

MISSOURI MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

MAY 1989 (No. 9)

Winter Meeting

We didn't have many people, but we had a good time. The NAMA slide shows, while interesting, focused on mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest. Don Dill also showed some of his many beautiful slides. We tried, usually in vain, to identify from the photos.

We discussed the dues structure. We decided to have a **regular** membership for approximately \$8.00/year and an **associate** membership for \$3.00. This is the *family* rate, if you are fortunate enough to be part of a family. Rates are the same for individuals. Associate memberships would be for people who already belong to another regional club (e.g., Kaw Valley, Arkansas, Illinois) or for those who cannot afford \$8.00. The special \$3.00 discount to join NAMA would be available only to regular members; otherwise members in the two categories would be treated alike.

We need to stay on the NAMA fiscal calendar so dues are due November 1st, both club and NAMA.

Membership

Your new membership list is enclosed. It is organized first, by region of the state, and second, alphabetically. If you're in the wrong region, (or there's another error) let me know. Please feel free to call other people in your area, particularly if you have a good local summer rain.

I Heard it on . . .

. . .the radio, specifically on NPR's "All Things Considered," May 11th. They had an interview with a District Ranger (?) on the Kootenai National Forest in northwestern Montana. The fires last year gave a big boost to the morels, as faithful readers will recall from an item Lynda Richards sent in and published in newsletter #4 (November 1987). People had thronged to the forest to buy morel hunting permits. Many of them had never seen a morel before. There were rumors that you could make up to \$600./day but the ranger said that \$50. to \$100./day was more reasonable.

Four buyers had also come. It wasn't clear to me, but apparently some were from Europe where the morel harvest has been damaged by fallout from Chernobyl. I also came across another item, some months back, that European mushrooms had

some months back, that European mushrooms had been declared unsafe in some locations. We have to be careful and not eat mushrooms growing next to busy highways and other places with high pollution levels as it seems possible that they absorb high levels of at least some environmental toxins.

Tee - Shirts ?

New member Ken Gilberg has volunteered to design a T-shirt. I have not yet found out how much they will cost to produce. However, I hope to have some by the NAMA National Foray so as to raise some money in a way other than dues.

Cultivation

Ron Dollarhite writes from Reeds Spring that he is interested in leading a cultivation workshop. (As many of you know, Ron is in the business of selling spores and other mushroom supplies.) He is willing to go even as far as St. Louis. Any one interested, write or call him. Ron writes that he has been working with shiitake, oyster, winter, and two species of *Gymnopilus*.

Morels & Such

I had no luck with morels this spring and other people in this area seemed to have less luck than last year. However, others did do very well on what the locals call "red morel" or "big red" or simply "red mushroom." I was able to beg a fresh one. Using the books I narrowed it down to *Gyromitra caroliniana* or *G. fastigiata* (alias *G. korfii*). When I talked to Jay Justice, he said it was almost certainly the former.

Book Reports

Harley Barnhart, a master mushroom photographer, reviewed the long awaited *Mushrooms & other Fungi of the midcontinental US* by Huffman, Tiffany & Knaphus, in the current issue of the *Mycophile*. Barnhart criticizes the photos, but, more important, the book contains only six mushrooms not already in the *Audubon* guide. For \$19.95, I guess I'll pass although Barnhart does say it is good for beginners.

(Continued on reverse)

Listed, but not reviewed, is a 38 page key to 180 species of *Russula*. After my total inability to identify the *Russulas* we collected in St. Joe State Park last fall, I sent my \$5.00 to Geoffrey Kibby, P.O. Box 291, Oldwick NJ 08858. I'll try to remember to tell you about it in the November newsletter.

My daughter has been in Japan since October; I visited in March. Grocery stores have four kinds of mushrooms; shiitake, our common store mushroom, and 2 kinds I had never seen before. We went to a large bookstore. When we found the Natural History section, it was much smaller than in a US bookstore of comparable size. There were only two field guides. Like almost everything else in Japan, the dollar price was high so I looked and left them on the shelf.

