



EARTHSTAR

E X A M I N E R

Number 24, May 1992

The Missouri Mycological Society Newsletter

Gary Lincoff's Visit

"Your club's enthusiasm and energy are great to see," Gary Lincoff wrote to the *Earthstar*. "I wish more of the clubs in the east had the diversity and intensity of the Missouri Mycological Society!" Lincoff has led mushroom tour groups around the world from Tierra del Fuego to China, from Alaska to New Guinea, but it was his first visit to Missouri.

Gary said that the Winter Meeting and Mycophagist's Luncheon was one of the finest events of its kind that he had ever attended. Of Barb O'Brien's centerpieces Gary said that he "had never seen anything like them."



Gary signs a member's copy of the *Audubon Guide*.

Everyone enjoyed Gary's talk on identification at the luncheon. Fascinating was Gary's presentation on mushroom evolution held the Saturday before. On both days Gary shared insights from a remarkable career in mycology with humor, animation and a great concern for amateur mushrooming.

Also from Gary's letter: "Please say 'hi' to everyone and tell 'em to come out this August to the NAMA foray in New Mexico and Telluride

Thanks for coming to Missouri, Gary.



Morel Queen Lila Pelouch and Morel Madness organizer Jim Winn enjoy a large skillet of morels.

Morel Madness

Organizers Jim Winn and John Regnier put together our first ever Morel Madness the weekend of April 11 at Meramec State Park. It was a great time for the approximately 45 folks who participated. Sorry you couldn't make it, John.

Lila Pelouch won the title of Queen of Morel Madness. Lila and her husband, Milan were welcome visitors from the Chicago area and the Illinois Mycological Society. On accepting her position of royalty, she declared, "I can't believe I won with just four mushrooms."

Many members tracked down the few roons in the state park. Mark and Mary D'Angelo found about a dozen and a half shyly emerged morels. The successful hunters contributed their finds to the skillet for a delicious taste of the first fruits of the season. It whetted the appetite and recharged the madness.

When we gathered again in the afternoon, Jim Winn came in with a *Gyromitra caroliniana* with a head on it the size of a

Continued on page 2

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- May 11 - (Monday) 6:00 P.M. Emmenegger Park; Leader: Barb O'Brien
- May 23 - (Saturday) 10:00 A.M. Forest 44; Leader: Don Dill
- May 30 - (Saturday) 10:00 A.M. Pere Marquette State Park (Ill.); Leader: Leland Von Behren
- June 14 - (Sunday) 10:00 A.M. Emmenegger Park; Leader: Barb O'Brien
- July 11 - (Saturday) 10:00 A.M. Rockbridge State Park (south of Columbia); Leader: Phil Roos
- August 1 - (Saturday) Sweat 'n Chanterelles, Babler State Park at 3:00 P.M. Leader: Ken Gilberg
- August 13-16 - NAMA Foray in Angel Fire, New Mexico
- August 20-23 - Wild Mushrooms/Telluride, Telluride, Colorado
- September 12 & 13 - Fall Campout at Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Puxico, MO
- September 27 - (Sunday) 10:00 A.M. Rockwoods Reservation; Leader: Don Dill
- October 3 - (Saturday) 10:00 A.M. Gillespie Lake (Ill.); Leader: Leland Von Behren

Morel Madness (continued from page 1)

softball. It would have outweighed Lila's four morels easily, but Jim himself had set the rules long before, otherwise he'd have been King of the Madness. We fried the big red in butter to everyone's pleasure who partook and there have been no reported problems. Perhaps someone so minded may lobby in Jefferson City to make *Gyromitra caroliniana* our state mushroom.

It seemed that the season had been shuffled a bit by the weather. Perhaps we were about a week or two ahead of peak morel season. Perhaps it had been too dry. Perhaps the cold spell in late March had thrown everything off schedule. (See Phenology article in this issue).

There was a report of a local finding a bag of morels a month previously. (Was it a fish story?)

