



# WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA MUSHROOM CLUB NEWSLETTER

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MAY / JUNE 2014

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### It's not just mushrooms...

Recently I heard a story on the radio and the speaker said, "There's a saying about ecology that it's not rocket science, it's a lot more complicated than that." For me, this is a statement about the richly connected web of life and all the related parts that make up the whole of nature.

It is too complex for us to comprehend in its entirety all at once, but we can notice some simple relations between mushrooms and their habitat and use that to our advantage. Some mushrooms only grow on dead wood, others on live trees, and some will take either. Others prefer leaf litter, and there is (at least) one species that only grows on pine cones. Noting where and what a mushroom grows on can help determine the type and is a key identifying factor.

We can also use this in guiding our search (if we know what we're looking for). At our last meeting we learned some of the types of the trees that morels can be found associating with. If you haven't had a chance to try this out yet (or even if you have), come out to one of the walks this month. The mix of rain and warming temperatures should make perfect conditions for morels, which are only here for a couple weeks at this time of year. (But don't be surprised if you find them somewhere else, though, as apparently morels don't read.)

When you get out into the woods and start looking around, even if you're only looking for mushrooms, you can't help but notice the rest. And the more you look, the more you will find.

Our May 20, 2014 meeting will be on the topic of Mushroom Cultivation. If you haven't renewed (or joined) yet, now is the time as a Membership Card is required if you want receive a Mushroom Kit at the meeting. (Club dues for the year are less than the price of a growing kit elsewhere.)

Todd Kaufmann  
President 2014

## The Great Morel Quest

**MAY 10, 2014 – 10 AM – 2 PM**

**LOCATION: MCGUFFEY COMMUNITY PARK, CLAYSVILLE PA**

**LEADER: JOHN PLISCHKE III**

**A NEW ADVENTURE:** Learn how John finds new morel spots and join him on the Great Morel Quest. Difficulty of the walk is unknown. We will try to find better quality walking locations but we do not know what to expect. We are going to the heart of the Giant Morel sweet spot and looking for the Giant Morels under Elm trees which can produce massive quantities.

**DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** From I-70W take exit 6 for PA 231 towards Claysville, turn right onto St Rte 3024, turn right onto US-40E, Right onto 231 South, Turn Right onto Beham Ridge Road. This is just the meeting place for our quest. We will be traveling by car to possibly multiple locations from there. Looking in each location for about 1 hour and moving on to new locations unless we hit the mother lode.



# May Morel MADDNESS!

**NEXT MEETING 7:00 PM:  
MAY 20, 2014**

**Beechwood Farms (Audubon Society of Western PA)  
614 Dorseyville Road • Pittsburgh, PA 15238**

# Morel Maddness – May 4, 2014

ABOUT 90 CLUB MEMBERS, Friends of the Park and guests attended Morel Maddness 2014 at Pine Ridge Park near Blairsville, PA. Bob Rittle, a Friends of the Parks board member, welcomed everyone prior to a presentation by WPMC Past-Presidents Dick Dougall and Jim Wasik. The presentation included types of Morels and other edible and non-edible Spring mushrooms, and types of trees where they can be found.

The season seems to be late this year; however, some morels were found. Talis and Zinta Jacob immediately spotted a few half-free morels (*Morchella semilibra*), just as they were getting out of the car. Everyone thought WOW, this could be the day. Well on second thought... not quite. Although a few Black Morels (*Morchella elata*), were found, a surprising number of other interesting species were

gathered. Thick-stalked False Morel (*Gyromitra korfii*), and a great specimen of Stalked Scarlet Cup (*Sarcoscypha occidentalis*), were identified. Even the Morel hunters consolation prize—Dryad's Saddle—was not to be found.

However, the elusive morel was in the forest that day, as just as everyone was leaving, a bounty of Black Morel (*Morchella elata* or *Morchella angusticeps*), was brought in. Go figure! 90 people go looking and find maybe a dozen, and someone hunts down a bagful.

Well, at least we stayed dry and had a good walk in the woods. Like fishing, "they'll be biting NEXT week."

Thanks again for the Indiana County Friends of the Parks for their hospitality for hosting Morel Maddness 2014.



# Fluffin' Up a Morel Hunt

Fluff Berger

THERE IS NOTHING LIKE getting lost while looking for morels. On my first official mushroom walk as a leader, I'd met my interested group at the assigned place, and left to explore the trails at the top of Sewickley Heights Borough Park. Not long after we began, most of the group scattered into the forest wherever we saw elm trees, and there were many.

"I found one!" came the call from in the brush, and we gathered around to see the small *Morchella esculentoides* our comrade had discovered, and found a couple more. We slogged through more underbrush and found ourselves back on a path, getting to know one another and enjoying the damp, but not rainy day.

Eventually we found a spot not too far from one of the borough's maintenance buildings that caused some excitement as it yielded a dozen more medium sized morels. I was also excited to find my first Devil's Urn fungi (*Urnula craterium*).

A couple of us had brought cameras, and were kneeling in the wet leaves to try to get some nice photos of the morels before they were snatched into buckets and baskets.

We were starting to think about heading back, so turned to go back uphill, talking and looking along the edges of the path. One walker pointed out the hollow stem of what must have been a baseball-sized morel, already gone to another of the park's hikers. We saw several other places along the way where the only signs of the once sizeable morels were the remnants of lonely stems.

