



### President's Message

Barbora Batokova

AS I WRITE THIS, we're kicking off the season with one of my favorite traditions—our Strip District walk, where instead of scanning the forest floor, we scan aisle shelves and produce bins for fungi from around the world. It's a joyful reminder that mushroom appreciation doesn't always require the woods!

But soon enough, our eyes will return to the forest floor. In Pennsylvania, morels typically fruit when soil temperatures at 2–4 inches reach 50–60°F after several warm days and mild nights. This winter's prolonged cold snaps and a potentially cooler March likely mean a later start in many areas. The silver lining? Cool, steadily rainy springs often bring longer, more sustained flushes rather than a short burst. Let's hope!

Last year, we hosted close to 60 mushroom walks across western Pennsylvania, and I hope we can host even more this year. Thanks to our new mutual agreement with Allegheny County Parks, we are now officially able to hold permitted events and conduct limited scientific collection for DNA work within all Allegheny County Parks. At a time when foraging laws and land-use policies are tightening, we are proud to be working proactively with local and state partners to ensure that responsible mushroom clubs remain part of the solution—advancing mycology, conservation, and public education through transparent research practices.

Molecular data is becoming central to how we understand Pennsylvania's fungal biodiversity and so we are significantly expanding our DNA work this year. First, we will be doing more eDNA sampling to better understand fungal diversity beyond visible fruitings, thanks to our DCNR Wild Resource Conservation Program grant. We are also actively improving our specimen documentation and sequencing pipeline, as well as building local lab capacity. I've even heard rumors of monthly Fungi Lab Days, where members could bring properly documented specimens and participate in the lab workflow, gaining hands-on insight into how field collections become genetic data. Let us know if you'd be interested!

As I begin my final year as President, I am looking forward to what we can collectively accomplish: documenting mycodiversity, expanding our DNA and lab efforts, and continuing to grow a club that is not only passionate about mushrooms, but actively advancing fungal research and conservation in Pennsylvania.



### 2026 Meeting Schedule

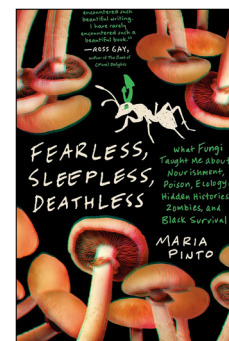
MARK YOUR CALENDARS now for this year's monthly WPMC meetings. The May cultivation meeting has been moved to May 12 to avoid a conflict with Election Day. All meetings will be held on Tuesday evenings from March through November at the Frick Environmental Center and will feature updates on club activities, a speaker/presentation, mushroom identification table, and mushroom-related merchandise for sale. Meetings are free and open to the public. WPMC will email members in advance with a Zoom link, so that they have the option of joining remotely.

Please note that Service Animals are welcome at the Frick Environmental Center, provided they meet the criteria of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This means they must be trained to perform specific tasks for a person with a disability and must remain under the handler's control. Pets and other non-service animals are not permitted.

#### The complete list of 2026 WPMC monthly meeting dates:

#### MARCH 17 Maria Pinto: A Survey of Black Mycologies (virtual)

In this presentation, Maria will read from her book, *Fearless, Sleepless, Deathless: What Fungi Taught Me about Nourishment, Poison, Ecology, Hidden Histories, Zombies, and Black Survival*. She will talk about the inspirations for her book, and what she found when she went looking for Black mycophilia at home and abroad.



#### APRIL 21 Mariah Rogers: Truffle Fungi Diversity of the Midwest (virtual)

Mariah Rogers is a Board member of the Wisconsin Mycological Society. She is pursuing a MS degree in Biology, focusing on Mycology, at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Mariah is investigating the native truffle-forming fungi in the Midwest. Her intention is to continue with Mycology in a PhD program.



2026 SCHEDULE CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



# New Resources Available with Help from WPMC Members

WPMC MEMBERS HAVE been actively involved in creating new resources to help all of us understand local fungi:

## The Claudius Project: Poisonous Mushrooms in Virginia

*The Claudius Project: Poisonous Mushrooms in Virginia* is a reference guide to poisonous mushrooms native to Virginia. Many of the photos were taken by WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke**. You can download a free copy here: <https://med.virginia.edu/brpc/the-learning-center/the-claudius-project/>