The Madness Dinner was lots of fun and a delicious buffet was served by the lodge at the park. Barb O'Brien was named princess of the affair and received one of the two award plaques for her finds that day.

Many camped out and others stayed in the cabins at Meramec State Park. On Saturday night after the dinner we all gathered around a big fire by Pat Lennon's tent and toasted (burned) marshmallows for s'mores. Some folks stayed overnight and went for the wildflower walk on Sunday morning.

Tim Renkin, outdoor writer for the Post-Dispatch joined the group Saturday morning. An large article about morels and the Missouri Mycological Society appeared Sunday, April 26.

An Unspoken Danger of Mushroom Hunting

Most amateurs learn quickly to be wary of *Amanitas* and advanced mushroomers show great caution as they expand their mycophagical horizons. They may even be willing to risk a possible stomach ache and vomiting spell to find out their own personal sensitivity to a particular mushroom such as *Chlorophyllum molybdites* or drink a glass of wine with their *Coprinus atramentarius* just to see if what the experts say is true.

All mushroom guides give fair warning of the dangers of eating poisonous fungi, stressing careful identification and caution. But how many tell you of another danger?

Imagine. As you are driving through the state park after a rain and scanning the trees for oysters, your eye catches sight of a mass of white bracket fungi about 10 feet up on a dead tree. Are they polypores? Can I reach them? Are they *sapidus* or *ostreatus*? You note its location so you can pull over as soon as possible...

As you were hunting, the road turned to the left. You may as well have let Toonses the Cat do the driving as your Nissan 2000 wraps around a 150-year old white oak.

When your eyes are diverted from the road for more than an instant, it is hard to tell how long you'll be distracted. Keep vigilant while you drive or appoint a non-mushrooming designated driver. Be careful. Those "I brake for fungi" bumper stickers won't be much help. Especially, don't drink and drive and mushroom.

There is a lot to be said for foraging from a car. I've gleaned many pounds of bounty that way. I've read that those guys who win the morel hunting contests up in Boyne City can spot a morel (yellow, of course) from their car going 60 miles an hour. But try to picture those crash dummies morel hunting that way.

Attention Foray Leaders

Don has made up a form for foray leaders to record the facts from each foray so that coherent reports made be published in the *Earthstar*. Information will include a list of species, weather conditions, number of participants, etc.

By saving your Earthstars over the years, you'll have a good idea of when to look for your favorites.

More on the Fall Campout

Jack and Marty Toll are continuing to firm up plans for a weekend foray around Missouri's Mingo Swamp Refuge area for this year's Fall Campout. Dr. Walter Sundberg has promised to come. Jay Justice of the Arkansas Myco Club will be there.

We are inviting other clubs to join our group and hope to coordinate with neighboring states' clubs.

People will either camp out or stay in nearby inexpensive motels. People will supply their own meals except for Saturday night supper.

Phenology

Phenology is the study of periodic biological phenomena. The concept of phenology is an important aspect of mushrooming, in gauging when to look for what in one's specific area. As applied to the morels, they're in full swing when the dogwoods are blooming, the oaks leaves are the size of squirrel ears, the trilliums in flower, the lilacs in bloom.

Jack Toll brought the science to my attention. He said that it might be a good idea to keep a diary and take personal note the progression of nature. Jack recommended reading *A Sand Count Almanac* by Aldo Leopold.

Tony's Does Morels

In a recent review in *St. Louis Business Journal*, Allan Cohen wrote the headline: "Morel mania season hits, Tony's kitchen responds." In the review he describes the incredible meal served by Tony's with morels they bought out of Washington State. They feasted on puff pastry shells with morels and cream sauce, fettucine with morels and more cream (repetitive but not redundant?), a veal dish with Madeira, artichokes and morels and a chicken dish with fresh tomatoes, basil, white wine and morels.

Tony's is a Mobil 5-star restaurant, one of 11 in the United States and the only Italian restaurant in the group.