We made a right at the fork in the trail, and now one or two of our number were starting to flag a bit, as most of our way was uphill, and we'd been out for nearly three hours. At every turn, I kept looking for the familiar signs that we were coming close to the parking lot. But when I saw the road, my heart sank to my toes.

"I'm sorry everyone, but I've led you astray. This road is nowhere near where we need to be. We'll have to go back." Arrgh! My walk. I was supposed to know where we were and how to get back. I'd walked these paths before, why didn't they look familiar? I still don't know. One of our tech-savvy hikers got out his cell phone and found our position on a Google map, to show everyone. After retracing our steps for a least a half mile, there was the place we had gone right, so we kept on straight ahead until another we came to another fork.

Though the next turn didn't "feel" right, it was opposite to the way we went before, and soon there were the familiar landmarks I'd been looking for. The group was getting a little grouchy now, understandably, since they were tired and getting hungry. "Are you sure this is the right way?" I heard more than once. "Don't worry, just down this hill and up the next and we'll be almost back." I tried to sound cheery and confident. Why did I think my rambling over these hills a few times a week qualified me to lead a mushroom walk? What was I thinking? How could I get lost on my own stomping grounds, sheesh!

Finally! There was the parking lot, thank you Lord! Weary walkers opened up cars to get to sandwiches and drinks, and to rest on the tailgates. We all brought the mushrooms we had collected to be listed, having found 20 different species of fungi. After a bit more conversation, but none of the disparaging comments that could have been made about inept walk leaders, everyone headed home.

I am thankful that everyone was kind enough not to ask me aloud the questions I was asking myself. I realize that, though I "know" the trails, I need to be absolutely certain where each turn leads before I take another group with me. I look forward to leading another walk, this time on the other side of the park, but I can only wonder—will any of those folks be back? Time will tell.

## The 14th Annual Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Foray

Barbara DeRiso

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

*Volunteers are needed for cooking (a.k.a. mycophagy), general hospitality (meet & greet, and helping folks find their destinations), auction, set-up and clean-up. Also, donations of mushroom-related items for the auction will be greatly appreciated.*

It will be held at the Parrish Hill Hall in North Park, Allison Park. Guest speakers will include Gary Lincoff, Bill Yule and Gary Emberger. Activities include guided walks for mushroom gathering, mushroom identification tables, sales of mushroom books and related articles, an auction, cooking demonstration, a soup lunch, dinner and more.

The morning will be devoted to guided walks and mushroom hunting. Choice edible mushrooms—including chanterelles, boletes, hen of the woods, and chicken mushroom—are usually found in abundance on these walks. Typically, over 100 different types of mushrooms—often some new ones—are found and brought back to "Foray Headquarters" for further identification and cataloguing.

New this year, a soup lunch will be served at the Parrish Hill facility.

The center of attention shifts back to our Parrish Hill headquarters in the afternoon. Our Principal mycologist, Gary Lincoff, the author of the Audubon Field Guide to Mushrooms, will be our first speaker. Joining Gary as guest speakers this year will be Bolete specialist Bill Yule (Connecticut Valley Mycological Society and Connecticut Field Museum) and Wood-decay mushroom specialist Gary Emberger (Eastern Penn Mushroomers, Messiah College).

Throughout the day there will be an auction of mushroom-related items, and sales of mushroom books, hats, tee shirts and mushroom-hunting paraphernalia. Mycophagy—the tasting of mushroom dishes will be another of the highlights of the afternoon program. Club cooks usually prepare dozens of wonderful mushroom dishes. You won't leave hungry and chances are that you will have tasted some entirely new things. Since we have to wrap up our North Park activities at 7 PM, an "after party" is planned—usually coffee and desserts at a nearby restaurant, and a chance to socialize with our guest speakers.

# The Mushroom Display / Identification Table

Cecily Franklin

DID YOU KNOW THAT, in France, pharmacists are trained to identify certain fungi? If you have any doubt about the safety of eating mushrooms while you're in France, you can take them to a pharmacist who will inspect them and declare whether they are dangerous or edible.

Here in Western Pennsylvania, that service is provided by the Identifiers and Mycologists of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club. You can bring your mushroom finds to any monthly meeting and add them to the Mushroom Display table, under the leadership of La Monte Yarroll.

Here are some tips for getting a good identification of your mushrooms:

- Bring in more than one sample of each mushroom, if possible.
- Remove bugs and loose dirt, but don't wash them.
- Bring fresh samples. Pick them just before the meeting, or keep them in paper or wax bags (not plastic) in the refrigerator.
- If the cap and stipe (stem) become separated, keep them together in the same bag.
- Include a white sheet of paper or card in the bag, and you may have a spore print by the time of the meeting!
- Once you get to the meeting, fill out the small slip of paper to indicate where you found your mushrooms.

- You may also bring photos of the mushrooms to show what they looked like before you picked them.

If you **ONLY** bring photos, then here's some more advice for getting a good identification:

- Include shots of both the top and underside of the cap, to show whether the mushroom has gills, pores, teeth, etc.
- Indicate the size of the mushroom by photographing it next to a coin or ruler. Or include a natural object, such as a pine cone or leaf.
- Include the stipe in your photo and, if possible, the base of the mushroom.
- If you have multiple samples of the same mushroom, cutting one of them in half lengthwise can also help with identification.

