1999 should also be sent to John.

ANNUAL MEETING BRINGS NEW PRESIDENT

June 28, 1998

At our annual picnic/business meeting on June 28, a new president, Chuck Soden, was appointed. Chuck has been a mainstay of the club since joining in 1986. He has always been a very enthusiastic member, gracing our forays with his knowledge and his sense of humor. In addition to that, Chuck has always been willing to help out, both in large and in small ways. He worked at the Mushroom Fair for most of the years that it ran, has written articles for the newsletter, and led the Mauthe Lake and other forays. In recent years he has also served as Assistant Secretary/Treasurer for the club and then Secretary/Treasurer. In his non-mycological life, Chuck is a project engineer for Harnischfeger, is married to Patty and has two grown children Rick and Amy.

At this time, we would like to thank outgoing President Bill Blank for his 2 years of service to the club. We know it was not always easy for him, given his family responsibilities, but he performed admirably.

Besides the new President, other new club officers appointed at the June meeting were Co-Vice-President Kris Ciombor and Secretary/Treasurer John Fetzer. Kris is a former WMS President and John has worked with Chuck before with the Boy Scouts; so they should make a good team. John is also our food critic for the newsletter, having reviewed the last two mushroom dinners. Continuing WMS officers are Co-Vice-President Tula Erskine and Membership Secretary John Steinke. The Board of Directors also remains the same as last year.

Colleen Vachuska

SUMMER FORAY

July 25, 1998

If our spring foray is known as the morel foray, the summer foray should be renamed the chanterelle foray. This is the edible fungus to be expected in our area during late July and early August. Unfortunately, while some good chanterelles were brought in at the foray, they were very few in number. Alas, "El Nino" struck again. The chanterelles were three weeks early this year. The good news was that it was a great season; the bad news was that most people did not know it until the summer foray, when it was too late.

Twenty-some people showed up for the "chanterelle foray". The species this fine group brought in outnumbered them two to one. I cannot think of anything we found in quantity, but we did have a lot of good quality. *Bolbitius vitellinus* was fruiting in the wood chips on the path. This is a good example of a species that is relatively easy to identify if you have all the growth stages. This species has a yellow slippery cap with white gills when fresh, but turns dry and tan all over as the spores mature. *Galiella rufa* was represented by a single specimen. This species can be absent two or three years and then be everywhere for a couple of months. It usually can be found on the smaller branches of downed oak trees. This species is also an Ascomycete which are not usually well represented at the collection table. *Daedalea quercina* was another example of quality; this was a very clear example of what is meant by "daedaleoid" pores. My last species that I will drag out before you is *Crucibulum laeve*. This was a beautiful parade of specimens on an old burdock cane. This little "bird's nest fungus" will grow on just about any dead material.

John Steinke

PHOTO FORAY

August 16, 1998

The fourth annual photo foray was held on Sunday, August 16th at the Scuppernong ski/hiking trails in the South Kettle Moraine. The foray, led by Chuck Fonaas and Ray Llanas, enjoyed a turnout of about a dozen or so members, several with photo equipment.

The Scuppernong area has produced for us in the past and did so again this year. Some members of our group may disagree, but given the weather of late, I think we did fairly well. The recent heavy rains certainly didn't seem to have done much to offset the dry spell we had earlier. If nothing else, those in attendance were treated to some outstanding weather.

Although it definitely would have to be considered a poor day if your goal was a basketful of edibles, from a photographer's standpoint, we were moderately successful. Among the species found were *Agaricus* (*placomyces?*), a *Lepiota* species, *Geastrum fornicatum* and some *Amanita* species. In general, we found many of the same species fruiting as we had found three weeks earlier at the midsummer foray at the same location. One noteworthy find was that of a *Hysterangium* species, a hypogeous gasteromycete that is often overlooked.

Regardless of how successful you considered yourself, the company and the weather were outstanding. How could you possibly lose?

