



Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Newsletter

■ *Fungi, Fun & Friends!* ■

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 1

MARCH / APRIL 2021



President's Message

STEPHEN BUCKLIN

WELCOME TO THE first newsletter of 2021 and my first column as the newly elected President! It is my honor to serve all of you through these unprecedented times.

It's difficult to put into words what we've endured in the past year. Being part of nature, hardship is something our ancestors—be it our grandparents or the first mammals to walk on land—have survived. Just like the resilient fungi we're so fond of, we've adapted to many changes in our environment. Like the "Wood Wide Web" which fungi use to transport nutrients and vital information, we've had to rely on the "World Wide Web" to connect with our family and friends, to get food or medicine, and so much more.

Despite the challenges 2020 brought, there were still plenty of fungi and ways to celebrate them. We were able to host seven monthly meetings over Zoom/YouTube, ten in-person walks, and the walk portions of the Lincoff Foray at North Park and pre-foray walk at Cook Forest. Club members also participated in a virtual BioBlitz organized by Phipps Conservatory, and many members took to the app and website iNaturalist to share their fungal finds in new ways while playing Mushroom BINGO.

This year will have both similarities and differences to last year. We're still living through a pandemic, and that will impact us in many ways. The biggest difference is that we have two things on our side this year that we didn't have last year: experience and a vaccine. How will that impact the club?

We've learned what worked (and what didn't) when it comes to virtual meetings. Beyond improvements to the logistics of the meetings, we've also lined up speakers who might not have been able to make it in-person, including folks from New Jersey, Colorado, West Virginia, New York, and Ontario, as well as students attending universities in other states.

The vaccine gives us a light at the end of the tunnel and the possibility of resuming some of the in-person activities later this year. We are tentatively planning to host the Lincoff Foray and several in-person meetings this fall, and we moved the annual cultivation meeting to August in hopes of maintaining this popular Club tradition. We'll also continue to offer in-person walks with limited attendance and safety measures in place at as many parks as we can. Check the website for updates throughout the year.

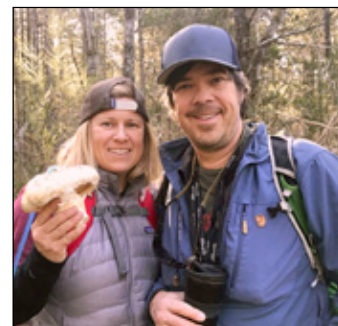
While we may not know precisely how the future will unfold, I hope you may find peace and comfort on your walks through the woods as life begins to wake up in Pennsylvania, the way it has for thousands of years. Morel season is just around the corner, and there are certainly good things waiting to be found among the trees.

WPMC March & April Meetings

MARCH 16: Trent & Kristen Blizzard

Mushroom Preservation: *How to preserve, store & enjoy your foraged bounty for year-round use.*

When the rains come, the mushrooms often come out in abundance. If you don't want all those fresh mushrooms to go to waste, what can you do with them? Learn tips & techniques to preserve your fresh mushrooms from Trent and Kristen. Once preserved, you can enjoy them in the coming year, or give them as gifts to friends and family.



APRIL 20: Daniel Gillies

Trametes Versicolor Research

WPMC member and scholarship grant recipient Daniel Gillies will present his "Study of the Response of *Trametes versicolor* to Environmental Conditions through Measurement of Color Band Zonations in Wild and Cultured Fruiting Bodies." (see page 6-7)



John Plischke Joins Executive Committee of NAMA

IN OCTOBER, WPMC MYCOLOGIST **John Plischke** became an at-large member of the Executive Committee of the North American Mycological Association (NAMA). John is a lifetime member of NAMA, where he has served on the Cultivation and Photography committees and voluntarily assists in the identification of mushrooms in poisoning cases. He received NAMA's Knight Award in 2003 and the Gary Lincoff Award for Contributions to Amateur Mycology in 2017.



City Nature Challenge 2021: Let's Break 200!

By Stephen Bucklin

SPRING IS HERE AGAIN, and for those with a penchant for iNaturalist who live in the southwest portion of the state, that means it won't be long until it's time for the City Nature Challenge!

The City Nature Challenge is an annual global virtual BioBlitz that last year attracted participation from over 500 people in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland counties. This year, the challenge observation dates are from April 30 through May 3, one week later than usual. For mushroom enthusiasts, this extra week means more time for the soil to warm up and for fungi to reveal themselves!

If you aren't already on iNaturalist but you're interested in learning more about the fungi, plants, and animals that live around you, this challenge is a great opportunity to join and discover the incredible value of posting photos of your finds to iNaturalist. Defined as "a social networking service of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists built on the concept of mapping and sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe," many of the club members are active on the platform. In fact, WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke** is the world's top fungus observer and identifier when it comes to species diversity. Another eight club members make the top 200 list. WPMC is truly a force to be reckoned with when it comes to finding, documenting, and identifying fungi, and Club members assist folks from around the country in identifying their fungi.

