



WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA MUSHROOM CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 17, Issue 1

MARCH / APRIL 2017



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**



WPMC Awards \$1,000 Grant to Local Student



WPMC ADMINISTERS an annual Scholarship/Grant program to promote wild mushrooming by providing monetary support for educational events, projects, research, or mycological studies by individuals or institutions.

The first grant of 2017 was awarded to Dacia Neely, an Environmental Studies student at California University of Pennsylvania. Dacia's research will focus on White Nose Syndrome

in Pennsylvania and European bats, to determine why the fungus associated with this disease is killing American bats, while not harming European bats. At the end of the project, Dacia will present her findings at one of WPMC's monthly meetings.

WPMC's Scholarship/Grant application forms are available on the WPMC website and must be sponsored by a WPMC member. For more information, contact John Stuart at jons2art@comcast.net or 724-443-6878.

Join Gary Lincoff for his Eponymous Foray!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The 17th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray will be held on **Saturday, September 16, 2017** at the Rose Barn in Allegheny County's North Park. This year's program will be a one-day event with guest mycologists Gary Lincoff, author of the *Audubon Guide to Mushrooms of North America*, *The Complete Mushroom Hunter*, and *The Joy of Foraging*, and **Robert Chang**, Managing Director and Chief Truffle Officer of the American Truffle Company. **Chef George Harris** will be our guest chef for the cooking demo.

The day will include guided walks, mushroom identification tables, cooking demo, sales table, vendors, speakers' Meet & Greet, auction, and the legendary Mushroom Feast. All included in the price of admission!

It's not too early to gather up mushroom-related items you'd like to donate for the auction, and/or to volunteer to make a dish for the Mushroom Feast. Please note: All foraged mushrooms used in cooking for the Feast must be certified by a club mycologist ahead of time. Future issues of this newsletter will include a Foray registration form, and online registration will be available later this Spring.

Hope to see you there!

2017 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at 7:00 pm on the third Tuesday of each month from March through November at Beechwood Farms (Audubon Society of Western PA), 614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. All monthly meetings are free and include a Mushroom Display Table, staffed by expert Identifiers.

March 21 Allegheny Land Trust
Jessica Kester, VP of Education

Allegheny Land Trust (ALT) and WPMC are extending their collaboration this year with multiple walks on ALT properties and four BioBlitzes at Wingfield Pines. Learn more about ALT, its mission and the properties it maintains at the first meeting of the year.

April 18 "Bugs 'n Mushrooms"
Britt Bunyard, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
FUNGI Magazine



You know how you've always heard "do not eat Amanita mushrooms... they're deadly poisonous to all animals." Well it's not entirely true. Britt Bunyard, a researcher who has studied mushroom flies and other insects associated with mushrooms for decades, will present a lecture with pretty photos for all audiences - no prior knowledge needed. The focus will be on strange mushrooms and the stranger insects that love them...in strange ways.

May 17 Annual Cultivation Meeting with Jim Tunney
June 20 Summer Planting to Extend the Season
Doug Oster, Home & Garden Editor
Pittsburgh Tribune-Review



July 18 Topic: To be announced
Scott Pavelle
August 15 Cooking Demo
Speaker: To be announced
September 19 Topic: To be announced
Speaker: WPMC member
October 17 Photo Contest Winners & Election of Officers
November 21 Pot Luck Dinner & Member Photos

Check upcoming newsletters for updates!

WPMC Walks

ALL WALKS ARE ON SATURDAYS, beginning at 10:00 a.m., unless noted otherwise. Please read carefully for any registration requirements or fees. We're always adding new walks to the WPMC website at www.wpamushroomclub.org/events so check back often for updates, directions, and much more!

The Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club does not endorse or support the commercial harvesting of wild mushrooms from any state, county or city park. WPMC does promote the gathering of mushrooms—where permitted—for recreational, educational and scientific purposes.

March 18 South Park

Meet WPMC Mycologist La Monte Yarroll at the South Park Nature Center to find mushrooms for the first meeting of the year,

March 25 Wingfield Pines (Upper St. Clair)

BioBlitz #1: Join Allegheny Land Trust on a BioBlitz to catalog the different species found at Wingfield Pines. The fungi portion of the BioBlitz will be held like a normal mushroom walk. Meet WPMC Mycologist Jim Tunney in the parking lot. This is the first of four BioBlitzes at Wingfield Pines carried out over the year and will allow us to give a rough estimation of the number of species at the site. For more information, including trail map, directions and video, visit:

<http://alleghenylandtrust.org/green-space/wingfield-pines/>

April 15 Location: To be announced

Jim Tunney

April 19 WEDNESDAY / To be announced

Britt Bunyard and John Plischke III

April 29 Wingfield Pines (Upper St. Clair)

BioBlitz #2 Meet WPMC Mycologist La Monte Yarroll in the parking lot.

