



The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society

1974-2020

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April 2020

Issue 1

PPMS Amidst Covid-19

a new season, a new paradigm

Inside: President's letter, Soma Foray, Treasurer's report and a new recipe!



Photo by Mercedes Perez Whitman, her first *Hericium coralloides*!



PIKES PEAK
MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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2019 PPMS OFFICERS:

President	Ben Kinsley
Vice -President	Jennifer Bell
Treasurer	Beth Leake
Secretary & Webmaster	Alyssa Hartson
Newsletter Editors	Jessica Langley Mercedes Whitman
Librarian	Isabel Gring
Herbarium Liaison	TBA
Hospitality	TBA
Foray Coordinator	TBA

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Membership Options

New Members:

Individual Membership: \$30/ year

Family Membership: \$40/year

Renewing Members:

Individual Membership: \$25/ year

Family Membership: \$35/year

Lifetime Membership

Individual: \$300

Family: \$400

To Pay Online via PayPal: <http://pikespeakmyc.org/join/>

Send renewal checks to:

PPMS Treasurer c/o Beth Leake

1370 Golden Hills Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Please make checks payable to PPMS.

All statements and opinions written in this newsletter belong solely to the individual author and in no way represent or reflect the opinions of the Pikes Peak Mycological Society. To receive this publication electronically contact Beth Leake at:

treasurer@pikespeakmyc.org

Archived copies of the newsletter are available in the Newsletters section of our website.

Submissions for the next issue of Spore Addict must reach the editors, Mercedes Whitman & Jessica Langley, by May 30, 2020.

editor@pikespeakmyc.org

2020 UPCOMING EVENTS

Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month, starting at 6:00 pm, at the Bear Creek Nature Center, located at 245 Bear Creek Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80906. Each meeting is approximately 90 minutes long and features a different speaker each month.

April 22 - ***NOTE***** Due to COVID-19 health concerns, our first public meeting will be broadcast via **YouTube Live**. Please make sure to tune into the [Pikes Peak Mycological Society YouTube page](#) and tune in at **6pm** to meet the officers and listen to Ben Kinsley and Jennifer Bell discuss basics of mushroom foraging and mountain safety.

May 27 - Mercedes Whitman: High Desert Mushroom Cultivation and Other Fungal Pursuits: Diverse Strategies in an increasingly Temperamental Climate

June 24 - Topic TBD

July 22 - Topic TBD

August 19 - (note: 3rd Wednesday)- Topic TBD - look for many events surrounding Telluride Mushroom Festival!

September 23 - Topic TBD

October - Date and topic TBD

2019 FINANIAL REPORT

From Treasurer, Beth Leake

Balance at the start of 2019 **\$6,280.82**

Income from Membership Dues \$1945.00

Sticker Sales \$80.00

Total Income **\$2,025.00**

Expenses

Promotional Items -\$477.00

KitScates Printing -\$61.86

Advertising -\$46.85

Website -\$115.39

Newsletter Shipping -\$22.80

Lecture fees & expenses -\$1500.00

Paypal Fees -\$58.00

NAMA membership -\$30.00

Bear Creek Rental (2019 & 2020) -\$420.00

Total 2019 Expenses **-\$2,732.00**

Balance at the end of 2019 **\$5,918.92**

MEMBERS CHECKLIST:

Is your email & phone number up to date?



Send contact info to: Beth
treasurer@pikespeakmyc.com

Have you paid your DUES?

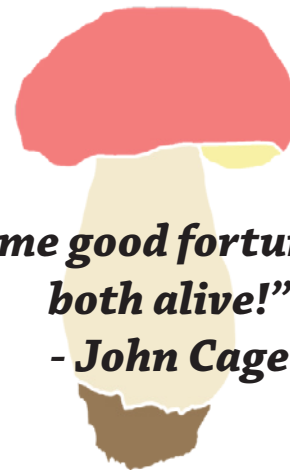


If not, please send to:
Treasurer c/o Beth Leake
1370 Golden Hills Road,
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Care to Volunteer?



Reach out to: Alyssa Hartson
info@pikespeakmyc.org



“Supreme good fortune - we’re both alive!”
- John Cage

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

We mean it!! We can't do this without you. Looking ahead to next season, we are seeking volunteers to do a number of things. Please contact Alyssa Hartson, info@pikespeakmyc.org, or Ben Kinsley, president@pikespeakmyc.org if you are interested in:

- coordinating forays
- writing for the newsletter
- hosting an event
- herbarium liason
- record keeping on forays
- leading a foray
- hospitality

President's Letter

Greetings mycophiles!

