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The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society
AUGUST 2003

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MONTHLY MEETING:

Annual Mushroom Fair:

The meeting this month will be the Mushroom Fair.

The Fair will be held at the Fountain Creek Nature Center, Saturday August 23 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Please collect all the mushrooms you can find and store them in your refrigerator (do not freeze them) and bring them to the Fair. When collecting, be sure that you dig down and get the entire mushroom. This is often crucial to identification. Treat your collected species with care so we will be able to determine just what you have found. It is helpful to the identifier to know the details of the habitat; was it growing on wood? If so, what kind of tree and what were the conditions?

For the Fair we want any kind of mushroom. We also need people to help with identification. You don't have to be an expert, but you should have a working knowledge of the different kinds of mushrooms commonly found in this area and a copy of your favorite mushroom book in hand to help with the identification process.

HOW TO GET THERE: Fountain Creek Nature Center is located about ten miles south of Colorado Springs. Take I-25 south to Exit 132 (Fountain - Fort Carson). Go east on Highway 16 for about one-half mile, exit right to Highway 85. Turn right on Highway 85 and go south for one-half mile then turn right (west) onto Cattail Marsh Road and proceed to the Nature Center.

PROGRAM: The program will consist of relaxing, enjoying and helping with the Fair. The more you are involved in the process the greater your enjoyment of it will be. This is a major event in the Pikes Peak Region. It is our opportunity to show the general public who we are and what we do and invite them to become members of our organization.

The Fair has attracted a relatively large number of people in the five years since its inception. We want it to increase in size and in the information we provide to those who choose to attend it. Your help is urgently needed to bring that about. Please call Ken Pals at the Fountain Creek Nature Center (520-6745) and let him know that you will be available to lend a hand in this joint venture. There are many ways to help such as setting up displays, receiving mushrooms from visitors and helping to fill out the mushroom identification slips, answering questions about the club, etc.



Boletus edulis - George Davis - 7-25-03

A MESSAGE FROM SHERYL OLSON (edited):

I really owe you guys a huge apology and I REALLY amso very sorry that I couldn't make it to my presentation at your July meeting. I would have called but I was on the east side of town dealing with an emergency in the family and I didn't have Pat's phone number with me. Myfather-in-law was in a severe car accident on the day of the meeting. Fortunately, he was belted and had air bags and is going to be okay. My husband's parents live in Ohio and we were on the phone with Mom, doctors, and siblings for several hours as you can imagine. Time went by faster than I realized and all of a sudden it was late. I do hope you will forgive me for not calling. I just lost my focus on everything but this incident.

We are the only medical people in the family and everyone relies on us for information, support, etc. Please accept my sincerest apologies. I would very much like to reschedule with you at your August meeting if you still have a space for me or perhaps in the spring of next year. September I am unavailable, as I will be teaching in England. I do feel very badly about missing my scheduled time for your July meeting.

Sincerely, Sheryl Olson

PRESIDENT'S NOTES: by Bud Bennett

Until recently, I had not thought much about using the Web as an aid to my mycological pursuits. Instead, I collected various books for reference and identification, and drew knowledge from the PPMS membership. A simple search on Google for the words "Mushroom Club" turned up 185,000 items in a fraction of a second.

The better websites usually contain general information about the club, its purpose or mission, events and forays, program notes, libraries of photographs (some very good). I found one website attached to a municipal site. It was a single page that provided a bare minimum and an email contact. It was rather disappointing. The Denver club maintains a nice site at: www.cmsweb.org. It contains activities and events, fungus information for beginners (but for some reason omits the recommendation to always cook wild mushrooms), club information, recipes, links to other sites, and even a search engine! www.mycoweb.com is probably familiar to most of you. It is an extreme

example and can be used as a mycological jumping off point for the Web. PPMS doesn't have a website, so our link to the web is a personal email contact. Do you think we should publish a site? What should it be? What benefits can it bring to the membership? What can we bring to the vast knowledge base already in the Web? I'll be thinking about these things as I investigate the possibility of a PPMS website. Let me know what you think.

FORAY SCHEDULE AND RULES

We will be publishing the foray schedule with the leaders' names and phone numbers in the newsletter each month. To go on any of the forays simply call the leader to find out where and what time to meet. You must have your dues paid for the current year and you must have a signed liability waiver on file to go on forays. If you want to **lead a foray call George Davis at 630-7140** and I will put you on the schedule. Some forays will probably be to unscouted areas and you may find only a pleasant experience in the mountains. Foray leaders do not guarantee success.

Schedule

*August 22nd Bud Bennett 487-8719

* This is a foray to collect specimens for the fair.

Foray Report:

There has been only one foray so far in August. Christa Howard is scheduled to lead a foray on the 16th, which has not occurred at this writing but will be history by the time you get this report.

Winnie Fairbanks led a foray to the Craggs by way of Rampart Range Reservoir. She reports that there was nothing at the first stop so they soon continued up towards the Craggs. The hunt on that part of the trip wasn't much better. They did collect several varieties but nothing in significant numbers. Several of the mushrooms they collected were edibles such as some *Flammulina velutipes* and *Boletus edulis*.