## The Importance of Fungi

The Pennsylvania Biological Survey's Mycological Technical Committee (MYCO-TC) has published *The Importance of Fungi: 13 Essential Ways Fungi Shape Our World*, a comprehensive and beautifully designed booklet highlighting the many critical roles fungi play—from supporting forest ecosystems and wildlife to driving sustainable innovation. The publication features articles and photo contributions from many of our club members, reflecting the depth of expertise and talent within WPMC. Download a free copy at the MYCO-TC website:

<https://www.pabiologicalsurvey.org/pabs-committees/mycological-tc.html>

## Pennsylvania Fungi List

The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) has created a list of all the species of fungi—lichenized and non-lichenized, native and introduced—known to grow outside of cultivation in Pennsylvania based on available evidence. As of January 13, the list includes 2,965 entries. Several WPMC members were instrumental in creating the list, including WPMC Mycologists **John** and **Kim Plischke**, **Garrett Taylor**, and **Stephen Bucklin**. PNHP conservation mycologist **Hannah Huber** is the lead curator of the all-fungi list presented on this page:

[https://www.naturalheritage.dcnr.pa.gov/fungi\\_list.html](https://www.naturalheritage.dcnr.pa.gov/fungi_list.html)

A green graphic with a magnifying glass over a butterfly. It contains two numbered boxes: 1. April 24 - April 27, 2026: Taking pictures of wild plants and animals. 2. April 28 - May 10, 2026: Identifying what was found.

**The 2026 CNC takes place in 2 parts**

- 1**  
**April 24 – April 27, 2026**  
Taking pictures of wild plants and animals.
- 2**  
**April 28 – May 10, 2026**  
Identifying what was found.

## City Nature Challenge 2026: Pittsburgh Region

IT'S TIME FOR WPMC members to once again help the Pittsburgh region document biodiversity where we live and celebrate local nature. It's easy – just take pictures of plants, animals, or things they leave behind from April 24 through April 27; upload your observations to iNaturalist; and help identify observations that other people share. Anyone using iNaturalist in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland counties during these dates will be a part of the project.

Check out the 2025 statistics for the Pittsburgh Region here:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2025-pittsburgh-region>

To join the 2026 project, go to:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2026-pittsburgh-region>



## WPMC Has New iNat Project

DUE TO NEW features enabled by iNaturalist, we request that WPMC members join our new project, "WPMC Western Pennsylvania Fungi"

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/276268>.

This project will only accept Fungi and Slime Molds; observations like amphibians will automatically be rejected. WPMC's former iNaturalist project from 2017 is now called "Legacy – WPMC Western Pennsylvania Fungi"

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/11556>. Please remain a member of that project and do not remove yourself.

## 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE, *continued*

- MAY 12\*** Annual Cultivation Meeting
- JUNE 16** Colin Domnauer: **Bicolor Boletes** (virtual)
- JULY 21** Kerri McCabe: **Lactarius/Lactifluus** (virtual)
- AUG. 18** Michael Wilson: **Amanita muscaria** (in person)
- SEPT. 15** Barbora Batokova: **Ethnomycology in the Czech Republic** (in person)
- OCT. 20** Photo Contest Results, Costume Contest & Election of Officers
- NOV. 17** Potluck & Annual WPMC Awards

\* Note: This meeting will be held on the SECOND Tuesday.





## iNaturalist ID-a-thon

# iNaturalist Launches Ambassador Program & WPMC holds ID-a-Thon

I NATURALIST RECENTLY LAUNCHED its Ambassador Program to train and support passionate community members who share iNaturalist in their local regions through talks, events, bioblitzes, and partnerships. Ambassadors help introduce new users to the platform, encourage high-quality observations, assist with identifications and data stewardship, and inspire continued participation.

Several WPMC members have stepped up to participate in the program, including WPMC Mycologist **Barbora Batokova** and WPMC Identifiers **Dawn Wehman, Jared White, Julie Travagliini, Cherie Cornmesser,** and **Sara Klingensmith**. For more details about the program, go to:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/ambassadors>

As part of this initiative, iNaturalist challenged users to participate in an ID-a-thon from December 15 through January 15. Inspired by this effort, WPMC—led by WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke**—hosted its first-ever ID-a-Thon on January 4. The meeting was recorded and is available on our YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@westernpennsylvaniamushroom3035>

At the time of the event, the “WPMC Western Pennsylvania Fungi” iNat Project contained 36,698 Research Grade observations. By January 16, that number had grown to 37,676, an increase of 978 Research Grade identifications in just 12 days. John estimates he personally upgraded an additional 1,000 observations to Research Grade between December 15 and January 4. What an outstanding contribution to our local fungal database!