April 29 12:00-3:00 PM

Pine Ridge Lodge, Blairsville, Morel Mushroom Presentation & Walk (Joint with Indiana County Friends of the Parks)

Meet WPMC Identifier Bob Sleigh at the Pine Ridge Lodge at noon. Bob will give a presentation on Morels and lead a walk at Pine Ridge County Park. Morels are one of the most sought after and elusive mushrooms. Slides will illustrate Morels, as well as poisonous look-alikes. Proper cleaning, storing and cooking techniques will be covered. Pre-registration is required at 724-463-8636. The event is free.

June 11 SUNDAY / 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

BioBlitz & Biodiversity Festival, Phipps Conservatory

WPMC will be participating for the second year and will be hosting a table. We will organize one or two public walks during the day, the first of which will begin at 10:00 a.m. We plan to sample the DNA from a number of specimens that are collected during the day.

June 24 Linbrook Woodlands, Sewickley

Fungus Among Us Hike with Allegheny Land Trust

You will need to preregister for this walk; details forthcoming. WPMC members are free but you will need to bring your membership card; non-members are \$5. For more information, including trail map and directions, visit:

<http://alleghenylandtrust.org/green-space/linbrook-woodlands/>



July 8 Wingfield Pines (Upper St. Clair)

BioBlitz #3

July 15 Dark Hollow Woods, Oakmont

Meet Cecily Franklin and WPMC Identifier and Past-President Dick Dougall at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance to Dark Hollow Woods. Choose between the level Memorial Trail loop and the more adventurous Spring Trail down into the hollow. NOTE: There are no restrooms at Dark Hollow Woods.

July 22 North Park, Annual Chanterelle Walk

Meet Valerie & Jack Baker at the Swimming Pool parking lot to hunt for chanterelles.

August 26 Presque Isle State Park

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, Erie, PA

Meet Mark Lethaby from the Natural History Museum at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center and Richard Jacob from WPMC for a walk at Presque Isle State Park. As far as we know, this will be the first fungal foray of Presque Isle. There are a number of environments, ranging from beaches and shoreline; sandy plain and ponds; sand dunes and ridges; marshes and old ponds; heath and sub-climax forest; and the climax forest. Very different environments from Pittsburgh, so we should find a number of species of mushrooms new to the club. Meeting point is the Tom Ridge Environmental Center. Since we plan to drive into the park, the walk may run over the normal two hours and we recommend bringing a lunch. It will take over two hours to drive from Pittsburgh, but the location is beautiful and worth a day trip.

Sept. 2 Pleasant Valley Park

Joint with Friends of Murrysville Parks

Meet Pia van de Venne and Richard Jacob at the Pleasant Valley parking lot. The park consists of 262 acres of woodlands, open fields, hilltops and remote valleys.

Sept. 30 Wingfield Pines (Upper St. Clair)

BioBlitz #4

Oct. 21 Dead Man's Hollow (McKeesport)

Fungus Among Us Walk with Allegheny Land Trust

Meet ALT and WPMC to explore Dead Man's Hollow. You will need to preregister for this walk; details forthcoming. WPMC members are free but you will need to bring your membership card; non-members are \$5. For more information, including trail map and directions, visit:

<http://alleghenylandtrust.org/green-space/dead-mans-hollow/>

Other Walks & Forays

July 27-30 Northeast Mycological Federation (NEMF)

2017 Samuel Ristich Foray, Stratton Mountain Resort, Bondville VT
<http://www.nemf.org/index.html>

Aug. 11-13 Central Pennsylvania Mushroom Club

2017 Bill Russell Foray, Lock Haven University
<http://www.centralpamushroomclub.com/foray.html>

Sept. 1-4 Connecticut-Westchester Mycological Association (COMA)

Clark Rogerson Foray, Camp Hemlocks, Hebron, CT
<http://www.comafungi.org/special-events/clark-rogerson-foray/>

Sept. 7-10 North American Mycological Association (NAMA)

2017 Northwoods Foray, Lakewood Resort & Lodge, Cable WI
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/285807945121717/>

Sept 16 17th Annual WPMC Gary Lincoff Foray

North Park: MORE IN UPCOMING NEWSLETTERS!

