



WESTERN PA



MUSHROOM CLUB

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Editor: Becky Plischke

December 2005

President: Joe Luzanski V Pres: Jim Strutz Sec: Mary Jane Yakulis C Sec: Valerie Baker Treas: George Yakulis

GIVE A MUSHROOM CLUB GIFT FOR THE HOLIDAYS

We think that giving a friend or relative a 2006 mushroom club membership would be a tremendous gift for the holidays. We have included 2 WPMC applications, one for you and one for a friend.

In addition, we have club tee shirts available for \$15. The club Cookbook is still available for \$5, plus a small shipping charge. To order, please call Joyce Gross at 724-339-8547 or email her at jagart@verizon.net

You can also order a mushroom book by going to the club's website then going to the club's bookstore.

ARTICLES WANTED

We need your articles, recipes, jokes, puzzles, stories and cartoons for the newsletter. Send yours in today. Mail or email them to Becky Plischke at: morelbp@aol.com or mail to 129 Grant St, Greensburg, PA 15601.

TAKE US FOR A WALK

If you want to lead a mushroom walk in your area, we would be glad to come. Find a place to have a walk and scout it out. If it is a park or nature area, please make sure we have permission to collect mushrooms there. Call our Walk & Foray Chairman, John Plischke III at 724-832-0271 or email fungi01@aol.com Do it today. He will put the walk on our schedule. Club Identifiers will help with the identification.

GET INVOLVED

If you would like to get even more involved with our mushroom club, Club President, Joe Luzanski is looking for a few good men and women to be committee members or chairmen. Call Joe at 724-872-7867 or email him at president@wpamushroomclub.org Let him know what your interest is. **We have a place for you!**

DUES ARE DUE

This is the last WPMC newsletter issue for 2005. That also means, unless you have already renewed your membership for 2006 that **your membership in the club is about to expire**. It is time to sign up for the year 2006.

In our first year, the WPMC grew from zero members to 170. Year 2, 250 members, year 3, 325 members, year 4, 420 members, and in year 5, 484 members. We now have 454 members. We had 34 walks and forays and tremendous programs at our nine meetings.

Mark Spear and Rebecca Miller gave us lessons in how to grow pink oyster mushrooms and sent everyone home with an oyster mushroom kit. If we had to buy the kit, it would cost more than twice the amount of a club membership.

Elizabeth Barrow is the webmaster of our club website at www.wpamushroomclub.org Bob Lucas's Species List on our website is a tremendous aid in learning mushrooms.

The Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Mushroom Foray had a tremendous crowd coming from a number of states. It was an outstanding success. Gary will come back again next year for more mushroom fun.

We have had five outstanding newsletters.

Thanks to our club mycologists and identifiers, our club members have been learning edible and non-edible mushrooms at a tremendous rate. That's a lot of bang for the buck. There is no place to get a better bargain for such a low cost. That is 48 opportunities to learn more about mushrooms.

Now is the time to fill in the membership form for the year 2006 and send it in along with your check so your membership continues. You don't want to miss out on Fungi, Fun, and Friends! **Don't delay, the time to do it is today.**

ARE YOU INTO SCRAPBOOKING?

Are you interested in gathering information and photos into scrap books? Do you enjoy organizing bits of information? Are you interested in doing or learning how to do this on a computer? The WPMC needs your talents!

Our Club Historian has moved to the west coast. The club needs someone (or a group of people) to take over this task. If you have friends with these interests, maybe you would consider taking this position. We have old newsletters, many photographs (film and digital), and newspaper clippings. There are other memorabilia of club activities.

The club needs someone to organize this historical record. If this sounds like something of interest to you, please contact Joe Luzanski (724-872-7867) or any of the club's officers listed on the back of the newsletter.

THANK YOU FOR A GREAT FORAY

By

Dick Dougall, Foray Co-Chair

On behalf of Glenn Carr and myself, I would like to thank everyone involved in our Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Foray on September 10th. First on this list were the 162 registrants who showed us again that mushrooming in all its aspects can be great fun. You really are the heart of this foray. Next, I would like to thank John Plischke for recruiting an outstanding set of nationally known mycologists. Being able to talk to Gary Lincoff, Ernst Both, Walt Sturgeon and David Miller one-on-one besides listening to their great talks is a rare opportunity.

Tom Chulick started off the mycophagy part of the day by sharing his cooking expertise with a large number of participants. A great feast prepared by our own Foray Cooking Group co-chaired by Kim Plischke and Charlotte Tunney followed later in the afternoon. Congratulations and thanks to everyone involved.

