



# Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Newsletter

■ Fungi, Fun & Friends! ■

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 5

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2025



## President's Message

Barbora Batokova

I'M EXCITED TO share that we've secured the date and location for next year's Lincoff Foray—mark your calendars for October 10, 2026, at North Park Lodge!

This year's Lincoff Foray was a huge success, thanks to our fantastic speakers, organizers, and volunteers who kept the spirit of the event strong even through the dry spell. I was truly sad to miss it, as I was away speaking at the Mycelium Mysteries conference that same weekend. I met some amazing people there, and I'm hoping that several of them may join us as guest speakers in some capacity next year.

A few of our members—myself included—also became part of the new iNaturalist Ambassador Program, which trains and supports local naturalists to share iNaturalist through talks, events, and partnerships with other organizations. As ambassadors,

we'll help introduce new people to the platform, promote quality observations, and strengthen connections between our club and the broader citizen science community.

And now, something that really deserves our collective energy—the State Mushroom effort! The bill (HB 1090) to designate the Hemlock Varnish Shelf (*Ganoderma tsugae*) as Pennsylvania's official State Mushroom is gaining some traction, but this is when we need to build momentum. The House Tourism, Recreation, and Economic Development Committee will soon take it up again, and legislators need to hear from us. If your representative serves on this committee—or if you have friends in their districts—reach out! A short, personal message of support goes a long way. Tell them why mushrooms matter to you and why *Ganoderma tsugae* represents Pennsylvania's natural heritage so well. The more they hear from us, the stronger our voice becomes.

As I write this, our fall calendar is absolutely packed—with some days even triple-booked! Whether you're identifying, photographing, or just enjoying a walk in the woods, I hope you'll join us for one of the many upcoming events. As the mushroom season winds down and the woods grow quiet, thank you all for another inspiring year of curiosity, community, and discovery. Until next year!

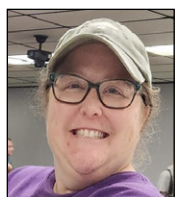
## 2026 WPMC Officers

AT THE OCTOBER meeting, WPMC members unanimously approved the following slate of Officers for 2026:



### PRESIDENT: BARBORA BATOKOVA

Barbora Batokova was born and raised in the Czech Republic, where she developed her passion for mushrooms. Barbora joined WPMC in 2019 and had three winning photos in that year's Photo Contest. She became a WPMC Identifier in 2021, President in 2024, and club Mycologist in 2025. Barbora is a frequent contributor to the WPMC newsletter, keeping members informed about taxonomic changes. She was a speaker at WPMC's Mushroom Education Day in 2024 and became an iNaturalist Ambassador in 2025. Barbora is the author of "Hunting Mushrooms: How to Safely Identify, Forage and Cook Wild Fungi", which was published in 2024. In demand as a walk leader and speaker, Barbora has more than 130K followers on her Instagram account @fungiwoman.



### VICE PRESIDENT: JULIE TRAVAGLINI

Julie Travaglini joined WPMC in 2018 and in 2021 became an Identifier, ID Button Chair, and Secretary. She has also served as Lincoff Foray Co-Chair and speaker at Mushroom Education Day. Julie received the WPMC President's Award in 2022 and became Vice President in 2024. She is Senior Director of Education & Curriculum at Allegheny Land Trust and President of the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators.

*continued on page 2*

## November 18 Meeting

### POTLUCK & ANNUAL WPMC AWARDS

FOR THE POTLUCK, bring something for 6 – 8 people, along with serving utensils. The categories are Appetizers, Salads, Hot Dishes, Cold Plates, Soup, Casseroles, Desserts, anything you want—be creative. It does not need to be mushroom related but, if so, wild mushrooms must be identified and approved by a club Identifier or Mycologist before cooking, and any non-members will have to sign a waiver before trying them. Since electrical connections are limited, bring hot food hot, and bring cold food cold. WPMC will provide soft drinks, plates, eating utensils, napkins, and take-home boxes.

Meetings will be held on Tuesday evenings at the Frick Environmental Center. Meetings are free and open to the public.

## 2025 Photo Contest

WPMC PHOTOGRAPHY CHAIR **Sara Klingensmith** judged the 2025 Photo Contest and presented the results at the October meeting. Twenty-three WPMC members submitted a total of 102 photos in four categories. **The photos appear in this newsletter on pages 3 – 6.** Congratulations to the winners and remember to document your finds throughout the year for the 2026 photo contest.

*continued on page 3*



## Costume Contest Showcases Creativity

IN ADDITION TO the Photo Contest, the October meeting included our annual mushroom costume contest. WPMC members outdid themselves again this year. The costumes receiving the most votes were **Alberto Almarza** (Birch Polypore) and **Becka Jean Marsh** (Veiled Stinkhorn).

*Photos by Cecily Franklin*



## Do Your Holiday Shopping on Spreadshop!

**S**URPRISE YOUR FAVORITE mushroom fan with a WPMC logo gift 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, so get started at this link:

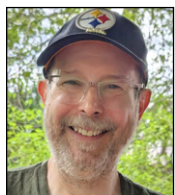
<https://western-pa-mushroom-club.myspreadshop.com/>

## Officers... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



### SECRETARY: SARA KLINGENSMITH

Sara Klingensmith joined WPMC in 2020 and has served as an Identifier, Photography Chair, and Lincoff Foray Co-Chair. She won the WPMC President's Award in 2023 and became Secretary in 2024. Sara is currently the Education Associate for Allegheny Land Trust and serves on the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators.