The 2020 mushroom season is upon us, and what a wild year it has already been! Ski resorts reported record-setting snowfall this winter (over 25 feet in February), a fact that has made mushroom hunters salivate with anticipation of future honey holes. Then, in March, the COVID-19 pandemic made it to Colorado and, as we all know too well, public life was put on hold for an unknown duration.

Unfortunately, this meant we had to cancel our special Pre-Season lecture by Olga Tzogas, of Smugtown Mushrooms. Our official first meeting, scheduled for April 22, cannot happen in person as planned. As is tradition, this welcome meeting is an introduction to our club and Colorado fungi by members of your trusted PPMS board. We are still working out the details, but we plan to hold this meeting remotely through an online video and screen-sharing platform. Stay tuned as more information will be announced soon.

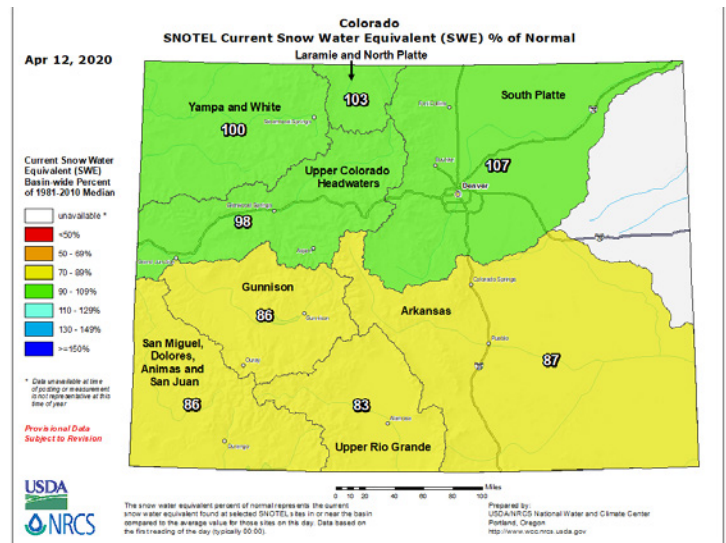
At this point, we are holding off on finalizing any of our upcoming speakers and club events until we know more about the state of the pandemic. Your health and safety are our first priority and we will act accordingly depending on how this crisis evolves. We appreciate your support and understanding, and we will keep you all up-to-date via email, our website, and our Facebook group.

I do want to take this opportunity to introduce and thank my fellow 2020 PPMS officers. They have already brought amazing energy to the club, and we have a lot of exciting plans in store for the (hopefully near) future.

Jennifer Bell, Vice President
 Alyssa Hartson, Secretary & Webmaster
 Beth Leake, Treasurer
 Brian Barzee, Board Member At-Large
 Jessica Langley & Mercedes Whitman, Newsletter
 Isabel Gring, Librarian

I know many of you are anxious to get outside and begin the hunt. Please be smart and stay safe, for home isolation will certainly make the first foray that much sweeter. I, for one, will be thinking of composer-mycologist John Cage's words when I spot my first mushroom this season: "Supreme good fortune - we're both alive!"

Sincerely,
 Ben Kinsley



SOMA CAMP 2020

A volunteer's field notes from the West Coast gathering

By Mercedes Perez Whitman



Every January the Sonoma County Mycological Association (SOMA) hosts their three day Camp at the CYO Retreat Center near Occidental on Graton Rancheria territory. Anticipating winter blues and seeking new foraging terrain, I signed up in November to volunteer and was put on the Feast Crew to my delight. Actually, the terrain wasn't completely new to me; I'd spent a summer as a farm intern in Petaluma six years ago and explored the nearby forests when I could. I learned about turkey tails, which could be found on the farm property, but otherwise mushrooms and mycology were not so much on my mind. However, my burgeoning interest in agriculture helped guide me to mycology a couple years later. Returning to Sonoma and experiencing the land during their mushroom season had significant meaning to me.