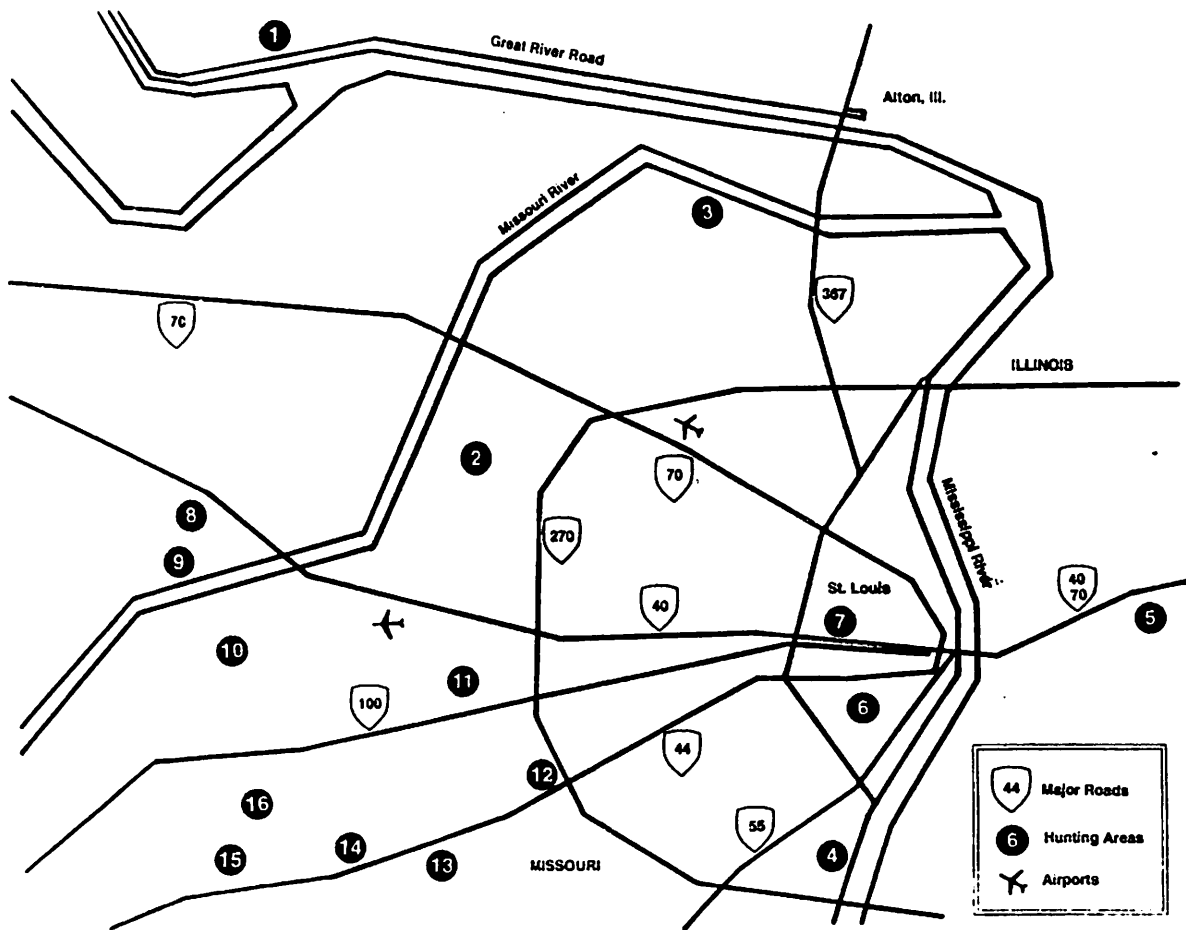
What a meal there would cost, the journalist did not say. He mentioned that they were moving from their present location May 23 and will reopen in the Equitable Building June 2.

If you think you can afford it, you probably can afford to take me, too, thanks. If their menu inspires you to cook at home, I'll bring the wine.