An important part of the foray is the mushroom walks. Thanks again to our walk leaders and identifiers who led the groups. As always, the groups brought back a large variety of

mushrooms. This summer's dry weather did not stop them. It is interesting to note that the weather did influence which mushrooms were found. They found essentially no hen-of-the-woods (*Grifola frondosa*) or milky mushrooms (*Lactarius* species). However, great numbers of sulfur shelf (*Laetiporus sulphureus*) and ash-tree boletes (*Boletinellus merulioides*) were found. Check our website

(www.wpamushroomclub.org) for more details on the mushroom species found.

Finally, I would like to thank everybody who helped cleanup and move tables and chairs at the end of the day. It was a great help. Thanks, also to those who attended the after party. It was great to unwind after an exhausting day.

For those who were unable to make this foray, mark September 16, 2006 on your calendar. This is the date of next year's foray, again to be held at Parish Hill site in North Park in Allegheny County.

2006 OFFICERS ELECTED

At the October meeting the Nominating committee, Rebecca Miller, Mary Ellen Dougall, and Robin Durr, presented the membership with a slate of officers. Elected were: Joe Luzanski, President; Jim Strutz, Vice President; Mary Jane Yakulis, Secretary; George Yakulis, Treasurer, and Valerie Baker, Corresponding Secretary.



CLUB SERVICE AWARDS

At the November meeting of the WPMC, Club President Joe Luzanski presented George and Mary Jane Yakulis with the President's Award. Joe selected George and Mary Jane for all the support they have given him this year.

The WPMC Distinguished Service Award was presented to Becky Plischke. Becky is one of the club's founding members, Newsletter Editor and has been Mycophagy Chair at Mushroom Mania.

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE TRIED TO CULTIVATE MUSHROOMS?

By Jim
Tunney

There are a lot of places that sell kits. Some have pre-inoculated substrate, some have spawn you add to something else. I tried some of these kits, from Fungi Perfecti and Mushroom People and they worked well. The real fun for me though, is finding a mushroom I like and getting it to grow.

When cloning a mushroom it is important to start with a clean healthy mushroom. You should work in a place that will limit the chance for contamination. I use a glove box, a box with holes for your hands and a glass top so that you can see inside while you are working.



Using agar that is sterilized in jars is, I think, the easiest way for a beginner to have success cloning and growing mushrooms. I'm fairly clumsy and was more so when I started using agar. Jars are much more forgiving than agar plates. You don't have to pour sterile media into jars and worry about it contaminating at that point. You can sterilize the media in the jar. And when you transfer out of jars when you turn them on their side anything falling in the air is less likely to fall onto the surface of the agar because they are shielded by the sides of the jar. You can leave the jar sit on its side through a few transfers for the same reason.

When you grow something from the wild you will not always be successful. For one reason or another, the mushroom may not make mycelium. It took me three attempts to get *Lepiota rhachodes* going on agar. For all three attempts I used five jars of agar

with pieces of mushrooms put on them. One batch did nothing at all. One I grew a lot of green mold.

The third took. It really pays to be patient with some mushrooms. Some mushroom, like oysters are easier to grow and you are less likely to run into problems.

CLONING FROM A MUSHROOM

1. Wipe down your glove box with a disinfectant. I use isopropyl alcohol.
2. Take your mushroom and clean it up. Brush off any loose dirt. Possibly wipe it with isopropyl. Put mushroom in glove box. You want a healthy looking mushroom.
3. Put your agar jars in the box. Loosen the lids if they are tight.
4. Light up your torch.
5. Flame your scalpel.



6. Tear open the mushroom and cut a small piece from tissue exposed by tear. The best places to get a piece are under the cuticle or at the base of the mushroom. Spear this piece with your scalpel.
7. Open jar and drop the speared piece of mushroom in the jar of agar, tighten the lid.
8. Label your jar with anything you want to remember about the culture, for example, the medium, the date, where you found the mushroom.



MAKING AGAR

Potato Dextrose Yeast Agar

500 ml of potato broth
 10 grams of agar agar
 1/2 tsp of fructose
 1/4 tsp of nutra yeast

Malt Yeast Agar

500 ml of water
 10 grams of powdered malt
 10 grams of agar agar
 1/4 tsp of nutra yeast

Put your ingredients in a pot and cook on moderately low heat stir with a whisk for about 10 minutes.

Pour about a quarter to three eights of an inch of agar into each jar.

Put on lids and put in pressure cooker and cook at 15 lbs/ sq. in. for 20 minutes. Cool before using.



STERILIZING GRAIN

RECIPE 1

1/4cup rye berries
 105 ml of water
 Pinch of gypsum
 And limestone
 Pinch of flax seed

RECIPE 2

150ml wild bird seed
 75 ml of water
 Pinch of gypsum
 And limestone
 Pinch of flax seed

Put these in a pressure cooker and cook at 15 lbs/sq. in. for 60 to 70 minutes. Let cool before you use.



You can also do a transfer from one medium to another. Examples: agar to grain, agar to agar, grain to sawdust, grain to grain, grain to agar, etc.

