



WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA MUSHROOM CLUB NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

RICHARD JACOB

IT HAS BEEN ANOTHER unseasonably warm winter due to the La Niña weather pattern, counterpart to the more famous El Niño brother. This year the club has taken advantage of the warmer weather and run several walks over the winter period. The diversity of fungi means that there are a number of species that are quite happy to live and fruit in cooler, even freezing,

conditions. By taking walks in winter, we have found some of these species and have also taken the time to examine some of the crust fungi that are normally overlooked, such that we have expanded the club's life list by about 10 species as of writing. The forecast for the summer is warmer and wetter than average, which should make for a good mushroom year. I expect spring and the Morel season to start early, but cold weather oscillations mean that the season may stop and start as per last year. However, I am still living in hope of a great Morel season – one of these years it may even happen!

We had a good year in 2016, with membership topping out at over 600 again. Thank you for supporting the club and I hope you enjoyed it enough to sign up again for this year. If you haven't already done so, please pay your dues. We have a variety of walks and BioBlitzes lined up for this year, with more still to be arranged. Over the years we have co-hosted a number of events with the Allegheny Land Trust (ALT). This year we will be walking in two ALT locations that are new to the club and participating in four BioBlitzes at Wingfield Pines. The BioBlitzes should give us enough information to estimate the total number of species that exist at Wingfield Pines. I am delighted that Jessica Kester, Vice President of Education for ALT, will be our first speaker of the year and will tell us more about the origins of the trust

and the different locations under ALT conservation.

We have about 15 events already lined up and will be looking to visit several new locations over the year. Last year the number of walks or events topped 30 and we will easily hit that many this year. This makes WPMC one of the most active clubs in the country. Other co-hosted events will include a walk with PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and another BioBlitz with the Phipps Conservatory. One highlight for later in the year is a walk at Presque Isle State Park in Erie. This walk will be well worth the drive north as the environment is very different from the typical woods and forests around Pittsburgh. As always, we are looking for guides to other locations in the Western PA area. If you would like to volunteer, please let La Monte Yarroll or John Plishke III know.

On the meeting front, we are honored to have Britt Bunyard, editor of *FUNGI Magazine*, presenting in April. This should be a very exciting meeting. The cultivation night organized by Jim Tunney is in May and the rest of the schedule is online. For the Lincoff foray, we plan on extending the Cook Forest State Park walks prior to the main event in North Park to two days. Last year we found over 200 species in Cook Forest that more than made up for the dry conditions around Pittsburgh. With a longer period of time in Cook Forest, we should be able to find even more species. The club is taking part in a NAMA MycoFlora pilot scheme and we plan to sample many of the species that we find on the Sunday after the foray. More information about the study will follow in a later newsletter.

As you can tell, we already have quite a year planned for our members. We look forward to seeing you at some of these events. If you have any suggestions for walks, events or other ideas, please let us know.



WPMC Membership

Membership dues are now due. A notice was sent out in early January to remind you that it was time to pay WPMC dues. I thank about 300 of you who have already paid and have sent your Membership Cards to you.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Nine Meetings with Mushroom Display & Identification**
- Mushroom Cultivation Kit to Members Attending the May Meeting**
- Five WPMC Newsletters**
- Discount at WPMC Forays and Classes**
- Advance Announcements of Mushroom Walks and Events**
- Member Photography Contest**

DUES REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR 2017:

Individual - \$15 / Family - \$20 (same household)
Student / Educator - \$10

There is a \$5 surcharge to receive a hard copy Newsletter. If you have not renewed yet, please do so soon. Memberships run out on May 15, 2017.

Renew on-line or download form:

<http://wpamushroomclub.org/about/join/>

Complete & return Membership Form in this newsletter (see page 12):

**WPMC Membership c/o Jim Wasik
70 Woodland Farms Rd.
Pittsburgh PA 15238**