The Club's impressive iNaturalist stats are precisely why I'm proposing that we set ourselves a goal for this year's City Nature Challenge. For the previous three years, we've hit a wall. We regularly document roughly 100 species of fungi in southwest Pennsylvania every time the City Nature Challenge comes around, but there are many more species that can be found in spring that go unnoticed or undocumented. How many different species of fungi can we find this year?

Two Virtual Kickoff Events with Stephen Bucklin

Wednesday, April 28 / 6:00-7:00 p.m.

WEBINAR: "**More than Morels: Spring Mushrooms in Pittsburgh's Parks**"

Friday, April 30 / 12:00-12:30 p.m.

Virtual Hike with a Naturalist - City Nature Challenge

<https://pittsburghparks.org/events/>



I think that WPMC could collectively document at least 200 different species if conditions are right. With six counties to explore, we have a great diversity of ecosystems in which to find and photograph fungi. Here are three tips for helping boost the fungi stats in this year's City Nature Challenge:

Take identifiable photos: Fill the frame with the subject; try your best to get it in focus and in good lighting (shaded from direct sunlight)

Take multiple photos: One perspective of a mushroom often isn't enough to identify it to species. It's a good practice to take pictures of the upper and lower surface, the details of the stipe, how the gills attach, and any other features that seem interesting.

Take notes: Some things can't be observed in a picture. Adding notes about what the mushroom was growing on, any distinct smells (or tastes), or about the area your subject was found (particularly tree species growing in the area) can be important information.

For more details on how to participate in the City Nature Challenge, see the article I wrote for the March/April 2020 newsletter in the archives on the website. To join the project on iNaturalist, go to:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2021-pittsburgh-region>

WPMC Presents Annual Awards

AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING, WPMC Past President **Richard Jacob** received the **2020 President's Award** for helping WPMC to succeed during a pandemic by establishing a YouTube channel and Zoom account; managing "secret" walks, including online registration; presenting "Heavy Metal Contamination" at WPMC's May meeting; and giving virtual presentations for Carnegie Science Center and Phipps Conservatory.

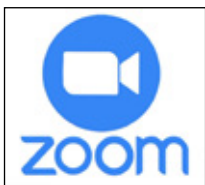


Richard Jacob

WPMC Past President **Jim Wasik** received the **2020 Outstanding Service Award**, in recognition of his many contributions to the success of WPMC, including serving as Membership Chair since 2011; being President in 2013 and Vice President in 2015; handling registration at many WPMC meetings, Lincoff Forays and Mushroom Education Days; and giving WPMC presentations to outside organizations.



Jim Wasik



Monthly Virtual Meetings in 2021

By Stephen Bucklin

THIS YEAR, WE WILL be hosting the meetings live on Zoom to reduce the likelihood of technical difficulties and delays starting the meeting. A Zoom link will be emailed to all WPMC members prior to that month's meeting. This link is for members only to attend the live session of the meeting. Following the meeting on Zoom, a recording of the opening remarks and speaker's presentation will be made available on the WPMC YouTube channel. It may take us a few days to edit and upload the video, and we will send an email to all members when the process is finished. Feel free to share the YouTube link with friends and family, but please do not share the Zoom link with anyone who is not a WPMC member.

The opening remarks will begin at 7:00 p.m., followed by a presentation from that month's speaker. See pages 1 & 8 for this year's great lineup of speakers and topics. It is our hope that we may be able to resume in-person meetings in August. Whenever in-person meetings resume, we will also stream the meeting over Zoom for WPMC members who would like to watch from home.

Another change this year is how we are structuring the open portion of the meeting. Following the speaker's presentation, a Mushroom ID Breakout Room will be opened for folks who have photos of mushrooms they'd like to get identified, or for people interested in learning more about mushroom identification. WPMC Mycologist **Garrett Taylor** and Identifier **Cara Coulter** will host this room.

The Main Room will remain open for discussion of other mushroom-related topics and for socializing. Members will have the ability to freely move between the two rooms, using buttons found at the bottom of their Zoom windows. (Look for a button marked "Breakout Rooms".)

More About Breakout Rooms

By Garrett Taylor

THE FIRST BREAKOUT ROOM will serve as a virtual Mushroom Display Table. In this Breakout Room, we will discuss what people are finding or have found but haven't been able to identify.

