



# WESTERN PA



# MUSHROOM CLUB

Volume 6, Issue 4

Editor: Becky Plischke

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

## Last Chance To Register For THE GARY LINCOFF MID ATLANTIC MUSHROOM FORAY

### ELEVEN MYCOLOGISTS TO HELP YOU LEARN MUSHROOMS

Sign up a friend or two. What an outstanding gift it would be. It is an experience of a lifetime. We're bringing our daughter and son-in-law to the foray.



### 4 MUSHROOM SLIDE SHOWS

Gary Lincoff will present, "The Natural History of Mushrooms: How many of your local mushrooms do you really know, and what do you know about them besides their names?" Ernst Both's program is, "How to Identify Boletes Without Pain." "Big Fleas, Little Fleas, a Look at Mushrooms and Their Habitats" will be presented by Walt Sturgeon. Dave Miller will speak on, "What's Going on Down There? The Real Lowdown on Trees and Mushrooms."

### SALES AHEAD OF LAST YEAR

Don't miss out on what was last year, the largest fall foray in the United States. Last year we sold out with 188 in attendance. **You can learn more mushrooms in one day than you can learn on your own in 5 years.** Don't forget the mushroom tasting. **Sign up now before the event is sold out.**

If you are a club member and have your registration sent in before August 20, the price is just \$30, by Aug 31 the price is \$35, after that it is \$50.

## COME TO THE MID ATLANTIC FORAY AND GET THIS \$30 BOOK FOR FREE!

### A Field Guide to Southern Mushrooms



Nancy Smith Weber  
and Alexander H. Smith

Photographs by Dan Guravich

Dr. Alexander Smith and Dr. Nancy Smith Weber are two of the most famous mycologist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The book is 5 3/8 by 10 5/8. It has 280 pages with 240 nicely sized beautiful color photographs. Although, it is called a southern field guide, most of the mushrooms are found here. It is a must have in my library. **This book is yours free when you come to the Mid Atlantic Mushroom Foray, one per family.**

## MUSHROOM COOKING CLASS WITH EXECUTIVE CHEF TOM CHULICK



### MUSHROOM TASTING

The Gary Lincoff Mid Atlantic Mushroom Foray will have mushroom tasting (Mycophagy). As we all know the menu is subject to the kinds of mushrooms we find. Although the menu has not been finalized for this year, last year's menu included:

Black Trumpet Dip  
Chicken Pasta Salad  
Boletus Separans Soup  
Sheephead & Barley  
Oysters in Béarnaise Sauce  
Chanterelle Potatoes  
Mushrooms & Spinach  
Candy Cap Coffee Cake

Chanterelle Dip  
Trumpet Pasta  
Chicken Etoufee  
Mushroom Log  
Candy Cap Carrots  
Chanterelle Risoto  
Shiitake Frittata  
Marsala Portobello



Pictured at the left is an example of our mushroom tasting.

Please donate mushrooms by calling Dick Dougall at 412-486-7504 or email him. [rsdme@imap.pitt.edu](mailto:rsdme@imap.pitt.edu)

## MID ATLANTIC MUSHROOM FORAY NEW TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

7:30-8:15 Registration  
7:45-8:15 Morning Walk Sign Up  
7:45-8:30 Sales Table Open  
8:30-8:31 President's Welcome  
8:31-8:32 Introduction of Mycologists  
8:32-8:35 How to Collect Mushrooms  
8:35-8:45 Organize Walks  
8:45-8:55 Proceed to Cars  
9:00-12:00 Collect Mushrooms  
12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)

We suggest you pack a lunch and drink or go to one of the nearby restaurants.