Fall Forays

We have not yet held discussions on this topic. Ken Gilberg's family has a nursery with an open house on Sept. 17th & 18th. Therefore, let's move the "trespasser's foray" (at Citicorp, off Hwy 40) up to Sept. 17th. Ken and I (at least) will set up a table and try to recruit.

Don't forget the NAMA national foray near Carbondale Oct. 19th - 22d.

Joint foray with Kaw Valley tentatively set for Knob Noster State Park. Joint foray with Arkansas will be arranged "at the last minute" to take advantage of local rains.

Gleanings

From *Mushroom*, the Journal, Vol 7 No. 1.

Five Survive In Oregon

The five people poisoned with death cap mushrooms in Oregon in October (1988) hadn't even gone out looking for mushrooms, but were gathering chestnuts. Two of the five were from Korea and they thought the *Amanita phalloides* they stumbled onto were paddy straw mushrooms, *Volvariella volvacea*.

None of the victims was a member of the Oregon Mycological Society The mushrooms were found in the Columbia River Gorge, and were eaten in a stir-fry dish Oct. 22.

Four of the 5 received liver transplants, and as of mid-November all five were doing "as well as could be expected." Because of the liver transplants, the four will be on medication permanently to suppress their immune systems and prevent their new livers from being rejected.

Preston Alexander, president of the Oregon Mycological Society and a member of the society's toxicology committee, identified the *Amanita phal-*

loides. "They called me in right away," he said. "I think those patients were handled as well as they could have been anywhere." He said poison control centers in this country and toxicologists in this country and overseas were consulted by telephone.

Alexander himself is a biochemist with the Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, and the event has reinforced his intention to write a book on current approaches to dealing with poisoning from amatoxin-containing mushrooms.

In addition to the liver transplantations for four of them, all the victims received a drug derived from the European milk thistle, Alexander said. It had to be administered orally, because its intravenous use is not yet approved in this country.

The Oregon poisonings are either the second or third incidents in this country which led to liver transplants being used to combat death cap poisoning. A year ago in the San Francisco Bay area, a couple consumed *Amanita phalloides* and both survived after liver transplants at the UCLA medical center. There may have been a similar case two years earlier in California, but no details ever have been provided.

(On the back page, from the same issue of *Mushroom*, a poem by Gary Lincoff.)

(This is a cute song, [to the tune of Tom Lehrer's "Be Prepared!"] but I prefer Latin names. I still don't know which mushroom Missourians call "chicken of the woods.")

Phone Tree

I have not yet worked on this important problem. Volunteers are always needed. If you don't call me, I'll call you.

Common Mushroom

With the heavy rains, there are lots of a mushroom which I keyed out to the *Agrocybe pediades* group (in Arora). It is light yellow to tan, grows in lawns, has coffee-grounds brown spores, close gills with intermediates which are sinuate (notched). The cap is convex when young, almost hemispherical, dry and not striate. If you know this one for sure, tell me and it'll be in the next issue.

Computer Glitch

I don't know why the computer repeats the last line of the first column as the first line of the second column.

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

**Nomen Vul Gary
(Common Names)**

COMMON NAMES!

That's the mushroom hunter's cry,

COMMON NAMES!

Though mycologists decry

All names that are not Latin or sound Greek,

All names that haven't changed since last week!

YOU CAN LEARN!

All the scientific names

YOU CAN PLAY!

All the taxonomic games.

You can memorize each esoteric text,

And be out of date the foray after next!

COMMON NAMES!

Don't just give in to the pros

COMMON NAMES!

Can be just as good as those

That are coined to honor him or her who found them

(we suppose)

And then are penned in Latin which just adds to all

our woes.

Give us plain and simple Anglo-Saxon names

For a change --

COMMON NAMES!

That's the mushroom hunter's prayer,

GIVE US NAMES!

The kind of names that we can bear.

Give us names we can remember and pronounce,

Give us names that has some sparkle and some

bounce.

IF THE CHURCH!

Can use vernacular in its Mass,

WHY CAN'T WE?

When we talk about your As-

Comycetes and basidios that we study or we eat,

Xeromphalina campanella is just little Fuzzy Feet!

Come on, you people out there, use your brains --

COMMON NAMES!

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