

earthstar examiner

August 2004

Newsletter of the Missouri Mycological Society



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Shiitake Farm Foray

by Linda Rees

The Shiitake Farm Foray was described to me as a great opportunity to relax and leisurely enjoy the beauty of the Sinking Creek area, to learn more about the process of growing mushrooms commercially and, of course, to eat well. It was all that, with a surprising overlay of stimulation created by the lush setting and the diversity of people participating.

It was a small group, with 19 adults including the Hellmuths, and three children. About half the group were very familiar with The Sinks, the name of the campgrounds and cabins, situated just above where the Sinking Creek passes through a natural tunnel in a ridge. Most people arrived around 5:00 and started setting up their tents or laying out appetizers. We settled into a steady night of grazing and chatting around the picnic table. The three children seemed to enjoy scurrying about together as much as we adults relished our conversations.

A whippoorwill put us to bed and guess what? It woke us up the next morning. It was my first encounter with one calling from such a close range. Early rising gave me a chance to identify two new wild

flowers and discover a large carpet of tiny *Conocybe lactea* behind the main rock building before our planned activities started. Maxine and the girls found many four-leaf clovers that morning, perhaps changing whatever bad luck might have been floating around in the air, staving off threatening rain that afternoon and leaving us with ideal weather for camping.

The optimal way to be out in the woods, in my opinion, is with a knowledgeable naturalist who enjoys sharing information. Jay and Maxine

continued on next page

Mingo 2004

Don't miss out on MOMs fall foray! See pages four and five for information and registration form.

Shiitake Farm Foray

continued from previous page

were always ready to answer questions.

Our walk down to the shiitake farm took much longer than the distance warranted because there was so much to see and identify on the way. The girls were busy collecting little frogs that kept hopping out of their hands. Once at the farm, we “first timers” were truly impressed with the scope of detail required to run an organic farm. Nikki explained each phase and how every log needs to be documented. The potential for contamination is an ongoing concern and certification standards are rigorous.

Dan Hellmuth lead a late afternoon hike up the ridge behind the campground then circling around to follow the Sinking Creek to the back side of the water tunnel. As we started up the ridge, Dan and Jay were reminiscing about past forays and the good times or funny incidents that had occurred. Little did we know that we were on an adventure that could become legendary too.

To start with, some of us had to make peace with the fact that Orlando was doing the trek barefooted, just as he had been on the gravel road to the farm in the morning (i.e., not feel the pain we assumed he did). At the foot of the ridge we climbed over a gate and headed across a cow pasture to the creek. Orlando confessed he was more concerned about what he could not see in the grassy field than the rocks on the ridge. We chose to follow the river back but that meant wading across. I opted to go in with my shoes on but still needed to hold Dan’s hand for confidence on the rocky riverbed. Jeff escorted Maxine across as it turned out to be very slippery and uncomfortable on

bare feet. Others slowly progressed across barefooted. The water was shallow but still, we all felt an immense sense of accomplishment to be on the other side.

As we approached the third crossing the lead group began to ponder what the reaction was going to be as those lagging behind would have to stop yet again and take their boots off. Orlando carried Sue piggyback but almost slipped with one step to go. Charlie suggested bushwhacking a path along the bank until Dan mentioned that the area was prime snake habitat. Charlie then stepped into the water in his boots. Presumably finding the footing much better in boots, he decided to carry Maxine across on his back. When that wasn’t going to work, he grabbed her from behind and literally sprinted across the stream. It was astounding to watch. Sue tried to get a picture but the crossing was so fast, she missed it.

The walk along the river was an opportunity for a geology lesson. I kept finding interesting rocks and Dan started talking about them, explaining why some had a black coating on them. The minerals in the rocks were reacting to magnesium in the water causing a black patina. Throughout the walk he was pointing out facts he had gleaned from a lifetime spent along the streambed and ridges. Soon we came to the backside of the ridge with its huge wall of rock formations and the arching passage below. It was well worth the adventures.