12:15-1:00 Sales Table Open

1:05-2:00 Gary Lincoff Slide Show and Talk  
2:00-2:05 Organize Walks  
2:05-4:00 Collect Mushrooms  
2:05-6:15 Mushroom Identification  
Identification Team identifies the collection and them on display for you to learn  
2:10-2:55 Cooking with Mushrooms by Chef Tom Chulick (limited to 30 people)  
2:55-3:40 Dave Miller Slide Show & Talk  
3:40-4:25 Ernst Both Slide Show and Talk  
4:00-7:00 Review the Collection  
4:30-5:30 Walt Sturgeon Slide Show & Talk  
5:35-6:15 Mushroom Tasting - Mycophagy  
5:35-6:15 Sales Table Open  
6:30-7:00 Gary Lincoff Table Walk  
7:00-7:30 Clean-Up (everybody helps)  
7:30 Leave or come to the party at a nearby location and socialize (even if you have a 4 hour drive, you should be home by 11:30)

### ITEMS FOR SALE AT FORAY

The club will be selling Vol. 2 of the Mushroom Cookbook that has 50 great mushroom recipes. We will have wax bags to help keep your mushrooms fresher and separated. We will have lounge chairs for sale to be able to see the small features of mushrooms and the club tee shirt will be available.

How many years of picking mushrooms would it take you to le this many mushrooms?



### SPECIAL OFFER

The cost of this day long mushroom foray is a real bargain. The price is only \$50 at the time of 12 hours of mushrooming, mushroom tasting and good friendship on Sept 10. **But, we have a special offer on the registration form for club members,** if you send your completed, signed, and dated registration form and receipt by Aug 20, it is \$30 or by Aug 31, \$35, after that it is \$50. The price for large forays like this is more. **WOW, what a bargain! Don't miss it. Send your registration in today.**

# WHY LEARN NEW MUSHROOMS?

By  
Dick  
Dougall

Why should I learn to identify new mushrooms? This is a lot of work, and there are so many to learn! This is a question we all ask ourselves as we look at a display table full of new mushrooms. A few are edible, some are poisonous, and most are inedible.

Learning new mushrooms will help people add a few new wild species they will actually eat. Any improvement in mushroom identification builds confidence in our ability. Some people in the club never eat mushrooms; they enjoy learning to identify new species.

The first step is always to learn the dangerous poisonous mushrooms so you will never accidentally eat one of these by mistake. Then, you can fine-tune your identifying skills with other mushrooms, edible or not.

I now know a lot of the common edible mushrooms which I eat, i.e. morels, chanterelles, oyster mushrooms, *Agaricus* species, chicken mushrooms, hen-of-the-woods, etc. I am thinking about adding to this list. Our club is a great help in this project because our Club Mycologists can check my identifications. Our all day foray in September (Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Mushroom Foray) allows me to get some good information from nationally known mycologists. Let me share with you my process of adding to my list of edibles.

My most recent additions have been the Dryad's Saddle (*P. squamosus*) and the Wine-cap *Stropharia* (*S. rugosoannulata*). Both of these are generally spring mushrooms. I have learned that Dryad's Saddles must be small (less than 3 inches) to be edible. They can grow very large and become too tough. They are fairly plentiful and are very unique in shape and coloring. Therefore, identifying them was easy. Wine caps are not quite so distinctive so they required more effort to learn. The wine caps grow in wood-chip mulch in a number of places near my home. I have become confident enough in my identification to eat these.

A new mushroom I am considering is the Mica Cap (*Coprinus micaceus*). I have found several

stumps that have produced these in large numbers. I have confirmed my identification with club Mycologist help. I am aware of the similar looking Alcohol Inky (*Coprinus atramentarius*) and will not have alcoholic beverages when trying *Coprinus* species.

Another specie for consideration to me is the Chicken-fat *Suillus* (*S. americanus*). I know a pine tree near my home where these commonly fruit. Again, they are very unique looking which makes identification easy. I also know that their slimy coating should be removed before eating.

Besides being confident in my identification of the above mushroom species, I have found spots near my home where I can gather them in reasonable quantities. This is further motivation to work on their identification. There are several other mushrooms that I want to find with confidence. These are the honey mushrooms (*Armillariella* species) and the milky mushrooms (*Lactarius* species). I don't have good hunting spots for these yet, but club forays will help.

