

Spore-Addict Times



The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society

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July 2010

MONTHLY MEETING:

WHEN? Monday, July 26, 2010 – The fourth Monday of the month.

WHAT TIME? 6:30 pm; The meeting will come to order at 7:00 pm.

WHERE? Pikes Peak National Bank, 2401 W. Colorado Ave. (across from Bancroft Park). Enter at the door on Colorado Ave., just west of the bank door. There you will find stairs and an elevator. You may use either. The room is on the second floor near the head of the stairs.

WEBSITE: www.pikespeakmushrooms.org/

PROGRAM:

Vera Evenson will give a Power Point presentation of "Colorado Mushrooms, some edible, some not, but all beneficial". She will also tell a little about the history of mushroom collecting in Colorado.

Do you have a question about the NAMA conference in Winter Park? Here is your chance to find out about this great program, the content of the talks and presentations.

Vera Evenson is the Curator, Sam Mitchel Herbarium of Fungi, Denver Botanic Gardens and author of "Mushrooms of Colorado".

Esther Price and Judy Willey have volunteered to bring the goodies for the meeting.

President's Notes: by Judy Willey

Can you believe July is half over? The All Star Game has come and gone with a National League win so if the Rockies get to the World Series (again) we will have home field advantage. Yeah! Now, what is up with no mushrooms? No rain, I imagine. My garden and front yard are full of them but that does no good for the Club. I can't believe we have not had a

productive foray this July. And I have been looking - Pikes Peak and the Craggs. This Friday I shall explore the pits (where the race cars accumulate race day) on Pikes Peak. I found chantrelles there and also at the Half Way Picnic Grounds. Our next meeting shall be an exciting one with Vera's presentation. I hope that all of you can make this meeting. I look forward to seeing you all.

Upcoming Events:

The **NAMA 50th Anniversary Foray** is in Winter Park this August 12 through 15. For more information check out these sites:

<http://www.namyco.org/events/index2010.html> and http://www.cmsweb.org/nama2010foray_info.htm

Foray Reports:

There were no club-sponsored forays since the last newsletter. It's dry, dry, dry but there's hope that the monsoon season will bring more rain.

Last Month:

(Editor's note: I include these notes as information for members who did not make last month's meeting. I think it should become a regular feature. Let me know either pro or con.)

Financial Report by Frieda Davis: PPMS has \$2276.00 in bank.

Karen Ryan from Denver is requesting donations in the form of refreshments or money for the NAMA conference in August. **Bring them to the July meeting.**

The following people agreed to help with the August presentation by taking photos of mushrooms and discussing them; Rick and Eva Mattedi, Frieda, Ashley, Judy, Don, Pat Gaffney and Elizabeth. Please send photos to Frieda.

Using the Key Chart, we identified a mushroom from spore print that was brought in by Judy. The spore print was light cream colored, mushroom with gills attached and sawtoothed and it grows on wood: *neolentinus ponderosus*, page 112 in *Mushrooms of Colorado*.

Judy Willey gave us a Vitamin and Mineral Chart. After reviewing essential nutrients various mushrooms were shown to have many important vitamins and minerals and healing properties such as the Reishi, Flamulina Velutipes, Enoki, and various others. "Growing Gourmet and Medicinal Mushrooms," by Paul Stamets was the reference. Esther's daughter sent some Reishi on ice for people to take home.

Photo Gallery:



Leccinum sp. by Gwyn Quillen



Gwyn Quillen with a few nice honeys at her place in Divide, CO.



A large Pycnoporellus alboluteus found on a log in the Great Sand Dunes National Park. Photo by Bud Bennett

Stems & Pieces:

Tiny, toxic mushrooms kill hundreds in China – Associated Press

BEIJING – Every summer during the height of the rainy season, villagers of all ages in a corner of southwestern China would suddenly die of cardiac arrest. No one knew what caused Yunnan Sudden Death Syndrome, blamed for an estimated 400 deaths in the past three decades. Now, after a five-year investigation, an elite investigative unit from China's Center for Disease Control and Prevention believes it has pinpointed the cause: an innocuous-looking small mushroom known as Little White.

The search for the culprit began in 2005 and took investigators to remote villages spread over the rural highlands of Yunnan province, said Robert Fontaine, an epidemiologist with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There was "this very obvious clustering of deaths in villages in very short periods of time in the summer," said Fontaine, who helped in the investigation. "It appears that there was something a little different going on."

Local health officials had noted the deaths for years. In 2004, they appealed to Beijing for assistance. The government gave the task to the China Field Epidemiology Training Program, a unit of medical investigators at China's CDC assigned some of the country's toughest health mysteries. The medical teams encountered obstacles. Many villagers didn't speak standard Chinese, instead communicating in their own dialect. Villages were scattered in often remote

areas. Rapid burials made it difficult to conduct autopsies. Torrential rain and mudslides hampered travel. But that first year, investigators were able to narrow down the list of possibilities: most victims had drunk surface water, they had emotional stress and they ate mushrooms.

The investigators zeroed in on mushrooms, because the deaths were closely aligned with the harvesting season. More than 90 percent of the deaths occurred in July or August. By the end of 2005, investigators began issuing warnings to some villages to avoid eating unfamiliar mushrooms.

That was a difficult order to follow. Yunnan province is legendary for its wide variety of wild mushrooms, many of which are exported at high prices. Entire families go out to hunt for them during the summer months.

By 2008, investigators had discovered a relatively unknown mushroom in a number of homes where people had died. The mushroom is not usually sold in the markets, because it's too small. "We repeatedly found it at all these sites," Fontaine said.