Important Walk & Foray Information

- Try to dig up three of the same species at different stages of development.
- Don't pick old mushrooms; leave them to drop spores.
- You are responsible for not getting lost. If you have a tendency to wander off, stick like glue to the 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 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 your responsibility alone.
- **Help Keep Our Parks Clean!** When mushrooming, it's easy to bring a plastic grocery bag to collect cans, bottles or other trash you find. Trash cans are generally found nearby. If not, take it home for disposal.



Interested in leading a mushroom walk?

Know of a good mushrooming location?

Contact La Monte Yarroll or John Plischke III.

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Walks & Forays Check List:

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

WPMC Stays Busy During the “Off” Season

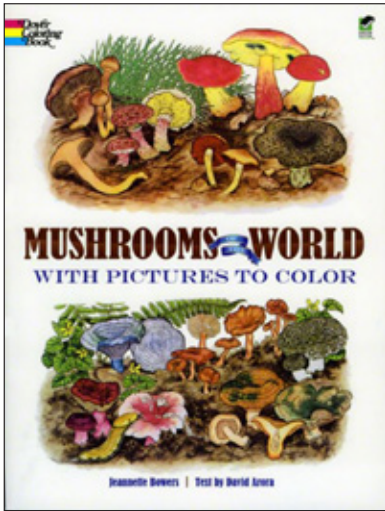
Photos by Adam Haritan

In November, WPMC President Richard Jacob and his family (center) led a walk at Hartwood Acres as part of REI’s Black Friday campaign, “Will You Go Out With Us?”



In January, WPMC Mycologists La Monte Yarroll and John Plischke III led a winter mushroom walk at South Park as part of REI’s “All Out 2017” campaign.

BOOK REVIEWS



Submitted by Cecily Franklin

Mushrooms of the World with Pictures to Color

By Jeannette Bowers and David Arora

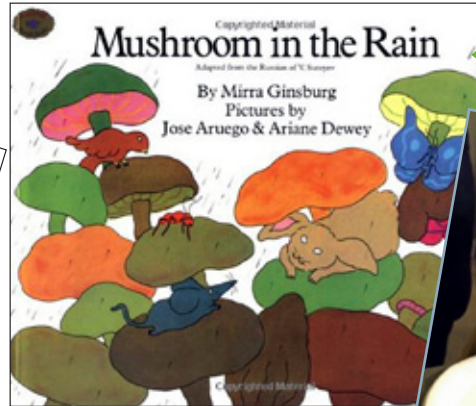
Dover Nature Coloring Book, Paperback: 48 pages: \$4.99

HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL mushroom book for kids of all ages. The text was written by mycologist David Arora, author of *Mushrooms Demystified*. Because mushrooms fade and deteriorate rapidly, Arora says that "there is no simple, adequate means of preserving their original shape and color aside from photographing or drawing them." He suggests that "coloring in the drawings is an excellent way to familiarize yourself with the field marks of our more distinctive mushrooms. Where possible, gather the mushrooms yourself and color them in as you find them, the way you find them."

The book includes drawings of 92 mushrooms found in Europe and throughout the U.S., most of them illustrated in their actual sizes. It's unlikely that most people will ever find all of these mushrooms. However, most of the common ones are included, and Arora provides insightful flexibility on coloring certain species. For example, on the page with *Amanita muscaria*, he points out that "in eastern North America, yellow, golden-orange and grayish-white capped varieties are the rule, while the red form prevails in Eurasia and the western states."

I plan to keep this book at my house for when my great-niece visits and we find a new mushroom. The last time she was here, we found Earthstars and watched them shoot spores. This coloring book includes a full page on Earthstars, including a drawing with the spores shooting out!

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you would like to review a mushroom book for a future newsletter, please email your name and the book title to cs4wpmc@gmail.com.



Jane helped her great-aunt Cecily find these Earthstars.

Photo by Vera Tobin

Submitted by Jane Tobin-Cook, Age 6

Mushroom in the Rain

By Mirra Ginsburg

Aladdin Books, Paperback: 32 pages: \$7.99

I LOVE THIS BOOK. It uses living things and tells why they wanted to go under the mushroom. Five animals (ant, butterfly, mouse, sparrow and bunny) didn't want to get caught in the rain. They all fit because mushrooms grow very fast in the rain.

