



SPORE-ADDICT TIMES

PIKES PEAK MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO SPRINGS OCTOBER 1987 NEWSLETTER



The October meeting of the society will be on Monday the 26th. The time is 7:30 at the usual place, Otero Savings and Loan, corner of highway 115 and Cheyenne Mountain Blvd. Our program for the evening will be put on by Mr. Sam Sushan of the Denver Mycological Society. Sam is a biology teacher at the University of Colorado and is an expert on lichens, his specialty. Sam told me that his program will be somewhat loosely structured but will be pointed in the general direction of identification. He plans, I believe, to include a question and answer session, so gather all those things which have perplexed you this past season (not dealing with "where were they?" and bring them up at the meeting.

As the season comes to a close, we will discuss at the meeting whether to conclude with a pot luck dinner in November as we did last year. This will be the final newsletter of the year. If the consensus at the meeting is to hold the dinner, an announcement will be made via the telephone committee of the time and place.

An interesting article from the bulletin of the Los Angeles Mycological Society addresses the linkage of rainfall to mushroom fruiting. We have seen this past season a very wet early spring, followed by a prolonged very dry summer. The dearth of mushrooms (especially edibles) certainly seems the consequence. Yet how often was heard when a day or so of rain did fall "off it is to the fields for surely we'll find a few now."

"RAIN AND MUSHROOMS: The question of how rainfall is correlated with mushroom fruiting has been a topic of research for Danish mycologist Morten Lange. One of the things he did was to observe the fruiting of mushrooms in a field over a period of four years. In his recent article titled "Fleshy Fungi in grass Fields. II Precipitation and Fructification: (Nordic Journal of Botany, vol.4, pp. 491-501, 1984) he says he chose to study a field because it's a simplified situation: the environment is uniform, there are no special water reservoirs (logs and stumps) or nutrient reservoirs (tree roots), all the mushrooms are saprophytes, and all the mushrooms are exposed to the rain, sun and wind. Conditions were controlled even further for Dr. Lange in that his field was sown with grass, it was fertilized in different ways in different sections and it was mown several times a year.

Forty species of mushrooms fruited during the four years. The more common species turned out to be either early fruiters which appeared in May or June then mostly faded out by mid-September, or else late fruiters which appeared in September and continued strong until late October or into November. Among the early fruiters were *Marasmius oreades*, *Panaelolus foenisecii*, two *Entolomataceae* species and two *Conocybe* species. Among the late fruiters were four species of *Mycena* and two species of *Stropharia*.

Dr. Lange found some relationships between rainfall and fruiting which applied to all the mushrooms. First, at the beginning of a season and also after a long dry period, it took 25 to 30 days after a heavy rain for a good crop of mushrooms to fruit. Secondly, after the field was mowed (and therewith the mushrooms cut down) or after a short dry period, it took 5 days for a mushroom crop to appear. It turns out that the 25 to 30 days is the time

required by mycelium to become activated, grow, and finally produce the tiny primordia which enlarge to become mushrooms.

The effect of drought as a mushroom inhibitor was found to depend especially on the amount of sunshine falling on the field. A sunny day in summer set back fruiting more than a sunny day in fall. As few as 2 sunny days in summer had a detrimental effect on fruiting.

Sometimes special fruiting patterns were observed for particular species. A good year of fruiting for *Clitocybe angustissima*? was followed by a poor one...apparently because the mycelium had exhausted its productivity in the first year. *Nolanea sericea* actually reached its greatest numbers after droughts; it would seem that either this species is stimulated to form primordia by dryness (which then can fruit soon after the next rain) or else its mycelium out-competes with other species under dry conditions." Foray chairmen of the future please note!

CULLINARY CORNER

I'm going to make the rather shakey assumption that you either have a store of *Boletus* held over from more bounteous times, or are willing to pay the going rate for store-boughten (or will substitute what you have). The season however is here for this recipe...and I trust the supply of pheasants is better than the past year's offerings of fungi.

From the original recipes of Kate March::

PHEASANT WITH MADEIRA AND MUSHROOM SAUCE

1 2 1/2 lb pheasant
1/2 tsp. rosemary
1/4 tsp. sage
1/4 tsp thyme
1/2 tsp. salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
5 slices of side pork (bacon?)
1 tsp.cornstarch
1 Tbsp. cold water
2 c. mushrooms (*Boletus edulis*
meadow, oyster or ?)
3 Tbsp. Madeira wine

Preheat the oven to 350 deg... Remove the giblets for later use and wash the pheasant inside and out with cold running water and pat completely dry. In a small bowl mix the rosemary, sage, thyme, 1/4 tsp. of the salt and a few grindings of black pepper. Spread the mixture on both the inside and outside of the bird. Place, breast side down, on a rack set over a shallow roasting pan. Place the 5 strips of side pork on top, covering the pheasant. Bake in the middle of the oven for 2 1/2 hours until done. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, bring 4 c. of water to

a boil. Add the pheasant neck, gizzard and heart and cook over moderate heat for 1 hour. Reserve the stock. (Save the liver for later use). After the pheasant is done and the stock has cooked, combine the cornstarch and cold water in a small bowl. Put approximately 3 Tbsp. of the pheasant pan drippings in a 10-12 inch skillet over moderate heat. Brown the liver in this, remove and chop finely. Add the mushrooms, 1/4 tsp. salt, and a few grindings of pepper to the skillet. Saute 3 minutes or so and then add 1 c. of the stock, Madeira and chopped liver. Bring to a boil stirring in all browned bits that cling to the side and bottom of the pan. Recombine the cornstarch and water and stir into the sauce. Allow to thicken, pour over the pheasant and serve.

For the book/recipe collectors among us, an excellent cookbook published by the San Francisco Mycological Society is now available: "Wild About Mushrooms... The Mycological Society of San Francisco Cookbook." 150 recipes, 20 drawings featuring mushrooms, tips for cleaning, slicing and cooking mushrooms, sections on home cultivation and medicinal values. Send a check for \$12.95 payable to MSSF-Cookbook to P.O. Box 11321, San Francisco, CA 94101 together with mailing information.