I have had concerns about eating honey mushrooms. My first concern was eased when I became confident that I could identify the Deadly *Galerina* (*G. autumnalis*). I will work further on recognizing the various species of honey mushrooms. Also, I will try to find spots where these mushroom can be found in reasonably large quantities. This may take another year or more, but they should be added to my edible list in the near future.

My main problem with learning the milky mushrooms is my lack of success in finding these mushrooms in the woods in any quantity. I know these are a favorite of Gary Lincoff. Therefore, at our next Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Foray, I will have lots of questions for him about searching for these mushrooms. I'm sure he will have some good ideas.

I hope these thoughts will motivate some of you to continue working on your identification skills. Then, you too will start to think about adding a new mushroom or two to your edible list.

## WALKS & FORAYS by John Plischke III

We request that no one hunts a walk or foray location for at least two weeks prior to a walk or foray. It is only through your cooperation that we can have successful walks and forays. All walks & forays will be held rain or shine. Come 15-30 min early and socialize. All walks start on time, so be early, if you are late we will already be in the woods. You can find last minute additions or changes by going to our Yahoo Groups at [groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub)

**August 13** – 10:00 – 12:00 **McConnell's Mill**, Butler County. Meet **Liz Barrow and Bob Lucas**. From the North or South: Take I-79 to the PA 422 exit. Go West on 422 for about a mile, turn left at the sign to McConnell's Mill onto McConnell's Mill Road. The sign is not obvious and is immediately at the turn. Follow this road to the parking lot and picnic area at the end. This area has been very productive on past walks.

**August 11-14, 2005 NEMF Sam Ristich Foray at Mont Alto Campus of Penn State University in Mont Alto, PA** There will be lectures and workshops all day Friday and Saturday, as well as many forays to choose from. There is no membership requirement. On the web, see [www.nemf.org](http://www.nemf.org) for upcoming info and registration form for the foray. Our own **John Plischke III, Sam Ristich, and Gary Lincoff** will be members of the faculty. Other will include: **Roy Watling, Walt Sturgeon, Gary Lincoff, Bart Buyck, Roz Lowen, Ernst Both, and Glenn Freeman**.

**August 20** – 10:00 -12:00 **Mingo Creek**, Washington County. Meet **Marty, Anna & Ross DeLattre and Bobby Boice**. I 70 to old Exit 9 Eighty Four/Glyde. Take Rt. 519 N for 2 miles. At a red light turn right onto Rt. 136. Go 4.4 miles and turn left at a sign to Mingo Creek Park. Follow signs to the park. Turn right then cross a covered bridge that is just before the Park Office. Meet at Shelter # 6. <http://www.washpatourism.org/parks.html>

**Aug 27**- 11:00 am **Brady's Run Park**, Beaver County. Meet **John Plischke and John Plischke III** for a program and walk. Head on the Parkway West out of Pittsburgh toward the Airport/Route 60. Pass the Airport on Route 60 and continue on to the Chippewa exit. It is the last exit before 60 becomes a toll road. When you exit at Chippewa, make a Right at the light onto Route 51, south. Continue on Route 51 (about 2 miles) until you come to the red light in front of the entrance to Brady's Run Park. Make a right into the park. About 1 mile down the road (near the lake and beach) you will see a turn up the hill to your right and a sign that says "Ed Calland Arboretum". Turn here and follow the road all the way to the top, you will see a parking area and the pavilion.

**Sept 3** – 10:00-12:00 **Upper Dock Hollow, Freeport**, Armstrong County. Meet **Don Stone and Susan Baker**. Enjoy this mushroom walk along a trail that also has two beautiful waterfalls. Follow Main Street. Go through a tunnel under the railroad and park in the parking lot at Riverside Park.

