

Next Meeting May 13th, 2002

# SPORES Afield

The newsletter of the Colorado Mycological Society

May 2002

## Editors Notes

Last year while trying to figure out where it was wet enough to be productive I happened on a little trick that I would like to share with you. If you can log on to the web try this, go to [www.theweatherchannel.com](http://www.theweatherchannel.com) (you can also use the weather on AOL) then click on maps and enter a local zip code. This will bring up a Doppler radar map for a 600 mile radius and will show you where the storms went that day. You can narrow that map down to 300 miles and see with great accuracy where the rain went. The main drawback is you must check it every day. I have not found a way to view these maps going back a couple of weeks. I'm still refining this and if you know how to search past maps let me know.

## Speaker for the May meeting

Arctic-Alpine Mushrooms: Undiscovered Diversity Above Treeline  
By Cathy Cripps

Sandwiched between snow-capped peaks and dense boreal forests lies a magical land called the "Alpine vegetation zone." In the thin air beyond the trees, alpine forget-me-nots and a myriad of miniature flowers thrive despite blustery cold, desert-like heat, and strong radiation that can quickly sunburn the unwary. It may seem an unlikely place to hunt for mushrooms, but milky caps, Russulas, boletes, Amanitas, puffballs, Cortinari, and Inocybes abound.

For our National Science Foundation survey, we have discovered unusual fungi, such as Pleurotellus, Rickenella, and Arrhenia in Colorado's alpine zone, which includes an intense look at the San Juan Mountains. The morels at 12,000 ft. were quite unexpected! The nearest relatives of these mountaintop dwellers are the arctic mushrooms that are found in northern polar regions. The slide show includes alpine wildflowers, wildlife, and scenic vistas, as well as a sampling of the 150 species of alpine mushrooms from Colorado's high country.

Dr. Cathy Cripps is an adjunct-research professor at Montana State University in Bozeman, where she teaches mycology and a course on Rocky Mountain Mushrooms. She graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute under the tutelage of Dr. Orson K. Miller, Jr. Her research on the mycorrhizal mushrooms of Montana aspen forests is published in numerous journals. She currently has an NSF-funded grant to survey alpine fungi in the Rocky Mountains, and a grant to improve mushroom farming in Montana. Cathy has collected mushrooms in the Rocky Mountains, from Colorado to Montana, for the last 25 years and has given talks on mushrooms throughout the world. She has a close bond with Colorado, having lived in a small cabin near Gunnison for many years, and was the recorder for the Telluride Mushroom Conference before returning to graduate school.

## ELDERHOSTEL TO HOST CLASS ON MUSHROOMS

Lake View Education Center, located on the shore of Lake San Cristobal near Lake City, CO, will be the site again this summer of an Elderhostel session on:

"VOLCANOES, GLACIERS AND MUSHROOMS: A 4x4 COLORADO ADVENTURE"

The program will be held August 18-24, 2002, and is a repeat of a successful session held there for the past several years. The program explores the geology of the San Juan Mountains, looking at the roles of both volcanism and glaciation in the formation of this geologically significant area. Lectures come alive during an all day 4x4 drive field trip to American Basin -- a beautiful high valley surrounded by 13,-14,000 peaks, the Basin is famous for its lovely wildflower display, tundra landscape and notable "rock glacier." The "Slumgullion Earthflow" is also nearby and provides evidence of "recent" earth movement. The week's classes also explore the wild mushrooms that abound in nearby forests. Slide shows, lectures, hands-on experiences and identification lead up to forays in the area. There are opportunities to prepare, cook and sample the harvest. The area boasts a great variety of mushrooms, although the class emphasizes identification of a few "really good ones" and how to best prepare, preserve and cook them. This is not a "textbook" class with a dreaded #2 pencil test at the end, but rather a chance to learn more about fungi in Colorado in a beautiful setting with friendly and always interesting Elderhostelers.

Additional information, including availability of space at the session, may be obtained by calling Elderhostel toll-free at 1-877-426-8056 or by visiting their Web site at [www.elderhostel.org](http://www.elderhostel.org). Class registration numbers are: for double occupancy, #06210-0915-01; for single occupancy, #06210-0915-21.