### TREASURER: MIKE HENRY

Mike Henry and his wife Heather joined WPMC in 2019. Mike enjoys cooking with wild mushrooms and making fermented beverages and vegetables. He has served as Lincoff Foray Feast Chair since 2021, was a speaker at Mushroom Education Day in 2024, and presented a cooking demo for the June 2025 WPMC meeting. Mike became a club Identifier in 2025 and led a walk with Hollow Oak Land Trust, where he is a Volunteer

Land Steward. Mike is native to the Coraopolis area, where he's also been a volunteer at the local food bank for almost 15 years. Mike often represents WPMC at other organizations' events and has been a WPMC Photo Contest Winner. He works as a software engineer for PNC Bank.



### NAMA TRUSTEE: CARA COULTER

Cara Coulter has been a WPMC member since 2018. The following year, she became a Club Identifier and in 2021 became a WPMC Mycologist and joined the Board of Directors as Vice President. Cara has served as Walks Chair and Education Chair and won the WPMC President's Award in 2021. She became the club's NAMA Trustee in 2025. Cara is an expert in mushroom art, photography, microscopy, and DNA. She designed the Lincoff Foray t-shirts in 2021-22 and was a speaker at WPMC's Mushroom Education Day in 2022-24. Cara often represents WPMC at other organizations' events.





# The 2025 Photo Contest Results

Novice Pictorial 3rd Place

Katie Manion • Angel Wings



Advanced Pictorial 2nd Place

Barbora Batokova • *Clavaria cf. zollingeri*



Documentary 3rd Place

Joy LeViere • *Craterellus fallax*

Advanced Pictorial Honorable Mention

Jared White • Spores







LEFT:

Documentary 1st Place

Stephen Bucklin • *Neoboletus subvelutipes*

Advanced Pictorial 3rd Place

Cara Coulter • *Hygrocybe* sp.

Judge's Option 3rd Place

Cara Coulter • *Clavulinopsis aurantiocinnabarina*

BELOW:

Documentary 2nd Place

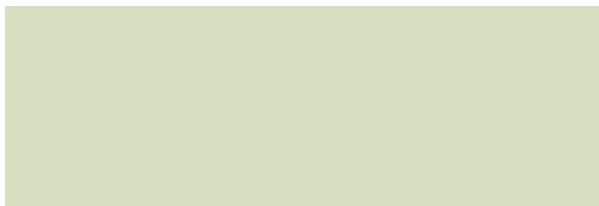
Dirk Cappel • *Entoloma parasiticum*

Judge's Option 2nd Place

Dana Driscoll • Shaggy Mane Art







LEFT:

Novice Pictorial Honorable Mention

Isaac King • Smoked Oysterlings

Advanced Pictorial 1st Place

Josh Doty • *Akanthomyces*

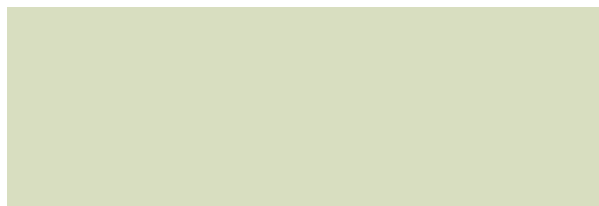
Novice Pictorial 2nd Place

Marlene Strege • Bonnets

BELOW:

Novice Pictorial 1st Place

Brittany Burch • Jack-O'-Lanterns





Honorable Mention

Mike Henry • Morelfie



Judge's Option 1st Place

Joy LeViere • Mr. Slug's Little Home



Honorable Mention

Dirk Cappel • Molly and Winecaps

Honorable Mention

Ed Jones • Mushroom Dreaming





## WPMC Scholarship Recipient Wins Awards for Research

IN 2023, WPMC awarded a scholarship to **Daniel Taratut**, student of **Dr. Barrie Overton** at Commonwealth University Lock Haven campus, to study Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) Mycopensticides. This year, Daniel's work was published in *Biocontrol Science and Technology*. More recently, Daniel was nominated for a "best researcher" award for the Global Scientist Day Awards.

Daniel received funding for his research from the Mycological Association of Washington DC, the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club, the Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania Biologists (CPUB), and the Entomology Society of Pennsylvania. Daniel garnered a first-place award for a research presentation in a juried exhibition of his research at CPUB and a monetary award from his presentation at Duke University, both in graduate student sessions.

Daniel identified that two fungal entomopathogens significantly reduced hatch rate success. This is an important finding, given that just a 35% reduction of SLF per year could substantially reduce the population and protect the wine industry and other agricultural and plant product industries in the Commonwealth.

Given that all of Daniel's research was conducted in a laboratory environment at Lock Haven, the next step will be to perform this work in the field. Daniel is currently teaching in Colorado and applying to doctoral programs. You can read an abstract of Daniel's research at this link:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09583157.2025.2561205>



*Barrie Overton, Daniel Taratut, and Abby Ireland at the Mid-Atlantic State Mycology Conference, where both Daniel and Abby were recognized for their research presentations with a monetary award.*

## Out & About with WPMC

DURING SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, WPMC members led many mushroom walks at local parks at the request of other organizations. In addition, WPMC Mycologists and Identifiers gave presentations or hosted tables at the following outside events:



**On September 6**, WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke** co-presented an iNat Demo and Mushroom ID Workshop at the Ohio Mushroom Festival in Hammondsville, Ohio.

**On September 13**, WPMC Identifiers **Mike Henry** and **Sara Klingensmith** represented WPMC at the Pittsburgh County Fair.

*ferment Pittsburgh*



**On September 13**, WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** was keynote speaker at The Nature Forum in Parma, Ohio. Her topic was "Fungi: From Mycelium to Mushroom Morphology and Identification."

**On September 19-21**, WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** was a keynote speaker at the 9th Annual Mycelium Mysteries Conference in Wisconsin.



**In September and October**, WPMC Mycologist **Cara Coulter**, WPMC Identifier **Julie Travaglini**, and Flannel Roots Farm presented mushroom programs with Phipps Conservatory.

