

# Spore-Addict Times



The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society

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## MONTHLY MEETING:

**WHEN?** Monday, May 19, 2008 – Moved forward one week this month due to the Memorial Day Holiday. It is usually held the fourth Monday of the month.

**WHAT TIME?** 6:00 PM; the meeting will come to order at 7:00 PM. We are continuing to offer a one-hour study class before the general meeting for those interested in studying and identifying mushrooms.

**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.

## **PROGRAM:**

Esther, with the help of her guru, will present *Forays for Everyone!* – including survival and foray rules to be presented by longtime members.

Refreshments after the program will be provided by Ilse Stratton, Inge Adams and Christa Howard.

## **PRESIDENT'S NOTES:** by Elsie Pope

We may not have had mushrooms at our first meeting of 2008, but we had a lot of mycologists! Everyone showed up early for the study session, so we all seem to recognize the need to learn more about our favorite subject. By the next 6:00pm session we should have some fungi to pore over.

Lee Barzee and Esther Price led a discussion on studying mushrooms. First, use a local guide. Our best local guide is Vera Evenson's *Mushrooms of Colorado and the Southern Rocky Mountains*. It's compact and complete, with great

photos and diagrams. Most of us have the bad habit of skipping the front of the book and getting right to the photos. This is NOT a good idea! Concentrate on the first six chapters of the book for a quick course in mycology.

Some other notes from Lee and Esther:

1. Do your homework and really study those first chapters. All disciplines have their vocabularies and we should learn to "speak mushroom".
2. In identification, start at the cap and work down. The spore is the first and final I.D. Learn to do spore prints.
3. Keep records – note the date, place, elevation, substrate, tree association, etc.
4. Remember that not all fungi fruit every season or even every year.

All of us wanted a chance to win a fabulous prize, a bag of *Pleurotus ostreatus* ready to go! So we all paid our dues promptly! Pat Gustavson will be enjoying her winnings. Your president thanks all of you profusely for the magnificent gift of morel spores. The spores are from the local *Morchella esculenta*, and I am to "plant" them all of the yard where they might prosper and fruit. Both prizes were provided by Black Mountain Mushrooms (see more about Pat's kit later in the newsletter).

The formal election confirmed the officers listed in the back of your newsletter. Judy Willey, Librarian, has made a library list available. Martha Zenger was pleased to have a pair of volunteers for refreshments for each of the coming months. Esther Price is initiating a calling committee for this year's forays. Call Esther to arrange for a foray or for information. Lee Barzee's slides are always a treat. The beautifully composed photos are a great teaching tool.

## FORAY REPORT:

Several ad hoc forays to Beaver Creek have reported no sign of the yellow morel. The general consensus is that the forays were too early or the cold spring is preventing their fruiting.

There is a desire to reinstate a calling committee that was voiced at the April meeting. The following members volunteered to be on the committee: Mary Fielder, Eva Mattedi, Jack Richards, Tom Abbott, Judy Willey, Esther Price. When this begins operation, members will be called prior to the foray and given a few details and the foray leader's name and phone number. It is the responsibility of the member to call the foray leader to obtain further information and be added to the foray.

### Non-PPMS Forays:

The NAMA foray this year is dedicated to Orson K. Miller Jr., and is being held on September 4–7 in McCall, Idaho. Full registration with housing at Camp Pinewood is \$250 ea. For details call Susan Stacy at (208) 344-7371 or [sstacy@spro.net](mailto:ssstacy@spro.net)

There are two expeditions to Tibet: Cordyceps expedition to Kham, May 26–June 9; and Fungal and Floral Foray in Tibet, August 2–19. Details at [www.MushRoaming.com](http://www.MushRoaming.com). Address inquiries to [info@mushroaming.com](mailto:info@mushroaming.com).

How about an exotic foray excursion to Mexico, August 17–24 for under \$2000? The foray will be in the central state of Michoacan, which ranges from the Pacific coastline to volcanic mountains, where the famed butterflies come to roost by the millions. More info at [mexmush@yahoo.com](mailto:mexmush@yahoo.com).