Joining the other folks who spent the afternoon fishing or in the water, the evening picnic began with canoe rides through the tunnel conducted by canoe-



master Lisa. The sound and air quality inside the 30 feet of arching rock and translucent green water was totally refreshing. The swallows would swoop right by us and fish swam below. It was a perfect day topped off with grilled shiitake and more good company.

The second morning began slower than the first though the whippoorwill tried persistently to hurry us awake. Most of the breakfast talk was of coyotes and other night sounds. We inspected a beautiful wild yam vine in the campground and leisurely packed up. We joined Chris and Marge who were staying at the Hellmuth’s and had helped Nikki and Dan prepare for a delicious brunch. The fiddle head ferns, a brothy mushroom dish and the apricot scones were top on my list of the tasty array of food. Many folks stayed for a while to help pick mushrooms to buy since the pick from the day before was small.

I speak for all who attended in thanking the Nikki and Dan for sharing their commitment to good food and life lived well. And thanks to Lisa Bailey for efficiently making the event a success. The efforts of all three of them resulted in a very special weekend.

“ It was a perfect day topped off with grilled shiitake and more good company. ”



news & notes

Save the Date The Winter Luncheon is Coming

February 6, 2005

I know it is hard to imagine right now in hot, hot August, but we all know how time flies! Mark your calendars NOW. The Winter Luncheon will again be at the beautiful Commons of Eden Seminary, and will again be a wonderful day full of friendship, food and fungi.

Mushroom Foray and Identification

Co-Sponsored by Meramec State Park
and Missouri Mycological Society

Saturday, October 16, 2004
Meramec State Park, 9:30AM
meet at the Visitor's Center

After introductions and a brief lesson on how to collect and what to collect, we will venture off into the woods for an hour or two. We'll return to Shelter #1 (Visitor's Center, if poor weather) and have our well-deserved sack lunch. If we find an abundance of good edibles, who knows, maybe we'll cook them right there and have a tasting! After lunch, we'll identify and keep a species list of what we have found. We have a camp site reserved for both Friday and Saturday nights, so come for the weekend, if you wish.

Bring a basket for collecting, bug spray and long pants for the foray. Bring camping gear and food to share for your overnight stay.

If you should have any questions, please contact Maxine Stone at 314-963-0280 or VeryMaxine@aol.com

A Missouri State Mushroom!

Well, isn't it about time? There is a state tree, bird, horse, fossil, nut, rock and even a state American folk dance (flowering dogwood, bluebird, Missouri fox trotting horse, Crinoidea, nut of the black walnut tree,

mozarkite, Square Dance). There are even more state symbols, but I don't have space to list them all.

Now MOMS is going to make the effort to have an official State Mushroom. What else could it be but the chanterelle (*Cantharellus lateritius*)? They grow in our native oak/hickory forests. They are abundant. They are beautiful. They are delicious.

Soon we may be asking all of you to participate in helping us make this idea turn into a reality. Stay tuned.

Walt Sundberg Workshop

Saturday, August 21
10:00 - 3:00, \$20

Hopefully you will receive this Earthstar before August 21. Our dear friend and Chief Mycologist, Walt Sundberg, is offering to MOMS members a mushroom workshop. Walt is an exciting and passionate teacher. He's as good with beginners as he is with experts. There may be a few spots left, so contact Maxine Stone asap if you wish to participate. VeryMaxine@aol.com or 314-963-0280.

Book Sales

By Chuck Yates

Bring your money to Mingo! New book titles and merchandise. Get ready for Christmas. New book titles include:

Start Mushrooming (\$8) - a book for beginning, novice and experienced "shroomers".

Find the Tree - Find the Morel (\$9) - This is what Willie has been teaching us for years.

Medicinal Mushrooms (\$15) - This looks like an excellent resource - "A handbook of healing fungi in Eastern and Western cultures."

I have ordered two of our "old standby" t-shirts, Morel Maniac (\$12) and the beige Mushroom Historical Poster shirts (\$12). I also found a yellow T-shirt (\$10) with morels and other spring botanicals - the same design will be available on neutral canvas bags (\$7) - great for carrying identification books.