**On October 6**, WPMC President **Barbora Batokova** gave a virtual presentation entitled "Getting to Know Mushrooms: Fungal Basics and 10 Common Species of Pennsylvania" for Biology students at Grove City College.



**On October 14**, WPMC Mycologist **Stephen Bucklin** presented "Trees & Fungi", a walk and talk at Tree Pittsburgh.

**On October 29**, WPMC Mycologist **Dawn Wehman** presented "Mushroom Identification Basics for Beginners" at the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls.



## 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/wpamc-scholarship-grant-application/>







## 25th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray: A Fabulous Fungal Festival!

By Dawn Wehman

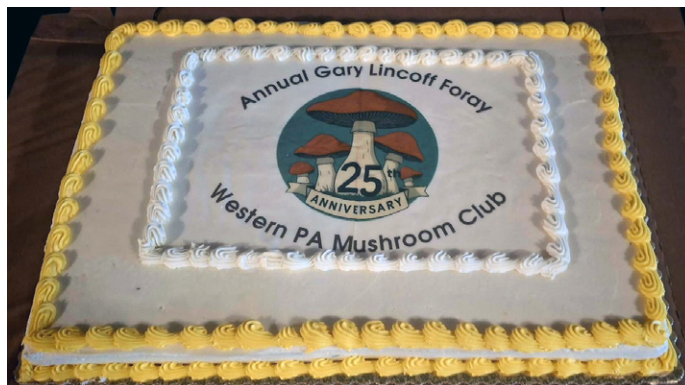
ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, about 115 mushroom enthusiasts—including registrants, volunteers, and speakers—gathered for the 25th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray. And what a day it was! From sunrise to sunset the event was bursting with energy, curiosity, and community. Participants were thrilled to be back at the beloved North Park Lodge, which buzzed with excitement.

The weather was clear and warm, perfect for morning walks in the woods. Our Club Identifiers, Mycologists, and Specialists led the morning walks, guiding both seasoned foragers and eager newcomers through North Park. Despite a stretch of dry weather, plenty of mushrooms popped up to join the party! Lots of specimens made their way to the landing tables to be admired and identified. Some will be sent for DNA sequencing.

After the walks, members enjoyed homemade soups generously donated by fellow fungi friends—each one as warm and comforting as the community itself. At the Cultivation Table, volunteers were busy assembling Pink Oyster and Lion's Mane grow kits so attendees could take home a bit of the foray spirit. Outside, our vendors returned with delightful wares, while the sales table overflowed with books and club T-shirts. And, of course, our auction tables tempted attendees with a whimsical assortment of fungi-themed finds—all helping to support the event's success.

### **Our lineup of speakers did not disappoint!**

- **Britt Bunyard**—mycologist, author, publisher, and editor-in-chief of *FUNGI Magazine*—enchanted the audience with his talk “A Resilient Planet Needs Fungi Now: The Secret Lives of Fungi,” inspired by his book *The Lives of Fungi*.
- **Dr. Matt Kasson** of West Virginia University followed with “Fungus-Eating Millipedes: More Fungi Than Legs!”—a presentation as entertaining as it was educational.
- **Trevor Ring** of Community Cultures led a well-attended hands-on workshop on Fermented Sodas.



- The afternoon activities wrapped up with a fantastic table talk hosted by **Britt Bunyard**. He had tons to share with those in attendance!

The evening Mushroom Feast was a true culinary celebration. The buffet tables overflowed with donated dishes and desserts, many featuring foraged fungi. Our kitchen crew worked tirelessly to bring it all together—thank you for your talent, teamwork, and culinary creations!

This event wouldn't have been possible without the countless volunteers who pitched in before, during, and after the foray. From setup to cleanup, every helping hand made a difference. The Foray Committee extends a heartfelt “Thank You” to everyone who attended, volunteered, or supported the event in any way. You made the 25th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray a truly memorable celebration of community, curiosity, and of course—mushrooms!

**Mark your calendar now for Saturday October 10, 2026, when we get to do it again!**

## Fifth Annual Fluorescent Foray – Another Dry Year

By Stephen Bucklin

THIS YEAR WAS our 5th Annual Fluorescent Pre-Foray event. It was our biggest yet in terms of the number of folks who participated. Thirty-seven people, including staff from both Cook Forest and Clear Creek State Parks, joined in a pleasant evening stroll through the woods in search of fluorescent organisms.

The dry conditions limited our fluorescent fungal finds to a handful of mushrooms—primarily small *Russula* species. We found the usual fluorescent lichen suspects—*Ochrolechia arborea* and *Cladonia squamosa* in their brilliant yellow and blue, respectively. We also found a single living millipede and many carcasses.

Ultimately, we found good company and a peaceful walk in nature. The clear night sky at the end of the walk allowed for excellent viewing of the Milky Way and many constellations, providing a sense of wonder and awe as folks dispersed for the evening to gather again the following morning.



Photo by Identifier Josh Doty







## Pre-Foray Walk on Friday, September 19

By Cara Coulter



Photo by Joy LeViere

THE WEATHER CONDITIONS were ideal for our Cook Forest Pre-Foray Walk, with mild temperatures and clear, sunny skies. Although attendance was slightly lower this year, with approximately 40–50 participants, engagement remained high among those present.

Several regular volunteers were attending the NEMF Foray in Ithaca, New York, resulting in the absence of some of our usual leading participants. Nevertheless, we were fortunate to have an excellent team of club Mycologists—**Stephen Bucklin, Richard Jacob, La Monte Yarroll, James Tunney, and Cara Coulter**—as well as many dedicated club Identifiers, including **Julie Travaglini, Dawn Wehman, Jared White, Josh Doty, Judy Mackenroth, Mike Henry, and Bolete Specialist Scott Pavelle.**

The event unfolded seamlessly, thanks to being well organized. Attendees who participated showed remarkable enthusiasm and a genuine desire to learn. To start the event, WPMC member **Dana Driscoll** played her pan flute in the forest, setting an atmosphere that was both lively and tranquil.