### FORAY SCHEDULE

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 Esther Price at 632-5880. Esther is also the contact for ad hoc forays. Check with her to see if anyone has decided to go on an ad hoc foray that does not appear on the schedule.** Some forays will probably be to unscouted areas. Foray leaders do not guarantee success.

- Sat. June 28, Jack Richards (719) 591-6996
- Sat. July 12, Pat Gustavson (719) 495-4344
- Sat. July 26, Frieda Davis (719) 630-7140
- Thurs. August 7, Eva Mattedi (719) 687-9848
- Sat. Aug. 23, Dennis Craig (719) 596-5676

There will be two possible overnight forays: one to the wet mountains; and a September foray to Crede via Lake City. Keep in touch through your foray leaders, PPMS newsletter, and calling committee. Happy hunting.

## TEN ESSENTIALS:

The coming mushroom season will bring opportunities to get out and enjoy the outdoors, but there is also a risk of becoming lost or injured while hunting. Search and Rescue organizations recommend that you carry the Ten Essentials to increase your chances of survival. No one expects to be lost in the wilderness while just going for a few minutes hunting mushrooms, but carrying this minimum set should be on your person whenever you are mushroom hunting in a remote location. Most of these items are lightweight and don't take much space in a small pack.

1. Map
2. Compass, or GPS with extra batteries
3. Flashlight/headlamp (be sure to have an extra set of batteries that fit your flashlight/headlamp)
4. Extra food (enough for one extra day)
5. Extra clothing (a fleece top...)
6. Rain gear – minimum: an orange DOT bag
7. [First aid supplies](#) (be sure to include an extra day of any medication you are taking or might need in an emergency)
8. Pocket knife – basic mushroomer gear
9. Waterproofed matches (REI stormproof matches are best)
10. Fire starter – cotton balls impregnated with petroleum jelly work very well. Store in spent plastic film container

Consider the Ten Essentials as an insurance policy against the unexpected.

### Mushroom Kit Report – Pat Gustavson

Last evening we dined on the Pearl Oyster Mushrooms.... sautéed in butter and olive oil. This was LESS than one week after receiving the kit! I was fortunate to win the oyster mushroom kit at our April 28th PPMS meeting. Immediately, when I arrived home I set the kit up...following instructions. I placed the kit on a shallow bowl in a large plastic 12"x 15" tray...with ½" of water in the tray. Bamboo skewers (4) inserted in each of the corners angled outwards to hold the plastic tent (which has holes punched in it) for air circulation and room for the mushrooms to grow. I placed the

unit in our utility room that has abundant light, though not DIRECT light on it. Misting the inside of the plastic through the holes...careful not to moisten the plastic bag.



### First Day – May 1, 2008

It has been a delight to watch it...almost changing hour by hour. Yesterday, I removed two of the clusters that weighed 10.5 oz, and there are others ready to be harvested. Now, that we have enjoyed the full flavor of the mushrooms, I may be more inventive with some recipes. For those wishing to have truly "fresh" mushrooms, you may want to check out [www.blackmountainmushrooms.com](http://www.blackmountainmushrooms.com) (Scott Johnson's website.) MORE FUN!!!



### Ready to Eat - May 5, 2008

## Photo Gallery:

There was a bit of discussion at the last meeting about the inability to identify a mushroom from a photograph. Many of us have pictures labeled "Mystery Mushroom" because we took a picture of an interesting mushroom specimen only to get back home and find that it was not the species that we thought it was. Here are a couple photos in the Mystery Mushroom category.



This mushroom looked like a Pleurotus at first blush. No sample was taken for a spore print or closer inspection. Upon closer inspection of the photos, one realizes that it is not growing on dead wood, has a rather prominent stipe (though off-center), and the gills are not decurrent. But it is a pretty specimen, isn't it?



### PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES:

In accordance with the By-laws, dues, in the amount of \$15.00, are due and payable on or before the April monthly meeting. If you still have not paid, please pay at the May meeting or mail the payment to PPMS, PO Box 39, Colorado Springs, CO 80901-0039. Thanks!