If you've found mushrooms that you'd like to have identified, we recommend that you upload photos of your finds onto iNaturalist prior to the meeting, so that we can easily view and share your observations in the room. If you haven't used iNaturalist, we encourage you to sign up. It's a great way to keep track of your finds, and you'll be able to participate in WPMC's project, "WPMC Western Pennsylvania Fungi."

If you're not using iNaturalist, try to have images on your computer that you can share. Document your finds with clear pictures, showing details of the cap, underside, stem, etc., and make note of the habitat. When possible, make a spore print. You should be able to share your screen and show us your photos or use the chat feature of Zoom to upload photos for the hosts to share.

Everyone is welcome, mushrooms or not. You will be muted automatically upon entry into the room. We ask that if the number of people in the room is greater than six, please stay muted unless you are in the process of sharing or helping with the identification of what is on the screen. If you have something to share, say it in the chat or wait until the hosts call for open sharing. When that happens, simply unmute and say you have something. The Mushroom ID room will be open until we run out of stuff to look at or until 9:00 p.m., whichever comes first.

WPMC Hosts February Meeting on Zoom!

ON FEBRUARY 16, WPMC offered a "bonus" monthly meeting for all members. **Maricel Patiño**, an active member of the New Jersey Mycological Association, presented "FALL IN ♥ WITH CRUST FUNGI." More than 60 WPMC members signed in for this comprehensive overview of Crust Fungi. The presentation will be posted to the WPMC YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUadsnAVTMINFMogIHO4WjA>



Phlebiopsis crassa, by Maricel Patiño

All meetings & events may be postponed or canceled due to Covid-19. Please check website for updates. www.wpamushroomclub.org



Save the Dates!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS now for the **21st Annual Gary Lincoff Foray**. Registration will open at a later date, but here are the events we're planning for that weekend:

Friday, September 17 – Pre-Foray Walk at Cook Forest State Park, with Park Ranger Dale Luthringer. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lunch.

Saturday, September 18 – 21st Annual Gary Lincoff Foray at Rose Barn in Allegheny County's North Park. Guest speakers will be Michael Kuo and Leon Shernoff. Activities will include:

- Guided morning walks
- Mushroom display tables
- Book-Signing / Meet & Greet
- Auction / Raffle
- Sales Tables & Vendors
- Cooking Demonstration
- Mushroom Feast
- Table Walk

Sunday, September 19 – Science Sunday at Rose Barn in North Park. This will be a workshop for those who would like to help identify mushrooms found on Friday and Saturday.

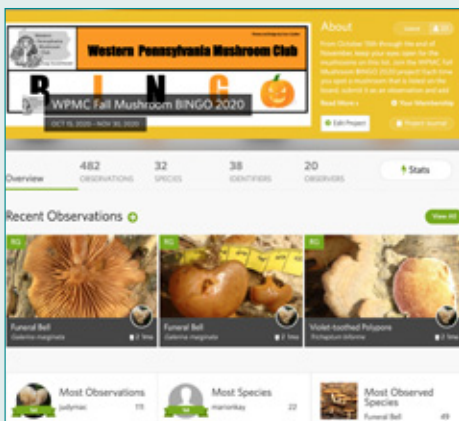
More details to come!

WPMC Fall Mushroom BINGO Winners

WPMC'S FALL MUSHROOM BINGO was an even bigger success than the Summer BINGO. This time, we had a total of 23 participants, who posted a whopping 482 observations! WPMC Identifier **Judy Mackenroth** had the Most Observations (111), and **Marion Hall** posted the most species (22). The following WPMC members each achieved at least one BINGO:

Stephen Bucklin	Cara Coulter
Chris Dilla	Mariah Hall
Marion Hall	Mike Henry
Richard Jacob	Judy Mackenroth
Carissa Mendez	

Thanks to WPMC Identifier **Cara Coulter** for creating both the summer and fall BINGO charts, and congratulations to all of the winners.

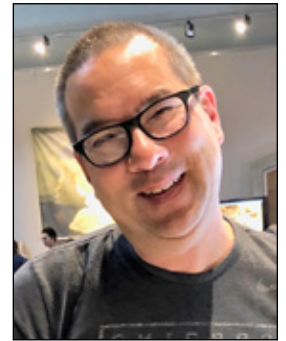


This Year's Lincoff Foray Guest Speakers

WPMC HAS ONCE AGAIN lined up two great speakers for this year's Lincoff Foray. Both Michael Kuo (mushroomexpert.com) and Leon Shernoff (Mushroom the Journal) will give presentations on Saturday, September 18, and will be available for a "Meet & Greet" session. In addition, both Michael and Leon will be with us for Science Sunday on September 19.

Michael Kuo

Michael Kuo, the developer of MushroomExpert.Com, is an English teacher and amateur mycologist, based in Illinois.