CMS member, Dorothy Jochim, can answer questions about Lake View Resort; feel free to contact her at 303-424-8973.

## Morel Foray

Lead by William Windsor

It has been a very dry winter and unless we receive substantial rain within the next two weeks (and daytime temps do not jump consistently to the 80's), the morel fruiting season may not be very good this year. Do your best rain dance and maybe we will get lucky.

For those interested in a morel foray, please e-mail me at [william453@attbi.com](mailto:william453@attbi.com) or call me at 303-544-6069. This will be a weekend foray on short notice. I will wait until I start finding yellow morels, then immediately notify those who are interested for the following Saturday. Based on past experience my best guess is May 11th, but it could be as early as May 4th.

## New CMS T-shirt

President Tom Ruzicka has come up with a new design for the CMS T-shirt. It will be available for the first time at the May meeting.

## Lost And Found

Did you lose your favorite soft navy blue hat from EMS at the Mushroom Fair or one of our meetings late last year? If so, give me a call at 303-377-1278 or by e-mail, [MariHShaw@aol.com](mailto:MariHShaw@aol.com). Marilyn Shaw

### *Spores Afield*

*Spores Afield* is published from March through October by the Colorado Mycological Society. CMS dues are \$23 for the first year and \$20 thereafter. Send membership dues to CMS Membership Chair, Box 9621, Denver, CO 80209. All CMS members receive *SporesAfield* as part of their membership.

CMS is an associate member of the North American Mycological Association.

CMS website: <http://www.cmsweb.org>

## CMS Member Karen Adams Dies

Karen Adams didn't look like a mushroom expert, until she took her place behind a display table and started gently correcting your misidentifications.

Then you'd say to yourself, how can a person be so smart and so nice, usually, it seems, people are one or the other. But Karen was both. She was full of knowledge, always dispensed with grace, about all natural things, especially mushrooms.

And you could not find a kinder person, willing to do whatever she could for anyone. For example, when Karen was in the midst of her fight with cancer, carefully regulating her diet, she went out of her way to share the melon she was saving for her own dinner with my whiny five-year-old. Some people might have spanked my five-year-old, but Karen gave him her dinner instead. (She would treat cranky mycologists with the same non-stop kindness.)

It was, of course, the mushroom connection that linked us. Karen was on the faculty of the Telluride Mushroom Festival for 20 years. We were all lucky that Karen was as talented at cooking mushrooms as she was at identifying them, again, two talents that are not often seen together. She masterfully coordinated the Festival's annual cook-and-taste feast, which might have been more aptly called a cook-with-haste headache, but Karen made it fun for everyone, and most everything was delicious. (We will excuse her for the scaly tooth concoctions.)

Everyone who knew Karen will miss her dearly.

Jason Salzman

## Upcoming Events

- May 13<sup>th</sup>** Cathy Cripps,  
"Artic-Alpine Mushrooms:  
Undiscovered diversity above  
treeline"
- June 10<sup>th</sup>** Vera Evenson  
Topic to be announced
- July 8<sup>th</sup>** Marc Donsky,  
"Mushroom Cultivation"
- Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>** Foray with Jack States, collecting  
for the mushroom fair
- Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>** Mushroom fair setup
- Aug. 11<sup>th</sup>** Annual CMS Mushroom Fair at  
Denver Botanic Gardens
- Aug. 12<sup>th</sup>** Jack States,  
"Mystery and Magic in Mushroom  
Identification: Will the REAL  
Boletus edulis please stand up"
- Aug. 22-25** 21st Annual Telluride Mushroom  
Festival  
Call: 303-296-9359  
Write: Fungophile  
Box 480503  
Denver, CO 80248-0503  
Complete details coming soon.
- Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>** Nancy Smith Weber,  
"Morels"
- Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>** Terri Jensen and Karen Aguiar,  
"Medicinal Mushrooms"

## Fair time

It is that time again, when we would like volunteers for the fair, we all had great fun last year, setting up everything, and would like to have as many volunteers as possible.

