



# Spore-Addict Times

The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society

August 1991

## Mushrooming with integrity

by David Watson

I remember well my introduction to wild mushrooms. Seven years ago, my girlfriend—now wife—Annette, showed me what distinguished one mushroom from another, which differences were due simply to environment, and which differences really separated species. She told me about caps and stipes, gills and pores, ridges and reticulations, veils and volvas. And once I could tell them apart, she told me which mushrooms were poisonous and which were choice edibles. I was captivated, both by her and by the mushrooms.

But she told me something more. On a trip to the Collegiate Peaks, I was excited to make my own discoveries of the *Boletus edulis* and *Lactarius deliciosus* that I had learned about. I wanted to take them all, to triumphantly fill my basket. But Annette said, "No, leave some to release their spores and some for other mushroom hunters who might visit this place." Now I was impressed. Here was a commitment to preservation and maintenance of the forest that was a premise of mushroom hunting. Annette was describing one tenet of the mushroom hunting ethic.

Alas, my mushrooming has strayed from the ideal of this ethic. I have at times taken all or too many mushrooms. But I repent, and as part of my penance I wish to relate to the newcomers to this activity, the mushroom hunting ethic as I learned it.

- Leave at least half of what you find. If everyone does this, there will always be some left. If you want more than half of what you find in one spot, seek out another spot and take some from it. Don't be lazy.

- Leave the smallest specimens to mature. They will be worth more to someone else in a day or two and they might have a chance to release some spores. Some Society members report that, in their experience, small specimens that are physically disturbed,

for preservation is a lot of work. Of course, healthy competition on group forays is part of the fun. It may even encourage individuals to sharpen their sensory acuity. But be sure that the competition is to see who can bring back the most mushrooms while leaving at least half of what they find in the woods.

- Disturb the underlying mycelium as little as possible. Cover it where it's left exposed by your digging or plucking.

- Don't leave an ugly trail behind you. Don't kick or pluck unwanted species (not even *Russulas*).

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**"In two words, a modern mushroom hunting ethic means *caring* and *sharing*."**

David Arora

*All That the Rain Promises and More...*

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even slightly, when a nearby larger mushroom is removed, cease to grow and mature. I do not know how common this phenomenon is, but one might consider passing over a large mushroom if removing it would disturb one that is immature.

- Never take more mushrooms than you are going to use immediately or are willing to preserve. Most fresh mushrooms don't keep very long, even refrigerated, and preparing them

Discarded caps, stems, and trimmings are trash, and, for at least a few days, they are as unsightly as paper or cans.

- Always take the time to appreciate where you are, and what it has to offer besides edible mushrooms. You're not just there for the mushrooms; you could buy them at a store.

What I have outlined here is merely a guide for personal conduct. There are other broader issues concerning wild mushrooms, and competition for

## Mushrooming with integrity, continued

them. David Arora concludes his new book, *All That the Rain Promises and More...* (Ten Speed Press, 1991), with an essay, "Toward a Mushroom Hunting Ethic." In this essay, Arora asserts that wild mushrooms should be viewed as a renewable natural resource, and as such require thoughtful, scientific management. Mushroom hunting can be a non-destructive use of our public lands with measurable benefit that provides reason to preserve these lands at a time when they are being threatened. I wholeheartedly support Arora's stand. In fact, I recommend that anyone with

an interest in wild mushrooms, from commercial pickers to mycologists, buy or borrow this book and carefully consider Arora's essay. As wild mushrooms become more popular in this country, we may all need to heed a more global mushrooming ethic or risk having our harvests severely reduced in quantity and variety.

## Speedy Cheesecake Pie

Society members brought a cornucopia of delightful dishes to the picnic on 3 August. Pat Gustavson's cheesecake was among the favorites.

### Filling and crust

1 1/4 cup or 24 squares cinnamon graham crackers  
1/4 cup butter, softened  
1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
2 eggs  
dash of salt  
1/2 cup sugar or honey

### Topping

1 cup sour cream  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Combine cracker crumbs and butter. Press into buttered eight-inch pie plate with a spatula; build up sides. To make filling, beat cream cheese until fluffy and gradually beat in honey or sugar, lemon juice, vanilla and salt. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Pour filling into crumb crust. Bake in slow oven (325°) for thirty minutes or until set. Combine sour cream, two tablespoons sugar and vanilla and spoon over top of pie. Bake ten minutes longer. Cool. Chill several hours. Serve plain or with red ripe strawberries.

## Spore-Addict Times

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Spore-Addict Times is published monthly from April through October by the Pikes Peak Mycological Society. Submissions of articles, book reviews, letters, artwork, recipes, and ideas are encouraged.

