Mingo '93
—Ellen Menown

How does one start to describe all the events that took place at our second annual Fall Foray at Mingo Swamp (actually, our forth annual foray— the other two were held at the Toll’s house in Mountain View)?

When I took on the assignment of covering the Mingo Swamp foray for the Earthstar Examiner, I was ready to turn out the best Earthstar article ever! I have, however, come to the realization (after sitting in front of a blank screen monitor for awhile) that I will never turn out anything of the caliber of our own Christine Bertelson or Claudia Joyce or Ken Gilberg. With much more humility, I am sitting down to try again to describe the wondrous MMP event that took place in mid-September.

This year we utilized Camp Latonka, a Girl Scout camp. I think it is safe to say that those of us who stayed on the premises found the accommodations just fine (remember to bring your flashlights and lanterns next year). The kitchen and dining hall were especially noteworthy—they were clean, modern, and quite capable of handling our group. Magnificent as the kitchen was, it was nothing without “the belle of the ball”, “the hostess with the mostest”, “the chef incredible” (just ask anyone), the one and only Linda Worley! Linda’s cooking expeditions came awfully close to upstaging the specimen tables’ allure. Vegetarians and other health-conscious persons were pleased. We were fortunate to have such a splendid menu at each meal! George Rolby, Linda’s chief assistant and Barbara O’Brien, who was responsible for such nice touches as flowers on every table, definitely deserve a hand here for their roles.

Marty and Jack Toll, Larry Douglass, and Patrick Lennon were the head honchos involved in getting all of this together. Jack, as you all know by now, is the former Director of the Preserve, so he was able to acquire the keys that unlocked the portions of Mingo without animal hunters. Without the help of Jack, Marty, and Lee Toll, we never could have found our way to the choice mushroom-hunting places. Pat and Larry did the nitty gritty administrative work and cabin assignments and I think they did a fine job. Thank you.

Linda Mueller and Claudia Joyce get the credit for the T-shirt design. The club sold out of them, which is a good indicator of popularity.

Don Dill drew some lovely identification cards for the specimen table, complete with clever drawings that went with each mushroom category. We enjoy your company but why don’t you talk Wanda and Raine into coming too?

Erika Roos commandeered the kitchen for the mushroom tasting. Ken was second in charge. Evidently the event turned into a cooking class and a group effort. By all reports, the tasting was one of the highlights of the weekend. We tried the Sparassis, the Hericium and the Chicken of the Woods. Larry—sorry it started too early, next time we’ll save some for you.

Last, but not least, the mushrooms.

Continued on page 4
Home on the range—when the skies are cloudy all day
—by Richard Kay (President of the Kaw Valley Mycological, editor of their newsletter, the Kansas Mycologist, and co-author of the new A Guide to Kansas Mushrooms)

The rarest mushroom in Kansas is perhaps Amanita praecox, the "Home-on-the-Range Amanita", featured on the back cover of my Checklist. It was discovered in July 1895 by the prodigious Kansas amateur mycologist, Elam Bartholomew, whose story I have already told in the Guide to Kansas Mushrooms (pp. 14-16). He found it again in September 1896, August 1901, and June 1927—all within a few miles of his home in Rooks county, 9 miles north of Stockton. Altogether, he deposited 16 specimens in 5 American herbaria, but no one other than Bartholomew has ever collected the species, either in Kansas or elsewhere.

Amanitologist Rod Tulloss, based in New Jersey, has an ongoing interest in A. praecox as part of his monographic study of the North American Vitatiadinia, a subsection of the genus Amanita. Some years ago, at a NAMA foray, he encouraged Sherry and me to try to collect some fresh specimens, which might clear up some unresolved problems.

Our first question was when to make the 300-mile trip to Bartholomew's hunting grounds. Armed with the collection dates supplied by Tulloss from herbarium packets he had examined, we asked Mary Ann Thompson, a librarian and historian in nearby Hays, what the weather was like when Bartholomew made his collections. According to the newspapers, in 1896 a long drought was ended by the heaviest rainfall they had had in years (3 inches); in 1927 another drought was followed by the second heaviest rainfall in 60 years. So we knew we must wait for rain.