Chuck Fonaas

GREENBUSH FORAY

September 5, 1998

About a dozen people turned out for the first fall foray on Sept. 5 at Greenbush Trails in the North Kettle Moraine. The weather had been dry and, at least in this foray leader's eye, prospects were at a minimum. Nonetheless the small group of adventurers was enthusiastic and this positive attitude paid off. Everyone collected at least a meal of *Armillaria mellea* (honeys) or *Hypomyces lactifluorum* (lobsters). We also collected *Laetiporus sulphureus* and *Laccaria ochropurpurea* for the table, though the *Laccaria* was rather distorted with fat stems and very small caps. Surprisingly no Boletes or Ascomycetes were collected and only a minimal collection of *Entoloma abortivum* was brought in. No *Grifola* or *Calvatia* were seen yet, either. On the other hand, there were the usual collections of *Russulas*, *Cortinarius*, and *Hygrophorus* and other genera brought in. Everyone seemed to be quite happy with their findings, including our professional mycologist, Alan Parker, who found several collections of *Scleroderma*, *Albatrellus crustina*, and the toothed polypore *Steccherinum adustum*.

Peter Vachuska

THE ZEN OF MUSHROOM PICKING

“Picking mushrooms is the most meditative activity I've ever found. It's only when you stop worrying about finding them that you do. You have to let mushrooms come to you.”

The above quote is one of the better ones from Trent Valvo, an itinerant mushroom picker profiled in the May 28, 1998 issue of Rolling Stone magazine. Living out of a VW van, Trent follows the annual mushroom season as it moves south from British Columbia in July to Mexico in January.

MYCOBRIEFS

One truffle is as good as another: The black truffle (*Tuber melanosporum*) is generally considered to be the best edible fungus in the world. It grows mainly in Spain, France, and Italy, and shows variation in several traits, including its very special taste and smell, across this geographical range. Now however, after surveying 207 wild truffles from Italy and France, French scientists led by Guillaume Bertault from the University of Montpellier report that the European black truffle shows remarkably little genetic variation. This suggests that about 10,000 years ago, the truffle endured a massive die-off that left only a few survivors, and therefore much less genetic diversity, to repopulate their

range. The researchers theorise that the disaster that nearly wiped out the black truffle could have been the last glacial period which ended a little over 10,000 years ago. In support of this argument, Bertault points out that the black truffle ripens in winter and suffers more from the cold than does the European summer truffle, which is dormant during the winter and has retained more genetic diversity. (Science News 8/22/98 and Nature 8/20/98)

New species of *Hypomyces* may be possible biocontrol agents: Methyl bromide, an important pesticide and soil fumigant used on more than 100 crops, is scheduled to be phased out of use in the U.S. by the year 2001, and agricultural researchers are looking for alternatives to replace it. Three recently discovered species of the fungal genus *Hypomyces* hold promise as biocontrol agents and may be able to fill in part of the gap left by the phaseout of methyl bromide. The three new species were identified and described by mycologist Gary Samuels of the USDA-ARS Systematic Botany and Mycology Lab in Beltsville, Maryland. Two of the species, *H. favoli* and *H. puertoricensis*, were discovered on rotting wood by a USDA Forest Service scientist D. Jean Lodge during a biological survey of the Puerto Rican rainforest in 1992. The other, *H. viridigriseus*, was discovered in Illinois in 1996 by Samuels and Estonian scientist Kadri Poldmaa. The reason that these *Hypomyces* may have potential as biological control agents is because they are related to beneficial fungi in the genus *Trichoderma* which are known to attack other fungi. However, according to Samuels, "The problem is that these newly described fungi reproduce primarily asexually so they can't be readily improved by sexual reproduction to fight crop diseases It often happens that these fungi occur in nature as the asexually sporulating form, *Cladobotryum*, in the absence of their sexual state *Hypomyces*." It's the sexually reproducing forms of these new fungi which have excited the researchers. "Discovering a species of *Hypomyces* in its sexual state is important because then the fungus can be genetically manipulated and improved to fight harmful fungi," says Amy Rossman, who heads the Beltsville Lab where Samuels works. (Agricultural Research, July 1998)

Colleen Vachuska

KAUFMANN'S "PRINCE OF CORTS,"