It's not often that WPMC experts have trouble identifying a mushroom. But when they're not sure, they'll consult a variety of reference books, as well as each other. Sometimes they'll examine your mushroom with a loupe (magnifier), or even a microscope. Once they've identified your mushroom, the Identifier or Mycologist will write the genus and species names next to your sample.

So don't be shy. Bring in your mushrooms and see how much there is to learn!

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## 2014 WPMC Photo Contest

### DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:

- September 30, 2014
- Maximum of 5 entries per WPMC member
- Submit high resolution JPEG files no larger than 4 megabytes
- Email entries to Rebecca Miller at [rmtreesplease@gmail.com](mailto:rmtreesplease@gmail.com)

### WPMC PHOTO CONTEST RULES:

You must be a member of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club in good standing to enter. Club dues must be up to date.

### ENTRY DIVISIONS:

**PICTORIAL:** This division is for single photos that illustrate the beauty and variety of fungi in form and color. The objective is a photo suitable for display or illustration in a fine book. Judging criteria include consideration of both technical (focus, depth of field, exposure, lighting, color, and absence of distracting elements) and artistic (composition, color, background, lighting) aspects.

**DOCUMENTARY:** For single photographs especially suited as illustrations in a field guide or monograph, or for use in a lecture. Emphasis is placed on portrayal of key morphological characteristics such that the usefulness of the image as an identification aid is maximized. Subjects may be shot in the field, laboratory or studio and the photographer has complete freedom to process, manipulate, or orient the specimen in any desired manner to achieve the goal. Close-ups of single features and photomicrographs are acceptable. Judging criteria will be the same as in the Pictorial category but they will be of secondary importance to the overall mycological utility of the photo. Accurate identification of the subject will be a consideration.

**JUDGE'S OPTION:** For photos which do not fit into the pictorial or documentary divisions. For example: fungi in an interesting situation, fungi with animals, people enjoying fungi.

**SUBJECT MATERIAL FOR PICTORIAL AND DOCUMENTARY:** Organisms from the Myxomycota (slime molds) and the classes Basidiomycetes and Ascomycetes of the Eumycota ("true fungi") are eligible.

**FOR JUDGE'S OPTION:** Nearly anything goes, so long as the theme relates to fungi, and fungi are a key element of the photograph.

# The Mushroom Mug Shot

Dick Dougall

“MUG SHOTS” ARE PHOTOS taken by police to aid them in identifying people who might or might not be involved in a crime. Although mushrooms are not criminals, most of us take their pictures to aid in identification. With modern digital photography, taking lots of pictures and sharing them is easy. I do this regularly, but more times than I would like, it does not help very much with the identification.

Some mushrooms are easy to identify from a picture. However, many mushrooms, particularly gilled mushrooms, have subtle features that are needed for identification. Mushroom identification is surprisingly hard due to the large numbers showing up each year (in the hundreds) and their irregular nature of appearances (seemingly random and often skipping several years between appearances). Just taking the mushroom’s picture in its typical habitat is useful at times, but in many cases, it is far short of supplying the key information. I know; I have tons of my own photos in this category. Taking a lot of pictures with a variety of views does not always help either.

I am going to describe a systematic way of posing an unknown mushroom that increases the chances of showing key details. The approach is aimed mainly for gilled mushrooms. The first goal is to obtain a nice, clear picture of the mushroom. Place the mushroom on a piece of colored paper. Pale blue is a good choice. Next, try to take the picture in “bright shade.” Direct sunlight or direct flash can produce harsh shadows. Aluminum foil reflectors can help eliminate shadows. Try to practice taking good pictures.

The next step is to pose the mushroom to obtain the most key features. In order to do this best, three individual specimens are needed. (One or two specimens are sometimes all we have. Then we have to do our best with this case.) Internal and external features are important. Split one of the specimens in half. The other two mushrooms give views of the top of the cap and the underside of the cap (gills). Finally, include a coin or a small ruler in the photo. This is used to determine the size of the mushroom and its features.

Consider the sketch of an imaginary mushroom. The view of the top of the cap shows ornamentation. The side views show the cap is depressed in the center. The view of the inside of the mushroom shows a hollow stem and that the gills attach directly to the stem. The outside view shows the taper of the stem and the existence of a partial veil. The view of the bottom of the cap shows the gill spacing and “short gills” sometimes called lamellulae. From these views, estimates can be obtained of the color of the cap, stem, gills, and flesh. Finally, the coin can be used to obtain estimates of sizes of various features.

This type of picture is what I call the Mushroom Mug Shot. It presents a lot of information in one photo. Taking it is a lot of work; I do not always do it myself. However, to simplify the picture taking, I suggest trying to obtain the views from a mushroom cut in half. Also, the features I have given for the imaginary mushroom can be saved by writing them down.

We also need other important information. The date the mushroom was found and its habitat are very important. For example, it is easy to forget whether a mushroom was growing on wood. Digital photos can have this information included in the Comments Section of metadata for digital photos. Finally, the most important feature for gill mushrooms is its spore color, which is obtained from spore prints.