Kuo started collecting mushrooms in 1994 and began his website in 2000. Since then, the site has progressed from a dozen or so pages to well over a thousand. While it used to take Kuo about half an hour to make a mushroom webpage, he now spends five to ten hours, including collecting, documenting, and preserving the specimens, microscopic study, research and identification, and finally creating the corresponding webpage.

Kuo has written or co-authored many books and other publications about mushrooms, including *Morels*; *100 Edible Mushrooms*; *100 Cool Mushrooms*; and *Mushrooms of the Midwest*.

Leon Shernoff

Leon Shernoff is currently in his 18th year as editor of the internationally distributed magazine *Mushroom*, the *Journal of Wild Mushrooming*.



In addition to *Mushroom the Journal*, his columns on wild mushrooms have appeared in *The Wild Foods Network*; *Backwoods Home Magazine*; and *Mycophile*, the newsletter of the North American Mycological Association. A former president of the Illinois Mycological Association, Leon has given mushroom talks and identified mushrooms for forays in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Oregon and Washington. Fungi that he has collected are now part of the permanent collection of the Field Museum in Chicago and the New York Botanical Gardens.

Leon was the guest speaker for WPMC's September 2020 meeting on "Fall Mushrooms." To watch the video, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fABhZCTixOs&t=26s>



Two New Mushroom Books Donated to WPMC for Lincoff Foray

WPMC HAS RECEIVED AUTOGRAPHED copies of two brand new mushroom books. Both books will be included in WPMC's Auction/Raffle at the 21st Annual Lincoff Foray on Saturday, September 18. Until then, they can be purchased on Amazon.

Wild Mushrooms: A Cookbook and Foraging Guide was written by WPMC members **Kristen** and **Trent Blizzard**. It includes 115 recipes, including an amazing Mushroom Paté by WPMC member **Danielle Schoonover-Wils**.

The Beginner's Guide to Mushrooms: Everything You Need to Know, from Foraging to Cultivating was written by **Britt Bunyard** and **Tavis Lynch**. Bunyard is the Publisher & Editor-in-Chief of *FUNGI Magazine*; Lynch is a mycologist, cultivator and instructor from Wisconsin.

Mushroom Education Day is "Dye Day" This Year



*Dyer's Polypore,
Phaeolus
schweinitzii.
Photo by Fluff Berger*

Saturday, August 21

Join us in North Park to learn how to dye with mushrooms. The day will begin with a morning mushroom walk to look for suitable mushrooms. In the afternoon, at Harmar Shelter, WPMC Identifier Judy Mackenroth will explain principles of dyeing and demonstrate how to dye with mushrooms.

The morning mushroom walk is free; the afternoon session is \$10. No experience is necessary, but space is limited, and registration is required to attend the afternoon session. The full schedule will be included in the next newsletter. To register:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/events/mushroom-education-day-dye-day2021/>

WPMC Announces New ID Button Chair, 2 New Identifiers & Awards

THE FOLLOWING WPMC members have been awarded ID Buttons for their ability to identify mushroom species:

Hannah George (50)

Sara Klingensmith (100)

Julie Travaglini (150)

Judy Mackenroth (150)

Both Julie and Judy received Board approval to become WPMC Identifiers. Julie also agreed to be the new ID Button Committee Chair. Congratulations to all, and a big thank you to Julie.

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/>



*Rex admires Julie
Travaglini's new
"150" ID Button.*

Photo by Julie Travaglini



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PROJECT UPDATE: Study of the Response of *Trametes versicolor* to Environmental Conditions through Measurement of Color Band Zonations in Wild and Cultured Fruiting Bodies

By Daniel Gillies



Figure 1: Cultivated *T. versicolor* vs. Two Wild *T. versicolor* from Allegheny County

THE TURKEY TAIL MUSHROOM, *Trametes versicolor*, offers a wonderful array of color variations and patterns, dutifully earning its name with bands of zonation ranging from white, browns, oranges, yellows, and other hues. What drives this variation? Is it purely an expression of some evolved genetic trait, or do environmental factors play a role? Perhaps both?

In order to begin to answer this question, I sought out to not only compare the color patterns in different wild *T. versicolor*, but also to attempt to cultivate my own examples of this forest polypore, to see if I could influence those color patterns through control of temperature, humidity and other environmental factors.

This update focuses on that cultivation effort, the hardware involved, and the initial observations. Later this year, I'll provide a further update during the April 2021 club meeting on the differences in zonation as I add more cultivated samples to my collection. Figure 1 provides a preview of the differences already observed between one cultivation trial and wild examples.

