



EARTHSTAR

EXAMINER

Number 47, March 1997

The Missouri Mycological Society Newsletter

6th Annual Morel Madness Features a Professional Storyteller and a new Partner in 1997

— Jim Winn, organizer

Remember when you were little, when you heard your first story by the campfire or out under the stars? OK, so nobody in this group ever grew up. What time is it? It's story time! As if there aren't enough liars and tall tale tellers in mushrooming, Morel Madness has decided to feature a pro. Daniel Romano, a practiced storyteller from the St. Louis area, will tell his tale in the amphitheater Saturday night. Little does he know he will be following the biggest tale teller of them all, Arkansas Jay Justice. Jay will have a wild group of new mushroom slides for our entertainment.

Unofficially in 1997 and Officially in 1998, Morel Madness will be a permanent, Park co-sponsored event at Meramec State Park. This means we are more than just a foray, we are a Missouri tradition! We have to feel good about the fact that the MoMS has mounted an educational and fun event to the outdoors community. Hopefully, with this additional Park involvement, Morel Madness will continue to get "madder" every year.

Friday, April 25th

Campers must arrive before 10:00 pm. Suggested campsites are #181 to #188. Try to get there early to reserve these sites for our group. You may hold one additional campsite, but two tents (or 1 trailer and 1 tent) are permitted per site. Prices remain \$6 per campsite (\$12 if electrified). Pets are allowed on leash, and quiet hours are respected between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am. Park in allocated spaces only, please. Informal gathering will take place by the campfire. Watch Rose do the Macarena with park rangers while we sip wine and eat from pots stewing over the campfire.

Saturday, April 26th

9:00 am - Meet at Shelter #1 marked with MoMS sign for registration. We will discuss morel hunting, the status of current crop, distribute **new 1997 park maps** and read the official Morel Madness Rules.

9:30 am - Morel Madness officially begins. Go find 'em, or beginners can stay around for:

9:30 am to 9:45 am - A short talk, "How to Find Morels," will be led by Jim Winn and other Morel Madness veterans. This session is designed for beginners, and a question and answer session will follow until everyone feels confident enough to hit the trail.

12:00 noon to 1:30 pm - Identification of mushrooms led by mycologist, Jay Justice, as

we will gather for lunch at Shelter #1. Pack your own picnic, and hopefully we will taste morels cooked up by world renowned Chef des Champignons, Ken Gilberg, if he finds his way home from India.

1:30 pm to 4:00 pm - The Great Morel Hunt continues, on your own or in small groups.

2:00 pm and at 3:30 pm - A new Missouri Department of Conservation video on Morels (22 minutes) will be shown in the theater at the visitors' center. The ten minute video of Morel Madness 1995 prepared by Barbara Brueggeman will follow. MoMS members are in both videos!

4:30 pm (precisely) - All candidates wishing to enter their finds in the Morel Madness contest must present their entries at Shelter #1 for weigh-in. **Most Morels** (by quantity) and the **Largest Morel** (by height and weight) will be determined by a panel of judges. Prizes will be awarded. **Largest False Morel** (*Gyromitra* species) will also be awarded. The '97 Morel Madness King and Queen will be crowned based upon these results, contributions from foreign governments and by applying a complicated astrological formula. Once again, **Most Ticks** will be awarded this year; however, you must present them to the judges in their natural state (on your body or still squirming on a piece of duct tape). Those not wishing to enter the later contest should bring ample repellent.

5:30 pm to 6:45 pm - The **Madness Dinner** at Meramec Park Lodge will be buffet style (approx. \$8.00 + beverage) or from the menu. We'll be seated at tables in a (somewhat) private room. Seating will be your choice, dictated in part by your arrival time.

7:00 pm to 9:30 pm - We will gather at the amphitheater at Fischer Cave (near the entrance of the campground) for our evening program. In case of foul weather, this will be held at the visitors' center. Morel Madness King and Queen will be honored by all. Mycologist Jay Justice will present a slide show and talk entitled, "Unusual mushrooms and the strange people who hunt for them." After a question and answer session, we will be treated to a story told by Daniel Romano, a highly touted storyteller from the St. Louis metro area. Daniel has been storytelling in places like schools, bookstores and libraries for about nine years. We are excited to hear what stories he has in store for this special

Morel Madness evening. We will break up by (about) 9:00 pm, allowing everyone time to get home or to the campground before too late. Warm clothing or a blanket is recommended at the evening program.