When it came in unprecedented quantities this summer, we began to plan an expedition. I went over to the State Historical Society in Topeka and read Bartholomew's diary to discover where he hunted. Generally, it turned out, he rarely forayed more than 3 miles from his farm. Moreover, his diary for July 1895 indicated that there were torrential rains that month as well. I also came home with a copy of Bartholomew's own hand-drawn map of Rooks county (1881), with more detail than is found on printed maps.

Finally, there were indications of terrain and locale, which Tulloss supplied from the herbarium packets, e.g. "high, open prairie in short grass." One collection was from Phillips county, which lies about a mile north of the Bartholomew homestead. At this point, we needed a local informant, and I turned to Bartholomew's biographer, Leonard Erle Muir, for help. He agreed to lead me to some likely spots, most of which belonged to him or his relatives. Just to be on the safe side, we also asked Ron Meyers to interview Bartholomew's granddaughter, Margaret Young, who lives in Lawrence. She thought we might try Sugar Loaf, a mesa-like mass of igneous rock about 7 miles west of the homestead: it was certainly high and open enough.

Armed with these clues, Sherry and I drove out to Hays on Friday, July 23, and set out for Stockton early the next morning. After a week of rain—8.5" that month in the area—the day was clear and the thermometer rapidly rose into the 90s. Our guide, Erle Muir, had unexpectedly been hospitalized, but his wife, Shirlee, led us on a tour of prospective spots. And her help was surely needed, because the main road north of Stockton was closed for repairs, so we had to navigate a labyrinth of gravel, and even dirt, roads to reach our hunting grounds. What is more, Bow Creek, which runs just south of the Rooks county line and then turns north into Phillips county, was out of its banks, so we twice had to ford crossings with water close to the hub caps.

Our prime target was a broad rolling pasture of short prairie grass less than a mile east of U.S. 183 on the town road that forms the border between Rooks and Phillips counties. It was barely inside Phillips county and at the extreme edge of Bartholomew's collecting range, about 2½ miles northeast of his home. This fits the description quoted above better than any other spot within that radius. To our surprise, we found about a dozen species of mushrooms lurking in the grass, mostly in patches where the grass was shorter. Most abundant was a Clitocybe too brown to be Clitocybe dealbata, so probably it was C. norbita (Aron, 163)—a Kansas first! Also common was a yellow Psathyrella and several Coprinus on cow dung. Puffballs, too, were in evidence: Calvatia echinata, a sterile base of C. cyathiformis, and Lycoperdon pulcherrimum. Finally, some dried Marasmius oraeides, an unidentified Agaricus, and teenies, under an inch, colored white, orange, and chocolate brown.

But the prize of the day was a single white mushroom, about 2½" high, with a cap about 1¼" across, which fit the bottom of the range reported for A. praecox. At the base was a slight bulge instead of the usual Amanita bulb, but that fit too. It was immediately apparent that our specimen differed from Bartholomew's in several respects: instead of warts, ours had an large, irregular brown patch on the cap; also, instead of a membranous, persistent ring there was only a faint, pulverant zone. Moreover, although the spores of praecox are somewhat elongated, unlike the spherical shape typical of Amanitas, still ours were twice as long as they were wide, which suggested a Lepiota instead. Finally, in Melzer's solution the spores turned brown (dextrinoid reaction), again indicating a Lepiota.

Bearing our specimen home in a cooler, we sent half of it off to Tullus by overnight mail. He quickly determined that we had indeed found a Lepiota, as we suspected. But what Lepiota? He could not key it out in any of his books and so has sent it on to Walt Sundberg for identification. It is just possible that we collected an unknown Lepiota instead of a rare Amanita. So Amanita praecox is still out there in western Kansas waiting to be collected. In September, I am planning to go to Hays and visit Bartholomew's own herbarium, which is at Fort Hays State University (Joe Thomasson, curator), and if the weather is right, I'll have another look at that prairie.

Kati Fritz-Jung No Longer With Us

Sad but true. Kati and her husband Ken have moved to Houston where they both landed new and exciting jobs. They've already hooked up with the Texas Mycological Society and plan to attend their state foray. (See our Schedule of Events for dates.) They said they will keep their MMS membership to keep tabs on all of us in the Earthstar. We're gonna miss you, Kati and Ken!
Book Review: 
Mushrooms and Other Fungi 
by Geoffrey Kibby 
Reviewed by Don Dill

I'm glad to see a mushroom guide that indulges my bias for drawings instead of color photographs. I'm not unalterably opposed to photos—color or black and white. I have my own little collection of slides which I continue to supplement, periodically thumb through, and prune here and there, but, still and all, I prefer good drawings.