**Sept 10** – **Gary Lincoff Mid Atlantic Mushroom Foray** Don't miss it, register today!

**September 16-18** - Meet the **Mycological Association of Washington** at **Camp Sequanota** in Jennerstown, PA, which is where they've had excellent foray weekends in September of every year but two since 1988. The record number of species there was about 260, and sometimes found vast quantities of choice edibles (well, pretty good amounts) like black chanterelles, horse mushrooms, Boletus separans and Boletus bicolor. Details will be at [www.mawdc.org](http://www.mawdc.org)

**Sept 24** - 10:00-12:00 **Charleroi**, Westmoreland County. Meet **Gavin Farkas and LaMonte Yarroll**. From I 70 take the Charleroi Exit. Turn right on 88 S. Go 5-6 miles past the Allenport Steel Mill. After you pass the Speedy Mart, take the 2<sup>nd</sup> right on Walnut St. Look for a sign that says Howling Hills. After that sign there is a tee in the road, at the tee, go right. That takes you to the Jackson farm. The variety of habitats makes hunting sound good.

**Oct 2**, 12:00 - 5:00 pm: Meet the **Mycological Association of Washington** for a **Mushroom Fair** at Brookside Gardens, Wheaton Regional Park, Wheaton, MD. Their guest mycologist will be **John Plischke III**. For more info, email Program Chair, Gordon Callahan, at [programs@mawdc.org](mailto:programs@mawdc.org).

**Oct 8**- 11:00 am **Sewickley Park, Fern Hollow Nature Center**. Meet **John Plischke and John Plischke III** for a program and walk. **From PITTSBURGH** Take Route 65 North to I-79 North exit. Make a right at stop sign. Proceed ¼ mile and make a left on Deer Run Road. Proceed on Deer Run Road, which becomes Merriman Road to second stop sign and make a left on Glen Mitchell Road. Fern Hollow Nature Center is on the right at the crest of the hill.

**DIRECTIONS to North Park** [www.county.allegheny.pa.us/parks/parkphon.asp](http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/parks/parkphon.asp) From Pittsburgh go north on Rt. 8. Turn left onto Wildwood Road onto the Yellow Belt (Ford Dealer and Boston Market on the right). Go 1.3 mi. to a red light; go straight (W Hardies). Continue another 1.6 mi. to a red light at North Park Entrance, road name changes to Ingomar Road at this intersection, Turn left on Babcock Blvd. Follow the signs to the Swimming Pool parking lot and find the car with a yellow ribbon on the antenna.

**DIRECTIONS to Hartwood Acres:** From PA Turnpike: Take Allegheny Valley (Exit 5). Stay right on the exit ramp. Turn right onto Route 910 West. Go 4 1/2 miles and turn left onto Saxonburg Blvd. at the red blinking light. Follow Saxonburg Blvd. about 2 1/2 miles, entrance will be on your right. This is about a mile and a half from Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve.

For all walks and forays, bring water and lunch. Dress for the weather. Bring basket, wax or paper bags (no plastic) to keep mushrooms separated, whistle, compass, chair, hand lens, insect repellent, cell phone, and books for identification. Also bring a knife to dig up mushrooms for identification or to cut edibles off to keep them clean. Try to dig up 3 of the same species at different stages of development. Don't pick old mushrooms; leave them to drop their spores. Bring your membership card and a friend or two. You are responsible for not getting lost, if you have that tendency stick like glue to others. We won't wait for you, and we won't come 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 that 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 only your decision.

## **WPMC Meetings/Programs by Dick Dougall, Program Chair**

**Members are encouraged to bring mushrooms from home for identification. Bring your books and try to name some of your mushrooms. Hand them to a club mycologist to sign off on. Once the meeting starts only club mycologists are permitted at the tables. When the meeting is over and mycologists have checked everything, identifications will be considered accurate.**

**Make sure to sign in at all meetings, you just might win a door prize.**

**Meetings/Programs begin at 7:00 pm at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve.**

**August 16: Beginner Mushroom ID Part 1: Mostly Gilled by John Plischke III, Club Mycologist & Walk and Foray Chair** This slide show will cover both edible and non edible mushrooms, many of which one is likely to encounter in the woods. The program is arranged into groups of mushrooms and often with an edible mushroom then one or more of its look-alikes. Some mushrooms features, such as spore print, gills, habitat and edibility will be discussed. Some of the more popular covered groups include: Agaricus, Amanita, Lepiota, and Armillaria. For additional information on the program, go to the club's Yahoo Groups at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub> you must sign in to be able to view the files section. There you will be able to view or print the 2 page pass-out for the program which includes a list of all of the species that will be shown. Print it and get a heads up.