I will be trying to obtain Mushroom Mug Shots of some of the common mushrooms that I find. Maybe you might also like to try doing that. Perhaps we can have a category of this type in our photo contest.

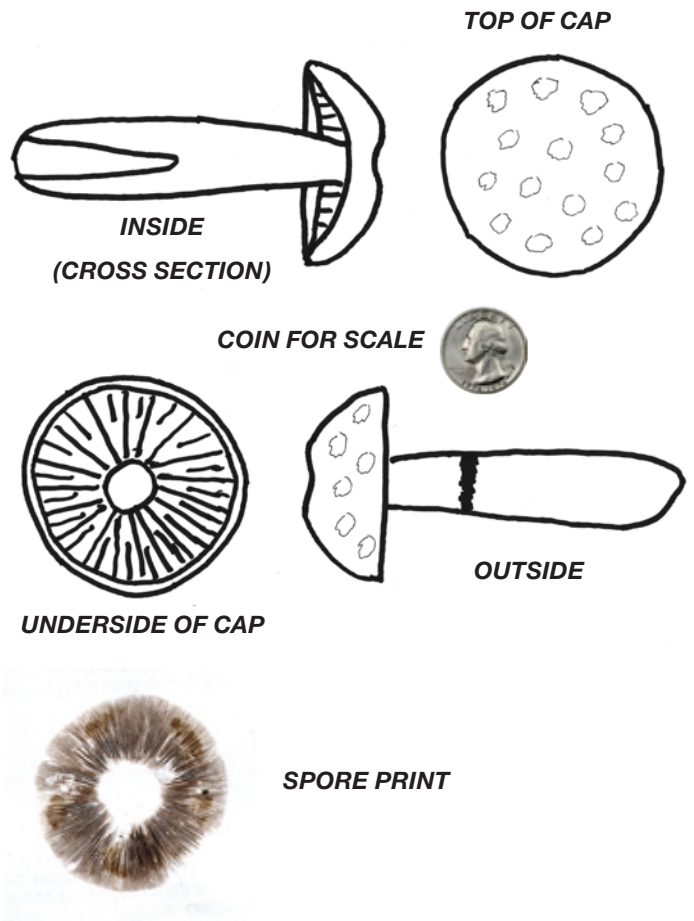
## MUSHROOM MUG SHOT

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

HABITAT: \_\_\_\_\_

SPORE PRINT COLOR: \_\_\_\_\_



# Walks & Forays 2014

## IMPORTANT WALK AND FORAY INFORMATION:

Try to dig up 3 of the same species at different stages of development. Don't pick old mushrooms; leave them to drop their spores.

You are responsible for not getting lost, if you have that tendency to wander off and get lost, stick like glue to others. We won't wait for you, and we won't come to look for you.

Don't take the identification of the person standing next to you, they might not know as much as you do. Only club mycologists and identifiers should be used for advice. The Walk Leader will tell you when to be back at the walk starting place where the mushrooms will be put on paper plates and the Walk Identifier or Club Mycologist will put names on only the mushrooms that they know well. Take notes and pictures to help you remember the mushrooms. You should go home and check books yourself. Whether you decide to eat a mushroom, is ultimately only your decision.

## WALKS AND FORAYS CHECK LIST:

- Bring a buddy or two. *Do not forage alone!*
- Dress for the weather / rain poncho
- Bring drinking water and lunch
- Insect repellent
- Basket for collecting
- Knife for cutting mushrooms
- Wax or paper bags (no plastic) Keep mushrooms separated
- Whistle
- Compass
- Hand lens
- Cell phone & camera
- Notebook & pencil
- Field guide for identification
- Band-aids
- Garden hand-clippers

## Mushroom Walks 2014

### The Great Morel Quest

May 10 / 10 am – 2 pm

LEADER: John Plischke III

LOCATION: McGuffey Community Park, Claysville PA

(SEE PAGE 1 FOR DETAILS)

### Take Mom on a Mushroom Hunt!

May 11 / 10 am – 1 pm

LEADER: John Plischke III

LOCATION: Twin Lakes Park, Westmoreland County.

Rt. 30 towards Greensburg. Turn onto Donohoe Rd. at the traffic light by Wendy's at Westmoreland Mall. (From east: right turn. From west: left turn.) Follow the road to the right towards the Toys R Us. Continue through the traffic light and two stop signs. Turn left after the second stop sign onto Twin Lakes Road, follow the signs to Twin Lakes Park. Park in the Tamarack parking lot.

May 24 / 10:00 a.m. - 12 PM

LEADER: Cecily Franklin

LOCATION: Dark Hollow Woods, Oakmont PA

From Route 28 (North or South) exit 11 follow directions to Oakmont, cross the Hulton Bridge. Continue on Hulton Road up the hill to the top and part way down. Turn right on 15th Street. At the end of 15th Street, turn left onto Pennsylvania Ave. and proceed into the park entrance. If the parking spaces are full, find a legal parking space on Pennsylvania Ave. and walk into the park.

June 7 / 10 am – 1 pm

LEADER: John Stuart

LOCATION: Sandy Cliffs of North Park, Allison Park, PA

Meet at the North Park swimming pool parking lot. These cliffs are "hidden among the trees of North Park and are a delightful and often missed surprise. The destination is incongruous, yet striking, sandy orange cliffs reminding one of a scene from the southwestern U.S."