**Please call Jae Lucus at:  
303-697-4417**

# Identifying Mushrooms to Genus,

## Part 1: Amanita & Agaricus

By Jon Sommer

The genus *Amanita* contains typically large, fleshy mushrooms with white spores and 'free' gills (when observed in cross-section, the gills do not meet the stalk). The last two characteristics are the most important in identifying the genus. Most of the *Amanitas* begin growing as spheres of material surrounded by a 'skin' called a universal veil. As the stalk begins to elongate the veil tissue does not grow, and fragments into a top half, left as a series of patches or warts on the cap, and a bottom half, left as a cup or volva at the base of the stalk. All *Amanitas* (except for the often-included sub genus *Amanitopsis*) have a veil of tissue that connects the edge of the cap with the stalk. As the cap expands this tissue is left as either a ring on the stalk (an 'annulus'), tissue fragments on the edge of the cap, or some combination of the two.

It is always important for identification purposes when collecting an unknown mushroom to dig all the way down around the base of the stalk to determine if there are remnants of the universal veil down in the soil. *Amanitas* typically form mycorrhizal (symbiotic) relationships with the roots of higher plants such as conifer and hardwood trees. They are therefore collected in woodland habitats or under such trees. It is a very large genus, with many 100's of species, and they are not all known or described here in the United States.

**Edibility:** While there are some that are choice edibles, none of these (to my knowledge) have been found in Colorado. The genus definitely contains some of the most deadly poisonous species (*A. phalloides*, *A. verna*, *A. ocreata*), again none of which to my knowledge have been found in Colorado. Some may be hallucinogenic (*A. muscaria*, *A. pantherina*) and these occur commonly here in Colorado. I would always recommend that no one eat any *Amanita*, except

those with a lot of mushrooming experience and knowledge.

The genus *Agaricus* consists of fleshy, some time very large mushrooms with chocolate-brown spores and free gills. There is no volva (cup) at the base of the stalk, and they have an annulus present on the stalk. The gills typically start out pink colored when young, and as the mushrooms mature they turn darker to eventually become chocolate-brown or purple-brown. *Agaricus* species are not mycorrhizal (symbiotic) and grow in pastures, along roadsides, in 'waste' places as well as in the woods. The former generic name, *Psalliota* (the 'P' is silent), is often used a common name in Europe. This is a very large and diverse genus, and contains the most common store-bought mushroom, *A. bisporus* (which does not occur in nature).

A number of *Agaricus* species have now been successfully cultivated, and can be "collected" safely at your local supermarket. Some of the species have a characteristic 'almond-anise' odor, which most people find appealing. This is typical of *A. augustus*, a delicious edible found in Colorado. A large group of *Agaricus* species stain or bruise reddish to brownish when handled. This can be easily seen in store-bought *Agaricus* species. Another large group of *Agaricus* species have a mild to strong phenolic odor. This group (the *Xanthodermati*) has a yellow-staining reaction of the cap (and often stalk) tissue. This reaction can be tested by applying strong alkali (like bleach or draino) to the cap and observing the instant yellow staining. This group of *Agaricus* species are definitely toxic and should not be eaten!!

**Edibility:** See above comments. Many of the most commonly collected edibles are *Agaricus* species, such as *A. campestris* ('meadow mushroom' or 'pink bottom'). Make sure to avoid the yellow-stainers and those that smell like phenol, and don't eat large quantities of any mushroom the first time. Happy hunting!!!

**Editor's note:** This is the first in a series of columns that we will publish, identifying some of the more common mushroom genera found in Colorado.



DIAMOND LAKE, OREGON  
OCTOBER 10-13, 2002

## The North American Mycological Association

### NAMA '02

Ann Bornstein, Registration Coordinator  
gramma.ann@att.net (510) 839-2487  
336 Lenox Ave., Oakland, CA 94610-4675

**Complete both sides of this form and send it to Ann Bornstein with your check to "NAMA '02".**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of other attendees at same address: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and club for name tags: \_\_\_\_\_

Housing:  Motel Room (2 persons, 2 large beds)

Cabin (4 persons, 2 bedrooms: 1 queen, 2 twins) Choose:  twins  queen

Housekeeping Studio (2 persons, 2 twins or queen) Choose:  twins  queen

Non-smoking: \_\_\_\_\_ Easy access: \_\_\_\_\_

I want to share a room with: \_\_\_\_\_ Find roommate: Male  Female

If cabin, please share with: \_\_\_\_\_ Please assign folks for the cabin's other room \_\_\_\_\_