The CYO Center has cabins for shared lodging and provides meals onsite which comes with the ticket, making Camp a more accessible event in comparison to some other mycological gatherings. The Feast Crew is led by Julie Schreiber and prepares lunch and dinner throughout the weekend. Breakfasts are made by CYO services. We made foods like roasted mushrooms and smoked gouda taquitos, mushroom and wild rice stew, and pork stew with tomatillos. Before dinner there was a period of "Cheese and Convivial Hobnobbing," featuring large tables of cheeses brought from Mark Todd, "The Cheese Dude," and wines from all over the

globe. I felt truly spoiled. And being a kitchen volunteer turned out to be great for a number of reasons: at the end of the long weekend we were entitled to our own shares of leftovers, got recipes of everything we made, and I became friends with crew members immediately. Many of the Camp's attendees were from nearby and knew each other already, so it was much appreciated to connect with others and feel welcomed to the Association like I did.

I wasn't completely alone there to begin with, as friends I'd met at other mycological events were present and some other Coloradans made the trip out: PPMS's own Jennifer Bell, Rayne Grant (who presented "Using Mushrooms to Help Save the Planet"), and Kristen and Trent Blizzard of Modern Forager. And a ticketless Brian Barzee managed to get into the main hall for convivial hobnobbing one night and hang out by the Camp's late night fire.

When not on kitchen duty, I had time for some talks and a foray. "A Review of Medicinal Mushrooms and Bioactive Compounds" by Gordon Walker of *Fascinated by Fungi* was an important dive into the significance (or lack thereof) of in vitro and in vivo lab animal studies that claim certain medicinal qualities of mushrooms. He pointed out why such studies may not actually hold the same weight when applied to humans. The foray was led by Mikhael Selk and Britt Bunyard at a spot off the Bohemian Highway that's maintained by local environmental conservation organization LandPaths. It wasn't a great year for mushroom foraging in Sonoma, but I was happy to find turkey tails, many a pluteus, oysters, candy caps, and my first coral tooth hericium (*Hericium coralloides*, pictured on cover). I also ate many young thistles along the walk, which I recognized after attending "Edible Plants During the Mushroom Season" by Kevin Feinsein the day before (and had confirmed before eating).

On the last day after Camp ended, I got to catch a tour of Mycopia Mushrooms in Sebastopol with Justin Reyes, Director of Sales and Marketing. I was particularly excited to visit the facility since they're one of the only companies I know of that reuse their fruiting vessels. In commercial production,



friend Naya Barretto with dinner entrees. Photo by Mercedes Perez Whitman



An array of mushrooms in the kitchen to be baked for dinner. Photo by Mercedes Perez Whitman

polyurethane bags are the standard. I recognized typical mushroom varieties like nameko and pioppini and learned of a couple unique ones. The Nebrodini Bianco™ (Pleurotus nebrodensis), relative of Trumpet Royale and native to Sicily, is only being grown commercially in the US by Mycopia, and the Alba Clamshell™ (Hypsizygus marmoreus), albino strain of the Brown Clamshell, is commonly grown in East Asia but not often in the States.

A couple highlights not featured on the Camp schedule were going on a night hike with Jill Easterday, who presented on bioluminescent fungi earlier that day, “koji queen” Eleana Tsu, and others. Jill had a couple blacklights and we found bioluminescent mushrooms, lichens and insects. Then there was a late night gathering for people to show and offer tastings of fermented foods and drinks. I tried Eleana’s koji beets and someone’s matsutake vodka.

After the weekend I stayed in Sonoma and the Bay Area with friends and got to catch the San Francisco mycological society’s (MSSF) monthly meeting for a cooking demo with chef Chad Hyatt. At the beginning of the meeting my friend William Goss, Mycology Director of the Decriminalize California initiative, addressed the audience about the group’s grassroots efforts to decriminalize psilocybin and how attendees can help the cause by signing their petition, volunteering and wearing Decrim merch. You can find more info at decrimca.org, where you can also learn about their work in calling for the legalization of electronic signatures in the time of COVID-19 to help their and other initiatives.

Making travel plans isn’t high on my priorities at a time like this, but I hope it’s possible to join the Feast Crew again at SOMA Camp next year. Despite the damage from and continued threats of floods and wildfires, Sonoma County continues to be beautiful, biodiverse and resilient. It’s a special place to me in a number of ways and I wish to continue adding to the count.



Mycopia Mushrooms tour. Photo by Mercedes Perez Whitman



SOMA foray. Photo by Mercedes Perez Whitman

Feature Recipe

The Daily Grind Burger

by Chef Zack Mazi



Since we are all staying at home, I thought sharing a more complicated recipe that delivers the most satisfying experience of eating a truly american meal would be the best way to help everyone pass their time. Unfortunately, this recipe does require a meat grinder, but I truly believe that once you have made this recipe once, it will be on your weekly meal plan anyway, and a meat grinder will seem like a cannot-live-without tool in your home kitchen. I have been using the metal KitchenAid attachment meat grinder for years and it has never failed me. A metal grinder is important, as a plastic one does not hold the cold from the freezer for long, and grinding meat cold is super important.