Another new item is a mushroom knife

with a hardened steel blade, rosewood handle and a soft bristle brush for cleaning (\$16). I have also replenished our supplies, books, and jewelry. See you on a foray.

Next Earthstar deadline

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

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Fall Foray: Mingo National Wild

It might be stretching a point to say that the plans for Mingo 2004 are 100% complete. There are still a few i's to dot between now and September. The basics are in place, though, and you can be assured that our annual fall foray will meet your expectations for it to be our biggest and best outing of the year.

The dates are set for Thursday, September 16 through Sunday, September 19. We have a relaxed schedule. Early birds can arrive anytime on Thursday and begin to set up Girl Scout Camp Latonka for the weekend. There will be time to visit, enjoy the wooded camp or adjacent Lake Wappapello. The pace will pick up on Friday as we conduct sorties to natural sites of interest to participants. Two years ago we visited Big Spring, where collecting wasn't on the agenda, but last year we applied ourselves to harvest plentiful black trumpets in a Conservation Department natural area. We are opportunists, availing ourselves of the best the area has to offer at the moment we are there. On Saturday, we will do some serious foraging in Mingo National Wildlife Refuge. We traditionally are given access to parts of the refuge that are not open to the public and we traditionally find many, many interesting and delectable species! Serious foraging means spending most of the day in the woods. Come prepared with bug spray, compass, watch, and sunscreen, and follow the instructions of the foray leaders who will strive to keep you from being hurt or lost. Sunday activities will be in or close to camp and will conclude by early afternoon. Of course, there's no rule against stopping on the way home to pick up still more trumpets (as last year) or persimmons (as year before last)!

We have again secured the excellent facility of Camp Latonka for our foray headquarters. Accommodations there are primarily screened-in cabins with cots, but campsites are available (and there are nearby motels for those who eschew the rustic life). Bathhouses not far from the campsites provide ample hot showers and lavatory facilities. The camp dining hall is perfect for our meals and mushroom talks, and is supported by a well equipped kitchen and serving area. The recreation room adjacent to the dining hall provides ample space for our specimen display tables where you will be able to see the mushrooms and talk with the expert mycologists who have confirmed the identifications. You can learn more in an hour than in



a week of poring over a field guide. Fees for this great camp are modest, but the Girl Scouts do ask that we refrain from activities not becoming Girl Scouts, such as smoking or consuming alcoholic beverages—or at least that we leave no evidence of such activities!

As at most MOMS events, our meals promise to be memorable! Your registration fee covers breakfasts on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and dinner on Saturday. MOMS volunteers will prepare and serve these meals, and in the past, they have outdone themselves! Thursday and Friday dinners will be potluck affairs, meaning that wonderful food will be shared in abundance. You will be responsible for your own lunch on Friday, and to bring a sack lunch into the field on Saturday. Ken Gilberg has again agreed to lead a cook-and-taste workshop whose participants will prepare the edibles we have collected and serve them at mid-day Sunday. If you've been to Mingo or our Winter Luncheon, you know what to expect in the way of food. If this is your first time, raise your expectations and know that they will be exceeded!

Our mycologist-mentors

MOMS invites to our fall foray knowledgeable mycologists who are also committed teachers (and fun guys, too!). This year our invitations have been accepted by: our own Chief Mycologist Dr. Walt Sundberg, just retired from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; Co-Chief Mycologist Dr. Andrew Methven of Eastern Illinois University; Dr. Ron Peterson, of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, an

expert on chanterelles; Dr. Michael Kuo of Mushroomexpert.com and an English instructor at Eastern Illinois University; and Jay Justice, president of the Arkansas Mycological Society and renowned field mycologist. In addition, Mark Pelton, a forester with the Missouri Department of Conservation, will teach us how to identify trees in the area, as it is often helpful in identification of lignicolous mushrooms to know the species of the substrate. In sum, Mingo 2004 will provide a really great opportunity to learn a lot about mushrooms!