Despite experiencing one of our driest years, our group managed to thoroughly search the area and collect some intriguing specimens. Altogether, we successfully found approximately 165 different species of fungi. Some of the highlights are:

- A rare tiny round fungus in the *Ascomycota* phylum called *Olla* sp. was found this year by **Josh Doty.**
- A velvety fan-like fungus called *Stereopsis hircens* was found by **Richard Jacob.**
- Found on some leaf debris was the very tiny and adorable *Marasmius minutissimus*, found by both **Julie Travaglini** and **Cara Coulter.**

- One of my favorite finds was a pleasant coconut smelling *Lactarius* called *Lactarius glyciosmus*, found by **Richard Jacob.**
- A gorgeous red *Bolbitius callistus* was found by **Luke Roles.**
- We also found quite a few different small ascos that could not be immediately identified. This is where DNA will come in handy!

I hope we'll have a bit more rain before the event next year, but despite the conditions, I still see this year's gathering as a tremendous success. I'm eager to see the DNA results from our discoveries and already anticipate next year's Lincoff Foray.

## Auction Breaks Fundraising Record; New Team Members Needed

By Cecily Franklin

THANKS TO THE generous donations and enthusiastic participation of WPMC members, we raised more than \$700 from this year's Foray Auction. I've been organizing the auction for more than ten years.

To continue this fundraiser in the future, we will need new team members to handle the considerable physical demands, particularly setting up the day before the Foray and operating the auction itself on the day of the Foray. If you are interested in joining this effort, please email me at [cs4wpmc@gmail.com](mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com).





## Foray Feast Features Fabulous Food

ONCE AGAIN, WPMC Foray Feast Chair **Mike Henry** organized a most memorable mushroom feast. Here's a list of all the cooks who contributed dishes to this year's event.

### Soups:

Bolete and Potato Soup – **Dawn Wehman**  
Carrot Ginger Soup – **Jim & Martha Wasik**  
Creamy Tomato Lentil Soup – **Jeff Steely**  
Hungarian Mushroom Soup – **Dana Driscoll**  
Leek Soup – **Becka Jean Marsh**  
Mock Pozole Soup – **Julie Case**  
Pumpkin Soup – **Sara Klingensmith**  
Shiitake Stew – **Jared Delaney**  
Tomato Meatball Soup – **Bobby Bo**  
Zuppa Soup – **Julie Travaglini**

### Entrees:

Gnocchi with Chanterelles – **Mike Henry**  
Buffalo Chicken of the Woods Pizza – **Mike Henry**  
Baked Salmon – **Alex Eowyn**  
Chicken-fried COTW Sliders – **Julie Case**  
Chicken Rice Mushroom Casserole – **Barbara DeRiso**  
Giant Eagle Fried Chicken – **Sean Manion**  
Koji Brisket – **Scott Pavelle**  
Mushroom Tamales – **Richard Jacob**  
One-pot Vegan Portobello Stew – **Lisa & Brad Grandstaff**  
Rustic Pasta Dish – **Paula Breuer & Victor Pregel**  
Shiitake Noodles – **Xiaoyan Cai**  
Shrimp of the woods Po' Boys – **Sara McGinity**

### Side dishes:

7-Layer Salad – **Julie Travaglini**  
Buffalo Chicken Dip – **Julie Travaglini**  
Candy Cap Sweet Potatoes – **Carla Beaudet**  
Caprese Salad – **Vince & Teresa Wojtyna**  
Duxelles on Crostini – **Joy LeViere & Nathan Cobbett**  
Fall Veggies with mushrooms – **Sean & Katie Manion**  
Herb-marinated Baby Bella Mushrooms – **Cherie Cornmesser**  
Mac and Cheese – **Sean Manion**  
Pasta Salad – **Julie Travaglini**  
Roasted Eggplant w/Pine Nuts & Saffron Yogurt Sauce –

**Kathy Gilotty Croft**

Side dish – **Christine Shipley**  
Sourdough Bread – **Marylou Lenhart**  
Tomato & Veggie Tray with Guacamole Dip – **Judy Mackenroth**  
Umami Mushroom Pate – **Jared White**  
Wood Ear Salad – **Julie Case**

### Desserts:

Apple Cake – **Dawn Wehman**  
Banana Bread – **Sara Klingensmith**  
Cookies – **Julie Travaglini**  
Cookies – **Sarah Adkins**  
Dolly Parton brownies – **Mike Henry**

## Bonus Foray Recipe!

### CREAMY GNOCCHI WITH SPINACH & MUSHROOMS

By Mike Henry

#### INGREDIENTS:

1¼ cups mushroom broth or chicken broth  
2 ounces Parmesan cheese, grated (1 cup)  
1/2 cup heavy cream  
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
Salt and pepper  
3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 pound vacuum-packed gnocchi  
1 pound sauteed chanterelle mushrooms  
2 garlic cloves, minced (or more!)  
10 oz bag frozen chopped spinach, water squeezed out  
1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Whisk broth, Parmesan, cream, nutmeg, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper together in bowl; set aside.
- Boil gnocchi in unsalted water until it floats, about 5 minutes. Drain.
- Melt 2 tablespoons butter in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add gnocchi and cook until lightly browned, about 5 minutes; transfer to plate.
- Melt remaining 1 tablespoon butter in skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and 1/4 teaspoon salt and cook for 5 minutes.
- Add the tablespoon of olive oil and squeezed spinach and cook until mushrooms are golden brown, about 5 more minutes. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
- Add broth mixture and gnocchi and bring to simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce has thickened, 5 to 7 minutes.