A public information campaign to warn against eating the mushrooms has dramatically reduced the number of deaths. Only a handful have been reported in the last couple of years, and none so far this year. However, the mystery has not yet been definitively solved.

Testing found the mushroom contained some toxins, though not enough to be deadly. Chinese scientists need to isolate the toxin and test whether it triggers cardiac arrests. Researchers have hypothesized that there is a second agent. Many of the victims showed high levels of barium, a heavy metal in the soil that seeps into mushrooms. "There is a lot of work left to do," Fontaine said. "We really need additional lab investigations."

Problems with poisonous mushrooms are common throughout Asia, said Diderik De Vleeschauwer, a spokesman for the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization regional office in Thailand. "Normally we expect people to have knowledge of what they can and can't eat. One would think there is indigenous knowledge available about what they can forage," he said. "But these are accidents that can happen."

What's in Season at the Farmers Markets?

By Felicia Friesema, Wed., Jul. 7 2010 @ 6:00AM

Lili Baltazar, the "queen of greens" at ABC Rhubarb Farms, started offering mushrooms at her stand a few years ago, filling in a gaping mushroom hole at the Pasadena market and giving mushroom vendors at other markets something to ponder. At first the selection she offered was pretty familiar: small and large shitakes, creminis, white buttons, and oyster mushrooms. Then last year she put out a basket of a deep brown and almost purple fungus that we almost didn't recognize. They're back again this summer and will be here until fall.

Wood Ear mushrooms aren't usually available fresh, even at your local Asian grocer. That's because once harvested you must either use them quickly or set them up for drying. Their shelf life while fresh is brief, but the texture is their major claim to fame. Even when cooked they have a pleasing and snappy crunchiness, providing a textural counterpoint to softer foods. The more common pairing is with tofu. But we've found it sublime diced in risottos or julienned with broccoli stalks and soft noodles. Their flavor is subtle to non-existent, imparting only a hint of earthiness to dishes. (*Editor's Note: Then why bother...*)



The mushrooms don't have any stems or gills like other edible fungi. Rather, they have an almost fan-like growing habit (hence the "ear") around a central growth nexus. The top side of the fungus is smooth and dark while the underside is velvety and almost grey. Choose for specimens that are dry on both sides and use within a few days of purchase to capitalize on that unique texture.

What's Cookin'

Melted brie with mushrooms is irresistible

By Ron Eade, Postmedia News July 13, 2010 4:02 PM

- 8 ounces (225 g) fresh sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) coarsely chopped onions
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) finely chopped walnuts
- 1 large clove garlic, sliced into thin slivers
- 1/2 teaspoon (2 mL) each, dried thyme, rosemary, pepper
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) olive oil
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) balsamic vinegar
- 1 7-ounce (200-g) wheel cold brie cheese
- 2 tablespoons (25 mL) finely minced fresh parsley, or chives

1. In a bowl, combine mushrooms, onions, walnuts, garlic, herbs and pepper.
 2. Heat oil in a large frying pan on medium heat; cook and stir mushroom mixture 5 to 7 minutes, or until all liquid has evaporated. Stir in vinegar and cook 1 to 2 minutes; remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Cover and chill.
 3. At serving time, preheat barbecue to 360 F (182 C). Place brie on small heatproof roasting pan or water-soaked cedar plank suitable for grilling. Bake over indirect heat (one side burner off) with barbecue lid closed about 4 minutes, then spoon mushroom mixture on top. Bake another 5 or 6 minutes, or until cheese is beginning to melt. Sprinkle parsley or chives on top to garnish. Serve with thinly sliced baguette or pita wedges.
- Serves 12 as an appetizer.



SEARED SALMON WITH WILD MUSHROOM COMPOTE

For the salmon:

- 4 7-ounce skinless salmon fillets
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper
- Salt

Set oven to 350 degrees. Rub salmon fillets with the olive oil to coat, crust with pepper and season with salt.

Heat an oven-proof saute pan over medium-high heat and sear the salmon for 1 minute on each side. Place in 350 degree oven for 5-10 minutes, until firm.

For the wild mushroom compote:

- 4 strips bacon, diced
- 1/2 cup purple onion, diced
- 1 cup button mushrooms
- 1 cup sliced shiitake mushrooms
- 1/2 cup porcini mushrooms (or substitute button mushrooms if porcini are unavailable)
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic, about 2 large cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons roasted red bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup fresh scallion, thinly sliced
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Saute bacon in pan until crispy and browned. Remove from pan and sauté onion, mushrooms and garlic in bacon drippings until mushrooms and onions are tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add roasted red bell peppers, scallion, bacon, olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Set aside at room temperature for 20-30 minutes, until ready to serve. (Mushrooms can be prepared a day ahead and reheated before serving.)

Top the salmon fillets with the mushroom compote before serving.

Makes 4 servings.

(Editor's Note: I'm thinking of substituting fresh trout...)

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

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June's Mystery Mushroom was Clitocybe Nuda
(Wood Blewit)

MYSTERY MUSHROOM

By Mary Fielder

Three to ten cm glutinous purple-brown caps with decurrent pale drab, distant gills, thick white stalk with bright yellow base found under conifers. Spores are smoky gray to blackish, elliptical to spindle shaped and smooth.

Who am I?

The Spore-Addict times is the official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society (PPMS) and is published monthly April – October. All articles appearing in this newsletter may be freely reproduced, unless otherwise noted, for use in other newsletters provided the source and author are acknowledged. We consider this to be a reciprocal agreement for clubs that send their newsletter to us unless we are advised to the contrary.

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