**September 20: Reproductive Strategies of Fungi by LaMonte Yarroll, Club Mycologist & Member of Education Committee.** Did you know that the Split Gill (*Schizophyllum commune*) has about 28,000 genders? What does that MEAN? How do we decide whether or not two fungi are members of the same species? The traditional answer has been to conduct a mating study. What is a mating study and what does it tell us about fungi? We'll review typical mushroom life-cycles and look at some of the more exotic variations in kingdom Fungi. Come see how much fun one person has with fungi without eating them.

**October 18—Title: Election of Officers & Open Forum** Officers for next year will be elected. Club members will be encouraged to share mushrooms stories, experiences and slides. Bring along any photos, new books, or anything else to share with fellow mushroomers. Do you have any questions that might be answered?

**November 15: Mushroom Cooking Panel Discussion.** Many club members are interested in cooking mushrooms, but they don't have much experience and have many questions. The club has many members who are excellent cooks in this area. Some of these members will form a panel to present their favorite recipes and answer cooking questions. This is a must meeting for people interested expanding their knowledge of mushroom cookery.

The WPMC Photo Contest winners will be announced. Make sure to get your entries in.

### **DIRECTIONS**

**DIRECTIONS to Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve:** (<http://www.aswp.org/beechwood.html>)

12 minutes from PA Turnpike Exit , Allegheny Valley (New Kensington/Pittsburgh) after tollbooth go south 1.2 miles on Freeport Road towards Pittsburgh. At the fourth stoplight (Eat'n'Park Restaurant on the right) turn right onto Guys Run Road. Go 4.1 miles to the second stop sign. Notice, part way on your journey Guys Run Road becomes Fox Chapel Road without any notification. Fox Chapel Road dead ends into Dorseyville Road. Turn left on Dorseyville and go .7 of a mile to Beechwood, on the right.

## **AIDS IN IDENTIFICATION**

Mushroom identification is not an easy thing to do on your own. Studying the mushrooms and checking the field guides are a great way to begin. Take a spore print and note all the defining characteristics. List the possible mushrooms you may have. Now get a little help from your friends.

Go to the club website at [wpamushroomclub.org](http://wpamushroomclub.org) Next to the Species List created by Bob Lucas. Go to the Life List and click on the camera icon for the mushroom you think you may have. Study the photos that come up. Remember these photos come from a Google search, so use them as a possibility.

Go to our Yahoo Groups at [groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub), post a message giving all the defining characteristics of your find. Take a digital photo showing the top, side and underside of the mushroom and add that to the file section. Ask our members if they have some ideas as to what the mushroom is. Our members have a wealth of knowledge and can aid you in coming to your decision as to what the mushroom really is.

# Hen of the Woods

By  
John  
Plischke III

Hen of the woods is one of Pennsylvania's most sought after mushrooms. Hen of the Woods sort of resembles the feathers on the back end of a hen, hence the name. When looking for the Sheep Head as it's often called in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, only check on oak trees, since this is the tree it grows in association with 99% of the time. We prefer to look at the base of large mature oaks but they can occasionally be found on medium sized oaks. Typically bigger oak trees get bigger hens and the bigger trees increase the chance of a successful hunt. The larger trees also often get more than one hen. Once in a while they can be found growing on underground oak roots.