Geoffrey Kibby's Mushrooms and Other Fungi, one of the American Nature Guide series, is a genuine pleasure to review. The illustrations are watercolors executed by the artist/author who is obviously proficient in both mediums. There's something compelling and satisfying about such clean, clear and concise illustrations that strikes a responsive chord in me. The illustrations also are helpful in resolving those annoying color vagaries peculiar to both flash and available-light photos done in situ.

Kibby has opted for brevity in both the introductory text and the descriptions accompanying the illustrations. Though the text is concise, it is surprisingly complete. A color pictorial key to the major fungal groups is an unusual but interesting and effective addition that I have not seen used before. The appendix includes the usual species and genera index plus formulae for four common reagents used in mushroom identification. Unfortunately, most of us will not have ready access to these restricted chemicals. Another nice feature of this guide that I particularly appreciate is the spiral binding which allows the book to lie flat rather than flipping pages or closing.

Kibby's brevity will be welcomed by newcomers to the fungal scene for obvious reasons. I can still recall my befuddlement upon opening Aurora's Mushrooms Demystified or Lincoff's tissue-paper-thin pages in the Audubon guide. Awesome they were and bulging with information. Kibby's Mushrooms and Other Fungi is precise in spite of its small size and can help any and all mycophiles.

For me, though, the acid test of any guide is how often one uses it and how many mushrooms it helps you identify. Kibby's guide got four new ones for me in two days. (That's a pretty good couple of days for me!) When I cross-checked the species with my other guides, it was those peculiar colors—plus some anomalous cap and stem shapes—which had been throwing me off.

I particularly liked the Boletus coverage in this guide that seemed surprisingly comprehensive given the size of the guide. Gertrude Stavisky wrote me recently asking about some mycological things and complaining specifically about the paucity of our local Boleti in her guides—I agree. It seems as though I'm forever coming up with a Boletus I can't key out. (Perhaps there are some environmental differences—sounds like an excellent opportunity for local some mycologists to study.) In any event, Kibby's guide is joining Aurora, Lincoff, Sundberg, et al, on my forays.

I'm telling you gang—you better get this one! At only $7.00 a copy, how can you go wrong?

Reexamining a Fruitful Book
—Gertrude Stavisky

I nearly didn't buy Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America (by David W. Fischer and Alan E. Besette. U. of Texas Press 1992) at the Mingo campout last year because some MMS members panned it so thoroughly. However it has been so useful to us it seemed a note to the Earthstar would be in order.

I had been told it was not useful as a cookbook, other basic guides being more to various peoples' liking. But I, as a newcomer to mycophagy, was looking for something that could assure me I wasn't doing in all the family every time something new was tried. Well, this book was just the thing, and this very wet summer it has been put to a lot of use. It is intended to help newcomers identify edible species, and then suggests ways to use them. There are also introductory general instructions for cooking and preserving, and specific recipes for various common types. Chapters on poisoning and common look-alike poisonous ones to avoid are included.

The recipes are highly particular, for example "Cornish Game Hens with Chanterelle Stuffing and Apricot Glaze". Not likely I would have just those ingredients handy at the moment. But, being somewhat adventurous cooks, it was not hard to translate this into baked stuffed bas (by omitting the glaze and adding some tarragon and reducing cooking time) when our pond supplied good fish during the height of the chanterelle season. See the recipe included in this issue's Culinary Corner.

What this book did so well was give us ideas about how the different varieties can be well used. For instance there are eight quite different black and/or yellow chanterelle recipes, ranging from the stuffed hen to omelets, salads, cracker spread, and an exotic filo dough concoction. Enough to give us plenty ideas about possibilities. We blithely substituted cinnamon red chanterelles where black trumpets were called for, substituted fish for chicken, and left out heavy cream for cholesterol reasons. But the results were invariably good and fun.