by Steve Nelsen

Adrienne and I found the prettiest *Cortinarius* (see photo at end of newsletter) we ever saw at Astigo County Park (in Dodge Co., east of Columbus) on September 7th, 1997. None of the specimens were fully mature, but the largest had a 4 inch wide cap, big for a "Cort." The caps were initially sticky, and shaded from reddish brown in the center to a lighter yellowish brown at the margin. The youngest buttons were distinctly less reddish brown at the center. There was a large turbinate (top-shaped) bulb, 4 cm. wide in the largest specimen, with a band the same color as the cap center, while the underground, pointed portion was whitish on the surface. The cap rests on the bulb in buttons, and is only slightly larger. The stem was dry and violet when young, but faded towards pallid brown with age, especially towards the bulb. There was a yellow cobwebby veil (the "cortina" of the genus name) stretching from the bulb over the cap in buttons, and from the edge of the cap to various points along the stem from just under the gills to the top of the bulb as the stem starts to grow. The flesh of both cap and stem was evenly violet in moist specimens, but had faded to pallid in dry ones. The gills were especially colorful in a section, with a line of darker violet than the flesh color at the top, but they faded suddenly to yellow near the margin, and the gills viewed from the underside of the cap were yellow, only slightly less intense than the cortina. The cap turned dark brown when a drop of potassium hydroxide solution was applied. The spores were about 14 microns long, almond-shaped, and finely bumpy. A fine collection of this species was brought to Alan Parker's Mushroom Fair at UW-Waukesha on September 21st, 1997. Old photos showed that we saw single specimens at Governor Dodge State Park (Iowa Co.) on 9/19/82 and Potawatami SP (Door Co.) on 9/15/87, and never identified it. All four times we have seen this species, the gills were distinctly two-toned, violet and yellow. This species is uncommon, but not rare in Wisconsin. It has so many marked characteristics that I thought it would be found easily by looking at pictures in manuals. Incorrect. It is not shown in any of the color illustrated books I have seen, even Phillips' Mushrooms of North America, which illustrates the most American Corts (88). A more technical approach was needed. The viscid cap, dry stem, and bulb place it in subgenus *Phiegmacium* (Fries). The bulb shape puts it in section *Scauri* (Fries), in which the bulb breaks out sharply from the stem, and which is sometimes raised to a subgenus or genus, *Bulbopodium* (Earle). When *Bulbopodium* is recognized, only the clavate-bulbed (swelling out from the stem gradually, like the head of a club) species are kept in *Phiegmacium*, but modern treatments keep *Phiegmacium* as a single subgenus. C. H. Kauffman was the first American mycologist after Peck who was particularly interested in Corts. The Agaricaceae of Michigan (1918; 1971 Dover reprint) contains a "preliminary monograph on eastern species of *Cortinarius*" (preface, viii) describing 152 species, only 90 of which he had located in Michigan. Kauffman could

not have missed such a beautiful and well-marked species. He didn't, but an error in his description put me off the trail for days. Our Cort is the first species Kauffman describes in subgenus *Bulbopodium*, as *C. atkinsonianus* Kauff. (1905), saying "this noble species is the prince of known American *Cortinari*". It took a long time to convince me that this identification is correct because of a cap color problem. Kauffman's species has the shape, the most unusual two-tone gills, the yellow veil, and the violet flesh of our species, but the cap color given is different. He describes it in 1918 as wax-yellow or flavus (light cadmium yellow) at first. We found rather young buttons, but none had caps that could reasonably be described as "yellow". The rather light brownish, fairly uniform color of the buttons (which are overlaid by the yellow veil) gets deeper and more reddish especially in the center as they develop. The black and white photographs in Kauffman and in Hard (1908) could both be our fungus, but don't address the color question. The problem appears to be that Kauffman didn't quote all of his original description in his book. Hard found it in Ohio and quotes Kauffman as saying the cap color is "wax-yellow or gallstone-yellow to clay colored and tawny" [Ridg.]. [The [Ridg.] refers to colors matched with swatches from a book privately published by Robert Ridgeway in 1912 (according to Kauffman). Ridgeway's book has a series of 1155 named colors that have been widely used by American mycologists. It appears that Ridgeway's color swatches were around well before 1912 because Hard used them quoting Kauffman's 1905 reference. I have never seen a copy of Ridgeway, and have little idea what is meant by any of these guys when they quote Ridgeway's names. Interpreting shades of color from names pose real problems. Hard's glossary says "tawny" is nearly the color of tanned leather. But what color is Hard's tanned leather? It sort of depends on how you tan it, doesn't it? Tanning processes are quite different now than they were in 1908, and any leather remaining from then would very probably have changed color a lot.] Graham in Mushrooms of the Great Lakes Region (1944, Dover reprint) says it occurs in Minnesota, Michigan, and the Indiana Dunes, and after yellow for the cap color adds "tawny in parts". Smith, Smith and Weber in How to Know the Gilled Mushrooms (1979) describe *C. atkinsonianus* as "dark reddish brown at first", with no mention of yellow in the cap. Clay colored to tawny is right on as a description of our fungus, and reddish brown is the color by the time the veil has broken. SSW also say "it is one of the best edible fungi known", followed by a disclaimer about poisonous Cortis and "the number of "variants" found around *C. atkinsonianus* and *cedretorum*. [Oddly, SSW also say the gills "change in color as Maire's species" (*C. cedretorum* Maire), which has gills "honey yellow at first, slowly becoming lavender to purplish". This is not the behavior of Wisconsin material we have seen. Furthermore, *C. cedretorum* is described by Moser [species 3.11.7.3.12.16], without mentioning the gills turning violet. American material from the Pacific coast is illustrated by Phillips (where the gills are said to be pallid yellow, turning rusty, also with no mention of violet), and European material is well illustrated by Cetto (I Fungi dal Vero, Vol.5, species 1799), who includes over 300 European Cortis. A section is shown and the gills are yellow with no violet. I can only conclude that a species in the western US having yellow gills that turn violet is unlikely to be identical with *C. cedretorum*.] I'm convinced that our fungus is *C. atkinsonianus*. It is both pretty and distinctive, in contrast to most Cortis, and it seems a shame that this noble species has been excised from recent manuals. I presume that it has been so completely ignored since the introduction of color photography because of the obvious east or west coast bias of current popular mushroom book authors.