Occasionally I find them growing on top of the roots of an uprooted tree. They often appear next to the spot where the tree was struck by lightning creating an injury for the mushroom to enter. I saw this happen a year after a tree was struck in a friend's woods. Since the gypsy moth has hit and killed large numbers large oak trees and logging has increased, they are becoming less common and we have lost about 10% of our places to hunt *Grifola frondosa*.

I usually look for these mushrooms in parks and on hillsides that are loaded with oaks. A good way to find an oak woods is when driving around in November and all the leaves have already fallen; oak trees usually have some dried brown leaves still hanging on them. Use a pen and paper and record these spots for hunting the following year.

Now, don't think you will find a Hen of the Woods on every oak tree that you check, you won't. It takes a lot of hard legwork to find one of them. On average, in a new spot, I have to check 100 to 200 large oak trees during its season to find one of them.

Besides the mushroom's great taste, it is also reported to have a lot of medicinal properties including anti-cancer properties. A small bottle of Sheep Head pills can cost \$25.00. According to some people who swear by this mushroom, the best thing to do is to drink the left over juice from when the mushroom was boiled. Although the possible health benefits sound great, the taste of the juice is not.

Although I usually go hiking in the woods to find them, my dad & his friend Larry usually go road hunting for them. Their favorite way to find them is at 55 MPH driving down back mountain roads. To do this, the driver just drives and the passenger looks for them. They only look at the bases of large oak trees and stumps. When they see one, they slow down and check it. Then after driving past it, they look out the back window to check the backside of the tree, which is where the mushroom is often hiding. Their favorite tools are a knife to cut the mushroom off with, since pulling it out "by the roots" reduces the chances of it coming back the next year, a pair of binoculars, so they don't have to get out of the car to check, & a camouflage bag.



## \*HEN OF THE WOODS

(*Grifola frondosa*)

Formerly Called (*Polypilus frondosus*) (*Polyporus frondosus*)

**OTHER COMMON NAMES:** Dancing Mushroom in Japan, Maitake - when cultivated, Sheep Head, Sheep's Head, Ram's Head

**FAMILY:** Polyporaceae

**Flesh:** It is white and meaty.

**Mushroom:** A large somewhat roundish bunch of overlapping caps. The mushroom can be 4 to 12 inches tall and 5 to 24 inches wide and weigh 1 to 50 pounds. The cap color typically gets lighter the further away from the outer edge.

**Single Cap:** Each cap piece is 1/2 to 3 inches wide and 1/8 to 3/8 inch thick. They are grayish on top turning brownish with age and they are sometimes whitish around the top outside edges. The caplets grow in clusters that are irregular in size and they are circular except where connected. It can be lobed. It starts off thicker where it is connected and gets thinner going towards the outer edge. The stalk attaches to the side of it. It can be zoned.

**Pores:** White turning a little yellowish with age. They go part way down the stalk. They are on the underside of the caps.

**Spore Print:** White.

**Stalks:** From 1/2 to 1 5/8 inches long. They are white turning cream then yellowish with age. There are many of them with many branches. They are attached to the side of the cap. They are fused together at the base to form a single stalk there.

**Odor:** mild to unpleasant or like ammonia with age. **Taste:** Mild.

**RANGE:** North Eastern United States. Canada. PA, WV, OH, NY

**WHERE TO LOOK:** In semi open oak woods such as parks where there is some grass and that is mowed every several weeks or mature shady oak woods. Very rarely it can grow on wild black cherry or yellow birch. This mushroom can be found on the same oak tree for many years since they are parasitic on it. About half the time others can be found in the same wooded area. They can also be found next to the base of oak stumps. Even though this is a common mushroom it is very easy to miss because it blends in with the brown leaves around it. If you find a young fist sized one it is often good to leave and come back in a couple of days to pick it when it matures. But, you run the risk of someone else picking it if it is in a park or other well visited area. In that case, we often camouflage it by covering it with a pile of leaves since it needs no light to grow.

**HOW OFTEN THEY'RE FOUND:** It is common. I usually find at least a dozen a year, but I only go out looking for them one day a week. My dad has collected up to 60 of them in a season.