# 2025 NAMA New England Foray

By Cara Coulter

THIS YEAR, WITH great thanks to WPMC, I was lucky enough to attend the 2025 NAMA New England Foray in Marlboro, Vermont. I was in awe of the natural beauty that surrounded the area. The mountains were picturesque and beautiful, the leaves were just being sprinkled with the slightest hint of autumn, and most of the houses were quaint old buildings bursting with history. I immediately fell in love with the state.

After a long but scenic drive, I arrived at Potash Hill Campus around 3 pm. After registering and setting up my tent, I was happy to see a few other WPMC Mycologists, including **Kim and John Plischke**, **Richard Jacob**, and **Garrett Taylor** with **Danielle A. Schoonover-Wils**. I then wandered around the campus and headed to the dining hall. After eating my fill, I took a brief walk in the campus woods. I was of course curious to see what kinds of interesting fungi I could discover in this habitat.

Even with the severe lack of rain, I was still able to find a few interesting fungi. My very first find of the foray was a small yellow fungus that I thought may be something from the *Helotiaceae* family. Interestingly enough, after DNA was performed, it actually turned out to be a novel species from the *Mollisiaceae* family. Because it wasn't closely related to any currently sequenced species within that family, it was given the provisional species name *Mollisiaceae* sp. 'VT01', a very exciting discovery!

Shortly after my hike, I decided to go to the lecture hall. The talks began with instructions on how to properly voucher fungi specimens for DNA and a very pleasant talk about the habitats of mushrooms in the Central New England area with a bit of info on some of the local wildlife. I hustled over to the final event of the first day, the evening mushroom social, where the chefs provided us with a delightful array of small mushroom appetizers and drinks. Unfortunately, I didn't stay long as I was exhausted from the long day and decided to call it a night.

The next day, I decided to bypass the planned walks and instead take Garrett's advice and head slightly off campus to woods that surrounded a small cat-shaped pond called South Pond. It was advice I'm glad I took because I found a wide diversity of fungi and slime molds. I was able to find 89 specimens! I stayed up late into the night making sure I labeled and cataloged the species properly. Thankfully I met a bunch of fun, supportive and scientifically minded people while cataloging, and it made the job go by fast. Of the 89 specimens, I turned in 59 for DNA. One of my coolest finds, a *Henningsomyces* species, not only turned out to be a novel species, but it won the NAMA Foray "Find of the Day"! It was given the new provisional name *Henningsomyces* sp. 'VT01'.

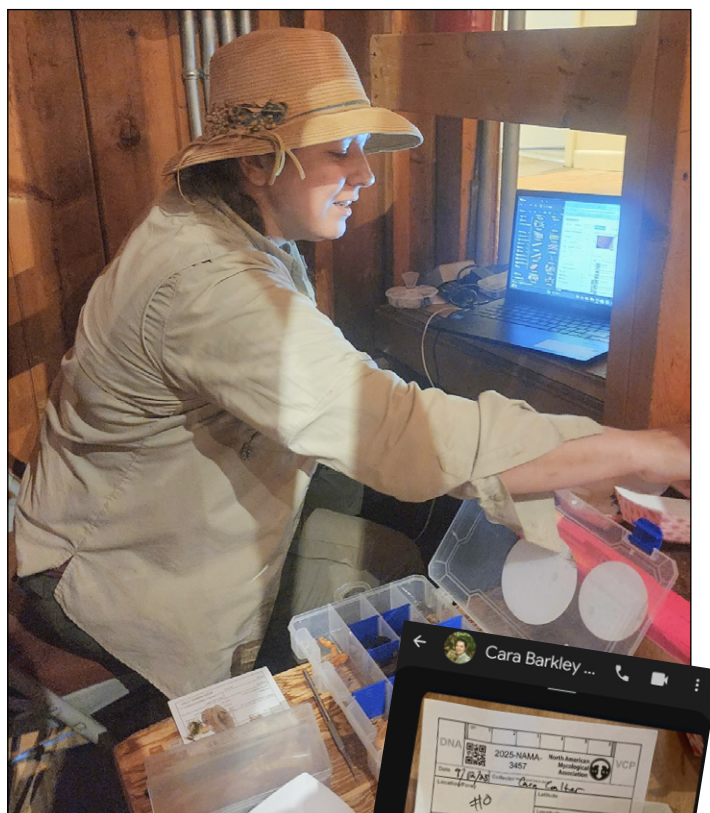
Already I've received some interesting results. For example, the *Ascobolus* species I found turned out to be the first of the genus sequenced for the state. This novel sequence was given the provisional name *Ascobolus* sp. 'VT01'. Another novel sequence result was on a specimen that was found to be in the order *Helotiales* but was not closely related to any sequenced species within the entire order. It has been given the provisional name *Helotiales* sp. 'VT03'.

On the third day of the foray, I was lucky enough to be invited to a tiny fungi walk with an all-star tiny fungi team! On this walk we all got down low. The small stream we walked around provided quite a few notable finds, like the *Lachnellula* species found by Pennsylvania mycologist **Hannah Huber** and a *Trichophaea woolhopeia*.

After cataloging and turning in my specimens for the day, I went for a drive and of course bought some local maple syrup. Then I headed for the dining hall to enjoy the social hour. We were treated to a variety of activities, including some local historical music and folk dancing called Contra Dancing. It was quite enjoyable watching **Trent and Kristen Blizzard** and **Noah Siegel** getting baited into joining the dance. I personally enjoyed the mushroom painting activity and some mushroom beverages.

After the social hour event, I headed down to the main building to learn that I received a NAMA Foray Honorable Mention for my *Collybia cirrhata* find! I then helped out where I could before calling it a night. Unfortunately, all good things have to end, and I had to say goodbye to some wonderful people I got to know at the event, as many were leaving first thing in the morning to head back home the next day.