Read the Mingo registration form for further details. You will soon see that the fall foray at Mingo is an incredible bargain. How can we do it at so low a price you ask? The answer lies in the willingness of MOMS members to pitch in when there is work to be done! Indicate your preference for volunteer work on the registration form and we'll confirm your assignment on your arrival at Latonka. Then complete the rest of the form (or keep your *Earthstar* intact and download a registration form from the website, <http://www.missourimycologicalsociety.org>) and send it to Lisa Bailey along with your check. Please don't wait until the last minute to register! If you need additional information, contact Charlie Raiser craiser@missourimycologicalsociety.org or (314) 821-6768 or Maxine Stone mstone@missourimycologicalsociety.org or (314) 963-0280. On receipt of your registration we will send you online confirmation and a packet of information including directions and a map to Camp Latonka.



The Hawnting Continues!

by Shannon Stevens

Yup, mark those calendars now! Back by popular demand for a one weekend engagement only, October 22 - 24, it's frightening fun, food and fellowship at it's frightening finest at the... Hawnting at Hawn State Park.

Last year audiences were mystified and mesmerized by the musical merriment of Mad Mike & Maxine. But wait, there could be more! Fine food and fungus, (and a little wine), has, in the past, produced popular performances by the acoustically acclaimed Jay Justice Jamboree! Now that's a hot ticket!!! (all performances subject to actual artist attendance and willingness to share their music). Don't forget, any and all fresh talent is always appreciated and warmly welcome.

Bring everything you need for primitive camping and what you can to make it less so. Yes it has rained in the past but it has never dampened the spirits of those hardy few who have endeavored to persevere and whose motto is always "the wine is fine come rain or shine." (Be Prepared!) All meals are BYO with potluck style dinners and don't forget the tasty beverages. "Monster pan" will be activated for any contributions to the creation of culinary curiosities. Oh yeah, bring the baskets as we will be attempting to hunt up some shrooms on Saturday and bring a pumpkin to carve. If you carve it, it will glow!

Our campsite is the one designated for the Boy Scouts and is on the left and up a small hill as you near the camp area. Carpeted with pine needles and away from the crowd, it is just a short walk down the hill to the shower house. The state charges \$2 per night per person for camping.

Can't make it to Hawn? Be sure not to miss the Sunday matinee foray, 10 am, at Pickle Springs Natural Area as this is always a beautiful hike and usually produces a preponderance of picking pleasure.

Hawn and Pickle Springs are both off Highway 32 between I-55 and Farmington. For each, there is a sign on Hwy. 32 directing you. For more information please contact Maxine Stone, 314-963-0128 or VeryMaxine@aol.com. See everyone there!!!

Mingo Registration Form

September 16 through 19, 2004

The registration fee to attend Mingo is \$35 for members, \$45 for non-members, \$20 for students, \$15 for children five and younger. This fee includes five wonderful meals, prepared by some of MOMS gourmet cooks: Friday breakfast, Saturday breakfast & supper, and Sunday breakfast & lunch. Thursday and Friday suppers, and Saturday lunch in the field are potluck. **All registrations postmarked after September 9th will incur a \$10 surcharge for late registration.**

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone (day/evening) _____

e-mail _____

Reservations for Lodging:

Screened cabin with cots and mattresses, but no bedding

\$6.00 per night per person. Circle number of people: 1 2 3 4

___ Thursday ___ Friday ___ Saturday **Cost for lodging:** _____

R.V. or tent site

\$3.00 per night per person Circle number of people: 1 2 3 4

___ Thursday ___ Friday ___ Saturday **Cost for lodging:** _____

Registration fees: Circle number of people: 1 2 3 4 **Total :** _____

Grand total registration and per night fees enclosed: _____

I would like to be in a cabin with _____

I am a vegetarian _____

The success of the Mingo Foray depends on volunteer effort. Please indicate how you will be able to help:

Friday: dinner, clean-up _____

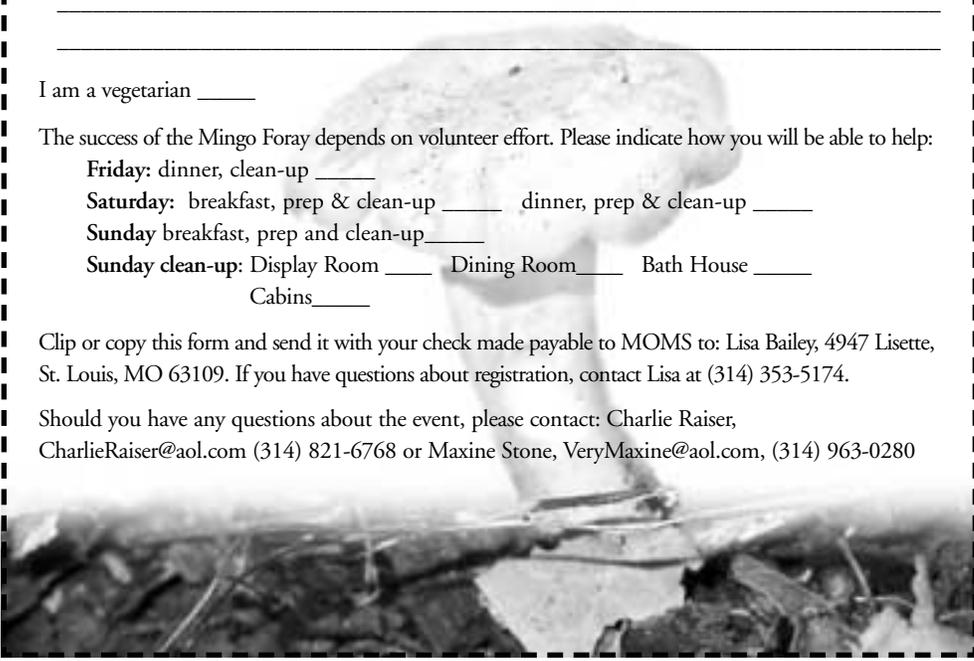
Saturday: breakfast, prep & clean-up _____ dinner, prep & clean-up _____

Sunday breakfast, prep and clean-up _____

Sunday clean-up: Display Room _____ Dining Room _____ Bath House _____
Cabins _____

Clip or copy this form and send it with your check made payable to MOMS to: Lisa Bailey, 4947 Lisette, St. Louis, MO 63109. If you have questions about registration, contact Lisa at (314) 353-5174.

Should you have any questions about the event, please contact: Charlie Raiser, CharlieRaiser@aol.com (314) 821-6768 or Maxine Stone, VeryMaxine@aol.com, (314) 963-0280



Recent Forays

Nettle—I mean Englemann Woods

By Maxine Stone

On Saturday, June 19, eleven of us gathered at Englemann Woods in St Albans. It was one of those glorious days. The rains came the night before. The temperature dropped to about 75. The humidity disappeared. The sun was out.

Englemann Woods is known for its beauty and old growth. Timing was good for black trumpets. Chanterelles had been spotted.

However, I think we should rename Englemann Woods. In the spring, we now should call it Nettle Woods. So here we were. Stinging nettles surrounded us, not one black trumpet was spotted and altogether we found about 7 chanterelles—and very wet ones at that.

Now don't get me wrong. We had a fantastic time. Our species list is to the right. Of the 11 participants, there were 4 new members. We hiked and searched and talked and had a wonderful time on a glorious day.

As we identified our finds we nibbled on a few delightful creations—sushi, black raspberry pie, and an array of home made jams and salsas.

Even when the pickin's are slim, we always enjoy the day.

Note from Ken: Jack Toll taught me long ago that stinging nettles are some of the best greens there are. In early spring, when I'm out looking for morels, I always take a pair of gauntleted gloves with me to pick the nettle tops. When cooked, the stings dissolve and leave a delicious, bright green vegetable. Stinging nettle soup is a favorite. Or try it sautéed like spinach, Italian style with garlic and olive oil. There are recipes for nettle beer but I never have tried it.