It has a very, very happy ending. And the pictures are very beautiful near the end, after the rain stops. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes to read in bed.

Robert Chang Is This Year's Guest Mycologist



Robert Chang, Managing Director & Chief Truffle Officer of the American Truffle Company

WPMC IS PLEASED to welcome Robert Chang, Managing Director & Chief Truffle Officer of the American Truffle Company, to this year's Gary Lincoff Foray on September 16. Current black truffle production is almost exclusively in Europe, but many parts of North America, including Napa Valley and Sonoma, offer particularly suitable climates and soils. Robert will explain the many scientific and business factors which must be considered in order to successfully grow truffles.

WPMC Presents Annual Awards

AT THE NOVEMBER meeting, WPMC announced the winners of the 2016 President's Award and Outstanding Service award:

Scott Pavelle received the President's Award for his work on the Bolete Filter, a synoptic (multi-access) key to identifying Boletes. Scott used his experience as an attorney to gather, process, organize and present a set of complicated facts related to Boletes. In 2014, Scott created his first Bolete Filter, consisting of 25 transparencies. He then developed a computer program for it, into which he could continually add new information, and collected Bolete photos from all over North America. The result is a genuinely useful scientific tool to identify Boletes.

Dick and Mary Ellen Dougall were the recipients of the Outstanding Service Award, not only for their work in 2016, but for their many contributions to WPMC since it first started in 2000. Dick is the only person who has served as WPMC President five times! He still compiles lists of all the mushrooms found at every Lincoff Foray, leads numerous walks, and runs the Button Program. Both Dick and Mary Ellen like to teach students of all ages about mushrooms, and Mary Ellen always brings some of her great cooking to the annual Mushroom Feast and Pot Luck dinner.

Congratulations to all of our winners!

FUNGI Magazine Features WPMC Member Photo

This photo of Jack-o'-Lantern mushrooms, taken by WPMC member Cecily Franklin, was published in the Fall 2016 issue of *FUNGI Magazine*.



Dick and Mary Ellen Dougall received the 2016 award for Outstanding Service.

Photo by Michael Yeh



Scott Pavelle developed WPMC's Bolete Filter into the "go to" website for Bolete identification.

Photo by Adam Haritan



**It's Time to
Focus WPMC's
2017 Photo
Contest!**

**Start collecting your mushroom
and mushroom-related photos!**

WPMC Member is Dyeing to Use Mushrooms

WPMC MEMBER Judy Mackenroth has been using natural plant dyes for over thirty years. But it's more recently that she's started to explore the rainbow of possibilities from mushrooms. Judy has summarized her experiences in this report, including step-by-step instructions and debunking certain "myths" about dyeing with mushrooms.

(LEFT) Some of the results of Judy Mackenroth's experiments with mushroom dyes.

Photo by Cecily Franklin



(BELOW) Needle-felted mushroom & leaves all dyed with mushroom dyes

IT'S BEEN OVER thirty years since I was first introduced to the amazing hidden rainbow of natural plant dyes. Now, I'm discovering an entirely new rainbow hidden in fungi. I've only tested a few dozen species so far, and only found a small percentage of the available colors, but I wanted to share with you what I've found so far:

• **MYTH #1: Originally, I was told that fungi dyes did not need any mordants.** False. Mordants (from the French word *mordre*, to bite) are chemicals that help the color to bite into the fiber and be colorfast instead of washing right back out again. Alum is the most commonly used mordant, and makes the least change in the dye's natural color. Dyer's alum (potassium aluminum sulfate, purchased from dye supply houses) seems to produce the brightest of the alum colors, but it is more expensive and harder to find.

Pickling alum is available in most grocery stores, (it is used to make pickles crisp), but it is sold in small quantities for a big price, and sometimes makes the fiber sticky. An economical alternative is to pick up Aluminum sulfate at the local garden store, where it is used to acidify the soil for acid loving plants like rhododendron & blueberries. It is weaker than potassium alum, but cheaper and more readily available. To pre-mordant, weigh the fiber to calculate the amount of mordant needed. Dissolve mordant in the dyepot with enough lukewarm water to cover the fiber and allow for movement. Add fiber and bring up to a simmer. Simmer for 1 hour, cool. To store: dry first.