## Helpful reminders from this meeting include:

- Make sure you join and add your observations to the iNat Project “WPMC Western Pennsylvania Fungi.”
- Try using iNaturalist on desktop, which offers additional tools and filters.
- iNaturalist does not limit or credential “Identifiers” like WPMC does. You can still contribute by confirming an observation you’re very confident in or asking one of our WPMC Identifiers to “give a look” at the observation.
- If you’re working toward your next button, struggling with identifications, or aiming to become a WPMC Identifier, reach out to an iNat Ambassador or WPMC Mycologist to review your observations. We’re happy to help!
- Remember, iNaturalist is a community driven application and is subject to new information and potential error. If you’re not 100% sure what mushroom it is, do not eat it.

## 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray

MARK YOUR CALENDARS now for the 26th annual Gary Lincoff Foray on Saturday, October 10. Registration will open at a later date, but here are the events we’re planning for that weekend:

**Thursday Evening, October 8** – Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest State Park. Join WPMC Identifier **Jared White** and Cook Forest Environmental Education Specialist **Dale Luthringer** for our annual Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lodging.

**Friday Morning, October 9** – Pre-Foray Walk at Cook Forest State Park. Meet WPMC Mycologists and Identifiers at Shelter 2 for our annual pre-Foray walk at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lunch.

**Saturday, October 10** – The 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray at The Lodge in North Park. Activities will include:

- Guided morning walks in North Park
- Afternoon speakers
- Mushroom display tables
- Auction & Sales
- Cooking Demonstration
- Mushroom Feast
- Table Walk

## Lincoff Foray Will Feature Two Guest Mycologists

OUR GUEST MYCOLOGISTS this year will include **Kristen Wickert, PhD** and **Alden Dirks, PhD**. Dr. Wickert is a plant pathologist who studies forests in North America. She explores unique ecosystems and shares her journeys on Instagram as “Kaydubs the Hiking Scientist”. Dr. Dirks is a fungal biologist and mushroom aficionado. His lifelong goal is to eat 1001 fungal species.



## Auction Donations

DONATIONS ARE ALREADY coming in for the Auction/Raffle at this year’s 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray on Saturday, October 10. Prizes will include mushroom stationery, apron, blanket, and comic books! If you would like to donate a mushroom-related item to this year’s auction, call **Kathy Gilotty** at 412-445-3121 or email Past President **Cecily Franklin** at [cs4wpmc@gmail.com](mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com).



## WPMC President Announces Annual Awards

AT THE NOVEMBER meeting, WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** announced club awards for 2025 and presented certificates to the following members:

The President's Award went to WPMC Identifier **Jared White** for his outstanding service to the club. Jared has earned his 400 ID Button, led walks at Westinghouse Park, Boyce Mayview Park, and Peters Lake Park, attends countless other walks, and shares his expertise with members of all levels. He has represented WPMC to the public, assisted at Mushroom Education Day, and promoted the club through media outreach. Jared's dedication, leadership, and passion make him a valued member of our community.

The first Outstanding Service Award went to WPMC Identifier **Mike Henry** for his exceptional dedication to WPMC. Since 2021, Mike has served as Foray Feast Chair, supported countless walks as an Identifier (250 ID button), led walks for Hollow Oak Land Trust, represented WPMC to outside organizations, and will serve as Treasurer beginning January 1, 2026. His commitment, expertise, and leadership have strengthened in club in countless ways.

The second Outstanding Service Award went to WPMC Identifier **Dawn Wehman** for her extraordinary contributions to WPMC. Dawn has overseen membership and club organization, managed insurance and permits, co-chaired the Gary Lincoff Foray, and actively processed and sent DNA specimens for research. Her reliability, innovation, and willingness to take on essential tasks have enriched the club and ensured its success.

In addition, Barbora nominated Past President **Cecily Franklin** for an Honorary Lifetime Membership, and the WPMC membership approved. Cecily joined the club in 2009 and has been an indispensable part of our operations ever since. She has served in numerous leadership roles: Corresponding Secretary (2011), Recording Secretary (2012), Vice President (2016), and President (2018-2020). She has been our Publicity Chair, Newsletter Editor since 2015, and Gary Lincoff Foray auction coordinator since 2014. Beyond these formal roles, Cecily keeps the club organized -tracking deadlines, maintaining smooth communication, and making sure nothing falls through the cracks. Her dedication, reliability, and attention to detail have strengthened the club year after year.