After having one last breakfast with a great group of people, I packed up my belongings and left the campus. Of course, I had to visit some popular tourist spots first like Hogback Mountain and a local farmer's market. Once I sufficiently loaded up my car with local cheese, meats, and novelties, I regretfully headed back home. I'm so thankful that I had the opportunity to visit such a great place with so many wonderful like-minded individuals. Looking forward to seeing what the next foray will be like!



WPMC's NAMA Trustee Cara Coulter found a corner with internet and outlets to make a hidden processing center.

Photo by Blackie Li

Cara found many unusual species, including this *Collybia cirrhata*.





# Names They Are A-Changin’

## Big News for a Familiar Fungus: *Phaeolus schweinitzii* in North America is Not What We Thought

By Barbora Batokova

MANY OF US IN Pennsylvania know *Phaeolus schweinitzii* as the striking “Dyer’s Polypore.” With its vivid yellow to rusty-brown rosettes and its role as both a forest pathogen and a source of natural dyes, this fungus has long been a familiar part of the North American fungal landscape.

It is a brown-rot polypore, meaning it primarily digests cellulose while leaving behind the brown, cubical remains of lignin. Ecologically, it plays a dual role: breaking down conifer wood while also acting as a butt-rot pathogen that can compromise living trees. For dyers, its pigments have been valued for producing a wide range of yellows, oranges, and greens. I recently dyed a scarf a beautiful moss green using this mushroom!

But recent research has turned our understanding of this species upside down.

### The First Breakthrough: 2022

In 2022, Yuan and colleagues published a molecular phylogeny of *Phaeolus* that confirmed *P. schweinitzii* is not a single, widespread species, but a species complex. Their research, based on specimens from China, Europe, and North America, revealed at least six distinct taxa. Importantly for us, their study suggested that true *P. schweinitzii* is restricted to Eurasia, and that three separate lineages occur in North America: one in the Northeast, one in the Southeast, and one in the West. They also described two new species from China, *Phaeolus asiae-orientalis* and *P. yunnanensis*, both important pathogens of local conifers.

### The Next Step: 2025

Building on this, Cui and colleagues (2025) refined the picture using a global dataset. They confirmed that the North American lineages are distinct species:

***Phaeolus hispidoides*** – Found in the Northeast and Midwest, including Pennsylvania. This is the fungus we’ve been seeing on pines, hemlocks, and firs. It can be distinguished from its relatives by its more irregular, labyrinthine pores; slightly variable basidiospores (ellipsoid to almond-shaped;  $5.4\text{--}8.2 \times 3.4\text{--}5.2 \mu\text{m}$ ); and lack of gloeoplerous hyphae.

***Phaeolus tabulaeformis*** – Occurs in the southeastern U.S., on pines and spruces. First described in the 19th century from Georgia, it has now been restored to species rank. It features round to irregular pores (2–3 per mm), basidiospores  $\sim 6\text{--}7 \times 4\text{--}5 \mu\text{m}$ , and gloeoplerous hyphae in context and tubes.

***Phaeolus occidentiamericus*** – Found in the western U.S., strongly associated with Douglas fir and other western conifers. It features round pores (2–3 per mm), ellipsoid spores ( $6.5\text{--}7.8 \times 4\text{--}5 \mu\text{m}$ ), and abundant gloeoplerous hyphae in both context and trama.

Together, these studies make it clear that true *P. schweinitzii* does not occur in North America at all.

### Why It Matters for Pennsylvania

For mushroomers in Pennsylvania, this means that the familiar fungus we’ve been recording as *P. schweinitzii*

is actually *Phaeolus hispidoides*. This name change matters for:

- **Accurate records** – Our club foray lists, herbarium specimens, and iNaturalist entries should be updated.
- **Forest health** – *Phaeolus* species are pathogens of economically important conifers, and distinguishing them helps foresters better understand regional disease patterns.
- **History of mycology** – The species named after Pennsylvania-born Lewis David de Schweinitz, the “Father of North American Mycology,” doesn’t actually live here!

### Identifying Specimens in the Mid-Atlantic (Virginia and Beyond)

One open question concerns the transition zone between the Northeast and Southeast, such as Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, the Carolinas, and potentially southern parts of Pennsylvania. This is an area where the ranges of *Phaeolus hispidoides* (northeastern species) and *P. tabulaeformis* (southeastern species) may overlap.

Because both species can produce very similar large, rosette-like fruiting bodies with similar colors, host tree and pore structure are the most practical field clues at present; however, they may not be sufficient to distinguish the two. While microscopy could theoretically be used to examine the presence of gloeoplerous hyphae or lack thereof, DNA sequencing will likely be needed to confirm ID 100%.

### Takeaway

Next time you find a “Dyer’s Polypore” in Pennsylvania, remember you’re looking at *Phaeolus hispidoides*, not *P. schweinitzii*. And thanks to advances in DNA-based taxonomy, we now know that our North American fungi are more diverse and regionally specialized than we once thought.

### References:

Yuan Y. et al. (2022). Two new forest pathogens in *Phaeolus* (Polyporales, Basidiomycota) on Chinese coniferous trees were confirmed by molecular phylogeny. *Frontiers in Microbiology* 13:942603.

Cui Y.J. et al. (2025). Phylogeny, divergence times, and biogeography of the phytopathogenic fungal genus *Phaeolus* (Basidiomycota, Polyporales). *Journal of Systematics and Evolution*.



*Phaeolus hispidoides* observed at the Bear Run Nature Reserve in Fayette County, Pennsylvania on Aug. 5, 2023.

Barbora Batokova with Alissa Allen, a naturalist and textile artist based in Washington state, after a mushroom-dyeing workshop at the Mycelium Mysteries conference in September. Barbora dyed her scarf using the Dyer’s Polypore.





## WPMC in the News



THE FALL 2025 issue of *FUNGI Magazine* will include an article by Past President **Cecily Franklin** entitled "Team Effort Leads to New Canadian Fungi Stamps". The article describes the process of creating five new Canadian stamps depicting fungi.