A variety of *T. versicolor* growing kits are commercially available with instructions as simple as cutting holes in the grow bag, soaking the pre-inoculated substrate, and keeping the bag generally moist and at or just above room temperature. Because my growth experiment would vary both temperature and humidity, I required a finer level of control over the environmental conditions. To do this, I adapted a grow box from TerraFirma Mushrooms (\$419; Etsy) for this purpose, as shown in Figure 2. In its standard configuration, the grow box includes a temperature controller (A) and heat mat (F), humidity controller (B) and fogger (C), and a light (G). The box is outfitted with fan units to both bring in fresh air as well as to push the moist air generated in (C) into the grow chamber. Humidity levels are controlled by balancing an on/off cycle of the air inlet fan against the controlled cycling of the fogger via the humidity controller.

In order to support my experiment, I upgraded the chamber to more easily achieve a given humidity level and to add data logging features that were invaluable for determining if humidity and temperature play a role in *T. versicolor*'s zonation. This included the addition of a secondary inlet fan (E) coupled to the humidity controller (B) for fine humidity control and better carbon

dioxide control in the grow chamber; the addition of a carbon dioxide monitor (D) and associated sensor (H); a humidity and temperature data logger (I); and the addition of a GoPro Hero 7 (J) connected to external power through a bulkhead fitting (also J) that allowed for the collection of long term, multi-week time lapse photography. In all, these upgrades improved my ability not only to control conditions, but also monitor environmental parameters in the chamber and record progress of growth directly, so that the two could be correlated in subsequent data review.

For the initial cultivation attempt, I selected using the ideal growing parameters for *T. versicolor* first and would hold these as stable as possible throughout the trial run. Research indicated ideal conditions for fruiting included a relative humidity of 80-85% and approximately 77 degrees F. Lighting would be left at about a 12 hour on/ 12 hour off cycle. Carbon dioxide was monitored only as there was not readily available data on the levels of carbon dioxide required to abort fruiting in this particular species. At these conditions, fruiting was expected to begin at approximately 2-3 weeks with full development at 4-6 weeks.

The initial cultivation trial began on 11/26/20 and was ended on 1/18/21—a period of 53 days or approximately 7.5 weeks. During the first two weeks of the study, no temperature and humidity data was retained, due to an issue with the data logger. The experiment was ceased due to an observed reduction in growth and due to failures in the fogging chamber fan. Despite this, the initial experiment was generally a success. As illustrated in Figure 3, for the majority of the trial, temperatures were typically held near 70-75 degrees, with brief periods as low as 64F and as high as 80F. Humidity was more tightly controlled, averaging ~87% RH with a typical range of 84-91%, other than a few brief exceedances. The photo timeline shows the progress of growth throughout the course of the trial. Initial growth was observed around 12/14/20, which erupted into more bulbous popcorn-like masses by 12/21/20. The first signs of color, which was initially almost entirely brown, were visible by 12/25/20, with

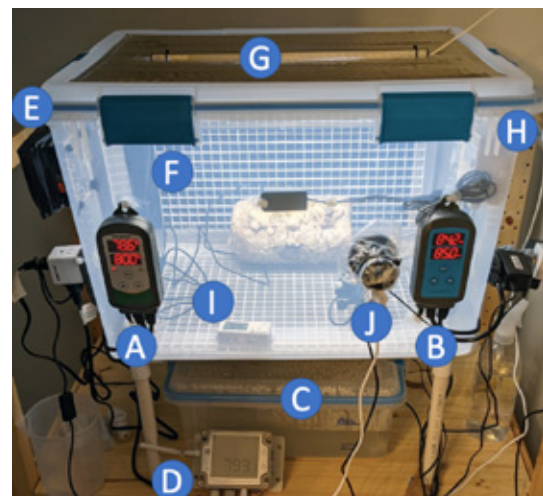


Figure 2: Mushroom Grow Chamber

visible bracket-like shapes by 12/29/20. Throughout January, the fruit bodies continued to develop, although their form and color appeared significantly different from the wild varieties of *T. versicolor* as shown in Figure 1.

Compared to wild varieties, the cultivated *T. versicolor* was extremely thick, almost resembling a shelf polypore both in appearance and rigidity. Zonation was present, although it was significantly more subtle than its wild counterparts. As mentioned previously, carbon dioxide levels were measured during the trial, ranging from 500 ppm to over 2000 ppm, although generally staying around 700 ppm (ambient atmospheric carbon dioxide is around 415 ppm as of the writing of this article). It is very possible that elevated carbon dioxide levels played a role in the

development of the fruiting body; however, the sensor data was not reliable and is being reviewed further before any presumptions are made to its role in the fungi's growth.