Telluride Mushroom Conference

The 12th annual Telluride Mushroom Conference will be held in Telluride, Colorado, August 20-23, 1992, three days after the NAMA foray in New Mexico.

Speakers will include Gary Lincoff, Paul Stammets, Andrew Weil and others. For further information contact Fungophile, P.O. Box 480503, Denver, Colorado, 80248-0503. Phone: 303 296-9359.



Don Dill's Guide to Mushroom Hunting in the St. Louis Area

This guide lists the large and/or popular places many local mushroom hunters use regularly. It lists good areas within reasonable driving distance and includes many of the clubs regular meeting places for forays. You might want to save this map for future reference.

This guide does not attempt to list every prospective fungi hunting area in the metropolitan area and surrounding areas of Missouri and Illinois. For instance, it makes no mention of small city and county parks (though many are quite good) based on the assumption that everyone has access to area maps.

North area

- 1 **Pere Marquette** (in Illinois)- 367-67 to Alton, w. on Great River Road to park
- 2 **Creve Coeur Co. Park**- w. of 270 on Dorsett Rd., n. on Marine to park
- 3 **Souix Passage Co. Park**- Old Jamnestown Rd. between Vail and Douglas Rd.

South area

- 4 **Jefferson Barracks** - s. off Lemay Ferry Rd, Telegraph Rd. to park

East area

- 5 **Cahokia Mounds Park** (Ill) - s. off 55/70 on 111, e. on Collinsville Rd. to park
- 6 **Tower Grove Park** - s. Grand Blvd. between Arsenal and Magnolia
- 7 **Forest Park** - n. off 40 on Hampton or Kingshighway

West area

- 8 **A. J. Busch Wildlife Area**- s. off 40/61 at Weldon Springs on 94 to park
- 9 **Weldon Springs Wildlife Area**- s. off 40/61 at Weldon Springs on 94 to park
- 10 **Babler State Park**- s. off 44 on 109 or from 40 consult road map
- 11 **Queeny County Park**- n. off Manchester (100) on Weidman Road
- 12 **Emmenegger County Park**- s. off Manchester on Geyer Rd., w. on Craigwold Rd.
- 13 **Forest 44**- s. off 44 to Meramec Station Rd. w. to Hillsboro Rd., s. to parking lot entrance (less than a mile)
- 14 **West Tyson Park**- n. off 44 at Lewis Rd., w. on outer road to Lewis Rd.
- 15 **Greensfelder Park**- n. off 44 at Allenton Rd.
- 16 **Rockwoods Reservation**- n. off 44 at Hwy. 109 to Old Manchester west

Additional Areas Further Afield

Meramec State Park- s. off 44 to Sullivan
Lake Gillespie (Ill.)- n. on 55 to exit 52 (Ill. Hwy. 16), w. on 16 about 7½ mi. to Lake Gillespie turnoff--about 1 mi. to park
Engelmann Woods - w. on 100 to n. on Hwy. T, a mile past 2nd St. Albans entrance



Sweat 'n Chanterelles Foray

Ken Gilberg has called a foray to be in the heat of summer when chanterelles are usually in bloom to be held August 1 in Babler State Park at 3:00 p.m.. The intention is to forage for an hour or two, then be able to shower and swim at the pool in Babler. Make a picnic dinner in the park if you like and then meet up with the gang at Stovall's Grove out on Manchester for some cold long-necks and music by the Missouri Valley Boys. Babler's pool is open from noon to 7:00 p.m. and they charge adults \$2.50, children 5-12 \$1.50.

A Bird in the Hand

This is the time of year when Americans think hardest about taxes and how they are spent. President Bush recently unveiled a plan to spend \$12.7 billion on his war against drugs, some \$3 billion of which is to be devoted to "international efforts," such as reducing the production of illegal drugs abroad. (AP in *Journal World*, Jan. 28, 1992)

Judging by past experience, much of the \$3 billion will be wasted. According to the same source (Jan. 4), U.S. efforts to destroy coca plants in Peru, which produces 60% of the world's cocaine, have had relatively little impact.