## WPMC Names New Mycologist and Awards ID Buttons



**Momo & Alberto Almarza**



**Theresa Colecchia**



**Mark Bowers**



**Barbora Batokova**

ID BUTTON CHAIR **Julie Travaglini** has awarded ID Buttons to the following WPMC members: **Momo Almarza** (Kid), **Alberto Almarza** (50), **Theresa Colecchia** (100), and **Mark Bowers** (200). In addition, the WPMC Board of Directors has approved a new Mycologist: **Barbora Batokova**. 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/>



## 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 (if you itemize deductions) 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 Pa. Mushroom Club and submit them to our Treasurer. You may donate using PayPal by using the email address [treasurer@wpamushroomclub.org](mailto:treasurer@wpamushroomclub.org).

## WPMC Newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club is published five times a year. 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)





# WPMC Walks & Events

**D**AY 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! If you would like to lead a WPMC walk, or if you know a great walk location, please email WPMC Identifier Josh Mowris at [josh-mowris@yahoo.com](mailto:josh-mowris@yahoo.com).

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.

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 10 AM-1 PM

### Townsend Park with Friends of Murrysville Parks 130 Townsend Park Court, Murrysville (Westmoreland County)

Meet WPMC Mycologist **Richard Jacob** and Friends of Murrysville Parks for a late fall mushroom walk at Townsend Park. Free and open to the public.

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1-3:30 PM

### Urban Mushroom Walk, Rockwell Park, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Meet WPMC Mycologist **Stephen Bucklin** at the sidewalk along Meade Street to search for fungi as part of the Allegheny Sport & Outdoor Summit. We'll walk through Point Breeze searching for mushrooms along the sidewalk, then take a 1-mile loop through the forests of Frick Park to continue our search. Our walk will end back at the Summit. Please dress for the weather and wear closed-toe shoes with decent tread, but no other supplies are necessary.  
<https://www.alleghenysport.com/about-asosummit>

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, NOON TO 3 PM

### Celebrating Science in the Steel City David L. Lawrence Convention Center

WPMC Mycologist **Richard Jacob** will represent the club at this event. For more information:  
<https://www.mariawheelerdubas.org/2025/07/19/celebrating-science-in-the-steel-city/>

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 12:00-2:00 P.M.

### Trail Tour in Hays Woods with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Agnew Road Trailhead, Baldwin, PA 15236

Meet WPMC Mycologist **Stephen Bucklin** at the Agnew Trailhead entrance for a lichen walk through the hidden trails of Hays Woods. This trail tour is about two miles long and may entail slopes at times, both ascending and descending. Terrain can be rugged and slippery at times, especially after rain. We recommend hiking shoes or boots with good traction, and hiking poles, if extra support is needed. There is no charge for this walk, but space is limited. Register here:  
<https://pittsburghparks.org/event/trail-tour-in-hays-woods-park-featuring-stephen-bucklin-3/>

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 10:00 A.M.

### Thanksgiving Weekend Walk at Hartwood Acres

Meet WPMC Mycologist **Cara Coulter** and WPMC Identifier **Mike Henry** at the Mansion parking lot for our annual Thanksgiving weekend walk at Hartwood Acres.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

|                                |                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PRESIDENT<br>412-609-0723      | Barbora Batokova<br><a href="mailto:president@wpamushroomclub.org">president@wpamushroomclub.org</a>           |
| VICE-PRESIDENT<br>724-255-1131 | Julie Travaglini<br><a href="mailto:vice-president@wpamushroomclub.org">vice-president@wpamushroomclub.org</a> |
| SECRETARY<br>724-664-9287      | Sara Klingensmith<br><a href="mailto:secretary@wpamushroomclub.org">secretary@wpamushroomclub.org</a>          |
| TREASURER<br>412-204-6281      | Jared Delaney<br><a href="mailto:treasurer@wpamushroomclub.org">treasurer@wpamushroomclub.org</a>              |
| NAMA TRUSTEE<br>412-445-1078   | Cara Coulter<br><a href="mailto:education@wpamushroomclub.org">education@wpamushroomclub.org</a>               |