## Dorothy Fornoff Memorial Walk

June 21 / 10 am – Noon

LEADER: Dick Dougall and Jim Wilson

LOCATION: Deer Lakes Park, Tarentum PA

Dorothy Fornoff was one of the WPMC's original club mycologists. With her husband, she participated in many of our local walks. She had a wealth of knowledge about the mushrooms that we found. Deer Lakes Park was her favorite mushrooming spot. It is appropriate that we have a walk here in her honor because she was a kind and patient person who willingly shared her knowledge with everyone on our walks.

June 28 / 10 am - Noon

LEADER: Barb DeRiso

LOCATION: Camp Guyasuta

From Route 28 take Exit 6 (Highland Park Bridge/Sharpsburg). Exit onto the Sharpsburg ramp. Turn right onto Main St./Freeport Rd and then right onto 23rd St. Cross the railroad tracks, and follow the signs for Camp Guyasuta. We will meet in the second parking lot (beyond the ranger's house).

October 4 / 10 am

LEADER: Park Naturalist for Mushroom Mania

LOCATION: South Park Nature Center

2075 Buffalo Drive / 412-835-4810

Learn the lore, see the strange, and taste the terrific of local wild mushrooms. Visit: [www.county.allegheny.pa.us](http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us) (click on COUNTY PARKS, SOUTH PARK)

## HELP KEEP OUR PARKS CLEAN!

When mushrooming, it's easy to bring just one plastic grocery bag to collect cans, bottles or other trash you find. Trash cans are generally found nearby. If not, take them home for disposal.

*Leave the parks cleaner than you found them!*

# Mushroom Forays 2014

## July 19 – 20

Summer Foray, Ohio Mushroom Society, North Chagrin Nature Center. Visit: [ohiomushroomsociety.wordpress.com](http://ohiomushroomsociety.wordpress.com)

## July 25 – 26

West Virginia Mushroom Club. Join Gary Lincoff and the West Virginia Destroying Angels. Visit: [wvmushroomclub.org](http://wvmushroomclub.org)

## July 25 – 27

Eastern Penn Mushroomers Helen Miknis Foray  
Mont Alto, PA at Penn State Mont Alto

## August 7 – 10

NEMF Samuel Ristich Foray, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine. The Northeast Mycological Federation (NEMF) will convene for a weekend of mushrooming, workshops, mycophagy and camaraderie with Dr. Seanna Annis, mycologist and plant pathologist, University of Maine at Orono. The Maine Mycological Association is hosting the event. Visit: [nemf.org](http://nemf.org)

## August 8 – 10

3rd Joint Appalachian Foray, 4H Conference Center in Front Royal, VA. The Mycological Association of Washington Event: [mawdc.org](http://mawdc.org)

## August 10 – 16

Eagle Hill Institute: Boletes, the Genus Lactarius, and other Fungi of New England with Alan Bessette and Arlene Bessette. Visit: [www.eaglehill.us](http://www.eaglehill.us) click on “2014 courses”

## August 22 – 24

Bill Russell Foray Central PA, Lock Haven University's Sieg Center on Fishing Creek. Visit: [www.centralpamushroomclub.org](http://www.centralpamushroomclub.org)

## August 24 – 30

Eagle Hill Institute  
Amanitaceae Taxonomy: Fundamentals and Microscopy to Barcodes with Rod Tulloss and Chistina Rodriguez-Caycedo. Visit: [www.eaglehill.us](http://www.eaglehill.us) click on “2014 courses”

## September 4 – 7

COMA's Annual Clark Rogerson Foray. Berkshire Hills Emmanuel Camp, Copake, NY. Visit: [www.comafungi.org/special-events](http://www.comafungi.org/special-events)

**September 13 / 8:00 am – 7:00 pm**  
**WPMC 14th Annual Gary Lincoff**  
**Mid-Atlantic Mushroom Foray**  
**Parish Hill Hall, North Park**

## September 26 – 28

Sequanota Annual Foray. Jennerstown, PA (details to come) Mycological Association of Washington. Visit: [mawdc.org](http://mawdc.org)

## October 4 – 5

Ohio Mushroom Society Fall Foray. Mt. Airy Arboretum. Dick Doyle. Visit: [ohiomushroomsociety.wordpress.com](http://ohiomushroomsociety.wordpress.com)

## October 9 – 12

NAMA Foray at Camp Arnold, Eatonville, Washington Steve Trudell, foray mycologist and Paul Stamets, keynote speaker. Visit: [www.namyco.org](http://www.namyco.org)

## Club Mycologists

Robert Boice .....724-446-0524 ..... [blgym@aol.com](mailto:blgym@aol.com)  
Kim Plischke.....724-832-0271 ..... [ladiebugzkp@aol.com](mailto:ladiebugzkp@aol.com)  
John Plischke III.....724-832-0271 ..... [fungi01@aol.com](mailto:fungi01@aol.com)  
Dr. Frank Schrock .....724-463-7453..... [ambrosia1@verizon.net](mailto:ambrosia1@verizon.net)  
Jim Tunney .....412-441-3958..... [aminitam@hotmail.com](mailto:aminitam@hotmail.com)  
La Monte Yarroll .....412-854-5684 ..... [piggy.yarroll+wpmc@gmail.com](mailto:piggy.yarroll+wpmc@gmail.com)