Overall, the data collected on both the performance of the growing chamber and the growth of *T. versicolor* has been extremely valuable in further refining the study. Currently, upgrades and repairs are being made to the growing chamber to improve airflow (and hopefully reduce carbon dioxide), repair the faulty fogger fan, and improve controllability overall.

I look forward to sharing my further results with everyone in the club at the April meeting, and I thank the WPMC scholarship committee for providing the funds for me to embark on this project!

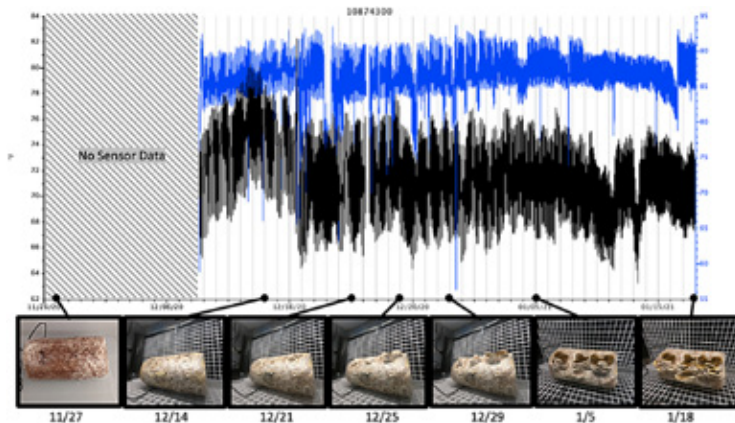


Figure 3: Temperature (Black) and Humidity (Blue) data over time & *T. versicolor* growth images

2021 Annual WPMC Photo Contest

It's not too soon to start collecting photos.

- Deadline for Submissions: September 30, 2021
- Maximum of 5 Entries per WPMC member
- Submit high resolution JPEG files minimum 1 MB
- Rename images before submitting, using your name and subject, e.g. "Joe Smith morel.jpg"
- Email entries to Josh Doty:
wpmcphotocontest@gmail.com

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

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.

Entry Divisions

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

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

Judge's Option: For photos which do not fit into the Pictorial or Documentary divisions. Examples include fungi in an interesting situation, fungi with animals, people enjoying fungi.

Subjects for Pictorial and Documentary: Organisms from the *Myxomycota* (slime molds) and the classes *Basidiomycetes* and *Ascomycetes* of the *Eumycota* ("true fungi") are eligible. For Judge's Option, nearly anything goes, so long as the theme relates to fungi, and fungi are a key element of the photograph.



2021 Meeting Programs

WPMC MEETINGS ARE held on the third Tuesday evening of each month from March through November. Monthly meetings will be virtual until further notice. Gatherings will be limited to mushroom walks with Allegheny Land Trust and WPMC member walks, which are outdoors with masks and social distancing. Check the website for exact dates, times and locations.



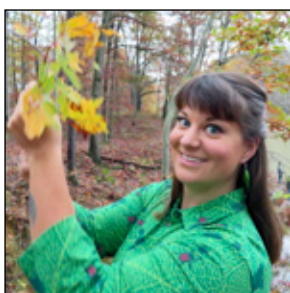
MAY 18

Tosca Terán and Andrei Gravelle

Fungi Frequencies

From the Midnight Mushroom Music archives to the Mycorrhizal Rhythm Machine to fungi-controlled VR experiences, Tosca

Terán and Andrei Gravelle (the visionaries of Nanotopia) construct soundscapes and installations involving biodata-sonification of fungi. The duo will present their past and upcoming projects and how they came to work intimately with fungi. They will also give a behind-the-scenes look at their collaborative composition process that involves channeling the electrical energies of cultivated fungi through synthesizers.



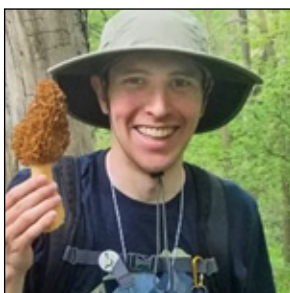
JUNE 15

Dr. Kristen Wickert

Fungi as Plant Pathogens

Plant pathology is like a giant puzzle with many different pieces that tell a story about our ecosystem's health. Fungi are commonly an im-

portant piece in that puzzle. Dr. Kristen Wickert is a forest plant pathologist who specializes in the fungi of our Eastern forests. She will highlight some of the obvious and not so obvious fungal players that are influencing our forest composition. Dr. Wickert has a bachelor's degree in Forest Biology from Penn State University, as well as master's and doctoral degrees in Forest Plant Pathology from West Virginia University.