This book has gone a long way towards making me more relaxed about trying out edibles new to us. The careful identification descriptions and pictures are coupled with detailed instructions about possible poisonous look-aliases. None of that stumbling around through dozens of varieties in a general field manual. The focus is on identifying certain common edibles, and the information concisely organized to that purpose.

An added bonus is the personal anecdotes from the authors' experiences of collecting and eating which can be found in the margins. They helped me feel less foolish about some of my worries. After all, they were beginners once, too.

Foray Report

September 2, 1993 Foray at Rockwood Reservation
Leader: D. Dill. Five participants. 10 a.m.
Weather: Warm (80 degrees) and humid.
Rain previous day and during foray.
Species List
(A) 1 to 3 specimens, (B) 3 to 10 specimens, (C) 10 to 50 specimens, (D) too numerous to count.
Amanita flavoconia B
A. pantherina A
A. rubescens B
A. vaginata A
Armillaria tabescens D
Cantharellus cibarius B
C. minor A
Ganoderma applanatum C (one log)
Hydnellum zonatum D
Lactarius hygrophorides A
L. pipizera C
L. volvens B
Laetiporus sulphureus A (state of decay)
Mycena leatiana B (one log)
Pleurotus ostreatus A (immature specimen)
Russula virenses A
Strobilomyces floccopus A
Trametes versicolor D
Unidentified to species:
6 Boletus (See comment in book review)
2 Agaricus
1 Sarco don
3 Russula
2 Lactarius
2 Polyopores
2 Amanitas
About 10 fruiting bodies were unidentified.
Continued from page 1

We found lots of interesting specimens! As Walt said, we didn’t find the quantity of last years’ foray but we certainly found the quality. The 100+ participants traveled to one of five destinations to collect what came their way and everybody was successful! Most of us would have been lucky to be able to identify even half of what was in our baskets so we were indeed fortunate to have such knowledgeable mycologists in our midst, both amateur and professional.

Walt Sundberg once again honored us in accepting the position of head mycologist for the weekend. Walt is charming and a very good teacher. I was lucky enough to have him on my foray, the “C” group, and he was a hit with everyone. I enjoyed all of the people on our foray. Anya Vykopal found an amazing array of frog species and Woody Mauthe found a rather large Sparassis herbstii, as did George Zimney in another group. I sure wish that I could remember what tiny mushroom Doris Amann found that Walt thought was so interesting. She had given it to me for safekeeping because I had brought one of Ken’s egg cartons for the little specimens.

There were numerous finds and good stories from the other groups. Jay Justice, from the Arkansas club, was able to make it this year, much to our delight. Jay proved to be a valued, knowledgeable amateur mycologist, and the group members returned from the field quite impressed with him. Jay—we don’t consider you to be “a foray bum”, we think you’re swell! Amongst Jay’s finds was a Clitocybe of particular interest, a good collection of Amanitas and Boletes, and a yellow Chamaeota. One foray member remarked that “Jay explained the mushrooms one-by-one and it was very interesting.” Jay felt that “it was well worth the trip from Arkansas.”

Ken Olson, longtime member of the MMS, was able to come again this year and, once again, proved to be a pillar of information in the specimen room after the foray. He functioned as mycologist for one of the foray groups. Unfortunately, I didn’t get a chance to interview him about his weekend, but I learned a bit about Swedish mycologists. You’ll have to ask Ken or Pat. Thank you for coming Ken!

We were all happy to meet Brian Akers, a student of Walt’s who charmed his way through the weekend. It seems that Brian made the biggest impression on his foray group. Larry Douglas commented that “Brian is a superb teacher and foray leader... and great with kids.” Everyone agreed. We thank Brian for his work in the specimen room, his willingness to lend a hand, and his enthusiasm.

Leland Von Behren has proved to be a man of many talents. Not only does he seem adept at videotaping, he is also a wine maker who is willing to share his ever-popular Elderberry Wine. The campfire outside of Von’s tent “Morel Hotel” and the Toll’s camper was a popular hangout. Von even agreed to function as a foray mycologist and leader for the fifth group! Thank you Leland.

I would like to know which group the Hellmuths were in. Evidently Dan saw a cottonmouth and inadvertently went for a dip in the swamp. Dan came out unscathed—he landed on his feet!