Registration (includes 3 nights, 8 meals) # \_\_\_\_\_ at \$262 double /\$336 single \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Commuters (includes 2 lunches, 2 dinners) # \_\_\_\_\_ at \$151 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAMA membership (required if not current) \$35 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Trustees meeting (1 night, 3 meals) # \_\_\_\_\_ at \$60 double /\$85 single \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want vegetarian meals? \_\_\_\_\_

**Be sure to sign up for volunteer opportunities and sign and date the Liability Release on the next page of this form. We must have a signed release for all adults attending the foray.**

## Liability Release and Promise Not to Sue

I understand there is some risk in participating in a mushroom foray and conference: all those risks one assumes by being away from home, risks associated with moving about in fields and woods, risks involved in eating wild mushrooms, risks of losing personal property by theft or misplacement, and all other expected and unexpected risks. In registering for or attending this foray, I agree to assume total responsibility during this event for my own safety and well-being, and that of any minor children under my care, and for the protection of my and their personal property. I release The North American Mycological Association, its trustees, officers, employees, contractors, and all other persons assisting in the planning and presentation of this event from liability for any sickness, injury or loss I or any minor children under my care may suffer during this event or as a result of attending and participating. I further promise not to file a lawsuit or make a claim against any of the persons listed above, even if they negligently cause me or my minor children injury or loss. Finally, I agree to hold NAMA harmless from any liability it may incur as a result of any damages to Diamond Lake property I may cause. This release and promise is part of the consideration I give in order to attend this event. I understand it affects my legal rights. I intend it to apply not only to me but to anyone who may have the right to make a claim on my behalf.

Signature 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name 3: \_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteer Options

This is your foray. We hope every attendee will give a few hours before and/or during the foray to make it a huge success. Please sign up for the tasks that interest you: write 1 for first choice, 2 for second, etc. If more than one person is completing the form, please indicate which requests are for which person. The coordinator will contact you with details.

#### Registration:

Assemble packets: Wed evening \_\_\_\_\_

Registration desk: Thurs 10 AM-1 PM \_\_\_\_\_ 1 PM - 4 PM \_\_\_\_\_ Thurs 4 PM - 6 PM \_\_\_\_\_

#### Forays:

Help set up display and identification areas: \_\_\_\_\_ Assist identifiers during foray: \_\_\_\_\_

Clean up: Sunday AM \_\_\_\_\_

#### Mycophagy:

Setup/Make decorative mushroom display \_\_\_\_\_

Food Preparation: Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ Clean up: Saturday \_\_\_\_\_

#### Raffle:

Before foray: Solicit prizes \_\_\_\_\_ During foray: Sell tickets \_\_\_\_\_

#### Programs:

Host (check room/assist lecturer/run errands): \_\_\_\_\_

#### Logistics:

Audio visual assistance (slides/projector): \_\_\_\_\_ Bus coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Vendors

Items for sale: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of space desired \_\_\_\_\_

## Member Profile



**Name:** Jae Lucas

**Birth Place:** Colorado

**Town of residence:** Conifer

**Years with CMS:** 5

**Years collecting:**

I have been collecting mushrooms since childhood, from that point on I have been a "Mycoholic". Wherever I went I looked for shrooms, primarily as subject's for my artwork and more recently for the table.

**Are you a member of other clubs?**

Platte Canyon Artist Guild.

**What do you do with the club?**

I have been the CMS Fair Chairperson for the last 2 years as well as filling in as Secretary when needed.

**Schooling:**

I received my Associate in Arts from the Colorado Women's College, which is now The Denver University Law School. I received my Bachelor of Arts from San Jose State College and took many postgraduate courses at seven different universities in the U.S.A..