July 20

Thomas Roehl

Flammulina velutipes research

WPMC scholarship grant recipient Thomas Roehl will present his research on "Examining the genetics of mushroom development in the

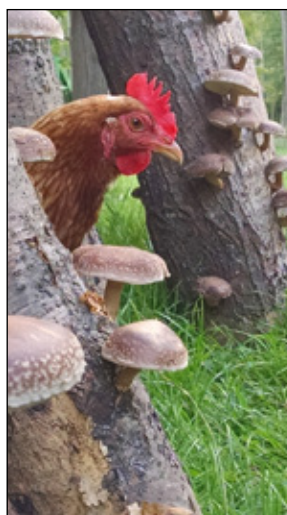
cultivated edible mushroom *Flammulina velutipes*." Thomas is pursuing a master's degree in Biology at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, where he is advised by Todd Osmundson and Tom Volk.



AUGUST 17

Rebecca Miller & Friends

Annual Cultivation Meeting



SEPTEMBER 21

John Michelotti

How to Quit Your Job and Devote your Life to Mushrooms

John Michelotti, Founder of Catskill Fungi, will share this presentation, which he gave at the Telluride Mushroom Festival. It is a journey of stories that is a tribute to Gary Lincoff and highlights how John and other mushroom folks have made their way through life by devoting their lives to fungi.

Photo by John Michelotti of Catskill Fungi

OCTOBER 19

Photo Contest Winners & Election of Officers

NOVEMBER 16

Potluck Dinner & Member Photos

IMPORTANT: All meetings and other events in this newsletter are subject to postponement or cancellation, due to Covid-19. Please check the website often for updates.

Out & About With WPMC

Here's a countdown of some recent events:



ON FEBRUARY 15, WPMC President **Stephen Bucklin** gave a presentation to over 100 people who registered

for an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute course called "The Story of Pittsburgh's Forests." His presentation was titled "How Fungi Shape Our Forests."



ON FEBRUARY 1, WPMC Identifier **Adam Haritan** was featured on the Mushroom Hour podcast, discussing "Learn Your Land – Connecting to Natural Spaces, Finding a Sense of Belonging." To listen to this one-hour presentation, go to:

<https://www.welcometomushroomhour.com/blogs/podcasts/ep-68-learn-your-land-wild-foraging-honoring-natural-spaces-the-importance-of-belonging-feat-adam-haritan>



ON JANUARY 30, WPMC Identifier **Cara Coulter** did a virtual mushroom walk for winter mushrooms and made a video to document all of her finds. To see the video:

https://youtu.be/Yjkk_j_O8ME



ON JANUARY 18, WPMC's Boletus Specialist **Scott Pavele** presented the Boletus Filter to members of the North American Mycological Association (NAMA). This presentation is only available to NAMA members. To join NAMA, go to:

<https://namyco.org/join.php>



ON DECEMBER 3, WPMC Identifier **Julie Travaglini** gave a presentation on mushrooms and their role in the environment for the Student Conservation Association.



MIKE HENRY found an old mushroom on WPMC's Black Friday walk at Hartwood Acres on November 27.



ON NOVEMBER 4, WPMC Identifier **Fluff Berger** made a presentation on "Mushrooms of Pennsylvania" for the PA Parks & Forests Foundation, as part of their "Lunch & Learn" webinar series.

To watch Fluff's presentation, go to:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW2ZtqtK_Ps&list=PLSCKDSBQKDV5rbiNCICjHRbh0oSvGb2E2

WPMC Membership Report

By Kris Murawski

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who has joined the WPMC in 2021. I hope all of the new and renewing members will join us at the Virtual Meetings on Zoom until we can meet again safely in person.

This year is shaping up to be the largest membership year ever. As of February 16, we have 943 members, representing 526 households. I'm excited to report that we have 40 new members from 25 households in just a month and a half. I hope all the WPMC members are staying healthy, safe, and warm.

Benefits of WPMC membership include:

- Bi-Monthly WPMC Newsletter
- Monthly Meeting Notices
- Updates on Mushroom Walks & WPMC Events

- Free 'Grow-Your-Own' Mushroom Kit
- Mushroom Identification at Meetings
- Mushroom Walks
- Mushroom Education Day
- Annual Photo Contest
- WPMC Gary Lincoff Foray Discount
- Access to WPMC Facebook Group

To join or renew, download the membership application or pay online here: <https://wpamushroomclub.org/about/join/>

NOTE: All 2020 members were automatically given free renewal for 2021. If you wish to continue receiving the hardcopy of the newsletter for 2021, you need to select that option and pay the \$5 fee. If any current members choose to voluntarily submit dues for 2021, we will gladly use those contributions to support WPMC's programs and events.



Day and time for walks vary. Please read carefully for any registration requirements or fees. Check the website at www.wpamushroomclub.org/ events for updates, directions, and much more!



WPMC Walks

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 5:00-7:00 P.M.