## Identifiers

Jack Baker.....412-367-7696 ..... [jabaker2@hotmail.com](mailto:jabaker2@hotmail.com)  
Fluff Berger .....724-251-9662..... [wfberger@comcast.net](mailto:wfberger@comcast.net)  
Dick Dougall .....412-486-7504..... [mush2prof@verizon.net](mailto:mush2prof@verizon.net)  
Joyce Gross.....724-339-8547 ..... [jagart58@comcast.net](mailto:jagart58@comcast.net)  
Bob Lucas.....  
John Stuart.....724-443-6878 ..... [jons2art@comcast.net](mailto:jons2art@comcast.net)

# Introduction to DNA Barcoding

**DATE:** Saturday: May 31, 2014  
10 am to 4 pm

**LOCATION:** Camp Guyasuta Conference Center  
300 23rd Street  
Sharpsburg, PA, 15215

**COST:** WPMC Members - \$25 per person

**Reservations required by 5/24: 412-967-9541  
or membership@wpamushroomclub.org**

Please bring a lunch.

<http://campguyasuta.org/conference-center.html>

***What is a DNA barcode?***

***Why are they important?***

***How do you collect and annotate samples?***

***Can I become an integral part of the  
WPMC DNA barcoding project?***



THESE ARE ALL QUESTIONS that will be answered during the WPMC's first course on DNA barcoding. In the course, you will learn about DNA and how small pieces can be used as unique identifiers for different species.

The Club's DNA barcoding project will be described and you will be taught how to collect specimens suitable for analysis. We will cover the basics of specimen annotation and how to fill out the Club's description forms. We will then go out into the Camp Guyasuta grounds where you will put your new-found knowledge to the test and collect some specimens. After lunch (on your own), we will begin identifying the species and selecting samples for further analysis. You will describe, annotate the samples, and collect a tissue sample for the actual DNA analysis. The final part of the course will cover the analysis of DNA sequencing results, checking the overall quality, understanding and using tools like BLAST to identify the species of samples.

Each attendee will collect and annotate one or two specimens for the Club's DNA barcoding project and the attendees will be listed as the collector and/or annotator of the samples in any records we submit to public databases.

Recommended equipment (but not required): a smart phone for use during specimen collection or a digital camera and a laptop for DNA barcode analysis.



## Snow Molds & Other Lawn Fungi

John Plischke III

WITH ALL THE DAYS of snow we had over the winter, we got used to looking at large piles of snow.

The snow laying on the grass for so long can cause fungi in the spring. Look at the edges of grass along snow pile melts, where the grass gets matted and dies.

*Typhula incarnata* looks like little seeds but it's hard to spot. One must get down close to see it. This is the sclerotia. Later in the year the fruit bodies develop from the sclerotia. There is also a second *Typhula*, *T. ishikariensis*, that differs in color by being darker, it's almost black-looking and is much smaller, typically about 1/3 as wide as the grass blade. *Typhula* is a type of gray snow mold. There is also a pink snow mold.

In the summer (not the spring) there are other fungi that can attack the lawns. *Sclerotium rolfsii* can also grow on crops.





# Recipe Corner



## Hot and Sour Soup

Richard Jacob

Morel season has arrived a bit late this year, but that does not mean there are no edible mushrooms available for collecting. On a recent club walk in Hartwood Acres we found quite a lot of Wood Ear mushroom which is a jelly fungus in the family Auriculariaceae. In Asia a different species of Wood Ear mushroom, *Auricularia polytricha*, is used in cooking. You can find fresh or dried *Auricularia polytricha* in the Asian stores in Pittsburgh's Strip District. The Wood Ear fungi are used in Asian dishes for their crisp, snappy texture and their color rather than their taste. You need quite a lot of them to make a decent sized dish so I supplemented this recipe with Shiitake mushrooms. Like many Chinese recipes, there is quite a bit of preparation but the actual cooking is very quick. Serves 6 people as an appetizer.

### INGREDIENTS

- 5 oz. fresh Wood Ears or a mixture of Wood Ear and Shiitakes or 1 oz. dried Wood Ears that have been rehydrated in warm water.
- 6 oz. extra firm Tofu, about 1/2 of a normal block.
- 1 box chicken broth and 2 cups of water or 6 cups of home made chicken stock.
- 1 large egg
- 1 pork chop, about 6 oz., bone removed
- 5 oz. can of sliced bamboo shoots
- 4 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar plus 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar or 5 Tbsp Chinese black vinegar if you have it
- 4 Tbsp. cornstarch (approx)
- 3 medium scallions
- 1 tsp. ground white pepper



### DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk 1 Tbsp of the soy sauce with the sesame oil and 1 tsp cornstarch together in a medium bowl.
2. Slice the pork chop into 1-inch by 1/4-inch match-sticks and mix with the soy sauce, sesame oil and cornstarch mixture.
3. Mix 3 Tbsp cornstarch with water in a bowl and set aside.
4. Whisk the egg in a small bowl, set aside.
5. Slice the tofu into 1/2-inch cubes.
6. Clean the Wood Ear mushrooms, removing any hard pieces, rehydrate if necessary.
7. Remove and discard the hard stems from the Shiitake mushrooms and slice the caps into 1/4-inch slices.
8. Mix the vinegar, ground pepper and 3 Tbsp soy sauce together in a bowl.
9. Now that everything has been prepared, bring the broth to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer.
10. Add the mushrooms and bamboo shoots and cook for 5 minutes.
11. Add the tofu and marinated pork, stir to separate the pork pieces and simmer for 2 minutes.
12. Stir the cornstarch and water and add to the soup. Increase heat. Stir a couple of times as the soup thickens and turns translucent, about 1 minute.
13. Add vinegar, pepper and soy sauce mixture, stir once and turn off heat.
14. Using a spoon, drizzle the egg into the soup in a thin stream.
15. Let the soup sit for a minute and turn the heat back on. Once the soup has reached a gentle boil turn the heat off and serve.
16. Top the bowls of soup with sliced scallions.

Do you have an interesting Mushroom Recipe you'd like to share? Send it to our newsletter editor and it might be included in our Recipe Corner.

## WPMC Meetings:

Meetings are held at 7 pm on the 3rd Tuesday each month from March through November at:

**Beechwood Farms (Audubon Society of Western PA)**  
614 Dorseyville Road • Pittsburgh, PA 15238

- May 20 CULTIVATION:**  
Jim Tunney and Todd Kaufmann will talk about Mushroom Cultivation
- June 17 IDENTIFICATION:** Dick Dougall
- July 15 JOINT MEETING: AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
Joel Greenberg, Natural History Museum of Chicago, author of *A Feathered River Across The Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*. 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the species extinction. Joel will also talk a bit about the bird in Pennsylvania, some of its ecological niches, and the lesson from the bird's extinction.
- August 19 COOKING DEMONSTRATION**
- Sept. 16 MUSHROOM TABLE TALK:**  
Club Mycologists and Identifiers  
Gary Lincoff Foray Review
- Oct. 21 ELECTIONS / PHOTO CONTEST RESULTS**
- Nov. 18 SURVIVORS POT LUCK / MEMBER AWARDS / OPEN PHOTO FORUM**

## WPMC Membership

Thank you all who have renewed your membership. As of April 29, 2014, membership increased from 217 in March to 347 new and renewing members. 2014 Membership Cards have been sent to each member and will be required to receive a Mushroom Kit at the May 20, 2014 meeting.

If you have not renewed, please do so as soon as possible. If you do not renew by May 30, 2014, this will be your LAST newsletter. A Past Due notice is in the e-mail or address label accompanying this Newsletter.

## WPMC Newsletter

**The Newsletter of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club** is published five times a year: March/April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept./Oct., and Nov./Dec. Articles, photos, news items and other submissions should be sent to the editor at least 6-8 weeks prior to targeted distribution for the best chance of inclusion. The editor cannot guarantee that submissions will be included in the next newsletter. The editor reserves the right to make spelling or grammatical corrections and may suggest content changes to the author. Material published in our newsletters may be used in other non-profit publications only with expressed permission and with appropriate acknowledgements.

### NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION:

Cecily Franklin, Martha Wasik Graphic Arts Inc

## Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Officers and Committee Chairs

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PRESIDENT

Todd Kaufmann  
817 Walnut St.  
Pittsburgh PA 15221  
828-738-6487  
president@wpamushroomclub.org

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

Richard Jacob  
215 Highland Rd  
Blawnox PA 15238-2136  
215-888-5503  
Vice\_president@wpamushroomclub.org

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Scott Pavelle  
110 Isolda Dr  
Pittsburgh PA 15209  
412-606-4361  
sppksp@verizon.net

#### CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Fluff Berger  
137 Hickory Drive  
Sewickley PA 15143-8212  
724-251-9662  
Cor\_secretary@wpamushroomclub.org

#### TREASURER

Barbara DeRiso  
204 Woodcock Dr.  
Pittsburgh PA 15215-1546  
412-252-2594  
barbaraderiso@gmail.com

### COMMITTEES

#### CLUB E-MAIL CONTACT

Valerie Baker  
412-367-7696  
vbbaker8@hotmail.com

#### CULTIVATION

Jim Tunney  
412-441-3958  
aminitam@hotmail.com

#### DNA BARCODING

Richard Jacob  
richard@lostculture.net

#### EDUCATION

Fluff Berger  
724-251-9662  
wfberger@comcast.net

#### HISTORIAN

Joyce Gross  
724-339-8547  
jagart58@comcast.net

#### HOSPITALITY

Shirley Caseman  
412-871-0185  
pbft1@verizon.net

#### ID BUTTON PROGRAM

Dick Dougall  
412-486-7504  
mush2prof@verizon.net

#### LINCOFF FORAY

Barbara DeRiso  
412-252-2594  
barbaraderiso@gmail.com

#### MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

James Wasik  
70 Woodland Farms Rd.  
Pittsburgh PA 15238  
412-967-9359  
membership@wpamushroomclub.org

