

earthstar examiner

June 2003

Newsletter of the Missouri Mycological Society



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Morel Madness 2003

by Willie May

Well we did it again! The weather was perfect--two days of rain prior to MOMS annual spring morel day, then sunshine and 70 degrees for our hunt. It was glorious, just glorious. Oh, and 45 mushroomers picked 700 morels. Here is how the hunters fared: 2003 Madness King Shannon Stevens – 59 *esculenta*, 2 *semilibera* and 2 false morels. He edged out partner Mike Perks who had 59 *esculenta* and 1 *semilibera*. Because these two were so close, Shannon took the honor

of King on the basis of total weight. This the second time in three years that Shannon has taken the crown. Should we move his stature to Lord? I guess next year will decide that issue.

Madness Queen, with 91 black and yellow morels is Julie Cole. Julie also took the coveted "Most Morels" plaque. This is Julie's second time as Queen. We may be looking for a new designation for her as well. I will need some help with this new

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Foray Rep

Morel Madness 2003

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Morel Madness Species List

Auricularia auricula Tree-Ear
Coprinus atramentarius Alcohol Inky
Coprinus micaceus Mica Cap
Favolus alveolaris Hexagonal-Pored Polypore
Galerina sp. Galerina
Ganoderma lucidum Ling Chi
Gyromitra fastigiata Thick-Stalked False Morel
Hapalopilus nidulans Tender Nesting Polypore
Lentinus tigrinus
Morchella angusticeps Conical Morel
Morchella esculenta Yellow Morel
Morchella semilibera Half-Free Morel
Peziza sp. Brown Cup
Polyporus arcularius Spring Polypore
Polyporus conchifer Little Nest Polypore
Polyporus squamosus Dryad's Saddle
Psathyrella sp.
Schizophyllum commune Common Split Gill
Tremella mesenterica Witches' Butter
Trichaptum bififormis Violet-Toothed Polypore

Here is what the top hunters picked in just seven hours or less

Julie Cole	91
Dr Robert Gessner	30
Doris O'Growsky	52
Angelika Kamler	52
Bill Kwapy	20
Bill May	45
Michael Perks	60
Barb Steps	31
Gary Steps	15
(and guided 4 hunters to 50+)	
Shannon Stevens	63
Maxine Stone	27
Leland Von Behren	50
Joe Walsh	32
Lois Walsh	20
Chuck Yates	50

crown for Julie if she can perform next year and take the crown again.

Tallest morel was a very close one. The judges deliberated for almost 15 minutes with morels submitted by Mayu, Mike and Shannon. In the end, Mike Perks was awarded the coveted plaque. Smallest morel, the most difficult of awards to win, was picked by the youthful eagle eye of Rachael Cole. Largest False Morel went to Shannon Stevens and Most Species went to Chuck Yates. We had a four-way tie on this award. Chuck was given the plaque after much deliberation by the judges. Honorable Mention with 3 species went to Sam Shemwell. Go get them next year, Sam!

Even after I announced all of the categories, just before our hunt started, Jay Justice decided that he would enter a morel for a category of his own, Prettiest Morel. Yes it was a pleasant morel to look at, but aren't they all? Sorry Jay, but the judges are aware of your wish for next year.

Then there was the food. A five-pound tenderloin grilled on a charcoal pit after being rubbed with Michael Perks' secret rub. Pork tenderloin, fried walleye and mahi-mahi, homemade salsa (to die for). I'm getting stuffed again just relaying this to you. I can't go on with the fifty other incredible dishes that we enjoyed with three gallons of vodka to mix with Angelika's home-



Willie May, Madness coordinator

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made bloody mary mix. And if I missed thanking our four cooks, Angelika, Shannon, Mike and Doris, I want to do so now. You helped make this weekend the success it was. Thank you!

And lastly, but actually the best, was our speaker Elio Schaechter. It was fun having him follow me in the woods in the morning and listening to him and Dr. Bob Gessner talk about everything and anything while they hunted. He stayed glued to me like he was on a rope and as everyone knows that is not an easy feat to accomplish. Thanks for your great presentations, Elio!

I'd like to thank everyone for coming this year. I know that staying at the Lay Field Station cost everyone a little extra if you stayed both nights, but I hope the Board of Directors will vote to have Madness 2004 back at Lay. MOMS members, please cast your vote for Lay. Thanks again.