Alum: use about 3 oz. Alum and 1 oz. Cream of tartar per pound of fiber and enough water to cover the fiber and give it room to move around. You can pre-mordant your fiber, dry it, and have it ready ahead of time; or you can add the alum right to the dyepot and mordant & dye simultaneously. Too much alum may make the fiber sticky.

Iron: 'saddens' colors—turns yellow into khaki green, red into a grayed purple, browns into blacks. Too much iron may make the wool brittle, usually iron is added after dyeing. Remove fiber from dyepot, add ½ oz. iron (or ferrous) sulfate per pound of dry fiber, stir, and return fiber to the pot. Simmer for another 20 minutes, let cool and rinse.

Copper also saddens color, and brings out the green tints. Copper sulfate, also known as 'blue vitriol' in the old dyebooks, is often available at farm supply stores, where it is used to make sheep hoof dip. Blue vitriol is toxic, take care how you dispose of the mordanting liquid. Use one ounce per pound of fiber.

The dyepot you use will affect the color. Heat-proof glass, unchipped enamelware and stainless steel are all neutral pots. If you do not use processed chemicals, the dyepot metal will also affect



the dye color. Old rusty cast iron will work like iron mordant, saddening the color. Tin plated pots will brighten colors, copper pots work like copper mordant. Have a separate pot and utensils just for dyes. **Be sure to NEVER use your cooking pots or utensils for dyeing.**

• **MYTH #2: All fibers dye alike.** False. Protein fibers like wool & silk seem to be the easiest to dye. Prewash the fibers for best color, or just add a squirt of dishwashing liquid like Dawn® to the dyebath. This method doesn't work with most plant fibers. Cotton has up to a quarter of its weight in waxes that will deter dyeing. Cotton, linen, and similar fibers are usually scoured first, simmering for an hour with a quarter cup of washing soda per large

canning pot of water. Cool, rinse. Plant fibers often need additional mordantings with tannin to accept dye. One traditional method for rich color is to mordant with alum as above, then in a tannin mordant (simmer 1-2 oz. crushed oak galls OR 4-6 oz. dried sumac leaves OR 8-12 oz fresh sumac leaves OR 1 oz. tannic acid per pound of fiber for an hour, strain & let fiber soak in the tannin bath for an hour or longer. Then mordant again in alum. (Tannin will give a yellowish tint to the fiber.)

• **MYTH #3: The color of the mushroom will be the dye color.** False. The bright orange-red Cinnabar-red polypore barely makes a pale beige dye. I haven't found it yet, but the dull orange-ochre *Hapalopilus nidulans* actually makes a purple dye. (An alkali like KOH or ammonia is used to test the cap, turning it purple. You need to make the dyebath a pH around 9 to get the purple color. Do be careful though, this is a toxic polypore.)

Many of the fungal dyes are very pH sensitive. In plant dyes, acids (like vinegar or lemon juice) may tend a color toward the red spectrum, while alkalis (like ammonia, baking soda and washing soda) will shift toward blue tints. In fungal dyes, it sometimes takes an alkali shift to get any color at all. A poor yellow tint can often be improved by shifting the dyepot more alkali.

HOW TO DYE

You'll need a dyepot, water, spoons, mordant, protective gloves, a candy thermometer, vinegar and an alkali like washing soda (available in the laundry aisle of the grocery store), prepared fiber to be dyed and the mushrooms to dye it with.

1. Rule of thumb is to use one ounce dried mushroom per ounce of fiber. You will often get subsequent dyebaths with the same mushroom that are lighter shades, called 'exhaust baths.' If possible, soak the dried mushrooms overnight in neutral pH water (like distilled water) before dyeing.



Above & Beyond... John Plischke III & Kim Plischke



John and Kim Plischke enjoyed the 2016 NEMF Foray.

Photo by Bill Yule

WPMC MEMBERS are already well aware of the many contributions that Kim and John Plischke III make to our club, from leading walks and identifying mushrooms, to bringing refreshments to meetings, and providing information for our newsletters. But you may not realize how much they also do for the Northeast Mycological Federation (NEMF), of which WPMC is a member.

John Plischke III received an award from NEMF in recognition of his many years of service as a Trustee; as one of their most devoted and reliable fungi identifiers working at the display tables year after year; for his photographic skills; for his educational presentations at forays; and for the many times when he took responsibility to order items required for their forays.