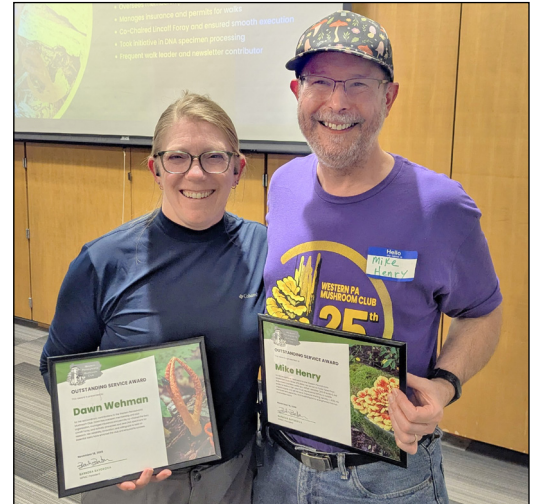
Please extend our congratulations and appreciation to all of these members for their service to the club.



Jared White



Cecily Franklin



Dawn Wehman

Mike Henry



### Save the Date for Mushroom Education Day

MUSHROOM EDUCATION DAY will take place on Saturday, June 13, at Powdermill Nature Reserve in Westmoreland County. Complete details and a link to registration will be included in the May/June newsletter.

## WPMC Scholarship Committee

WPMC ADMINISTERS AN annual Scholarship/Grant program to promote wild mushrooming by providing monetary support for attending educational events, projects, research, or mycological studies by individuals or institutions. Application forms are available on our website and must be sponsored by a WPMC member. For more information or to register, go to:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/education/wpam-scholarship-grant-application/>

## Donations Help Fund WPMC Projects

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. If you're age 73 or above, you can reduce your taxable income by directing some of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). 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 PA. Mushroom Club and submit them to our Treasurer, **Mike Henry**.



# Interview with Eugene Kadar

By Dawn Wehman

**Eugene Kadar** joined WPMC in 2001 at the suggestion of his friend and mentor **Joe Lesko**. Rather than rely on field guides alone, Eugene wanted experienced members to confirm his finds and offer cooking advice. After getting sick from eating raw morels (*Morchella sp.*), he now warns everyone: “Cook your mushrooms!”

“Dad didn’t know mushrooms as well as my mom. He took a batch of morels he’d found in an old apple orchard to a bunch of guys at the local tavern and they told him they were poisonous and stole one of the best locations.”

His Hungarian mother made a traditional soup with honey mushrooms, kielbasa, sauerkraut, garlic, and peppercorns served over barley. When fresh mushrooms weren’t available, she ordered dried ones from Paprikas Weiss, the longtime Hungarian specialty shop on New York’s Upper East Side. Eugene recalls, “The flavor (of the mushrooms) is stronger when they’re dehydrated.”

Today his favorites are honey mushrooms (*Armillaria sp.*), blewits (*Collybia nuda*), and wood ears (*Auricularia sp.*). He finds blewits beneath early snow on his 34 acres in Fayette County and notes that wood ears are mild but nutritious and easy to locate. For hen of the woods (*Grifola frondosa*), he advises checking injured oaks at least 10 inches wide—a lesson he remembers from childhood after his father recognized the scent on his muddy new school shoes. “That story reminds me every year to start looking around for them at the end of August-early September.”

Eugene attributes his longevity to lots of activity and prayer. “But when I’m feeling a little peckish, I put some local dried turkey tail (*Trametes versicolor*), reishi (*Ganoderma tsugae*) and birch polypore (*Fomitopsis betulina*) in a tea ball and drink it up.”



**EUGENE KADAR WITH LION’S Mane** (*Hericium erinaceus*) found on a Beech tree by a friend, who told him, “You identified it—you keep it.” Eugene held it close for the photo so no one would say he exaggerated its size.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Diane Stuart**



**Charlotte Tunney**

WPMC RECENTLY LOST two long-time members. **Diane Stuart**, wife of Past President **John Stuart**, passed away on December 24. For more information or to post a memory:

<https://www.sperlingfuneral.com/obituaries/Sydney-Diane-Stuart?obId=46787471>

**Charlotte Tunney**, wife of WPMC Mycologist **Jim Tunney**, passed away on January 9. A celebration of her life will take place at Moraine State Park, Pavilion 005, on Saturday, May 23, at noon. For more information:

<https://www.beinhauer.com/obituaries/Charlotte-Lucille-Tunney?obId=46984412>

## WPMC Announces New Committee Chairs & Vacancy

WPMC Identifier **Cherie Cormmesser** has agreed to be our new Mushroom Display Chair. Cherie will manage the mushroom display table at our monthly meetings at Frick Environmental Center. She is a laboratory animal trainer, specializing in training Nonhuman Primates for tasks related to Neuroscience research. Cherie is also an iNaturalist Ambassador and enjoys hiking with her dogs in nature.