Engleman Woods

June 19, 2004

Auricularia auricula (tree ear)
Cantharellus cibarius (chanterelle)
Clavicornia pyxidata (crown-tipped coral)
Galiella rufa (hairy rubber cup)
Melastiza (Peziza) chateri (orange cup)
Mutinus elegans (elegant stinkhorn)
Pycnoporus cinnabarinus (cinnabar polypore)
Sarcoscypha occidentalis (scarlet cup)
Schizophyllum commune (common split gill)
Strobilomyces loccopus (old man of the woods)
Tremella reticulata (white coral jelly)

Tyson Woods

June 27, 2004

Amanita onusta
Auricularia auricula (tree ear)
Boletus campestris
Cantharellus cibarius (chanterelle)
Cantharellus cinnabarinus (cinnabar-red chanterelle)
Cantharellus ateritius (smooth chanterelle)
Clavicornia pyxidata (crown-tipped coral)
Coprinus micaceus (mica cap)
Crepidotus applanatus (flat crep)
Galiella rufa (hairy rubber cup)
Ganoderma applanatum (artist's conk)
Pluteus thompsonii
Russula p.
Sarcoscypha coccinea (stalkless scarlet cup)
Sarcoscypha occidentalis (scarlet cup)
Schizophyllum commune (common split gill)
Scutellinia scutellata (eyelash cup)
Tremellodendron pallidum (jellied false coral)
Xylaria hypoxylon (carbon antlers)

Rockwoods Reservation

June 13, 2004

Arcyria incarnata (n/a)
Auricularia auricula (tree ear)
Boletus bicolor (two-colored bolete)
Boletus chrysenteron (red-cracked bolete)
Cyathus striatus (splash cups)
Galiella rufa (hairy rubber cup)
Ganoderma applanatum (artist's conk)
Laccaria amethystina (amethyst Laccaria)
Lactarius volemus (voluminous latex milky)
Lepiota americana (reddening Lepiota)
Lycoperdon perlatum (gem-studded puffball)
Microstoma floccosa (shaggy scarlet cup)
Peziza badio-confusa (common brown cup)
Pluteus cervinus (fawn mushroom)
Sarcoscypha occidentalis (stalked scarlet cup)
Schizophyllum commune (common split gill)
Scleroderma citrinum (pigskin poison puffball)
Scleroderma ostrea (false turkey-tail)
Trametes versicolor (turkey tail)
Tremella mesenterica (witch's butter)
Tremellodendron pallidum (jellied false coral)
Xylaria polymorpha (dead man's fingers)

Foray with Friends of Tyson

by Charlie Raiser

MOMS members continued to enjoy beautiful weather and plentiful mushrooms on Sunday, June 27 as we forayed with the Friends of Tyson at Washington University's Tyson Research Station at the Antire Road exit from I-44. Our group, which eventually numbered 23, began to arrive at the controlled-access facility shortly before noon, and by 12:30 we were fully involved in pre-foray conversation over a typical, delicious, MOMS luncheon. The Friends of Tyson seemed glad to be friends of MOMS as well, as they enjoyed our potato salad with chanterelles, roasted vegetables, and cucumber sandwiches! David Larson, the field manager of Tyson, led us to the area where we have forayed in the past, a slope and bottom along Tyson Creek where there are many old oaks and sycamores and a diverse understory. We were hardly out of the cars when Gary Steps' call of "Chanterelles!" rang out and before long all participants had seen numerous and large specimens of *Cantharellus cibarius* and *C. lateritius*, and a



few bright *C. cinnabarinus* as well! Respectful of the research mission of Tyson, we collected only for the specimen table, and restrained our usual inclination toward mycophagy. After a short time in the woods, we repaired to the office area where we confirmed identification of 18 species and had lively debate over a few others.