We didn’t get many reports on ticks or chiggers. As far as I know Keith Patten and I were the only chigger sufferers. If only I had washed in white vinegar when I came in from the woods!

The Saturday night schedule of events is worth mentioning. Amongst other scrumptious dishes, Linda treated us to Chicken Florentin. The dinner was punctuated by ice cream and Maya’s native Basque cry called Irrintzina, a “laughter” (you could have fooled me) to
scare away an enemy. It sounded like a cross between a bird call and a scream. Jack Toll responded to the call with an Ozark yodel, used by people in the Ozarks and Appalachians to communicate from hill to hill. Both calls were interesting and just the thing to wake us up after the meal when the coffee pot ran low.

This brings us to the main speech given by Walt. Walt chose to talk about miscellaneous mushroom topics but focused on the effect of floodwaters on mushrooms. It was a good speech. Walt had brought prizes for contest winners in Walt's categories such as "most disgusting mushroom" (won by Luke Lamb), "largest mushroom" (won by Gene Wigger) and "greatest quantity of mushrooms" (won by Lee Toll). I want to hear how Walter's "hygrometric" mushroom kit works.

I would like to say that we all appreciated all of the volunteer work. It made the event as wonderful as it was, and it did run smoothly. If anyone wants to write an article for the Earthstar Examiner about the most interesting mushrooms found, please submit it to Ken. This article lacks in that category. We hope to be able to publish a species list from Mingo in another issue.

"Great party, great food, great people, great conversations, great weather (whoever was on that committee did an excellent job), great organization, unbelievably great t-shirts. It was supper duper. Supper duper great. My only comment or suggestion is...I don't think I did enough physical work there. Next year we have to do a better job delegating. It's physical labor that makes this work."

Claudia Joyce
sight upon and on and on. They do not carry one magazine devoted specifically to mushrooms or mycology.

I phoned World News today on a whim. I asked, “Do you carry Handgun Mushroom Hunter?” I got a quick response. “Uh, let me check—you never know...”

As a continuation of our resources for mushroomers, the following are a few of the magazines dedicated to mushrooming.

**Mushroom, the Journal**

I praised this handsome quarterly just last issue. You know that song about “the Wells Fargo wagon is a comin’ down the street oh please let it be for me” from *Music Man*? That’s what it’s like when Mushroom comes. Get it and be connected to a national and international community of mushroomers. In addition to their own writings, editors often pick up and run the best of articles of the dozens of local club newsletters. (Of course they’ve picked up from the *Earthstar!*)

**Meliolavia**

Named for the “Father of American Mycology”, *Meliolavia* is the “Journal of American Amateur Mycology.” Published yearly by the North American Mycological Association (NAMA) and more like a book than a magazine, *Meliolavia* encompasses a broad range of mushroom related topics.

Within the ’92 issue, for instance, you will find articles on mushrooms and ecology, mushroom poisonings, photography, dividing a genus into subgroups, a tale of a pioneer mushroom hunting, and more. Our own Don Dill's airy mushroom drawings are scattered throughout.

*Meliolavia* is sent to NAMA members as part their dues of $15. “Meliolavia alone is worth the NAMA dues,” says W. Sundberg. MMSC members pay $12 per year. NAMA dues, a $3 discount.

**The Mycologist**

I heard about this from Jay Justice. He says it would interest many of our members (unlike *Mycotaxon*, a magazine devoted to technical articles and descriptions of new species of lichen and fungi; or the official publication of the mostly professional Mycological Society of America, *Mycologia*). *The Mycologist* is a quarterly magazine with some color plates published by Cambridge University Press, 110 Midland Avenue, Port Chester NY 10573-9863. $32/year.

**Winter Mycophagists’ Luncheon**

—Ellen Menown

Hey you guys with good ideas! We are looking for a place for the 1994 Mycophagists' Luncheon. The Towne Hall in Labadie worked really well last year, but, due to increased membership, we expect even more people—too many to be able to utilize that space. The good news is that we should have that man, more creative, delicious dishes! We are also toying with the idea of moving the event from Sunday afternoon to Saturday night. Any comments, suggestions? Call Ellen at (314) 458-1458.