RECIPE

MUSHROOMS WITH SOUR CREAM

contributed by Donna Naujokas

8 ounces mushrooms, sliced
2 tablespoons margarine or butter
1 teaspoon flour
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 teaspoon salt
dash pepper
snipped dill weed

Cook and stir mushrooms in margarine for 3 minutes. Stir in flour. Cook and stir one minute. Stir in sour cream and salt and pepper. Heat, stirring occasionally, just until hot. Sprinkle with dill weed.

Pour over meat roasts, chicken, or baked or mashed potatoes.

HAPPY MUSHROOMING

Joanne Pasek

My girlfriend called me two days ago and said she had a mushroom next to her driveway. I went over last night to check it out. It was a very large sulfur shelf or chicken of the woods. Actually it was only four pounds cleaned, but I felt happy. It's only the second one I have ever found.

I suggested we walk through the woods. Her son-in-law maintains a mowed path 4 to 5 feet wide in a mixed woods with some oaks, which allows the sun to hit the ground even with leaf cover.

We walked a little and found a few pear-shaped puffballs, solid white. Not the most sought after mushrooms. But some years when I find a long tree trunk covered with them they can be fun. We went a little further and found angel wings. I had only found them in one woods before. This means the mushroom season is really starting.

My girlfriend and I visited a while and walked some more. Good friends, nice woods, no chemicals in the woods or the ground or the mushrooms. What more can heaven be.

The next day I was off from work, so for breakfast I cut up a slice of bacon and browned and cooked it off. I added 1/2 cup angel wings whole; they break up in cooking. They were sauted, but I had to add a little water, maybe 1 tablespoon, and 1/8 teaspoon chicken broth base, cooking till the mushrooms became soft. I also threw in an egg and cooked it up. Then, to round out the meal, I added a piece of toast on the side of the plate and a cup of coffee. A great breakfast!

At supper time, I had chicken and rice:

CHICKEN AND RICE

- 1/2 cup raw rice (not Minute Rice)
- 2-1/2 cups water
- 2 cups diced zucchini (I used one of those big ones nobody wants)
- 2 cups cleaned cut chicken of the woods
- 1 cut green pepper
- 2 skinless chicken breasts
- 5 shakes low salt soy sauce
- 3/4 teaspoon chicken broth base
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 or 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 or 2 cut fresh tomatoes

I cut and measured the chicken and the vegetables except the tomatoes and put them in a bowl, each vegetable a different shape to add variety. Make sure the mushrooms and chicken pieces are in different shapes, because the mushroom will taste so much like chicken you will not be able to tell one from the other.

Bring the water to simmer and add mushrooms, zucchini, rice, green pepper, and chicken. Simmer about 20 minutes until all is tender. Mix 1/4 cup water, cornstarch, sour cream, soy sauce, and chicken broth. Add to the vegetables and chicken. Stir and cook till shiny. Add tomato to heat and serve. Great with pickles on the side. Serves 2 or 3.