**What do/did you do for a living?**

After graduating from San Jose I spent 12 years in

the medical field doing lab and x-ray work, office management, assisting with autopsies, and many more medical duties. After "burning out" in the medical field I was an executive secretary for Carnation Milk Co. in Los Angeles, plus several other companies for the next 8 years. I then moved with my family to Australia where I spent a year as a data technician with an Oceanographic firm, studying the floor of the Indian Ocean. After this another career change, I spent 3 years teaching art and fencing at the high school level in South Australia. In 1975 my family and I moved back to the U.S.A. and settled in Ohio where I taught art to 5th through 8th graders, and adults at Ohio University. After 17 years of teaching I took early retirement and moved to Denver to live with my daughter and family.

**Favorite general area to hunt:**

Around Wellington Lake; although just a couple of weeks ago there was a large forest fire in the area and I am not sure if my favorite spots were harmed.

**Out of state forays:**

I once went to a family reunion in Ohio, during the festivities I went on a foray of my own and found lots of mushrooms. I brought them back to the reunion but no one was very interested in my finds. One of my favorite things to do is to paint and sculpt mushrooms. I have sold paintings and sculptures throughout the United States and abroad. I have traveled in India and Nepal and once found an 18" bolete in South Australia.

**Editors note 1:**

I want to make sure that Jae's sister gets credit, she sent me this bio and I brought it back into the first person. She also said that in 1962 Jae won a state fencing championship which qualified her to go to L.A. and fence in the National championships.

**Editor's Note 2:**

This column is a regular feature presented as a way for members to get to know each other. If you would like to be interviewed please contact me at; [onebwwd@aol.com](mailto:onebwwd@aol.com) or 303-440-7123.

## **HAVE BASKET, WILL TRAVEL (#1)**

The annual Conference/Foray of the North American Mycological Association (NAMA) will convene October 10-13, 2002 at Diamond Lake, Oregon near legendary Crater Lake. Chief Mycologist for the event will be Dr. Jim Trappe of Oregon State University. Dr. Trappe is an expert on the subject of hypogeous (underground) fungi. Yes, that includes truffles, and yes, we have truffles in the United States. Among the other outstanding mycologists who will take part, and with whom conferees will interact are, Dr. Nancy Smith Weber, Ascomycete expert (including morels) from OSU, and Dr. Michael Beug, Evergreen State College, who has authored many of the educational slide programs offered to NAMA members.

Also present will be a number of other outstanding practitioners of the art of mycology. If you really want to learn about mushrooms in a very short time, this is the way to go. There are lectures and workshops filling every hour of the day. At the same time, for those who prefer to get out and collect instead of sitting and listening, there will be forays to nearby spots. The real problem is making choices.

Not to be overlooked is the opportunity to make new friendships and renew old ones among the 250 NAMA members who will attend. The membership of NAMA is diverse. You will encounter interesting and delightful people from all walks of life. There are plenty of social activities to aid in getting acquainted. And, dear to most mushroomers' hearts, lots of delicious food.

Much more information is available on NAMA's web site, [namyco.org](http://namyco.org), as is a registration form. Basic cost for three nights' lodging and eight meals is \$262 each, double occupancy, or \$336, single. This price includes all lectures and forays. Current membership in NAMA (\$32 for members of affiliated clubs, including CMS, \$35 for those who are not) is required. Details about additional costs for transportation from airports to Diamond Lake Resort, if needed, are available on the web page. If you don't have access to the internet, or you have any questions, please call me, Marilyn Shaw, CMS Club Trustee to NAMA, at 303-377-1278. Don't wait too long. It is expected that the foray to this beautiful part of the country will be a sell-out. A registration form is included in this issue of *Spores*.

## **CAN'T MAKE IT TO OREGON? TRY HB,WT (#2)**

A Regional NAMA Foray will be held September 12-15, 2002 at Wildacres Conference Center near the Blue Ridge Parkway between Asheville and Blowing Rock in North Carolina. The Chief Mycologist will be Dr. Orson Miller, familiar to all but the most recent members of CMS. Cost for three nights' lodging and eight meals is \$160 per person, double occupancy. Limit is 40 participants. You must be a member of NAMA to attend. More information is available from Allein Stanley, 1057 Westminster Dr., Statesville, NC 28677-9302, or by phone at 740-872-7972, or by e-mail at <[astanley@i-america.net](mailto:astanley@i-america.net)>.