If your meat is frozen well enough and cut evenly, you can pulse it in a cuisinart as well, but I must admit my experience with this process is much more limited and I cannot swear by it. You may also be able to get your butcher to grind the meat combination for you. We have found that a mix of the large die cut and medium die cut for this burger mix produce the best textures.

The aioli, mustard and pickled onions are, for me, the best complement to this unbelievably delicious burger, and are also great condiments to keep in your fridge for a myriad of other uses as well. As far as the bun goes, it is one of the most important components. I am a chef, not a baker, and my homemade buns never turned out as good as the local baker's brioche buns. You want one that does not fall apart, but also does not dominate the mouthfeel of this delicious combination of flavors. Best to try out as many as you can to find the perfect one.

Chef Zack's Salt and Pepper Blend

I use a salt and pepper blend for almost all of my savory dishes. I find that making the pre-mix is the best way to quickly season just about anything. I ALWAYS use Kosher Salt. Kosher salt is half as salty as Table salt because it is flakes that take up more airspace. Using it for all of my recipes will guarantee that the recipe is not too salty. Himalayan Pink Salt, Table Salt, or other salts can be too dense to accurately work in recipes if you are exchanging salts, so unless you are comfortable with the saltiness of each salt, use Kosher!

The super secret ingredient in my salt and pepper blends is a spice that was long forgotten after the Ottoman Empire closed down the Silk Road in the 15th Century now called Balinese Long Pepper. It is used in India, and it's Sanskrit name Pipilli is the root word for the current word "pepper." In dry form it is a long thin (about 1 in) black and hard peppercorn. YOU can find them on Amazon or other spice order companies.

2 tbls black peppercorns
2 ea balinese long-pepper
1 tsp powdered mushroom blend
.75 cup kosher salt

1. In a spice grinder (re-purposed coffee grinder), grind the pepper corns and long pepper to fine powder.
2. Mix all ingredients together thoroughly. If you have it Agaricus blazeii powder has the most Umami punch of any dried mushroom. Porcini works well too. Sometimes to change things up I add a tiny amount of a spice blend to my salts as well, such as a bit of curry or ras-el-hanoot or chinese 5-spice, but I mean TINY amount. Just enough to change the experience, but not enough to make it a dominating flavor. Have fun with this recipe, it may just change your life. You will find that you can come up with a proprietary blend of your own and your friends will ask you every time why your food tastes so good.

The Burger

1.5 # short-rib, cut off the bone, ¾" cubes
1.5 # brisket, ¾" cubes
1.5 # sirloin, ¾" cubes
2 tbls morel mushroom powder
2 tbls salt and pepper blend



1. Put all meat grinder components in the freezer.
2. Mix all ingredients and freeze halfway--by spreading the pieces out on a pan or plate--before grinding. The freezing of both the meat and the grinder parts helps the meat break up well and not become mushy when ground.
3. One of the secrets to truly unctuous burger is to form the patties very loosely, rather than tight packing. Grinding the meat with the salt actually caused the binding lignans in the meat to form, and the burger will hold together even when more loosely packed.
4. The recipe makes about 10 7-oz burger patties. Amazingly, they also take much longer to grill than one might expect, so count on at least 5 minutes per side to thoroughly cook the meat all the way through. That being said, if you are using the best quality meats and grinding your own, a rare burger is totally safe to eat, (provided you yourself have good hygienic practices).
5. As with any burger, the meat will tighten as it cooks, so make a wider than desired patty to start with a small indent in the middle.

Porcini aioli

Of all the recipes from our “elevated bar food” restaurant in Santa Cruz, I often tell people that this was my favorite recipe to come out of the experience. It is not complicated, but the variations on this recipe were used on everything from our Vietnamese Beef tongue to our Banh Mi sandwich, or burger, our french fry dipping sauce, and on and on and on. This recipe was perfect for the restaurant because it is easy to scale, easy to make, and holds for a week or more without breaking (when an emulsion of oil and water such as aioli, separates and becomes running and clumpy).

