

Spore-Addict Times



MONTHLY MEETING

WHEN? Monday, **May 21***, 2012
The 4th Monday of the month. *3rd due to holiday
WHAT TIME?
Mushroom identification 6:30—7:00 pm.
The regular 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. Use either to go to the second floor. The meeting room is on the second floor near the head of the stairs.

WEBSITE: www.pikespeakmushrooms.org

Membership dues \$20

(\$25 includes printed/mailed newsletter).

Send check to PPMS, c/o Frieda Davis,
10 Swallow Drive, Colorado Springs CO 80904

*A friend sends you these pictures via email and asks,
“My husband found these growing in our green onions.
What are they? Can we still eat the onions?” She
thinks the spores are white. We can begin the practice
of identification. Use our ID key and text to try.*

*How much information can be gleaned from the photo?
This website offers some keys to identification.*

<http://www.rogersmushrooms.com/gallery/visualkey.asp>



*But,
when in doubt,
toss it out.*

MAY PRESENTATION

Urban Mushrooms

For decades, a group of CMS members have been studying mushrooms that grow in the city. This month, each visiting presenter will provide new insight on urban mushrooms:

Linnea Gillman: Identifying Urban Species

Jason Salzman: Foray in Urban Markets

Dr. Manny Salzman: Urban Mushroom Poisoning

This group created UrbanMushrooms.com to share what they’ve learned with people who want to know more about city mushrooms.



One goal of the website is to rid the mycophobic public of their “obnoxious” habits of stomping on or kicking innocent mushrooms in their yards or, even worse, using fungicides to “murder” them. www.UrbanMushrooms.com appears to be the first website in the country dedicated exclusively to mushrooms found in lawns, gardens, parks, and other urban habitats.

A snapshot and link to the website are above.

President's Note

By Mike Essam

Welcome members to the PPMS 2012 mushroom season!

I look forward to continuing my decent down the rabbit hole of fungi with you all. I would like to thank those in PPMS who have educated, influenced, and supported me over the last couple years.

A few May showers have given hope for some spring findings. I recently spied some aged *Pleurotus* while biking on the Midland Trail, and observed *Coprinus micaceus* prolifically making their presence in the landscaping around City Hall.



<http://www.mushroomexpert.com/images/kuo/>

So, while the cooler mountain temperatures keep us out of the high country in our search for fungus, many opportunities can present themselves a bit closer to home.

I hope to see you at our May meeting, where we will learn more about searching our urban landscapes for our fungal friends. In the meantime, keep watching the emails for an upcoming May foray.

Fairies, Rain, Mushrooms

By Lee Barzee

(an updated introduction, originally published July 1991)

Come away, O human child!

To the waters and the wild

With a faery, hand in hand,

*For the world's more full of weeping
than you understand.*

W.B Yeats

At our April 2012 meeting, Lee Barzee presented commonly found spring mushrooms of Colorado, based on four decades of knowledge of this area. The most commonly reported local finds for March through May included the Shaggy Mane, morels, false morels, bird's nest mushroom, stink morels, and some polypores. Lee shared many artistic and descriptive photos of these finds, along with hints on looking for mushrooms, based on other clues more noticeable to the eye. Pasque Flowers and Calypso Orchids are symbols of fairies that morels may be nearby. The brighter colors stand out while the mushrooms hide below. Enjoy Lee Barzee's original article.

Irish poet William Butler Yeats, interested in his country's folklore, described the "fairy ring" and the land of Druids in his poetry. The Druids (Celtic priests) belonged to a cult whose celebration included the ritual Dance of the Faery Ring at sacred sites such as Stonehedge.[1] Whether the inspiration for the original faeries was Celtic or pre-Celtic, don't you agree that faeries, great masters of magic and charm, still delight the modern imagination?

The fairies leave evidence of their dances almost every year in Colorado, to indicate the time of morels. The Fairy-slipper Orchid, *Calypso bulbosa*, are often found nearby morel mushrooms. The fairies are generous and even helpful!

Have you ever peered into fairy goblets? Do you suppose that after all that dancing the fairies needed an egg in their goblet of beer?

(continued on next page)

Share your mushroom hunting PHOTOS on our Member Website!

Visit the blog on our website <http://pikespeakmushrooms.org> under the Members Only tab.

You'll need the password to sign in. Contact ppmsmail@gmail.com

Send photos of mushrooms to be posted on the website!

Fairies, Rain, Mushrooms

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Fairy goblets, *Crucibulum leave*, found often on lodgepole pine cones (called *C. vulgare*, which means common in Latin), of the family Nidulariaceae. The order Nidulariales, or bird's nest fungi, are gasteromycetes, those basidios that release their spores from a closed fruiting body, rather than forcibly discharging them in the open air as most member of the class do.