Smallest morel- the hardest of all awards to win was picked by the eagle eye of Rachael Cole.

Our new friend

by Maxine Stone

To us, he is our friend, Elio. To the larger world, he is Moselio Schaechter, world-renowned researcher, educator, and writer.

Elio Schaechter generously gave of himself at Morel Madness this year. Not only did he offer fabulous presentations both Friday night and Saturday night, he also was an easily accessible presence for all.

On Friday, Elio spoke about "What are Morels (and other mushrooms), Anyhow?" He managed to engage us so well that we were mesmerized. What a pleasure to hear him. Did you know that morel spores are in the pits of the morel, not the edges?

Saturday's talk was on "Mushrooms in Art". He showed us many beautiful slides and one tidbit we learned was that the oldest piece of mushroom art known is a fresco from the first century A.D., depicting *Lactarius deliciosus*.

Elio was at Tufts University for 33 years and chaired the Department of Molecular Biology and Microbiology for 23 years. He won the Tufts University Medical Students' Teaching Award 11 times, which obviously says something about his teaching capabilities.

He has written many books on molecular biology and microbial disease. However, "In the Company of Mushrooms" is his mushroom masterpiece, all written in a very readable, conversational style.

Elio tromped through the woods with us at Morel Madness staying quite close to our morel maniac,



Willie May, and said that he had never been on a morel foray. Imagine that? Having lived in Boston much of his adult life, then moving to San Diego, that is understandable.

He has written to me thanking me for the weekend with MOMS and I have this paragraph that he has allowed me to quote: "This was turkey season, and several of the people there were torn between the two pursuits. Bright vests were handed out, just in case. After all, it is easier for a turkey hunter to confuse a mushroomer for a turkey—than for a mushroomer to confuse a turkey hunter for a mushroom.... This was not a casual walk through the woods but a well-organized and planned search expedition. Perhaps we did not shock and awe the morels, but we certainly gave them fair warning."

With all of this said, and this merely touches the surface of Elio Schaechter's life and times, he graced us with his presence on his birthday. What a guy!

MOMS Annual Fall Foray

Sweat 'n Chanterelles 2003

July 18th-20th at Meramec State Park

Come join us for the Sweat 'n Chanterelles Foray cosponsored by Meramec State Park in Sullivan, Missouri

General Schedule of Events

Friday, July 18

Arrive before 10:00pm (they lock the gates then) and ask for directions to Group Campground C. If you arrive around dinner, join us for potluck. If you arrive later, bring dessert and your favorite beverage. We'll try to stay cool while chatting and swatting mosquitoes.

Remember this is a non-powered campsite, so bring your own light source. If you or your vehicle needs electric, the park offers regular sites. These are \$12 per day (Call ahead and reserve). Pets are allowed, but please keep them leashed.

Saturday, July 20

9:00AM
Meet at Shelter #1 to check in and find with whom you're hunting. We'll try to have the red-and-white MOMS mushroom sign up to make the shelter easier to find. We'll discuss proper chanterelle picking etiquette, the varieties of chanterelles and other mushrooms you're likely to find (or not). Maps will be distributed for those wanting them. Dress appropriately. It's hot, but long pants and a hat are recommended. The ticks and brambles are out in full force! Bug, tick and bramble repellent are a must. Try treating socks and pants a day ahead with Permanone, *but read the directions!*

9:30AM-12:00PM
Go find 'em! Bring back whatever you find interesting. We'll have plenty of mycologist-types to help us sort and ID our finds.

12:00PM-1:30PM
We'll meet back at Shelter #1 for lunch. Be

sure to bring your picnic lunch and something to share, if you'd like. Besides chanterelles, my favorite, *Lactarius volemus* are out this time of year and are scrumptious. If there are enough, we might cook some up!

1:30PM-4:30PM
Continue hunting or spend some time relaxing, hiking or swimming in the cool spring waters of the Meramec. Don't venture too far upstream or you'll be late for dinner!

5:00PM
Meet on the veranda at Meramec Park Lodge at the top of the hill. We'll have cocktails outside before adjourning to a great meal inside. The Lodge "fancier" up their menu last year and offers many different entrees as well as the salad bar. As I recall, the trout was heavenly!