The oil used for this aioli makes a difference. I have found that the Chosen Foods brand of avocado oil is the cleanest, least greasy, and most flavorless oil of any I have ever used, and it is the secret to allowing the ingredients to stand out, rather than the mouthfeel of the oil. Because this recipe is a third of the size we used in the restaurant, it can be made in a small cuisinart or any OPEN blender (as in, not a nutri bullet) with a whisk or with a hand blender in a tall container that allows the egg and mushroom to be fully whipped as you pour in the oil for emulsification.

- 1 ea eggs, sous vide 145°F for 45 min (in the shell)**
- 1 ea garlic clove**
- 1 tsp vinegar, sherry**
- 2 Tbls Cooked porcini mushroom or 1 T porcini mushroom powder**
- 11 oz oil, avocado, Chosen Foods Brand***
- 1 tsp lemon juice**
- 1 tsp salt and pepper**

1. When you cook an egg at 145°F for 45 minutes in the shell, the result is an incredible poached egg IN THE SHELL. It takes at least one experience of this before believing it, it is such an astounding result. If you do not have a sous vide wand, you can replicate the process by heating water on the stove until it is just steaming, around 140°F (in higher altitudes like Pikes Peak you may need a thermometer to assure this is the case), and then keep the water at this rough temperature as best you can while the egg is submerged. This recipe uses the whole egg, and the soft-cooked whites gives the aioli a creamy impossible to replicate texture with recipes that call only for the yolk, as well as stabilizing the final product.

2. Puree the egg, mushroom, vinegar, and garlic until fairly well blended and begin adding the oil in a sloooooow stream to start. The egg will act as the emulsifying agent in the aioli, and the mixture will begin to thicken. Use small amounts of the lemon juice or even a bit of tap-warm water to thin it out if it gets too thick (it shouldn't, but hey, just in case).

3. Finish this sauce with the salt and pepper blend.

Truffled House Mustard (Make 4-6 days in advance for best results)

- .25 cup brown mustard seeds**
- .25 cup yellow mustard seeds**
- .5 cup dry white wine or vermouth**
- .5 cup white wine vinegar**
- .5 tsp kosher salt**
- 1 tsp light brown sugar (optional)**
- 2 tsp truffle product (or more to taste)**

1. Place mustard seeds, wine, and vinegar in a small bowl or container, cover, and let soak at room temperature for two days.

2. Transfer mustard seeds and liquid to the jar of a blender. Add in salt and sugar, if using, and puree

until mustard paste forms, but whole seeds still remain. Transfer to an airtight container and let rest in the refrigerator for 2-4 days before use to allow the mustard to off-gas and become less astringent and less piquant.

3. When the mustard is ready, stir in truffle oil, truffle bits, or canned truffle. Italian shops online have excellent products in this category (www.FoodsInSeason.com is one of the most excellent overnight shippers of all of the best ingredients).

Pickled Red Onion with Oyster Mushrooms

.5 # fresh oyster mushrooms
1 ea red onion, french cut (see instructions below)
.25 cup vinegar, apple cider or red wine
1 T Kosher salt (or to taste)
2 ea thyme sprigs, whole
1 cup water

1. Slice the oyster mushroom into thin strips and saute in a small pan until the water comes out, reduces and the mushrooms begin to brown a little. Remove from heat and set aside.

2. Cut onion by removing both ends, cutting in half tail-to-tip, remove the inner complicated layers or each half, and cut the outside layers in a spokes-on-a-wheel fashion to make thin evenly sized julienne cuts. With the removed middle bits, cut the onions to make the "rainbow" cuts, cutting thin cuts perpendicular to the tail-to-tip direction. This was a trick a chef showed me years ago, and it prevents oddly sized onion bits, making all pieces an even thickness (provide your knife skills or patience are intact).

3. Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Depending on the size of the onion, you may need more or less water to just cover the onions. This recipe can take several hours to achieve the deep pink you are looking for in the onion. To speed up the process, you can put his on the stove and bring to a steaming but not even simmering temperature. Cool completely before using.

Assembly (per burger)

2 ea leaves lettuce or .5 cup arugula
2 ea slices fresh tomato
1 slice cheese (optional, choose wisely)
1-2 tbls aioli
1-2 tbls mustard
1 each brioche bun, grilled or toasted
1 ea burger patty cooked to perfection

Once you have grilled your bun, sliced your fresh tomatoes, chosen your perfect lettuce or arugula, simply put it all together: slather your bun with aioli and mustard, top it with your fresh vegetables, add your burger, and top with pickled onions. Obviously cheese is optional. This is an elevated burger of the next level, so do as you will with the cheese, but please don't blame me if your slice of velveeta ruins it the first time around.

HAVE FUN!!!