In addition, **Sara McGinity** will assume responsibility for WPMC’s Scholarship Committee. Sara’s background is in environmental engineering, and she currently works in environmental, health, and safety. Sara is originally from Michigan and went to the University of Michigan. This will be her third year with WPMC. She also enjoys backpacking, fly fishing, hiking, and camping. Sara is currently training her dog for mushroom hunting and looking forward to morel season!



After three years of serving as WPMC’s Sales Chair, **Matt Stahlman** is stepping down from that position. Therefore, we’re looking for a new Sales Chair to sell books and other mushroom-related merchandise at WPMC meetings and other events. If you’re interested or would like more information, please contact Past President **Cecily Franklin** at [cs4wpmc@gmail.com](mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com).



Day and time for walks vary. Please read carefully for any registration requirements or fees. Check the website at [www.wpamushroomclub.org/events](http://www.wpamushroomclub.org/events) 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.

If you would like to lead a WPMC walk, or if you know a great walk location, please email WPMC Identifier Josh Mowris at [joshmowris@yahoo.com](mailto:joshmowris@yahoo.com).



## WPMC Walks & Events

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 11 AM-2 PM

#### Gallitzin State Forest (Somerset County) Route 56, four miles east of Windber

Meet WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke** and WPMC Identifier **Dawn Wehman** at the Babcock Picnic Area for a winter Tree ID walk. Dress appropriately. Free and open to the public. In the past we have found Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*) on this walk, so it's a great time to learn to identify this sclerotium. By giving us your name and email address you are not committed to attending. We just want to have a firm list of potential attendees in case we need to reach out to you at the last minute and cancel/reschedule due to weather. Sign-up here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-MtwDXudMXt1MXb0ztKnW9\\_iq0vuGGI0jhbBTrUw8yaB2kw/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=117166604226259274242](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-MtwDXudMXt1MXb0ztKnW9_iq0vuGGI0jhbBTrUw8yaB2kw/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=117166604226259274242)

### SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 10 AM-1 PM

#### Spring Mushroom & Tree Walk, Pine Ridge Park, Blairsville (Indiana County)

Meet WPMC Mycologist **Richard Jacob** and Indiana Friends of the Parks for an interactive walk to focus on finding and identifying mushrooms that grow in early Spring. We will also focus on tree identification, which is key for mushroom hunting. Participants should wear good footwear, as mushroom hunting will take us off trail. Free and open to the public.

### THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 6-7 PM

#### ALT Sustainability at Home: Preserving Edible Mushrooms 101, Washington County Conservation District, 50 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Suite 1, Washington, PA 15301

Join **Allegheny Land Trust** and **Flannel Roots Farm** in discovering new ways to preserve and enjoy your foraged and cultivated mushroom finds! In this hands-on presentation and workshop, we will not only LEARN about the various ways to preserve mushrooms (whether it be pickling, jerky, candy or more), and TASTE some of these methods, but also MAKE your own mushroom DIY spice rub as a bonus take-home with marinated dried mushrooms.

This workshop should provide a basic introduction to food preservation methods that can be applied not only to mushrooms, but most produce as well, ensuring longer lasting nutrition. All participants will receive \$100 worth of related materials for attending. One set of materials per ticket purchased. Children under 18 are NOT eligible to receive the materials; do not purchase tickets for children that attend with you. You must be present for the entire workshop to receive the provided materials. Pre-registration is required, and no walk ins will be permitted. Tickets are \$15. Register here:

<https://alleghenylandtrust.networkforgood.com/events/96112-sustainability-at-home-preserving-edible-mushrooms-101?hid=MzE0MzExOTQ=>

### SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 11:30 A.M. TO 1 PM

#### Earth Day Celebration at Frick Park

Join WPMC Mycologist **Barbora Batokova** for a guided mushroom walk in Frick Park to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, the 20th anniversary of Schenley Plaza, and the 10th anniversary of the “new” Frick Environmental Center. Participants will search for early spring fungi, including the first morels of the season and their lookalikes. Along the way, the group will learn how fungi function as decomposers, parasites, as well as symbiotic partners—and how they quietly support the health and resilience of our hardwood forests.