The Pikes Peak Mycological Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing interest in, and understanding of, the field of mycology. Membership is open to all persons interested in mycology. A gastronomic passion for wild fungi is not required. Annual dues are \$10 for individual and family memberships.

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# Forays

by Lori Ligon

Many thanks to George Singer and Don Berrigan who planned and delivered a successful picnic on 3 August. They provided mouth-watering steaks, grilled to order, and three skillets simmering with morels, chanterelles, and boletes. Wonderful salads and desserts brought by club members made this day one of the highlights of the season. An orienteering course set up by Jay Kilgore began the day's activities. Then mushroom seekers, their enthusiasm undampened by the rain, raided Fox run Park. Dennis Craig even appeared with beautiful chanterelles which he found "one mile north" of the picnic pavilion.

More thanks are due Frieda and George Davis who led twenty club members on a foray to the Spanish Peaks and La Veta Pass area the following weekend. Annette Campbell found chanterelles almost everywhere they stopped, and Mary Will was puffball queen for about three hours after spotting a nice specimen high on a rocky cliff. But later, Doris Bennett, Elsie Pope, and Lori Ligon found about fifty pounds of *Calvatia booniana*, western giant puffball. Fame is fleeting!

Hans Ras and Ed Malew deserve praise for the handling of their RVs over rocks, wash-outs, and passes. Some people will do anything to find a mushroom!

Reynolds Bane and Jay Kilgore braved the elements and lack of fire (and therefore lack of dinner) and spent the night camped in the forest while others less adventurous slept at the Cuchara Inn. The abundance of flowers and mushrooms of impressive variety made this a memorable overnight foray.

## Meeting News

☞ **August.** The mushroom season is nearing its peak, and many members are returning from forays with abundant harvests. So this month's meeting will be an open forum on tips and techniques for the use and preservation of all kinds of mushrooms. Experienced members should come prepared to share an idea or two on such subjects as methods of cleaning mushrooms, best ways to prepare and season before freezing, acceptable recipe substitutions, and unusual uses for preserved mushrooms. Beginning members should come prepared to reap a wealth of helpful information, if they can sort it out from the likely differences of opinion.

The meeting will be on Monday, 26 August, in the usual place (the Junior League office at 2914 Beacon Street, just south of Fillmore) at the usual time (7:00 p.m.).

☞ **Last Month.** At the July meeting, Jay Kilgore introduced the society to orienteering and basic survival skills. Jay also generously raffled some frozen, sautéed *Lactarius deliciosus* from last year's harvest.

The society welcomed two new members, Kathy Walta and Elsie Pope.

After considerable discussion of the society's liability for harm to participants in its activities, members voted against incorporating the club and instead decided to require members and foray participants to sign a waiver. Dan Lacy will lead the development of the waiver form.

The society also voted to spend up to \$75 on a first aid kit to be taken on forays by the foray leader.

## Rain Report

At the National Weather Service at the Colorado Springs airport, the actual total rainfall for July was 2.87 inches, a mere two hundredths of an inch more than normal for the month. So the weather service's thirty-day outlook last month was correct for the first fifteen days. Then the weather, and the weather service's luck, changed.

In the first twenty-one days of August, 4.11 inches of rain fell. Normal rainfall is 1.93 inches, so the last three weeks have been twice as wet as usual. This rain really makes *The Old Farmer's Almanac* (Yankee Publishing Inc., 1990) look bad. It predicted average to below-average rainfall for both July and August in the mountains and plains.

So far this year, Colorado Springs

has received 13.12 inches of rain, 11 percent more than the normal of 11.82 inches. Perhaps this explains this year's bounty of mushrooms.

The National Weather Service outlook for Colorado Springs through mid-September predicts five percent below normal temperatures and five percent above normal rainfall. Normal rainfall for the period is 1.48 inches. *The Old Farmer's Almanac* predicts the opposite: substantially below-average rainfall for September in both the mountains and plains.

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# Stems and pieces



**Be a Citizen Ambassador.** The Citizen Ambassador Program of People to People International is selecting a delegation of specialists in all aspects of mushroom production to visit the People's Republic of China next January. The delegation will visit mushroom research facilities, universities, growers, and processors in Beijing, Wuhan, Fuzhou, and Hong Kong. Discussions will cover such subjects as edible mushrooms, commercial production, marketing, and research. The delegation will also have the opportunity to view the culture and beauty of China and to meet socially with Chinese colleagues. David R. Hosford, Ph.D., will lead. For more information, consult the information and registration packet at the August meeting.

**Spring mushrooming in Argentina.** Asensio Tours has organized a mushroom study tour to Argentina for 1-11 October. Dr. Dick Homola, Professor of Botany at the University of Maine will lead the tour to diverse areas of the country. Informational fliers and registration forms will be available at the August meeting.

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