

# Spore-Addict Times



The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society

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September 2004

## MONTHLY MEETING:

**WHEN?** Monday, September 27

**WHAT TIME?** 7:00 PM. The meeting will come to order at 7:30 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.

**PROGRAM:** The program for this month will be a presentation by Marc Donsky. Mr. Donsky will tell us all about medicinal mushrooms, a subject I understand he is well qualified to present. Thanks to Dennis Craig for arranging this presentation.

**PRESIDENT'S NOTES:** by Bud Bennett  
The party's over. The lack of rain lately seems to have brought a quick end to the mushroom season.

The Mushroom Fair on August 28<sup>th</sup> at the Fountain Creek Nature Center was a definite success. Many thanks to Ken Pals who coordinated the

event, and to Lee Barzee, who was clearly inundated by the amount of specimens brought in, and also to club members that manned the information table and answered the many questions from visitors. The relatively rainy days



Rudy Parks With Display

of July and August brought above average fruitings and interested people came to the fair to find out more about Mycology, or just to find out what was growing in their yard. We also sold quite a few T-shirts (mostly to new members so we didn't make much money on the deal).

We have eleven new memberships that joined PPMS as a result of the fair. In talking to some of them I was reminded of my initial enthusiasm when I discovered the mushroom world in the summer of 1997, our last rainy season. I see that enthusiasm in club members at every meeting or foray. With this many new members I should reiterate the fundamental cautions of Mycophagy:

1) Never eat any mushroom that you cannot positively identify as edible (if in doubt throw it out), 2. Never eat any mushroom that is not properly cooked.

Remember there are old mushroom hunters and bold mushroom hunters but there are few old and bold mushroom hunters.

Please extend a warm welcome to these new members if you see them at the September meeting: Carla Turner, Beth Moorman, Renee and Paul Hathcoat, Dale Anne Pijanowski, Charles Hall and Carol White, J. Greg Lucey, Gerald E. Anderson, Kim Pettit, Michael and Fawn Remington, Michael Warren, and Jane Cauve

**A Super Fair** by Ken Pals The Gazette called it "fun with fungi." The Independent provided a riddle

Hard at Work



to stimulate interest, "Why did the fungi leave the party? Because there wasn't mushroom. Ahem. At times there wasn't much room as about 130 people came to Pikes Peak Mycological Society's 7th **Annual Mushroom Fair** held



Eva Mattedi's Basket

at Fountain Creek Nature Center on August 28. Over 90 species of fungi were identified, 94 to be exact, making 2004 a good year. Members of the club did an outstanding job in collecting specimens. Over the 7 years of the fair we have identified 250 species. This year **29 new species** were added to the list.



Michael Park's Helvella

Thanks all the members who participated in some way to make this event successful. Thank you to those who posted the fliers and promoted the fair to friends. Thank you to all who spent time exploring plains and mountains for specimens to bring to the fair. A special thank you

Pat Gustavson for manning the hospitality table, to Lee Barzee for being our chief mushroom identifier, to Dennis Craig, George and Frieda Davis, Bud Bennet, Glenn Lorang,



Ilse Stratton, Winnie Fairbanks and so many others for doing a great job in interpreting fungi to the visitors. Thanks also for the great display brought in by Rudy and his dad. It was a "spore-ific" day!

As always it is important to review what we did and how we did it. We would appreciate your comments pro and con about the fair. Was the time good? Is the location suitable? What would you like to see that would make the fair better? Is

it reasonable to charge a fee to the public or would it be appropriate to give a donation to the nature center for use of the facility? Pass along your comments to one of the officers or Ken Pals. Your input is appreciated.

### Mystery Mushroom

The mystery mushroom has been provided this month by Pat Gustavson, the winner of the contest in July. There was no mystery mushroom in August because of the mushroom fair. Her clues are on page 4. Remember the winner is paid five bucks as a prize but the real winners are the club members and especially those who try to identify the mushroom. Good luck!

### A Matsutake Hunt

by Simone Thompson

After hearing about the unsuccessful hunts for this elusive mushroom in the Pikes Peak region, I was very glad to take Norm Birchler (editor for the Denver Club) up on his invitation to take us on a Matsutake hunt around the Boulder area.

The White Matsutake (*Tricholoma magnivelare*) is



a robust, white mushroom with a very distinctive odor. It's flesh is very tough and hard to the touch, with a cottony veil. In ancient

Japan it was seen as a fertility symbol and reserved for priests and the royal court. Women were not allowed to speak the name Matsutake. (Come on guys...) Since it is highly prized by Asian-Americans some states in the Pacific Northwest require that the mushroom be cut in half, while still in the forest, so it can not be sold in markets.