**Newsworthy:**

The *NY Times* reported last month that Fort Bragg, CA was going to attempt to employ mushrooms to clean up dioxin at a former lumber mill site. Using life forms to clean up toxic waste is a process called bioremediation. Mushrooms have been previously used to clean up oil spills, but have never been used to treat dioxin.

The mill, owned by Georgia-Pacific, occupies 420 acres between downtown Fort Bragg and the Pacific Ocean. Among several toxic hot spots discovered here were five plots of soil with high levels of dioxin that Georgia-Pacific says were ash piles from 2001-2, when the mill burned wood from Bay Area landfills to create power and sell it to Pacific Gas & Electric. Usually, the contaminated soil is hauled off to a toxic waste landfill, at considerable expense, some 200 miles distant from Ft. Bragg.

Paul E. Stamets, author of *Mycelium Running: How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World*, was called in as an expert, after local authorities became alarmed at the potential cost of the cleanup. He said that the clean up procedure would be to put mushroom spawn into the plots, cover it with straw, and leave it alone. The mycelium created by the spawn secretes enzymes that break down molecular bonds, causing the toxins to fall apart.

Stamets claimed that at least two species of mushroom, indigenous to the Northern California coast would work: turkey tail (*Trametes versicolor* – a polypore) and oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus* sp. – strangely, also a polypore).

Critics cite the need for further testing to see how well it works on dioxin. An environmental consultant hired by the city claimed that one study found that the mushrooms reduced dioxins by only 50%. Even so, the town decided to proceed with a pilot program on a few cubic yards of contaminated soil. This demonstrates a change of thinking from extraction thinking to restoration thinking in American culture. "One bin. Ten cubic yards. That's a beginning," said David Turner, a Ft. Bragg City Council member.

**RECIPES:**

We have several recipe contributions this month. The first two are by popular demand from the April meeting.

**Corn Dip** – Martha Zenger

2 17 oz. cans corn, drained  
 1 cup sour cream  
 1 cup mayonnaise (Hellmann's)  
 10 oz. grated cheddar cheese  
 10 oz. grated jack cheese  
 3 chopped green onions  
 Sprinkle garlic salt on top (I added one clove of garlic to the dip)

Can also be served hot – it is easy to serve with the "Scoops" – type corn chips

**Vegetable Dip** – Martha Zenger

1 package "Knorr" Vegetable Soup Mix  
 16 oz. sour cream  
 1 cup Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise  
 1 can (8oz.) water chestnuts, drained and chopped (optional)  
 3 green onion, chopped (optional)  
 1 clove garlic crushed (optional)

For a spinach dip add 10 oz. baby spinach, chopped, or 1 package (10oz.) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry.

Chill Time: 2 hours, serve with chips or vegetables

**Tempura Mushrooms** – Freia Bradford

Mushrooms, with good solid flesh, either large pieces or a whole smaller mushroom.  
 Panko flakes (these are Japanese Bread crumbs easily available in Asian markets, many on Academy Blvd.  
 Flour.  
 Beer instead of the recommended water.  
 Canola Oil.  
 Heat 2 to 3 inches of oil in a Wok or deep frying pan (or deep fryer) to 400 degrees.  
 Dust the mushrooms in a bowl of flour.  
 Dip in a batter made of Panko flakes and beer, the batter should be like pancake batter, not too runny.  
 Oil is ready when a bead of the batter sizzles and rises to the top of the oil. Hold mushrooms by stem and coat with batter. Carefully place into oil.  
 Remove when batter is light golden brown, about 3- 5 minutes, with a slotted spoon or wire ladle.  
 Drain on paper towels.  
 Dipping sauce can be soy or plum sauce (also Japanese Markets). This must be eaten immediately.

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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The mystery mushroom for April 2008 was a *Verpa conica*. Ester Price was picked as the winner. There were three correct answers out of the seven entries.

## MYSTERY MUSHROOM

by Ester Price

I don't appear until late June - I'm most common under conifers in warm exposed sites along the Front Range (includes our front range) - My shape, flesh colors and stalk surface pattern resemble a mushroom that is avidly sought in Europe and elsewhere but my cap color is dull white to grayish buff. I am a choice edible - what is my Genus- species?

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