Forest 44

June 12, 2004

Amanita bisporigera
Amanita flavoconia (yellow patches)
Auricularia auricula (wood ear)
Boletus ornaticipes (ornate stalked bolete)
Bulgaria rufa (hairy rubber cup)
Cantharellus cibarius (chanterelle)
Cantharellus cinnabarinus (red chanterelle)
Cantharellus lateritius (smooth chanterelle)
Coltricia cinnamomea (shiny cinnamon polypore)
Craterellus fallax (black trumpet)
Crepidotus applanatus (flat crep)
Lactarius camphoratus (aromatic milky)
Lactarius piperatus (peppery milky)
Lactarius volemus (voluminous latex milky)
Laetiporus cincinnatus (white pored chicken of the woods)
Polyporus mori (hexagonal pored polypore)
Russula crustosa (green quilt russula)
Sarcosyphia occidentalis (stalked scarlet cap)
Schizophyllum commune (common split gill)
Scleroderma aerolatum
Strobilomyces confusus (old man of the woods)
Trametes versicolor (turkey tail)
Tremellodendron pallidum (jellied false coral)
Xylaria polymorpha (dead man's finger)

Rockwoods Reservation

June 5, 2004

Amanita flavoconia (yellow patches)
Amanita rubescens blusher
Auricularia auricula (tree ear)
Boletus ornaticipes (ornate stalked bolete)
Boletus subvelutipes (red-mouth bolete)
Cantharellus cibarius (chanterelle)
Cantharellus cinnabarinus (cinnabar-red chanterelle)
Clavaria acuta (white worm coral)
Clavicornia pyxidata (crown-tipped coral)
Coltricia cinnamomea (shiny cinnamon polypore)
Craterellus fallax (black trumpet)
Exidia alba (white jelly fungus)
Galiella rufa (hairy rubber cup)
Hygrophorus coccinea (scarlet waxy cap)
Lactarius camphoratus (aromatic milky)
Lactarius volemus (voluminous-latex milky)
Laetiporus sulphureus (chicken of the woods)
Lycogala epidendrum (wolf's milk slime)
Phylloporus rhodoxanthus (gilled bolete)
Pleurotus ostreatus (oyster mushroom)
Russula emetica (emetic russula)
Russula olivacea
Schizophyllum commune (common split gill)
Strobilomyces floccopus (old man of the woods)
Suillus luteus (slippery jack)
Trametes versicolor (turkey tail)
Tremellodendron pallidum (jellied false coral)
Trichaptum bififormis (violet-toothed polypore)

Research Report

by Brad Bomanz

Voucher Database

The research committee has been hard at work to document new species and revoucher older ones. The ranking for each voucher is based on how thorough the documentation of each specimen was conducted.

The database has three levels of certainty of classification:

- Level 1 - 96%-100%
- Level 2 - 91% - 95%
- Level 3 - 86% - 90%

MOMS database now has:

- Level 1 = 71 (increase of 33.80% from the previous 47 specimens)
- Level 2 = 8 (reduction of 50.00% from the previous 16 specimens)
- Level 3 = 132 (reduction of 4.35% from the previous 138 specimens)

I am happy to report that the database has increased its overall confidence level from its last reported level in February 2004 of 92.73% to 93.56% for July 2004.

This rise is due to a dramatic increase in the high degree, accurate information supplied with each of the vouchers recently submitted. If this level of documentation continues, MOMS Voucher Database will not only be the best in Missouri, but could rival the best ones available in the nation. Keep up the good work!

On July 7, 2004, I delivered all of MOMS voucher specimens to the Dunn-Palmer Herbarium at the University of Missouri, Columbia. MOMS has recently entered into an agreement with the university, purchased its own herbarium, and had it delivered to the university. The university has agreed to curate over our specimens and associated database. The database contains all voucher information and photos for each specimen. For those of you interested, the database not only contains information on specimen locations, habitat and morphology, but also photos of the fungi as it was found in the field. It also has a photo of the specimen cut in half, a photo of its cap color and gill arrangement, and a photo of the spore. This information will be made available to the university staff and students, as well as available to members of MOMS or any other individual or organization with scientific interest.