---

**Mushrooms**

Rain, and then the cool pursed lips of the wind draw them out of the ground—red and yellow skulls pummeling upward through leaves, through grasses, through sand; astonishing in their suddenness, their quietude, their wetness; they appear on fall mornings, some balancing in the earth on one hoof packed with poison, others billowing chunkily, and delicious—those who know walk out to gather, choosing the benign from flocks of glitterers, sorcerers, russulas, panther caps, shark-white death angels in their torn veils looking innocents as sugar but full of paralysis: to eat is to stagger down fast as mushrooms themselves when they are done being perfect and overnight slide back under the shining fields of rain.

Mary Oliver, *American Primitive*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1983), p. 4
Chanterelle Stuffed Black Bass
—Conrad Stawski

Scale and clean a 1 to 1½ lb. black bass. Remove gills but leave head on.

To prepare stuffing, lightly toast one slice of white and one slice of rye bread. Dice toast into ½" cubes. Add 2 Tbsp. finely chopped shallots or onion, and 1 tsp. celery. Saute another cup chopped onions in butter. Add ½ cup or more chanterelles and cook until just done, about five minutes. Add to mixture in bowl and season with salt and pepper.

Have ready prepared ½ cup chicken broth or chicken bouillon flavored with 2 Tbsp. butter, and also with pepper, basil, tarragon, finely chopped parsley, a couple splashes of worcestershire sauce and ½ cup white wine. Dribble about ⅛ of the stock over stuffing mixture and stir. Reserve remainder of stock for basting.

Salted and pepper the bass inside and out, then stuff the fish on a sheet of greased foil, pushing stuffing into head cavity as well as body. Push three toothpicks across the slit belly and use them as anchors to criss-cross thread to hold stuffing in place. Close up foil around fish and place in greased shallow pan.

Bake in pre-heated 400 oven 12-15 minutes. Remove, open foil, baste with hot, reserved basting liquid. Reclose foil and bake another 10-12 minutes. Check for doneness. Serve on a bed of parsley. Bake any leftover stuffing along with the fish.

Puffball Parmesan
—Ken Gilberg

Substitute puffballs for the eggplant in your usual Eggplant Parmesan recipe. It's simple to make but time consuming to assemble.

Dip the puffballs in egg and then bread crumbs, fry and drain. In a baking pan, layer puffballs with a subtle tomato sauce, some fresh basil, mozzarella and then parmesan cheese. Finish on top with just the parmesan. Bake at 400 degrees 20 minutes, press the layers down, draw off excess oil and cook another 15 minutes. Allow to cool down some before serving.

This can keep in the refrigerator for several days if no one eats it. The mushroom flavor is enhanced. Can be frozen and reheated in the microwave.

Happy Taco
—Ken Gilberg

If you read the last issue of the Earthstar, you read of my disappointment at a lost opportunity to taste something I had never eaten before, something reportedly delicious and a fungus to boot. The something I was hoping to try was huitlacoche, corn smut, known to mycologists as Ustilago maydis. Early this month, Ellen and I were invited to taste this delicacy, prepare masterfully and in a delightful situation.

Lourdes Henares-Levy and Gloria Montaño both attended my beginning mushroom-identification class last spring at the Arboretum. We hit it off right away and since then they've both become members of our club. They run Happy Taco, an authentic Mexican restaurant and bar in St. Louis at 5917 Delmar between Skinker and Hamilton Avenue. I had driven by the restaurant dozens of times before and had never been tempted to stop. Judging from the location (it's really not so bad and there's a lighted parking lot next door) and from the primitive Happy Taco logo on the lightbox sign, it is definitely a place that must live by word-of-mouth.

Lourdes is a psychoanalyst (that's even beyond a psychiatrist) who loves to cook, inspired as a child by the servants in her parents' home in Monterrey. She and Gloria (who is from Colombia, S.A.) run the restaurant, dedicated to making "tasty, all natural and authentic" food. They even found pesticide free corn smut.

Our dinner was delicious. But don't expect the special dishes we had that night on the usual menu. These dishes had ingredients hard to come by on a regular basis. But the integrity of the cooking, I believe, will always be there. And the adventure and pure fun. The dining area is laid out to resemble Callejón del Beso in Guanajuato, the "Kissing Lane", named because the street was narrow enough to allow a couple to kiss from windows on opposite sides.