**HOW THEY'RE GROUPED:** One or two are common but we have found up to 17 growing around a single well matured oak.

**SOCIAL PLANTS:** Grass, violets, dandelions, broadleaf plantain, narrow leaf plantain, moss, and ground ivy can sometimes be found growing beside it but usually there are not any social plants. I saw Tartarian honeysuckle growing beside it once.

**WHEN TO LOOK:** They can be found August to November but September and October are the best. On the larger trees that I have found them on I often go back and check two or three weeks later and I have occasionally collected an additional one growing there.

**LOOK ALIKES:** The edible Black-Staining Polypore (*Meripilus sumstinei*), which unlike the Sheep Head bruises black. The edible Umbrella Polypore (*Polyporus umbellatus*), which has circular caps; central stems, a lighter color, and usually grows on beech. The edible Berkeley's Polypore (*Bondarzewia berkeleyi*) who has much larger creamish colored pieces of the cap. The entire cap can be up to 3 feet wide. It also likes oak but it has a bitter taste. All three of these are edible.

**EDIBILITY:** Edible and Choice.

**COOKING INSTRUCTIONS:** When Grifola gets too old to eat it can develop the odor of ammonia or get a white mold on it and dry out and become hard. First the mushroom should be checked for beetles, centipedes, spiders and other insects, which might be hiding between the branches and they should be removed. Then the caps can be separated using a knife to do any final cleaning. The caps are fairly meaty and a brush can be used to scrub a piece here and there with out any problems of water absorption. The mushroom should be boiled to remove any tannin. It does not loose much of its size when cooked. The caps are excellent pickled or breaded. They also are good put into spaghetti. The base can be cut into steak like pieces and fried in butter or olive oil and garlic. I have also eaten it in a mushroom spread with cream cheese and spices on crackers and in cheese squares at Mushroom Mania. It dries well in a food dehydrator. Caution: break them into usable pieces before drying. If you dry them in large chunks and break after they are dried, breathing problems can occur. Any unused pieces can be put into Ziploc bags and frozen for later use.



### The Remains of a cut Sheep Head



I came across this giant oak tree that had 6 cut hens around its base. One of them can be seen in the above photo. The white cut off base of the mushroom let me spot it from over 50 feet away! I wrote down the spot and have since claimed it as my own and have beaten the hunter to get his hens every year since. Always hide your hen remains or your spot could become mine.

### A Large Oak Tree Surrounded by Hens



The morning Kim picked these, we came home with over 60 prime specimens.

### Hiding the Sheep Head Remains



This photo shows how I hid the hen remains. A few leaves easily does the trick. I will even cover a baby hen with a few dry leaves to let it mature if it is growing in a heavily hunted location. This is exactly what I did to the baby hens in the spot that I claimed. The poor person probably walked passed and thought that they did not grow there anymore and did not realize that they were now hidden.

### The Umbrella Polypore



Polyporus umbellatus looks a lot like a hen. Its cap differs by having stems that connect the center of the cap. It is very delicious and is also a prized edible.

# "Largest Mushroom Club in the Ten-State Area"

Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club  
129 Grant Street  
Greensburg, PA 15601

Non profit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Greensburg, PA  
Permit # 1057

## MUSHROOM MANIA HEN OF THE WOODS MEETINGS WHY LEARN MUSHROOMS? WALKS AND FORAYS

### CLUB OFFICERS

**President:** Joseph Luzanski 724-872-7867  
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**Corresponding Secretary:** Valerie Baker 412-367-7696  
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### COMMITTEES

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LaMonte Yarroll  
**Festival Chair:** George Yakulis (see Treasurer)  
**Historian:** Jane Duffy 412-492-0104 230 Indiana Drive, Glenshaw, PA 15116  
**Hospitality Chair:** Kim Plischke 724-832-0271 [Ladiebugzkp@aol.com](mailto:Ladiebugzkp@aol.com)  
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