What has been effective is the fungus *Fusarium oxysporum*, which attacks the roots and causes the leaves to wilt and the plant to die. Although common in those parts, *F. oxysporum* only began its war against cocaine two years ago. Already it has wiped out a sixth of coca plants in the affected area, and the epidemic has just begun. Despite reports that our helicopters have been spraying the area, U.S. authorities flatly deny any responsibility for the epidemic.

Evidently mycology is proving more effective than military science. Perhaps the President's drug gurus could save us a billion dollars or so just by letting nature take its course.

- editorial by Richard Kay of the Kaw Valley Mycological Society in *The Kansas Mycology*, Feb. & Mar. 1992

World's Biggest and Oldest Organism: a 30-Acre Fungus

The organism is *Armillariella bulbosum*, an interwoven filigree of hyphae spawned by a single fertilized spore some 1,500 to 10,000 years ago and now extending for more than 30 acres in the soil of a forest near Crystal Falls, Michigan, along the Wisconsin border. It could weigh about 100 tons, as much as a blue whale.

Through genetic fingerprinting, the fungus was considered an individual even though the network of rhizomorphs in the soil did not stay totally connected over the years, breaking off or degrading at various points.

Researchers said the finding will force biologists to rethink their assumptions about what constitutes an individual, a funda-

A person eats a peck of dirt in their lifetime.
You can have more if you like. -K.G.



Mushrooms growing through a tree stump are only the tips of an organic iceberg.

mental problem in the study of the natural world and its ecosystems. Scientists normally view a single organism as something bound by a type of skin, whether of animal skin or plant cellulose. But fungi, along with other organisms like coral and some types of grasses, grow as network of cells and threadlike elements whose boundaries are not always clear.

Researchers said that the fungus they found may not be the largest around. They believe that the fungus had reached its maximum dimensions because it is bumping up against competing fungi which block further colonization by this specimen.

"It's the most successful one we're aware of, but this is a mixed forest with many kinds of trees," said Dr. Johann N. Bruhr of Michigan Technological University. "We would think where there was a stand of pure trees like birch or aspen, a single fungus might be more successful still." In that case a fungus for a particular type of tree might be able to proliferate especially quickly and over the entire area before encountering any competitors.

-from the front page of the New York Times, April 2, 1992. The article appeared in many papers nationwide.



'Stool Samples

This is a new column devoted to the reporting of species found at times other than at forays. It is a take-off from the San Francisco *Mycena News* Mushroom Watch. Advisories to 'Stool Samples should be sent or phoned to Ken Gilberg for inclusion in the next *Earthstar*.

Reported finds such as morels in August or of species found only in southern Australia will be taken with a grain of salt. If you need help or confirmation for your find call Ken or Don or someone close to you from the membership list.

The Morel reports are in. By most accounts this was a mediocre to poor year, but if you were satisfied with a few, you could find them. The April rains swelled specimens to a size that took just a few to make a meal. The greatest quantity reported was about 200 from a non-member collecting near St. Genevieve.

Also, Ken Gilberg reports finding the wine-cap *Stropharia (rugosa-annulata)* near his home in St. Louis County while looking for morels on April 19. Barb O'Brien found a good burst of *Coprinus micaceus* on a stump in Kirkwood.



Culinary Corner

Vicki Duncan's mushroom paté was a big hit at the Winter Meeting. Several requests were made for the recipe and Vicki sent it with her compliments.

MUSHROOM PATÉ

4 Tbsp. butter
1 lb. chopped mushrooms (shiitake or your choice)
½ onion, minced
2 cloves garlic, pressed
1½ tsp. curry powder
¼ tsp. coriander
¼ tsp. ground cumin
1 cup roasted cashews (honey roasted is best but salty, so watch salting)
2 Tbsp. oil
chopped parsley
½ tsp. salt

Saute mushrooms, garlic, onion, salt and all spices; cook until all water evaporates. In a blender chop cashews, add oil to make paste. Add mushroom mix and blend until smooth. Serve in a bowl (best at room temperature) with parsley garnish and wheat crackers on the side.