These little treasures are usually found in early autumn in moist, often shaded locations on vegetable and lignin-rich debris (stems, twigs, old nut shells, old matting, manure, soil) according to Smith. [2] However, the fruit bodies are tough and can be found in semiarid Colorado almost any season, still looking quite fresh, the spores still snugly enclosed in the tiny "eggs."

Bird's nest fungi have been familiar to botanists since 1601, according to Tulasne who did a classic study of them in 1844. They were first classified as seed plants simply because of the little seed-like bodies contained in the cup-shaped structures. With the passing of another hundred years, the "seeds" were known to contain spores like those of other fungi, such as puffballs. Yet, there were mysteries to be solved. How did the spores escape and disperse for reproduction?

Botanist Harold J. Brodie has spent a distinguished professional lifetime solving these other mysteries. Professor Emeritus of Botany at the University of Alberta, Dr. Brodie (84 and living in Victoria, B.C. at original publishing), wrote *The Bird's Nest Fungi* [3] telling of these mysteries.

A good picture of fresh fairy cups, *C. leave*, is found in the Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms [4], plate #633. Look up these examples. The early epiphragm, or lid, is shown before it detaches to expose the peridioles (eggs).

Perhaps you knew that the spore dispersal mechanism involves raindrops falling at just the right angle. But the *Crucibulum* genus also has a funicular cord, like an umbilical attachment to each peridiole. It must require a smart-bomb raindrop direct hit to dislodge it from its cup. The attachment is so strong and resilient.

With a razor blade, I cut one little goblet with eggs off the cone and soaked it in water a while to soften it. Then, I cut the 5mm goblet lengthwise for a look under magnification. The cord was scrunches up into the center of the cup. I tried to remove the tiny lens-like peridiole; it was not easy. Still wet, it did finally pull away from the cup and revealed the marvelous, minute, clear gelatinous elastic cable of the funicular cord, still

attached to the egg. As fine as it was, the cord did not break, in spite of my tugging to remove it from the peridiole. It simply stuck to my forceps and remained attached to the little disc. Eventually, I cut the egg and separately mounted the spores from within it onto a slide for a microscopic check. They proved to be the thick-walled, elliptical spores of the species size, textbook perfect.



In nature, bombed out of the goblet-nest by a raindrop, the peridiole egg flies out a distance of several feet. Its funicular cord hits some debris object and sticks like instant glue. The little egg is jerked back by the limit of the cord like an original bungee jumper, even if traveling in an upward direction. It may swing or settle into the new substrate, presumably spilling spores (or waiting for the fairies to spread them during the next rain dance) to begin a new life cycle.

Enchanting!

Dr. Bordie may not have given credit to the fairies, but he did give credit in his book to others for their involvement with the mystery. He mentioned a cartoonist and included a picture of smiling-faced Jamaican boys (his assistants), the joyous spirit of fairies in the flesh. I suggest that Dr. Brodie himself was charmed by the fairies. He showed me that even a slight shift in viewpoint enhances the pleasure which anyone can derive from fungi.

References:

1. *The Impossible People*, Georgess McHargue, 1972, Hold, Rinehart, and Winston, N.Y.
2. *How to Know the Non-gilled Mushrooms*, Alexander H. Smith, Helen V. Smith, and Nancy Weber, Wm. C. Brown Co.
3. *The Bird's Nest Fungi*, Harold J. Brodie, 1975, Univeristy of Toronto Press.
4. *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms*, Gary H. Lincoff, 1981, Aldfred A. Knopf, Inc., N.Y.

The Pikes Peak Mycological Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of mycology. Membership is open to anyone wanting to study mycology. Annual dues are \$20 (\$25 includes a printed newsletter Apr to Sept) for individual and family memberships and may be paid at the meeting.

Submissions of ideas, articles, letters, artwork, and recipes are welcome. Photos and stories may also be submitted to be posted on the website.

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MYSTERY MUSHROOM

This riddle is offered to encourage everyone to practice their mushroom identification skills. Bring your answer to the meeting!

I am only 1 1/2 to 4 cm with a conical to knobbed (at times) bell shaped cap. My color varies dark to pale brownish grey or bluish grey. My gills are white and stain gray when bruised. My hollow, curves stalk has white hairs. I drop white spores as I grow in clusters mainly on Conifer logs.

Find me in spring and early summer, but do not eat me. I belong to the Agaricales order.

April's mystery mushroom was *Discina perlata* (Mushrooms of Colorado, p.37), guessed correctly by Pat Gaffney.

September's mystery mushroom was *Catathelasma periala* (p.109), guessed correctly by Esther Price.

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