Sunday, April 27th

9:00 am to noon - A nature walk will be led by a Meramec Park naturalist, Brian Wilcox. Wildflower spotting and identification, observing wildlife, learning the history of the park, etc., always makes it worth crawling out of that warm sleeping bag early. Brian guarantees to find at least one Jack-in-the-Pulpit and one yellow Lady's Slipper. Of course, anyone may continue to look for morels.

Directions, Madness & Accommodations

Meramec State Park is three miles south of Sullivan, Mo., on Hwy 185, approximately one hour west of St. Louis following I-44. Cabins are available in the park for groups of 2 to 8 people. Early reservations are required by calling (573) 468-6519. Also, Sullivan has several clean, inexpensive motels.

For meals other than Saturday night, there is a great new buffet at the truck stop at Hwy 185 south and I-44. For country meals served in the old style, try The Dew Drop Inn on the north outer road. For white tablecloth dining at reasonable prices, try the White House (a remodeled farm house), one block east of 185 South at the Elks Club crossroads.

Proper Morel Madness attitude should be observed at all times during this weekend (i.e., mushroomy apparel and hats, anything weird is appropriate), especially during the buffet dinner on Saturday night. Anyone arrested due to dress or behavior is required to say they are an escapee from Ward 3 in Potosi, and they have nothing to do with Morel Madness and they would like to make a donation to the local Sheriff's Department Retirement Fund. Anyone not honoring this tradition is subject to the whim of the newly crowned royalty and will not be visited by MoMS club members while serving time.

This weekend is open for everyone, members and non-members alike, and is inexpensive (no meals are included). We will request a \$3/adult and \$1/child donation to cover expenses (speakers, prizes, shelter, etc.). All with questions (or those who would like to help out at this event) should contact Jim Winn, (314) 532-8030. See you there!

* * *

MISSOURI MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Ken Gilberg, Editor • 2888 Ossenfort Road • Glencoe, MO 63038



Morchella esculenta

by Don Dill

63021-6938 4A



Club News:

- 1) We are soliciting for volunteers to handle book sales and T-Shirt sales. Please contact Brad Bomanz at 225-0555.
- 2) The Missouri Mycological Society hopes to start one or two research plots for monitoring mushrooms. We are working on finding a location and once that is set up, we will need research volunteers to monitor the plots. Call Don Dill at 647-3307.
- 3) Our regular newsletter editor is on vacation. Therefore, this issue is abridged.

Foray Schedule - 1997

Sunday, April 20 - at 10:00 am, Dresser Island. Dresser Island is off Missouri Route 94 ~~at~~ West Alton, about four miles west of Missouri Route 67. Meet at the parking lot. If flooding interferes, meet at Pere Marquette Park's visitors' center parking lot. Leader will be Leland Von Behren.

Saturday, April 26 - at 9:00 am, Morel Madness at Meramec State Park, Shelter #1. Camping and lodging available at the Park. Saturday dinner optional at Lodge (see article). Leader will be Jim Winn.

Thursday, May 1 - at 10:00 a.m.. Beginners' class at Babler Park in Wildwood. BYO lunch to eat after class. Foray after lunch. Register by calling Babler's office at 458-3813 after April 1st. Leader will be Don Dill.

Saturday, May 3 - at 10:00 a.m.. Beckwith farm, Calhoun County, IL. For directions call leader Bob Beckwith at work at 343-6463.
Sat.-Sun., May 10-11 - Mountain View, MO, on Jacks Fork River. Arrive Friday or get up early and come Saturday for 9:30 am foray. Co-ed sleeping or camp out. Hotel in town, 8 miles away. RSVP to leader Lee Toll @ 573-335-0913. Lee will give directions.

Sunday, June 15 - at 10:00 a.m.. Greensfelder Park. Meet at visitors' center parking lot. Leader will be Gordon White.

Sunday, July 13 - at 10:00 a.m.. Forest 44. Meet at Parking lot. Leader will be Gordon White.

Sat.-Sun., July 19-20 - Grubville campout. Leaders will be Andrea Vainer and Barkha Bullin.

Sunday, August 3 - at 10:00 a.m.. Pere Marquette Park. Leader will be Leland Von Behren.

Fri.-Sun., Sept. 26-28 - "Mingo State Foray" More information about the event, including guest Mycologists and costs, will be available at a later date.

Sunday, Oct. 12 - at 10:00 a.m.. Hazlett State Park. Leader will be Leland Von Behren.

Sat. night, Sun., Oct. 25-26 - "The Hawnting" at Pickle Spring. Leaders will be Don Dill and Claudia Joyce.