#### MUSHROOM DISPLAY

La Monte Yarroll  
412-854-5684  
piggy.yarroll+wpmc@gmail.com

#### MYCOLOGICAL RECORDING

Bob Lucas  
rnlucas@microspell.com

#### NEMF FORAY

John Plischke  
724-834-2358  
morelbp@aol.com

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

Rebecca Miller  
724-297-3377  
rmtreesplease@gmail.com

#### SALES

Jim Wilson  
724-265-2398  
mushroomjim4@email.com

#### SCHOLARSHIP

John Stuart  
724-443-6878  
jons2art@comcast.net

#### TOXICOLOGY

Frank Lotrich  
412-216-8508  
lotrichfe@upmc.edu

#### WALKS & FORAYS

John Plischke III  
724-832-0271  
fungi01@aol.com

#### YAHOO GROUPS MODERATOR

Mary Jo Smiley  
724-494-1468  
cmtpt@zbzoom.net

Check our website for a complete list of the year's events.  
[contact@wpamushroomclub.org](mailto:contact@wpamushroomclub.org)

### WPMC YAHOO GROUPS:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub/>

### NORTH AMERICAN MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (NAMA):

[www.namyc.org](http://www.namyc.org)



# WPMC MEMBERSHIP FORM

Anyone who has an interest in wild mushrooms is welcome to become a WPMC member.

COMPLETE THIS FORM **PRINT CLEARLY**, SIGN AND MAIL

### Members are entitled to:

The WPMC newsletter • Nine monthly WPMC meetings • Free participation in WPMC walks • Fee discount for WPMC forays

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2 \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Interests (e.g.: foraging, identification, cooking, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

*Please print in plain block lettering. Take special care with email addresses: numeral "1", uppercase "i" and lowercase "l" look the same.*

ANNUAL DUES:     \$15 Individual     \$20 Family     \$10 Full-time Student    Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Please return completed, signed and dated form (with check payable to Western PA Mushroom Club) to:

WPMC, c/o Jim Wasik, 70 Woodland Farms Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238 e-mail contact: membership@wpamushroomclub.org

or visit [www.wpamushroomclub.org](http://www.wpamushroomclub.org) to pay using credit card.

Please indicate your newsletter/event announcement preference:     Electronic via e-mail     Hardcopy via US mail

## Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Release and Indemnification Agreement

This Release and Indemnification Agreement (the "Agreement") is entered into by and between the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club, as it is presently organized and may be later structured ("WPMC") and the undersigned Member (the "Member") on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

WHEREAS, WPMC is a non-profit educational organization that has as its principal purpose the sharing of mushroom-related information among its members; and

WHEREAS, all officers, directors, identifiers and members serve WPMC in a voluntary capacity and receive no remuneration for their services; and

WHEREAS, in cases where WPMC charges a fee for its forays, walks, lectures and other events (collectively "WPMC Events"), it is doing so only to cover its direct costs and does not operate in a for-profit capacity; and WHEREAS, the Member understands that there is inherent and unavoidable risk in outdoor activities relating to hunting and consuming wild mushrooms. These risks include but are not limited to the dangers of hiking in difficult terrain, the possibility of misidentifying a wild mushroom, and the possible allergic or toxic reaction that some individuals may have to otherwise edible mushrooms.

NOW THEREFORE, the Member hereby agrees to the following:

1. The Member assumes all risks associated with WPMC Events. The Member expressly acknowledges that it is the Member's sole responsibility to hike safely and to determine whether a wild mushroom may be consumed.
2. The Member releases, holds harmless, and indemnifies the WPMC, its officers, directors, identifiers, and representatives from any and all liability relating to any injury or illness incurred by the Member or the Member's family members as a result of participation in a WPMC Event.

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If any portion of the Agreement is declared for any reason to be invalid or unenforceable, such invalidity shall not affect any other provision of the Agreement. This Agreement shall apply to all current and future WPMC events.

### MEMBERS:

Signature (if Participant is under age 21, signature of Parent or guardian)

Please print name:

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_

*Signed release form will be in effect from date of membership until termination of membership.*



Western  
Pennsylvania  
Mushroom  
Club

202 Wadsworth Drive  
Glenshaw, PA 15116

*Fungi, fun and friends!*

## WPMC Goals

- Provide organized walks and forays
- Teach scientific methods of wild mushroom identification
- Explore various art forms including photography, dyeing, and paper-making with mushrooms
- Share mushroom recipes
- Educate members and the public about the many aspects of wild mushrooms



**NEVER EAT AN UNIDENTIFIED MUSHROOM**



## Earn an ID Button

Do you know the names of the mushrooms you are finding? Would you like to learn to recognize more of them? Then, it's time to consider participating in the John Plischke III Award for Mushroom Knowledge (Button Program.) For details visit:

<http://wpamushroomclub.org/about/button-id-program/>



## Squirrel Ice Cream Cones

Cecily Franklin photographed this squirrel eating Russulas in the backyard. Every year the squirrels eat the caps and throw away the stems.

## Northeast Mycological Federation (NEMF) Scholarship

**Attention, Students of Mycology!**  
**SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY!**

NEMF will award scholarships to a number of students under its Homola Scholarship. The award covers tuition, which includes room and board, at the four-day conference (transportation NOT included.) To be eligible for the Scholarship, Letters of Interest must be filed by June 30, 2014 to the following:

Rick Van de Poll / [rickvdp@gmail.com](mailto:rickvdp@gmail.com)

<http://www.nemf.org/assets/pdfs/HomolaScholarship.pdf>