In the words of NEMF President, Dianna Smith, "He is always friendly and open to assist others with identification. Kim is always by his side, working to ensure that NEMF forays go smoothly. She also has served as NEMF Secretary and is now in her second three-year term."

Editor's note: The next time you see a WPMC member go "above and beyond", please let us know. Email: cs4wpmc@gmail.com.



(LEFT) *Cortinarius* mushrooms from the Cook Forest preforay, these made lovely reds and oranges. (RIGHT) Using a canner and canning jars to try eight mushroom dyes at once.

2. Simultaneous dyeing is to put the fiber, mordant, and dyestuff all together in the pot at the same time. The advantage is time-saving, and less handling of hot or heavy kettles. The disadvantage is trying to pick mushroom mush out of your fiber. To avoid this, you can put the fungi into a piece of cheesecloth or pantyhose for simultaneous dyes, or cook the fungi for an hour and then strain out the pieces, putting the fiber in only with the liquid dyebath. Make sure you have enough water to cover the mushrooms & fiber. (I've been picking out the mushrooms.) I start with room temperature water and fiber, and bring up the temperature slowly, simmering for 20 minutes to several hours depending on the mushroom. Some dyes require lower temperatures for longer times for best color.

3. Some fungi dyes require pH adjustment at the very beginning of the dye extraction process. Read through the links below for clues

as to which dyes may require this before starting. Otherwise, you can often shift the pH after dyeing, allowing a greater range of colors from one dyebath.

4. Generally, I simmer the dyes for about an hour. Some will take color immediately, and look better with a short processing time. Some of the reds I simmered for an hour each day for several days to bring out the brighter colors. Experimentation will widen your range of colors. After simmering (not hard boiling, you don't want felted wool), allow the fiber to cool in the pot. Some colors hold better if they are dried next, and then rinsed. Otherwise, I usually rinse, and then dry the fiber. When working with protein fibers like wool, you don't want to shock the fiber, which leads to felting and shrinkage. So, try to rinse with approximately the same temperature water as the wool is. It takes three things to make felt—heat, moisture, and movement. That's why wool shrinks and felts when you use an automatic washer with hot and cold washes and rinses, and a hot dryer constantly moving. Wool can be boiled and it can be frozen, just don't shock it with a big temperature change or too much movement.

5. For dyeing lots of samples at one time, I find a canner and old canning jars (mayonnaise jars) to work well. I use this as a double boiler, keeping about two inches or so of water in the canner at all times (don't let it run dry). You can try one type of fungi with a variety of mordants, dye strengths, pH, and cooking times; or, try a variety of different fungi, as pictured here.

Always be sure to set aside dye pots/ jars/ utensils as dye-only, don't reuse these jars for food!

Remember, safety first. Some fungi, mordants, and other additives can be toxic. Read labels, and dispose of exhausted dyebaths carefully.

REFERENCES:

- The North American Mycological Society has a page on mushroom dyeing at http://www.namyco.org/fiber_dye_mushrooms.php.
- <http://mycopigments.com/> has photos to illustrate the color range of mushroom dyes
- http://www.namyco.org/selection_of_mushrooms_for_color.php illustrates some of the best known mushroom dyes
- http://namyco.org/mushrooms_to_dye_for.php is a more exhaustive list of fungal dyes
- <http://mushroom-collecting.com/mushroomdyeing.html> has more information



Fun for the Whole Family

By Dick Dougall

THE FIRST OBJECTIVE of our Button Program is for members (new and old) to have FUN learning to recognize new mushrooms. We probably don't stress this objective enough. One of the ways to do this is to make it into a family project.

If your children are still young, they need guidance. However, there is no problem with considering buttons awarded at the 10 and 25 mushroom level as a "Family Button." The only restriction on this concept is that your family has to actually find each each mushroom that you place on your list. You can look for mushrooms in your yard or neighborhood. Kids can be great at finding mushrooms. I know this well from leading many mushroom walks.

Once you find a mushroom, the adults have the main responsibility for identifying it. Also, it is useful to take pictures of the mushroom from a number of perspectives. You will not always have an easy time identifying the mushrooms. Many generic looking gilled and

Sarah Banach was very excited to receive her "50" ID pin from Dick Dougall at the November meeting. Joe Lee (above right) was awarded a "50" ID pin by Dick Dougall in November.