This walk emphasizes observation, ecological understanding, and safe identification practices. While spring mushroom season is always exciting, the focus will be on appreciating fungi as a vital and often overlooked component of our local ecosystems. Whether brand new to mushrooms or already a seasoned enthusiast, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the biodiversity thriving in Pittsburgh's parks—and perhaps never look at the forest floor the same way again.

### SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 11 A.M. TO 1 PM

#### Boyce Park During City Nature Challenge

Meet WPMC Identifier **Cherie Cornmesser** at the archery course parking lot for a City Nature Challenge & iNaturalist walk at Boyce Park. This beginner-friendly walk, approximately 2 miles on the red-white dot/white trail loop, will be on mostly flat, single-track trails, with a variety of old and second growth forest, meadow, and wetland habitats. We will try to find as many species as we can on this walk. Elevation gain on this walk is 121 feet.

Focus will be on fungi, but for the City Nature Challenge, documenting everything you see is encouraged. After the walk, we will discuss what we found and answer any questions on how to use iNaturalist to participate in projects and events. Dogs on leash are welcome. Children are welcome. There is a handicapped accessible porta john available on site. Free and open to the public; no registration required.

<https://share.google/cAh69qnjQrQAhdl2g>

### MONDAY, APRIL 27, 5:30-7:30 P.M.

#### Early Spring Mushroom & Tree ID Walk Enon Valley Trailhead, 397 State Route 168, New Galilee, PA (Lawrence County)

Meet WPMC Identifiers **Dawn Wehman** and **Mike Henry**, and **Lisa Bertolasio** of the Wampum Center of the North Country Trail Association at the Enon Valley Trailhead during the City Nature Challenge. Walk will focus on finding and identifying mushrooms that grow in early Spring, along with associated trees. Sturdy footwear is recommended. Free and open to the public.



## SATURDAY, MAY 2, 9:30 A.M. DEPARTURE

### Keystone Trails Association Spring Hiking Weekend. Mushroom Identification Hike. 1.8-mile, easy, loop. 10 A.M. - 2 P.M., Summit Inn, Laurel Highlands

Join WPMC Mycologist **Barbora Batokova** and KTA for a spring mushroom identification hike on the Ferncliff Trail as we wind through rich forest habitat along the Youghiogheny River. The forest is starting to wake up, and while fungi can be limited, there is still plenty to see and learn. We'll walk at an observational pace, stopping to identify fungi growing on soil, wood, and leaf litter.

Depending on conditions, we may encounter early-spring ascomycetes, cup fungi, jelly fungi, polypores, and crust fungi. Along the way, we'll focus on how to spot fungi in the landscape, discuss key identification features, explore fungal ecology, and learn about the important role fungi play in forest ecosystems—even during quieter times of the season. This outing is educational and beginner-friendly, with plenty of time for questions. While edibility may be mentioned when relevant, this hike is focused on learning and observation, not foraging. Weather-appropriate blaze orange clothing, sturdy footwear, phone or camera for photos, a hand lens, notebook, or field guide are suggested. Register here by April 9:

<https://www.kta-hike.org/shw2026.html>

## SATURDAY, JUNE 13

### Mushroom Education Day Powdermill Nature Reserve (Westmoreland County)

*Look for more information in the May/June newsletter.*

## JULY 17-19

### WPMC Camping Weekend Laurel Hill State Park (Somerset County)

*Look for more information in the May/June newsletter.*

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

### Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest State Park (Clarion County)

Join WPMC Identifier **Jared White** and Cook Forest Environmental Education Specialist **Dale Luthringer** for our annual Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lodging.

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

### Pre-Foray Walk at Cook Forest State Park (Clarion County)

Meet WPMC Mycologists and Identifiers at Shelter 2 for our annual pre-Foray walk at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lunch.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

### 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray The Lodge at North Park

See page 3.