7:00PM-9:00PM - Gather at the Fischer Cave Amphitheater, near the campground entrance (in case of foul weather, we'll be at the Visitor Center) for our evening program. This year the Park will provide the speaker. Bats, wild flowers, coyotes—whatever the topic, it's bound to be good.

9:00PM - ??? - Campfire & snacks back at the campground.

Sunday, July 21

9:00AM-12:00PM - No schedule, you're on your own. Foray some more, swim, hike, whatever. Break camp at noon, although you're welcome to stay in the park until ready to go home.

Planning is well underway for our 13th Annual Fall Foray at Mingo National Wildlife Refuge. Mark your calendars now for Thursday, September 18 through Sunday, September 21. The registration form will be in the next Earthstar along with exhortations to use it promptly and not force us to guess about how many people we will need to house and serve meals to!

Members who have participated in previous MOMS events at Mingo will recall that this is our biggest foray of the year. Last year we had nine mycologists and nearly a hundred participants. We are allowed access to parts of the refuge not open to the general public, and we collect and identify numerous species. Dining is outstanding, and on Sunday, at a special mycophagy session, we enjoy dishes prepared from specimens we have collected. We have again reserved Girl Scout Camp LaTonka on Lake Wappapello for the event, where members may choose sites for tents or RV's or use the camp's rustic cabins.

Ken Gilberg is at work to ensure that we again enjoy identification assistance and insights from a group of outstanding mycologists. This year, the focus will be on truffles, those elusive underground fungi. Experts in the field will be Dr. Johann Bruhn of the University of Missouri and Dr. Roseanne Healy of Iowa State University. Roseanne found a truffle at MONAMA'99 and it is a good chance we'll find more this fall. We are thrilled to also have our expert gang return: Dr. Walter Sundberg (Southern Illinois University, Carbondale), Dr. Andrew Methven (Eastern Illinois University), Dr. Jeanne Mihail (University of Missouri), Dr. Robert Gessner (Western Illinois University), and Jay Justice (President of the Arkansas Mycological Society).

Gordon White is accepting offers to assist his team of chefs, sous-chefs, and maitres de hôtel in the preparation of a dinner and breakfasts to be remembered. To volunteer for culinary duty, contact Gordon at GWDDS@Yahoo.com. To have questions answered or to offer help with camp preparation, foray transportation, or specimen tables, contact Maxine Stone (VeryMaxine@AOL.com) or Charlie Raiser (Charlieraiser@AOL.com).

by David Yates
Foray Coordinator

Directions and Accommodations

Meramec State Park is three miles south of Sullivan, MO on Highway 185, approximately one hour west of St. Louis following I-44.

If you're not a tent camper, cabins are available in the park for groups of 2 to 8 people. Call ahead to make reservations - (573) 468-6519. Also, Sullivan has several inexpensive motels. For something nicer, twenty-five minutes away in Bourbon is the Greer Hollow Farm B&B - (573) 732-4979.

For meals other than Saturday night, bring your own. For country-style comfort food on the way home, try the favorite Du Kum Inn on the north outer road.

This weekend is open to everyone, members and non-members alike, and is free (except meals). We thank Meramec State Park for their continued help, generously co-sponsoring this event and providing the camping area, shelter, amphitheater, and park staff. All questions should be directed to David Yates - (314) 457-0939, dyates@bondwolfe.com or the Meramec State Park - (573) 468-6072. See you there!

Update

Recent Forays

Babler State Park

by Joe Walsh

April 12 was a warm sunny day. Several MOMS members met with Lois and I at Babler State Park for a nice, early season morel foray. These included (in no special order) Bob Siemer, Ann Early, Claudia Joyce, Maxine Stone, Olga Neuolenko, Sylvia Rolloff, David Yates, Patrick Lennon, Ghilaine Chabelt, Jon Casey, Bill and Elaine Coulson, and Charlie Raiser. Very few morels were found, as it was still very early in the season.

Maxine seemed to have the best luck. She had 8 morels, including 6 tiny grays, one small half-free, and a black. Sylvia found the first one, a tiny gray, and she also found the first false morel, a *Gyromitra caroliniana*. Lois also found one of

those. Patrick and Charlie each had one tiny yellow. Bob, Jon and Ann also each found one tiny gray beneath an ash tree. In all, I believe just about everyone had at least one mushroom. This seems not to have been a very good year for the half-frees (*M. semilibera*). Of all the 500(+) morels I found so far this season, only one was a half-free, and it was tiny. Very few were found during Madness. On April 11, I found the largest *Gyromitra* that I have ever seen. It was a foot tall, and weighed four and one-half pounds. It was growing in the bottom of the crater formed when an old dead oak tree toppled. I think this season has been far more productive than last year was.