Dr. Richard Parmley made this Oyster Mushrooms and Red Bell Peppers on Radiator Pasta for the Winter Meeting. He and several other MMS members submitted recipes for a contest in the *Post-Dispatch* which was looking for "exotic mushroom recipes." However, wild mushrooms seemed to scare the editors there. The contest winner used fresh shiitake, exotic enough for the Post's reader's tastes.

OSTRICA PEPPERONE E RADIATORE

½ lb. oyster mushrooms sliced ¼" thick
2 red bell peppers, roasted, skinned and cut into ¼" strips
2 cloves garlic (diced)
4 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. basil
1 tsp. oregano
1 tsp. dried parsley
½ lb. marinara sauce
1 lb. radiatore (radiator shaped pasta)

Cook the radiatore in boiling water (or mushroom soaking liquid) for four minutes and then drain into a colander. Using the same pot, add olive oil, sliced mush-

rooms, garlic and cook for 5 minutes. Add the roasted bell pepper strips, basil, oregano, parsley and marinara sauce. Stir several times and pour over the pasta. Serves four.

Dick Martin of Mascoutah, Illinois won the *Post-Dispatch* Exotic Mushroom Contest with the following entry.

LINGUINE WITH SALMON AND SHIITAKE SAUCE

5 dried shiitake
1 (7¾-ounce) can red (not pink) salmon
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup (1 stick) butter
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. coarsely cracked peppercorns
2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
1 lb. linguine, cooked according to package directions

Soak mushrooms in 1½ to 2 cups warm water about 30 minutes, squeezing them out occasionally. Drain, reserve water. Remove and discard mushroom stems. Cut mushrooms into thin slices; set aside.

Saute garlic in butter and oil until lightly browned. Add peppercorns, mushrooms and salmon-mushroom liquid; simmer 5 minutes. Flake salmon; add to pan. Stir in parsley just before serving. Serve over hot linguine.

Yield: 4 servings

MUSHROOMS IN BAKED SPANISH ONIONS

(from *Mrs. Norton's Cook-Book* printed in 1917, borrowed from My Auntie's Attic antique shop on Manchester Road)

"Hollow out the centers of as many onions as there are portions to be served. Drain one can of button mushrooms [use real wild mushrooms!] cut or chop in small pieces, add a tablespoon of bread crumbs, a tablespoon of finely chopped celery, a tablespoon of melted butter, a tablespoon of cream, a tablespoon of grated cheese, a teaspoon of chopped parsley.

Fill the onions with the mixture, dust with pepper and salt, put a lump of butter on top of each, and set in a buttered baking dish; cover, bake thirty minutes, remove the cover; then brown.

For Sale from MMS

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\$10 plus \$2 postage.

BOOKPLATES depicting *Amanita brunnescens* in a beautiful
drawing by Don Dill \$1.50/dozen plus \$.60 postage.

Order from Ken Gilberg or buy at the next foray.

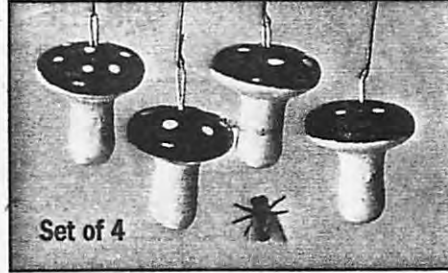
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To become a member of the Missouri Mycological Society (MMS), send \$8.00 yearly family dues to Phil Roos, 2544 Lexington Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65109. Include your name, full address, and home and work phone numbers (optional, of course).

MMS is affiliated with the North American Mycological Society (NAMA). MMS members receive a \$3.00 discount on NAMA's current \$15.00 yearly dues. MMS members should send their NAMA dues to Phil Roos. Make checks or money orders out to NAMA.

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at Chanel

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