## Other Walks, Forays & Events

## MONDAY, APRIL 13, 7:30 P.M.

### Merlin Sheldrake Lecture & Book Signing Carnegie Music Hall 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

<https://pittsburghlectures.org/lectures/merlin-sheldrake/>

## MAY 1 – 3

### Keystone Trails Association Spring Hiking Weekend The Laurel Highlands

Join KTA in the Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape. Stay at the Summit Inn, just miles from Ohiopyle State Park. Register here by April 9:

<https://www.kta-hike.org/shw2026.html>

## JUNE 26 – 28

### Ohio Mushroom Festival Joe Bottoms Campground, Hammondsville, OH

<https://ohiomushroomfestival.com/>

## JULY 30 – AUGUST 3

### NEMF Foray Penn State Mont Alto (Franklin County)

<https://www.nemf.org/>

## JULY 31 – AUGUST 9

### Summer Continental MycoBlitz

<https://mycota.com/continental-mycoblitz/>

## AUGUST 7 – 9

### West Virginia Mushroom Club

<https://www.wvmushroomclub.net/>

## AUGUST 27 – 30

### 66th Annual NAMA Foray Marquette, Michigan

<https://namyco.org/annual-foray/>

## AUGUST 28 – 30

### Bill Russell Foray Camp Golden near Petersburg, PA

<https://centralpamushroom.club/>

## SEPTEMBER 3 – 7

### Sequanota Foray (Somerset County) Mycological Association of Washington DC

<https://mawdc.org/>

## OCTOBER 2 – 11

### Fall Continental MycoBlitz

<https://mycota.com/continental-mycoblitz/>

**SEE PAGE 11 FOR WALK & FORAY CHECKLIST  
AS WELL AS FORAGING INFORMATION.**



# WPMC Out & About



**ON NOVEMBER 3**, WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** presented “Fungal Basics and Cold-Season Species of PA” at the Penn Hills Library.

**ON NOVEMBER 4**, WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** gave a virtual presentation on “Understanding Fungi: Morphology, Ecology, ID, & Key Mushroom Groups” for the Mycological Association of Washington, DC.



**ON NOVEMBER 8**, WPMC Mycologist **Richard Jacob** represented the club at this event at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. Richard was a “lightning speaker” on the topic of “Community Science – DNA Barcoding Mushroom.”

**ALSO ON NOVEMBER 8**, WPMC Mycologist **Stephen Bucklin** led a walk in Rockwell and Frick Parks as part of the Allegheny Sport & Outdoor Summit.



**ON NOVEMBER 9**, three WPMC members made presentations at the PA Master Naturalist Annual Meeting at Seven Springs. WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** presented “Getting to Know Mushrooms”, WPMC Mycologist **Stephen Bucklin** led a lichen walk at Ohiopyle State Park, and WPMC Identifier **Sara Klingensmith** gave a presentation on “Watching Wildflowers: Studying Phenology through Nature’s Notebook.”



## Winter Walks with WPMC

**ON NOVEMBER 29**, WPMC Mycologist **Cara Coulter** and WPMC Identifier **Mike Henry** led our annual Thanksgiving Walk at Hartwood Acres.

**ON JANUARY 11**, WPMC Mycologist and Lichen Specialist **Stephen Bucklin** led a lichen walk at Schenley Park for Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

**ON FEBRUARY 15**, Stephen led another lichen walk at Frick Park.



**ON FEBRUARY 21**, WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke** led a mushroom walk through Pittsburgh’s Strip District.



## WPMC ID Buttons



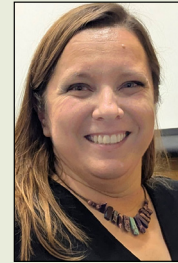
**Kate Gaglio**



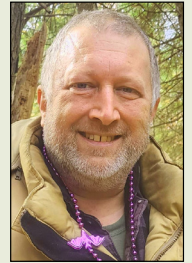
**Marissa Kolarosky**



**Josh Mowris**



**Cara Coulter**



**John Plischke**

**FIVE WPMC MEMBERS** have earned ID Buttons in recognition of their ability to identify mushroom species: **Kate Gaglio** (100); **Marissa Kolarosky** (200); WPMC Identifier **Josh Mowris** (400); WPMC Mycologist **Cara Coulter** (1,000); and WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke** (3,000) Congratulations to all!

WPMC's Button ID Button Program offers members a fun way to increase their knowledge of mushroom species. To learn more about the ID Button program and how to submit your list of known mushrooms, go to:

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

## WPMC Photo Contest Has New Category

ONCE AGAIN, WPMC Identifier **Sara Klingensmith** will judge members' photos for our annual Photo Contest. Here are the Photo Contest rules for this year:

- Deadline for Submissions:  
**September 30, 2026**
- Maximum of 5 Entries per WPMC member
- Submit high resolution JPEG files
- Rename images before submitting, using name and subject, e.g., "Joe Smith morel.jpg"
- Email entries to Sara Klingensmith at [pamushroomclubphotos@gmail.com](mailto:pamushroomclubphotos@gmail.com).
- Indicate in your email the desired category for each photo.
- No AI-generated art or photos are permitted.