Devil's Hollow Conservation Area with Allegheny Land Trust
193 Sevin Road, Sewickley, PA 15143

Join ALT and WPMC for a mushroom hunt and identification session. Masks will be required, and social distancing will be followed. Use of the iNaturalist app is highly encouraged since data collected during the walk will count towards the City Nature Challenge! Parking is limited: please park at nearby Walker Park and walk back to the Devil's Hollow parking area (less than ¼ mile). NOTE: We will not be foraging for food on this hike. Free for WPMC members; \$5 for non-members. To reserve your place, register here:

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/event/mushroom-hunt-with-the-western-pa-mushroom-club/>

SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1:00-3:00 P.M.

Barking Slopes Conservation Area with Allegheny Land Trust
37 Barking Road, New Kensington, PA 15068

Join ALT and WPMC for a mushroom hunt and identification session. Masks will be required, and social distancing will be encouraged. The use of the iNaturalist app for this walk is highly encouraged. Please note: We will not be foraging for food on this hike. Free for WPMC members; \$5 for non-members. To reserve your place, register here:

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/event/mushroom-hunt-with-the-western-pa-mushroom-club-2/>

SUNDAY, JUNE 6

Phipps BioBlitz at Schenley Park

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 6-8:00 P.M.

Meyer Farm (Ridge Road in South Fayette Township) with ALT

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/events/>

SATURDAY, JUNE 19 AT 10:00 A.M.

Deer Lakes Park

Meet WPMC identifier **Richard Jacob** for the annual Dorothy Forno Walk at Deer Lakes Park. Turn on Mahaffey Road, which goes into the park. Take the first right into the parking lot between the first two small lakes.

SATURDAY, JULY 17 AT 10:00 A.M.

Dead Man's Hollow (McKeesport) with ALT

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/events/>

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21

Dye Day Walk at North Park

See page 5 for more information.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 5:00 - 7:00 P.M.

Wingfield Pines (Upper St. Clair) with ALT

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/events/>

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Pre-Foray Walk at Cook Forest, Clarion County

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2 AT 10:00 A.M.

Audubon Greenway (Sewickley) with ALT

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/events/>

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26 AT 10:00 A.M.

Black Friday Walk at Hartwood Acres

Meet WPMC Identifier **Richard Jacob** at the Mansion parking lot for the annual Black Friday mushroom walk.

Other Walks, Forays & Events

JUNE 4-6

63rd Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage
Allegheny State Park, Cattaraugus County, NY

Over 50 field trips are planned, including one led by WPMC Mycologist **Garrett Taylor**. Each field trip will be limited to 20 people, and social distancing and masks will be required.

<http://www.alleganynaturepilgrimage.com/>

JUNE 18 – JULY 4

International Mountain Trekking Eco/Mushroom Tour of the Himalayas

<https://vimeo.com/463936289>

AUGUST 12-15

North American Mycological Association (NAMA) Annual Foray
Snow Mountain Ranch, Granby CO

www.namyco.com

SEPTEMBER 18

21st Annual WPMC Gary Lincoff Foray
The Rose Barn at North Park

See page 4 for more information.

SEPTEMBER 19

Science Sunday with WPMC
The Rose Barn at North Park

See page 4 for more information.

**NEVER EAT AN UNIDENTIFIED
MUSHROOM!**

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.

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
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Basket for collecting
- ☐ Knife for cutting mushrooms
- ☐ Wax or paper bags (no plastic) to keep mushrooms separated
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Hand lens
- ☐ Cell phone & camera
- ☐ Notebook & pencil
- ☐ Field guide for identification
- ☐ Band-aids
- ☐ Garden hand-clippers

NOTE: 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.

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NOTE:

WPMC automatically renewed all 2020 WPMC memberships, at no cost, through 2021. HANG ONTO YOUR 2020 MEMBERSHIP CARDS. Hardcopy newsletters will still cost \$5.

WPMC Scholarships & Grants

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. Application forms are available on the 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 to WPMC May be Deductible under CARES Act

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO support WPMC's projects? Make a donation anytime. It may be tax-deductible, even if you take the standard deduction, because the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allows individuals to deduct contributions made to qualified charitable organizations.

The CARES Act allows a deduction for charitable gifts made in cash of up to \$300 by individuals. New in 2021 is an additional deduction for those married filing jointly. Joint filers who aren't itemizing will be allowed to take a deduction of up to \$600 in cash contributions to charity this year.

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 the Treasurer, **Jared Delaney**.

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 the newsletters may only be used in other non-profit publications with expressed permission and with appropriate acknowledgements.

Cecily Franklin, Editor
Martha Wasik Graphic Arts Inc.
Send submissions to: cs4wpmc@gmail.com

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