Incurable Epicureans

by Gary Steps

The Incurable Epicureans got together again at Barb and Gary Steps' home to dig into the subject of Arabian food. While this seems very "CNN News of the Moment," in fact, it was planned long ago. As always, the enthusiasm and creativity of the club was evident in every wonderful dish and in the clothing for the evening. A number of Arab and Middle Eastern cultures were represented among the outfits worn for the evening.

The group was also rewarded with a surprise entertainment—a visit by Karen and Bruce Lowry's daughter, Cora, on her way to another engagement as a belly dancer. Her visit added texture and fun to the evening, and everyone enjoyed her work while nibbling on wonderful appetizers.

Included in the beautiful and tasty menu were yogurt/leak soup and Ramadan soup, lentil dip with

fresh flat bread, several exotic salads, and number of side dishes based on eggplant, zucchini, and chard.

At the center of the meal for the evening was a dish of lamb and chicken Tagine with couscous. Beautiful to look at, but too good to look at for long.

As if we needed any more food, desert followed, represented by a yogurt cake, a Middle Eastern version of flan, and filled dates. All supported with plenty of hot mint tea.

In all, it was another spectacular success for the IE. We add another great memory to our lengthening list of amazing events. And here we come again—the next IE dinner will be held at Jeri and Bill Kwapy's house on August 23rd. The theme is a Hawaiian Buffet. You think we can dig a hole in the back yard and barbeque a whole hog in a pit? Where will we find all the banana leaves to wrap it up? Stay tuned!

Upcoming

2003 Forays & Events

- Sun. 6/8** 10AM Mushroom Identification Class at Rockwoods Reservation.
Sat. 6/14 10AM Foray at Rockwoods Reservation. Gary Steps, leader
Sat. 6/21 10AM Foray at Forest 44 Conservation Area. Pat Lennon, leader
Thurs. 6/26 10AM Foray at Greensfelder County Park. Claudia Joyce, leader. Bring sack lunch. Meet at Interpretive Center.
Sun. 6/29 12 noon Foray at Tyson Research Center. Gordon White, leader
Tues. 7/1 Board meeting (call Maxine if you wish to attend).
7/12-7/13 Sat. - Sun. Dry July at Andrea Vadner's Farm (limited to 25 persons) Call Andrea at 314-647-0167 to reserve a spot.
Sun. 7/13 10AM Mushroom Identification Class at Rockwoods Reservation.
7/18-7/20 Fri. - Sun. Sweat 'n Chanterelles at Meramec State Pk. Dave Yates
Sun. 8/10 10AM Mushroom Identification Class at Rockwoods Reservation.
Sun. 9/7 10AM Mushroom Identification Class at Rockwoods Reservation.
Sat. 9/13 10AM Foray at Engelmann Woods Conservation Area. Elaine Fix.
9/18-9/21 MOMS Annual Fall Foray, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge
Sun. 10/5 10AM Strategies for Mushroom Identification at Rockwoods
Sat. 10/11 10AM Foray at Hazlett St. Park, IL. Leland von Behren
10/24 -26 Fri. - Sun. Foray, The Hawnting, Hawn State Park. Claudia Joyce and Shannon Stevens, coordinators
Sun. 10/26 10AM Foray at Pickle Springs Natural Area near Farmington, MO

Forays and classes meet at the Visitor's Center or parking area, unless otherwise specified, 15 minutes before the indicated departure time. Bring a sack lunch so that you don't go hungry while indentifying the finds.

Mushroom Identification Classes meet at Rockwoods Reservation. All classes taught by Don Dill.

Next *Earthstar* Issue

The deadline for the August issue of the *Earthstar* will be July 1. Anyone who wishes to submit should e-mail MOMSearchstar@aol.com, subject matter: *Earthstar* story. Thanks!



Missouri Mycological Society

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Gyromitra found April 11, 2003
by Joe Walsh; 1 foot high, 4½ pounds