There were three people on the foray including Winnie. Don Pelton and Esther Price accompanied her. Even though there not very many mushrooms to collect, Winnie reports that all had a grand time in the mountains.

MUSHROOM, the Journal

The following was received from Leon Shernoff, the editor of the Mushroom Journal. I fully support the Journal and I hope this effort is successful. He writes:

I run Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming. I'm writing to let you know that I have just completed a revision of the Mushroom the Journal web site. There are many new features; especially check out The Eleanor Yarrow Slide Collection, now online at:

www.mushroomthejournal.com/arcade/pis.html.

There are over 200 sterling mushroom pictures from the New York Botanical Gardens! If you're having a dry, mushroom-less summer, here's your chance for a virtual foray. There is also quite a bit of material that's designed to be helpful to mushroom hunters at all skill levels and instructional articles for beginners such as "What's a Mushroom?" from the home page. There also are mycological dictionaries and field guide supplements.

The **Pikes Peak Mycological Society's** entry in our directory of clubs can be seen by following the link to clubs on our home page. I don't know of a web site for **PPMS**, though I may just be out of date there.

Check out the new web site at:

<http://www.mushroomthejournal.com>

If you like what you see, tell your friends! Get them to subscribe. There is definitely strength in numbers.

PPMS WEB PAGE:

The possibility of setting up a Website for the Club was discussed at the July meeting. It was estimated that the cost would be \$ 20 to \$ 50 per year to maintain the site plus the extra expense for the software. Bud Bennett will look into this matter and report in more detail in September. (See the President's notes for more on this issue)

“Mushrooms – poisons and panaceas”, by Denis R. Benjamin, A book review by Bud Bennett
I became interested in this book after Marilyn Shaw’s excellent presentation to the club in April. She recommended this book above the others that she had brought with her that night. While browsing at The Book Broker on Tejon St., I came across it for the paltry sum of \$10. Since it lists for nearly \$35, I thought it a good bargain and took it home with me.

Webster’s dictionary defines a panacea as “a remedy for all ills or difficulties: cure-all”. I should have been more wary about a book that required a dictionary reference in the title. In order to truly understand most of this book, a dictionary (preferably a medical dictionary) should reside at one’s elbow when reading. A note on the cover claims it is “A handbook for naturalists, mycologists, and physicians.” I would emphasize the latter due to the highly technical discussions about symptoms and treatments.

The first quarter of the book covers cultural attitudes toward mushrooms, a history of mushroom eating and poisoning, nutritional aspects, and health benefits and medicinal properties of edible mushrooms. These chapters are not particularly technical and very interesting. He outlines the mycophagy (mushroom eating) preferences of various parts of the world. Did you know that one of the most favored mushrooms in Africa is the genus *Termitomyces*, which has a symbiotic relationship with termite nests. The sections on nutrition and medicinal properties are more technical, but most people are familiar with the vitamins, proteins, and topical health issues presented. He presents a section of guidelines for would-be mycophagists, which includes a long listing of look-alike mushrooms, but it is not a substitute for a good field guide. This book has only 32 color plates - a rogue’s gallery of the more notorious poisonous mushrooms.

The second part of the book covers symptoms that may be present after a meal of mushrooms, but are not indicative of poisoning. These may involve panic reactions, bacterial food poisoning, chemical contamination, or idiosyncratic/allergic reactions. He also deals with the incidence of mushroom poisoning in modern times, including the sociology of mushroom poisoning. There is a chapter with gray shaded pages for diagnosis and management of mushroom poisoning – easily accessed in the event of an emergency. These pages outline the major clinical syndromes, the most likely poisoning scenarios, and provide a general management for suspected poisonings. The rest of the book dissects, in great detail, each of the major toxins related to mushroom poisoning. I must admit, that I was skimming at this point, but there is information about how much of a particular mushroom it takes to cause potentially fatal consequences. There are also more details about the onset of symptoms and different treatment scenarios that are effective or proven ineffective. Keep your dictionary handy.

In summary, this is a great book to have on your shelf – for reference. I intend never to need to open it again.

Due to the Fair, there is no Mystery Mushroom to challenge your skills this month.

There were eight entries for the Mystery Mushroom in July. ALL OF THE ENTRIES WERE CORRECT! The first slip drawn from the hat was Don Pelton and he received the award of \$5.00.

He also accepted the task of preparing the clues for the Mystery Mushroom for September.

The entrants in July, in no particular order, were: Dennis Craig, Heide Pals, Esther Price, Frieda Davis, Don Pelton, Bud Bennett, Ken Pals, and Graz Benda.

You have all helped to make this program fun and beneficial.

The Pikes Peak Mycological Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of mycology, publishes Spore-Addict Times monthly from April through October. Membership is open to anyone wanting to study mycology. Annual dues are \$15 for individual and family memberships. Submissions of ideas, articles, reviews, letters, artwork and recipes are welcome.

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