Later this year I will be conducting a hands-on field class at Tyson Research Center for members of MOMS that want to know what it takes and how to correctly voucher a mushroom for submission into MOMS database. Keep an eye out for the date and time to be listed in an upcoming issue of the Earthstar newsletter.

Morcella Project

This year, the ongoing annual *Morchella* project conducted at the Tyson Research Center documented quite a change from all previous years recorded. Of the 42 monitored trees that have been producing morels almost 100% of the time annually, only one tree produced one morel this year. That tree usually produced 55 to 60 morels annually. The other monitored trees which normally produced anywhere from one to 12, produced nothing! WOW! What a change! I don't know why, but hopefully with continued monitoring we will be able to determine a pattern that might include the weather, soil, or host vegetation influence.

The research committee was able to get a GPS unit this year. I want thank all the board members for their support. This unit made it possible for the research committee to expand the project to include an additional 13 trees that will now be monitored. This brings the grand total to 55. The project is shooting for 80 to 100 trees before advancing to the next phase that will involve a controlled monitoring of human impact as well as animal and environmental.

Cantharellus Project

The *Cantharellus* project received approval in 2001, but has never gotten off the ground (so to speak) because the rains have always stopped during the fruiting season and a test site was never established. This year looks promising! Keep your fingers crossed and pray the rains continue through July and into August. Maybe we will be fortunate enough to find a study location and be able to start documentation that will help conservation agencies better understand this species and the influence collection has on future fruitings.



Fresh Paddy Straw Mushrooms in St. Louis

by Ken Gilberg

In mid-June this year, much rain and high temperatures produced a flush of paddy straw mushrooms in a pile of leaf mulch in our driveway in Kirkwood. How this tropical species got there we don't know but it's not entirely uncommon. I had never found it here before but Brad Bomanz had documented his find of *Volvariella volvacea* several years ago.

In the Far East, this mushroom is like our button mushroom, the most common in the marketplace. They are easily grown on rice straw. They are harvested in the egg stage, before the universal veil breaks and

Photo from Texas Mushrooms: A Field Guide, by Susan Metzler and Van Metzler

2004 Forays & Events

- Sun. 8/15** 10AM **Beginning Mushrooms**, Rockwoods Reservation. Don Dill, instructor
- Sat. 8/21** 10AM **A Passion for Mushrooms**, Babler. Walt Sundberg. Registration required.
- Sat. 8/28** 10AM **Foray**, Englemann Woods. Elaine Fix (carpool; very little parking, no facilities)
- Sat. 9/4** 10AM **Foray**, Babler State Park. Joe Walsh, leader
- Sat. 9/11** 10AM **Foray**, Greensfelder County Park. Gary Steps, leader
- Sun. 9/12** 10AM **Beginning Mushrooms**, Rockwoods Reservation. Don Dill, instructor
- 9/16-9/19** **MOMS Annual Fall Foray**, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Puxico, MO
- Sat. 10/2** 10AM **Foray**, Eldon Hazlet State Park, IL. Leland Von Behren
- Sat. 10/16** 10AM **Foray**, Meramac State Park.
- 10/22 -24** Fri. - Sun. **Foray**, The Hawnting, Hawn State Park.
- Sun. 10/24** 10AM **Foray** at Pickle Springs Natural Area near Farmington, MO
- Sun. 2/6** Winter Luncheon, Eden Commons

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. Don Dill's classes will be cancelled and rescheduled if weather interferes: 314-647-3307.

the volva appears at the base. Picking at the egg stage not only makes for easy cleaning but insures the firm texture desired.

I brought a bunch of the mushrooms to Chef Hama at the Sansui Japanese restaurant in Warson Woods. After showing him proof of the mushroom's identity in a

Japanese mushroom book (he already knows I know mushrooms), he prepared a fabulous dish of them for LaRee and me.

Chef Hama does wonders with mushrooms. Visit Sansui when the matsutake are fresh. Or anytime you want something unusual done to perfection.



Missouri Mycological Society

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*2004 is turning out to be a bountiful season for chanterelles.
If you've never hunted chanterelles before, this is the year to start!*