Our hunt took us (Norm, his wife Karen and me) into the beautiful mountains above Boulder; elevation around 10,000 feet. In Colorado the Matsutake seems to be found most often under Lodgepole pines, distinguished by their straight trunks and shorter needles.



Since the mushroom grows very reliably in the same patches year after year, Norm was able to find a Matsutake within minutes. It took me somewhat longer, because I had to stop looking for mushrooms in the normal fashion and start looking for the "humps" only. Matsutake mushrooms grow largely underground, with only a hump of dirt and pine needles to let you know of the hidden treasure in comparison with the more abundant *Russula* that we also found. The Matsutake pushes up more dirt since the fruiting body grows deeper in the ground. One should look for little whirlpools of dirt and be prepared to dig.

The odor is so strong, that it soon stuck to my hands, making identification by the smell alone difficult, especially with *Tricholoma zelleri*, a very similar looking mushroom growing in the same habitat. However, the *Tricholoma zelleri* does lack the fresh, spicy smell completely and is darker in color. We had a very successful hunt, taking home enough mushrooms for many delicious meals.

The Matsutake is supposed to be good in sushi, rice and with stir fried vegetables, never with cream based soups though, since the cream would take away it's unique flavor.

Norm and Karen are very experienced hunters and I am thankful that they were willing to share their knowledge and experience with me.

### Mushroom Poisoning

On Friday, September 17th in the Local and State section of the Gazette an article written by Elena Brown reported a mushroom poisoning. The thrust of the article was the quick thinking of an eight year old boy to summon aid for his stricken mom. He was

credited and honored for having saved his mother's life.

Emergency medical personnel transported the lady to a local hospital. By the time they arrived at the hospital the patient had lapsed into a coma. According to the article the mushroom was determined by the doctors to be *Amanita pantherina*.

The lady was collecting mushrooms from her garden to use in making "frittatas" when she decided to taste a few. Within minutes she began to feel sick, weak and she began hallucinating.

This happened in July, a time when just about anything was fruiting, given half a chance.

I wonder if anyone cautioned the lady on the dangers of eating any wild mushroom raw. The way the article is written it would appear that she tasted the mushrooms while harvesting them.

The Gazette missed a great opportunity to educate the general public on the dangers associated with eating wild mushrooms, cooked or raw, without positively identifying them. I hope all these things were done and they may have been. That was not the purpose of the article. The boy was indeed a hero to remain so calm in the face of a life threatening emergency.

### Bits And Pieces

Pat Gustavson reports that there are the following T-shirt supplies, all short sleeves: S (3) M (3) L (14) XL (12) Total: 32

### An Experiment by Don Pelton

I took that *Sarcodon imbricatum* (from the July Meeting) home, chopped it up, and put it in a big stew pot about a foot tall and a foot wide, then filled it about two-thirds full of water, then put in a white shirt I got from the surplus store, and let it simmer for about two hours. The water in the pot looked a lot like the juice in a can of black olives. The shirt came out a light beige. Very light, as a matter of fact, you had to hold it next to pure white to see the color difference. I thought that perhaps being two-thirds synthetic, the shirt didn't take as much as a piece of cloth that was natural. I then put in a white all cotton T-shirt, and this time, I got a much darker shade of beige, about the color of the underside of the fresh *Sarcodon*. I remember that the book said that you could get different colors with the addition of different mineral salts, like Copper Sulfate. I was planning to do some more experimentation. Hopefully, next year will be more normal, or perhaps a little wetter than normal.

**Spore-Addict Times**  
**P.O. Box 39**  
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The Pikes Peak Mycological Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of mycology, publishes Spore-Addict Times monthly from April through October. Membership is open to anyone wanting to study mycology. Annual dues are \$15 for individual and family memberships. Submissions of ideas, articles, reviews, letters, artwork and recipes are welcome.

### **MYSTERY MUSHROOM**

I am a "comeback mushroom" revived in water.....delicious in soups, gravies, where ever you would like to use my caps.

I'm often found in fairy rings in grass. My tan bell shaped cap flattens out a little as I mature producing white to buff spores. I have notched gills nearly free and separate under a cap that is 2-6 cms. I have no veil on my stipe. I am an LBM that is truly worth while knowing.

Who Am I?

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