Things I use to Clone or do a Transfer

Propane torch for sterilizing
 Loop
 Scalpel (I use an exacto)
 Marker and tape
 Glove box
 Latex gloves
 Isopropyl alcohol

Starting from a spore print.

Flame your loop. Quench it in agar. Run it though your spore print, Wipe the loop on the surface of the agar.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS & SOURCES

The Mushroom Cultivator by Paul Stamets
Growing Gourmet & Medicinal Mushrooms by Paul Stamets
<http://fungifun.com/grain>

PINK OYSTER MUSHROOM KITS



At the same meeting Rebecca Miller & Mark Spear gave everyone a Pink Oyster Mushroom kit.

Mark and Rebecca are professional mushroom cultivationists who work for Sylvan, Inc.

Every year they generously present a club meeting where members are shown how to cultivate mushrooms and then given a kit and complete instructions. Many members have been extremely successful after following the directions and putting the mushrooms in a conducive growing environment.



2005 WPMC PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Bobby and Elaine Boice and their team judged the photo contest. During judging the names of the photographers are not on the photos. This year 66 images were entered by 11 photographers.

Slide

JO 1st Place – Giant Morels With The Elves – Dorothy Fornof

Pictorial 1st Oyster Mushroom “Beetle” – D. Fornof

Pictorial 2nd Northern Tooth– Dorothy Fornof

Pictorial 3rd Wood Ear – Dorothy Fornof

Documentary 1st Trooping Cordyceps– D. Fornof

Documentary 2nd Scaly-Stalked Psilocybe– Dorothy Fornof

Documentary 3rd Wood Ear– Dorothy Fornof

Print

JO 1st Yum Tastes Like Chicken– Donna D. Roth

JO 2nd It Gets A Blue Ribbon– Elaine Boice

Pictorial 1st Aborted Entoloma – Donna D. Roth

Pictorial 2nd Scaly Pholiota - Donna (DeNoon) Roth

Pictorial 3rd Amanita jacksonii – Elaine Boice

Documentary 1st Flammulina velutipes– E. Boice

Documentary 2nd Meadow Mushroom - Donna (DeNoon) Roth

Digital

JO 1st An Umbrella I Don't Need To Hold – Dick Dougall

JO 2nd Mike Lloyd Promised The Decoy Would Work– Dick Dougall

JO 3rd Mom's Bouquet – Becky Plischke

JO HM Russula Colors – Liz Barrow

JO HM- This Is Bigger Than My Head! – D. Dougall

JO HM Dick Dougall Ponders A Find – Judy Stark

Pictorial 1st Ganoderma – Bill Greenawalt

Pictorial 2nd Pebbles and Cups– Dick Dougall

Pictorial 3rd Non-Inky Coprinus – Judy Stark

Pictorial HM Polypore – Shirley Caseman

Pictorial HM Pholiota A – Bill Cox

Pictorial HM Pholiota B – Bill Cox

Pictorial HM Laetiporus sulphureus - Bill Greenawalt

Pictorial HM White Coral - Bill Greenawalt

Pictorial HM Amanita Mold– Becky Plischke

Pictorial HM Morchella esculenta– Becky Plischke

Pictorial HM Chicken Mushroom – Judy Stark

Pictorial HM Yellow Morel #183 Mike Uschak

Documentary 1st Cortinarius iodes – B. Plischke

Documentary 2nd Paecilomyces farinosus – Becky Plischke

Documentary 3rd Deadly Galerina – Dick Dougall

STINKHORNS...THE CRUNCHY MUSHROOM

By Claire
Cox

Last year was my first introduction to Stinkhorns. My Pittsburgh friends told me how their neighbors had had some stinkhorns in their sideyard, and how M.E. thought they hadn't emptied their garbage--it smelled so bad! She showed me a picture of stinkhorns in a mushroom book and tittered as she said the genus--Phallus. Indeed, the fruiting body has that look about it.

Just a week later, I found mature stinkhorns, *Phallus ravenellii*, aka Eastern stinkhorn, growing in a scattered group under oakleaf mulch in a state park near me. The old, decaying sponge-like hollow stems stood sentry over the new green-capped sticky-wet ones. I was sure the "eggs" around them, just beginning to poke through the dirt, were the unopened stinkhorns. I brought one egg home to see if it would "hatch". It did. Overnight. I quickly took it outside, since M.E. had convinced me that the smell of a mature stinkhorn is equivalent to rotting garbage. Later that week I learned from a well-experienced mushrooming friend of mine, that the immature form of the stinkhorn is edible. But by then the stinkhorn season was over.

This year around the middle of September, I found stinkhorns again in the same location. I smelled them before I found them. To me their odor only smells like a collection of fragrant mushrooms--sort of sweet and a little musty. The smell does permeate the area, however. Fruitflies were swarming around the new green caps. The smell, of course, is Nature's way of attracting insects to spread the stinkhorn spores.