You must be a member of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club in good standing to enter. Club dues must be up to date. Photos submitted by non-members will not be considered.

### ENTRY DIVISIONS

**Advanced 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, absence of distracting elements) and artistic (composition, color, background, lighting) aspects.

**Novice Pictorial:** This division is for single photos that illustrate the beauty and variety of fungi in form and color. The objective is a photo that shows the photographer learning to use focus, depth of field, and lighting.

**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



Photo by Dawn Wehman

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 categories 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. Examples include fungi in an interesting situation, fungi with animals, people enjoying fungi, and mushroom selfies.

**NEW! Mushroom Art:** This category is for drawings, paintings, sculptures, textiles, and digital art pieces celebrating mushrooms. Art must be family friendly. AI-generated art is not permitted. To enter

this category, submit one photo of the art piece to be considered.

**Subject material:** Organisms from the *Myxomycota* (slime molds), the classes *Basidiomycetes* and *Ascomycetes* of the *Eumycota* ("true fungi"), and Lichens 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.

**Use and copyright:** WPMC may use your photographs on the website, newsletter and Mushroom Catalog and when we do, they will always be accompanied by your name as photographer (mentioned on the same page or caption of the image). WPMC will not allow the use of your photographs on other websites, although realistically we cannot prevent this. We will not sell or provide the images to others without your permission, and the images remain the property and under the copyright of you the photographer and are used under license by the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club.



# Look Great & Support WPMC!

SHOW YOUR WPMC pride by purchasing customized club gear from spreadshop.com. The WPMC Merch Store offers many products with the WPMC logo, including shirts of various styles, hats, mugs, aprons, tote bags, and more. Whether it's for men, women, or toddlers, you get to choose the size and color! Buy for yourself or as one-of-a-kind gifts. All purchases benefit WPMC.

<https://western-pa-mushroom-club.myspreadshop.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. Articles, photos, news items and other 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.

**Cecily Franklin, Editor**  
**Martha Wasik Graphic Arts, Production**  
 Send submissions to: [cs4wpmc@gmail.com](mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com)

## Membership Report

By Dawn Wehman

THE YEAR 2025 ended with 652 members from 398 households. Thank you to everyone who has already renewed! As of this writing for our 2026 roster, we have 295 members from 178 households. Your membership dues are vital to keep the club running. These dues contribute over 40% of the WPMC's income every year. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to me at [membership@wpamushroomclub.org](mailto:membership@wpamushroomclub.org). WPMC members are entitled to the following benefits:

- Nine monthly meetings with speakers & mushroom identification
- Free mushroom kit at our annual cultivation meeting
- Five electronic WPMC newsletters
- Advance notice of mushroom walks and other local, regional & national events
- Annual photo contest for WPMC members only
- Access to WPMC Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/250320011779>
- Discount at WPMC's annual Gary Lincoff Foray

To join or renew: <https://wpamushroomclub.org/about/join/>

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>PRESIDENT</b> 412-609-0723	Barbora Batokova <a href="mailto:president@wpamushroomclub.org">president@wpamushroomclub.org</a>
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# WPMC Mycologists, Identifiers, and Specialists

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## Walk & Foray Checklist

### CHECK LIST:

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

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. Find a buddy. Only Club Mycologists and Identifiers should be used for identification and advice. Take notes and pictures to help you remember the mushrooms: location, habitat, etc. Whether you decide to eat a mushroom is ultimately your responsibility alone. Help Keep Our Parks Clean! It's easy to bring a bag to collect cans, bottles or other trash you find. Trash cans are generally found nearby. If not, take it home for disposal.





# WPMC MEMBERSHIP FORM

REV: 2025

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

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

**Benefits:** WPMC newsletter • Nine monthly WPMC meetings • Free participation in WPMC walks • Discount for WPMC forays

NEW MEMBERSHIP:  RENEWAL:

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 Dawn Wehman 285 Kindale Street Ellwood City PA 16117 • membership@wpamushroomclub.org

or visit <http://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 (\$15 additional)

\$20 Individual  \$25 Family  \$15 Full-time Student  \$15 Newsletter Hardcopy Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_