We had a table of seven for supper including Lourdes, Gloria, Gloria's mother, who spoke only Spanish, and two of their friends—Graciela Hartenbach, a fun loving woman with a mischievous smile and ready laughter—and Fernando Mendez, an amateur mariachi player and singer about town. We all tossed each other over margaritas.

To start our meal we had a creamy zucchini blossom soup with a hint of chili and fresh coriander. It was so delicious, had there been no huitlacoche to follow, it wouldn't have mattered. But that was why we had come.

Huitlacoche is an oddity of Mexican cuisine. I've eaten all over the country of Mexico and enjoyed a full range of authentic eating venues from back street taco stands to four star Mexico City restaurants (that was on expense account while shooting for the Mexican Tourist Bureau). In all those places I had not tried huitlacoche.

But here it was at the Happy Taco, around the corner from my mother's childhood home.

Huitlacoche inhabits, as if by possession, the bodies of corn kernels, misshaping and exaggerating some to the size of chestnuts. It is black as few other foods are (name two besides caviar!).

Lourdes flash sauteed it with garlic and epazote, a wild herb related to lamb's quarters she had harvested from the behind her home in University City. The epazote had an aromatic smell and intriguing taste which went naturally with the smut. Here were two new flavors to acquire and they were mine to cherish by the third or fourth bite. The kernels had a delicate mushroom taste with a soft, not mushy, silky creamy texture. The meal was rounded out with some good red beans and rice.

Garlic and epazote, Lourdes said, are typical seasonings for mushrooms in Mexico. I am anxious to try using the herb again myself.

After more margaritas and yummy flan and cinnamon coffee, our hosts and friends took out guitars and sang wonderful Mexican blues songs of love and death. Cu Cu Ru Cu Cu—PAAAAALOOOMAAAA!

In addition to a full Mexican menu, Happy Taco offers Brazilian food on Wednesdays and Colombian food on Fridays. They have weekday happy hours. Their phone is 862-8066. See you there!
Schedule of Forays and Events

Saturday, October 9 - 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  Beginning Mushroom Identification at Rock Bridge State Park (near Jefferson City)  Bring a lunch.  Leaders: Phil and Erika Roos

Tuesday, October 12 - 10:00 a.m.  Foray at Busch Wildlife.  Meet at visitor center.  Leader: Don Dill.

Thursday, October 21 - 10:00 a.m.  Foray at Busch Wildlife.  Meet at visitor center.  Leader: Don Dill.

Saturday, October 23 - 10:00 a.m.  Mushroom Gathering at Missouri School for Doctors' Assistants, 10121 Manchester Road in Warson Woods across from Glendale Chrysler-Plymouth, one mile east of Lindbergh (see page 1)

Saturday, October 30 - 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  Beginning Mushroom Identification at Rock Bridge State Park (near Jefferson City)  Bring a lunch.  Leaders: Phil and Erika Roos


Oct. 22-24 - Texas Mushroom Foray near Houston.  For more information call Frank Willingham, (713) 350-0840.

Saturday, October 23 - Mushroom Gathering

Sunday, November 14 - 10:00 a.m.  Foray at Gillespie Lake.  Leader: L. Von Behren

Foray Coordinator: Don Dill.

Dues are due!

—Phil Roos

According to our Bylaws, the fiscal year starts in November. Therefore, dues are now due. However, if your dues were received on or after June 1, they count for the next fiscal year. Your mailing label will have a message next to your name and address. If your dues are not due, your mailing label says, "You've paid; dues are not due." If your dues are due, the label will say "Dues are due."

Dues are $15/year ($25/2 years) for regular members, $10 ($15/2 years) for associate members. You are eligible to be an associate member if you are already a member of another regional club, such as Kaw Valley or Illinois. Please make your check payable to Missouri Mycological Society.

If you belong to NAMA, or wish to, send your NAMA membership renewal form along with your check for $12.00. Remember, this check should be made payable to NAMA. As a member of the MMS, you receive a $3.00 discount when joining NAMA.

Please send all dues, and any other membership information (e.g., a change of address) to: Phil Roos, 2544 Lexington Dr., Jefferson City MO 65109-5610.

Thanks for your prompt attention.

Thanks Claudia and Linda for mailing this issue!