The eggs are first round, about the size of a golf ball, still mostly below the surface of the ground. They gradually grow to become oval. As the egg continues to mature, the stinkhorn pops the egg open and emerges. I was determined to eat at least one stinkhorn egg this year, just for the experience--to be able to say that I had! I gathered a handful of the eggs to bring home.

To prepare them, I slid off the outer layer, a wrinkled skin-like covering with a tender root on the bottom. The layer beneath is gelatinous and slippery. When you cut each egg open, the outline of the green cap is clearly inside, taking away any question that it might be an immature Amanita.

I cut the odorless eggs into wedges and stir-fried them in olive oil and butter with onions and carrots and broccoli. The stinkhorn egg remained rather

crunchy, even after cooking.

When my friends came to State College for a visit the first week in October, we returned to the same park looking for mushrooms. I hadn't expected any stinkhorns to remain. But there they were again.

We even found another plot where they were also plentiful.

I gathered a handful of eggs to bring home for cooking. M.E. wrinkled up her nose at the prospect! She did agree, though, that this stinkhorn smell was not so horrid as she'd originally told me.

(Probably the ones in her neighbor's yard were the "elegant" stinkhorns, purported to be quite repugnant.) Dick, her husband, also identified some Clustered Coral, *Ramaria botrytis*. It was exactly as pictured in the Mushrooms of Northeast North America by Barron. And we found a bunch of tiny puffballs just beginning to grow. I picked the biggest of them for cooking.

M.E. was reluctant to try the coral mushroom. One book said it was edible, but it was possible it would cause stomach upset, and they had a long drive back to Pittsburgh. She didn't want to chance it.

So I waited until the day after they left to prepare the mushrooms. This time I cut the stinkhorn eggs in circles, intending for them to be thin slices. But each egg slid around beneath my hand, so some slices were wide ones. The coral mushroom cluster fell apart as I washed it. I shook the water off and added it to the pan. The tiny puffballs I cut in half. I fried them all with onions and fresh greens and broccoli and tomatoes and shook soy sauce over the top; and added some leftover meatballs and some couscous. Candied ginger would have been a pleasing addition. I put on a lid to steam everything a little. It was a tasty blend.

The coral mushroom was delicious. The puffballs disappeared in the mix. And the stinkhorns remained crunchy; rather like calamari (fried squid), I thought.

Note: Don't bring me more stinkhorn "eggs". I'm only reporting on my experience--not necessarily looking to repeat it!

Additional note: David Arora, in Mushrooms Demystified, says: "The odorless stinkhorn eggs are considered a delicacy in parts of China and Europe...sometimes sold under the name, 'devil's eggs'."

Turkey Tails and False Turkey Tails

By
John
Plischke III

Winter is an excellent time to spend learning polypores. Many of them can be found then, when there are not a lot of other mushrooms. It's surprising to see just how many mushrooms grow in the winter. To see a list, go to the NEMF website at <http://www.nemf.org/files/menu.htm> then click NE areas checklists.

*TURKEY TAIL



Trametes versicolor

The Turkey Tail grows on wood. It can be found throughout the year. Its cap is from 1 to 4 inches wide and is zoned. When turned over, the underside is whitish colored and has pores that are easily seen without the need of a hand lens. Occasionally during the winter, they can be found with beautiful blue colored caps unlike the often brownish shaded cap colors when found in warmer periods.

*TRAMETES ELEGANS



At first look this Trametes sort of resembles one of the Maze polypores, but its cap is white to cream colored like its maze like pores. It is 1 to 5 1/4 inches wide. It is often found on dead deciduous wood that is in a state of decay.

*FALSE TURKEY TAIL



Stereum ostrea

The False Turkey Tail is one of our more common polypores that grow on wood. Its cap is from 1/2 to 2 7/8 inches wide. It is zoned and has several different colors on it. The under side of the False Turkey tail and of any Stereum is smooth. The spores lie exposed on the underside and easily fall or are blown off by the wind. So when looking underneath at the mushroom, if you don't see any pores such as on the Turkey Tail, it becomes very easy to figure out which genus it belongs with.

*CROWDED PARCHMENT



Stereum complicatum

This mushroom is much smaller than the False Turkey Tail. It is only 3/16 to about 1/2 inch wide. The upper side is zoned and the underside is smooth and orange colored when fresh but fading with age. It also grows on wood and its range extends across the United States.

To see large color photos for this article go to the files section of the Western PA Mushroom Club Yahoo groups at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub/files/>

"Largest Mushroom Club in the Ten-State Area"

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DUES ARE DUE CULTIVATION STINKHORNS TURKEY TAIL PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

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