## COMMITTEES

|                                        |                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CLUB E-MAIL CONTACT<br>412-781-6581    | Cecily Franklin<br><a href="mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com">cs4wpmc@gmail.com</a>                                                         |
| CULTIVATION<br>412-204-6281            | Jared Delaney<br><a href="mailto:treasurer@wpamushroomclub.org">treasurer@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                   |
| DNA BARCODING<br>215-888-5503          | Richard Jacob<br><a href="mailto:dna-barcoding@wpamushroomclub.org">dna-barcoding@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                           |
| EDUCATION<br>412-445-1078              | Cara Coulter<br><a href="mailto:education@wpamushroomclub.org">education@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                    |
| HISTORIAN<br>724-339-8547              | Joyce Gross<br><a href="mailto:jagart58@comcast.net">jagart58@comcast.net</a>                                                       |
| HOSPITALITY                            | Joy LeViere & Nathan Cobbett<br><a href="mailto:joy.leviere@gmail.com">joy.leviere@gmail.com</a>                                    |
| ID BUTTON PROGRAM<br>724-255-1131      | Julie Travaglini<br><a href="mailto:buttonid@wpamushroomclub.org">buttonid@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                  |
| LINCOFF FORAY<br>Dawn Wehman           | Sara Klingensmith / Katie & Sean Manion<br><a href="mailto:Lincoff-Foray@wpamushroomclub.org">Lincoff-Foray@wpamushroomclub.org</a> |
| MEMBERSHIP<br>724-544-0978             | Dawn Wehman<br><a href="mailto:membership@wpamushroomclub.org">membership@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                   |
| MUSHROOM DISPLAY                       | Vacant                                                                                                                              |
| MYCOLOGICAL RECORDING<br>215-888-5503  | Richard Jacob<br><a href="mailto:site-admin@wpamushroomclub.org">site-admin@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                 |
| NEMF FORAY<br>724-331-1974             | John Plischke III<br><a href="mailto:fungi01@aol.com">fungi01@aol.com</a>                                                           |
| NEWSLETTER<br>412-781-6581             | Cecily Franklin<br><a href="mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com">cs4wpmc@gmail.com</a>                                                         |
| PA DCNR REPRESENTATIVE<br>716-307-0758 | Garrett Taylor<br><a href="mailto:taygamu@gmail.com">taygamu@gmail.com</a>                                                          |
| PHOTOGRAPHY<br>724-664-9287            | Sara Klingensmith<br><a href="mailto:pamushroomclubphotos@gmail.com">pamushroomclubphotos@gmail.com</a>                             |
| PUBLICITY<br>412-781-6581              | Cecily Franklin<br><a href="mailto:cs4wpmc@gmail.com">cs4wpmc@gmail.com</a>                                                         |
| SALES<br>602-690-3198                  | Matt Stahlman<br><a href="mailto:stahlmanmatthew@gmail.com">stahlmanmatthew@gmail.com</a>                                           |
| SCHOLARSHIP<br>412-862-7891            | Sierra Weir<br><a href="mailto:scholarship@wpamushroomclub.org">scholarship@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                 |
| TOXICOLOGY<br>724-331-1974             | John Plischke III<br><a href="mailto:fungi01@aol.com">fungi01@aol.com</a>                                                           |
| WALKS & FORAYS<br>814-720-8804         | Josh Mowris<br><a href="mailto:joshmowris@yahoo.com">joshmowris@yahoo.com</a>                                                       |
| WEBMASTER<br>215-888-5503              | Richard Jacob<br><a href="mailto:site-admin@wpamushroomclub.org">site-admin@wpamushroomclub.org</a>                                 |
| WORKSHOP<br>724-352-4025               | Judy Mackenroth<br><a href="mailto:angora_farm@yahoo.com">angora_farm@yahoo.com</a>                                                 |





# WPMC Mycologists, Identifiers, and Specialists

## CLUB MYCOLOGISTS

Barbora Batokova ..... 412-609-0723  
president@wpamushroomclub.org

Stephen Bucklin ..... 814-823-1049  
sbucklin@pittsburghparks.org

Cara Coulter ..... 412-445-1078  
education@wpamushroomclub.org

Richard Jacob ..... 215-888-5503  
site-admin@wpamushroomclub.org

Kim Plischke ..... 724-217-7589  
ladiebugzpk@aol.com

John Plischke III ..... 724-331-1974  
fungi01@aol.com

Garrett Taylor ..... 716-307-0758  
taygamu@gmail.com

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

La Monte Yarroll ..... 412-854-5684  
piggy@wpamushroomclub.org

## IDENTIFIERS

Beth Ace ..... 814-673-3105  
eace8710@gmail.com

Jack Baker ..... 412-367-7696  
jabaker2@hotmail.com

Fluff Berger ..... 724-601-8382  
wfberger@comcast.net

Dirk Cappel ..... 248-924-4498  
dirk.cappel@gmail.com

Cheree Charmello Andrews ..... 412-576-0555  
charmello@gmail.com

Cherie Cornmesser ..... 724-413-3092  
shadowfax.c11@gmail.com

Josh Doty ..... 412-913-8026  
jcdoty@gmail.com

Carson Gross ..... 605-695-0605  
carson.a.gross@gmail.com

Mike Henry ..... 412-397-8424  
michaelshenry085@gmail.com

Ron Hilton ..... 814-657-7418  
leftyrh61@yahoo.com

Devin Hilty ..... 570-367-8000  
mindovermycology@gmail.com

Sara Klingensmith ..... 724-664-9287  
secretary@wpamushroomclub.org

Judy Mackenroth ..... 724-352-4025  
angora\_farm@yahoo.com

Josh Mowris ..... 814-720-8804  
joshmowris@yahoo.com

Jerry Sapp ..... 724-713-1212  
surffisher\_89@yahoo.com

Julie Travaglini ..... 724-255-1131  
vice-president@wpamushroomclub.org

Dawn Wehman ..... 724-544-0978  
membership@wpamushroomclub.org

Jared White ..... 814-460-4265  
white.jaredd@gmail.com

## BOLETE SPECIALIST

Scott Pavelle ..... 412-325-2535  
scott@pavellelaw.com

## LICHEN SPECIALIST

Stephen Bucklin ..... 814-823-1049  
sbucklin@pittsburghparks.org

## Membership Dues Increase in 2026

By Dawn Wehman

AS OF OCTOBER 24, WPMC is thriving with 640 members representing 384 households—that's a whole forest of fungi fans!

- Nine monthly meetings filled with fascinating speakers and friendly faces.
- A free mushroom kit at our annual cultivation meeting.
- Five electronic newsletters to keep you in the loop while you're in the woods, packed with: walk information, book reviews, member interviews, recipes, updates on name changes and local fascinating fungal discoveries.
- Tons of regional hikes and walks where we walk and discuss fungal identification along the way hosted by our club Identifiers, Mycologist and Specialists.
- Early announcements to other regional and national events.
- The chance to shine in our Members-Only Photo Contest. Show off your best fungal finds!
- Connection through our lively WPMC Facebook Group: [facebook.com/groups/250320011779](https://facebook.com/groups/250320011779)
- A discount to WPMC's biggest bash of the year—the Annual Gary Lincoff Foray!

Starting in 2026, membership dues will be:

**Individual: \$20 • Family: \$25 • Student: \$15**

Renew or join today to continue your adventure with us!  
<https://wpamushroomclub.org/about/join/>

Questions? Reach out anytime to Dawn Wehman:  
membership@wpamushroomclub.org







# 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](mailto: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 \_\_\_\_\_