Photos by Cecily Franklin

bolete mushrooms can be quite difficult to identify. However, at the 10 and 25 mushroom level, your family can get credits on your list just by knowing you have found a Bolete or a Russula.

Another possible project is to see how many of the small turkey-tail like mushrooms you can find and identify. These include the true, false, and hairy turkey tails as well as violet tooth polypore, split gill, etc.

Remember, the aim of this search for mushrooms is to have fun (and be amazed at what you find). You don't need anything more than a pencil and paper to record what you find. Identify the mushrooms using whatever books and field guides you have. Also, ask friends and WPMC members to help with your identification.

In a future article, I plan to discuss some more sophisticated tools that WPMC has developed to guide you in recording and identifying mushrooms.

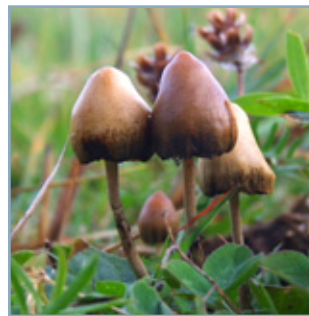


WPMC member Denise Kalinowski combined three recipes (sponge cake, buttercream frosting, and meringue mushrooms) to make this yummy "log" for the Pot Luck Dinner in November.

Photo by Fluff Berger

New Studies Available

Psilocybin for anxiety and depression in cancer care?



According to two studies published in the December 2016 issue of the *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, psilocybin is a possible anti-anxiety and antidepressant therapy in patients with cancer.

One study at NYU Langone Medical Center involved 29 patients with cancer-related anxiety and depression. In the other study, conducted by Johns Hopkins, 51 patients with a potentially life-threatening cancer diagnosis volunteered to participate. Both studies showed significant and sustained reductions in anxiety and depression among those subjects given psilocybin, a compound found in mind-altering "magic mushrooms."

More information about both studies can be found at these links:
<http://jop.sagepub.com/content/30/12/1181.full.pdf+html>
<http://jop.sagepub.com/content/30/12/1165.full.pdf+html>

photo credit: By Arp # 6514 at Mushroom Observer, a source for mycological images. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psilocybin>

WPMC's Non-Profit Status Makes Donations Tax-Deductible

Looking for a way to support WPMC beyond paying your annual dues? Make a donation anytime; it's tax-deductible because WPMC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations may be made in honor or in memory of a loved one. Your employer may even match your contribution. Make checks payable to Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club and submit them to our Treasurer, Barbara DeRiso.

WPMC Help Wanted!

WPMC has openings for two Committee Chairs: Hospitality and Sales

The **Hospitality Chair** plans for refreshments at WPMC meetings by requesting members to contribute specific items. The Hospitality Committee also greets people at meetings and welcomes new and potential members. NOTE: WPMC members who contribute food or supplies will be reimbursed for their expenses if they submit receipts.

The **Sales Chair** will set up a table at monthly meetings, the annual Foray, mushroom classes, and other events as requested. Inventory is stored at Beechwood Farms, along with a list of all items and their prices. The Sales Chair will collect cash and checks at each event and turn the money over to the Treasurer. A more detailed job description is available on request.

If you are interested in either of these positions, or even if you'd like to help out at one meeting, please notify any WPMC Board member, or email cs4wpmc@gmail.com.

WPMC Newsletter

The newsletter of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club is published five times a year: March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December. Submissions should be sent to the Editor at least 6-8 weeks prior to targeted distribution. 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 only be used in other non-profit publications with expressed permission and with appropriate acknowledgements.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION:

Cecily Franklin, Editor • Martha Wasik Graphic Arts Inc.

Send submissions to: cs4wpmc@gmail.com

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

Check the WPMC website for a complete list of events: wpamushroomclub.org

WPMC Yahoo Groups:

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

NORTH AMERICAN MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (NAMA): www.namyo.org

WPMC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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NEVER EAT AN UNIDENTIFIED MUSHROOM



WPMC MEMBERSHIP FORM

2017

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 • Discount for WPMC forays

Name (s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone 1 _____ Phone 2 _____

E-mail (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) _____

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.

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/about/join/ to pay using a credit card.

Please indicate your newsletter/event announcement preference: Electronic via e-mail Hardcopy via US mail (\$5 additional)

Annual dues: \$15 Individual \$20 Family \$10 Full-time Student Amount enclosed: \$ _____

NOTE: Please add \$5.00 surcharge for hard-copy newsletters to dues amount.

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 _____