

Next Meeting May 10th, 2004

SPORES Afield

The newsletter of the Colorado Mycological Society

May 2004

The President's Corner



Our last meeting was fantastic! We learned about various types of trees and the mushrooms associated with them (one topic I really need to learn!). We also had a real treat with the refreshments:

cheesecake and strawberries! Thanks Mark for putting that together! We also gave away a package of Shiitake spawn plugs and bees wax for the door prize. The Nameko mushroom growing kit was on back order and didn't make it here in time for the drawing. Be sure to attend the meeting next month for a chance to win the Nameko mushroom growing kit (*Pholiota nameko*), which is Japan's second most popular cultivated mushroom.

We have finally received some much needed moisture! By the time you get this newsletter, we should be nearing prime season for morels. Be sure to look near rivers and streams and around cottonwoods in the lower elevations. Just watch out for the dreaded poison ivy! There have already been several reports of oyster mushrooms being found.

We have a new CMS librarian! Julie Holmes has volunteered to take the library this year. She will store the CMS library books at her house and bring a few to the meetings for people to check out. Be sure to let her know of any books that may interest you.

I'll see you at the next meeting!

Speaker for the May meeting:

Jason Salzman, "City Mushrooms"

Even during a drought, you can find mushrooms in the city—and some of them are excellent edibles. And the best time to look for them is the spring. So come to our May program for Jason Salzman's presentation on common mushrooms of urban habitats, including yards, fields, parking lots, house plants, carpets, stumps, and more.

Jason Salzman is one of the organizers of the Telluride Mushroom Festival (shroomfestival.com), which takes place Aug. 19-22 this year. He is a past president of the CMS and a life-long lover of mushrooms. In addition to teaching dozens of mushroom classes, he has written for Mushroom magazine and is co-editor of a mushroom field guide titled Wild Mushrooms of Telluride. He also co-authored "In Search of Mukhomor (*Amanita muscaria*)," which appeared in Shaman's Drum.

Aside from hunting mushrooms, Jason is a writer, activist, and media consultant. A former campaign director for Greenpeace, he now heads Cause Communications (causecommunications.com), which serves activist and nonprofit groups. He is also co-founder of Rocky Mountain Media Watch.

He has two children, both named Button, who never sleep—and he is married to Anne Button. You can reach Jason at:
jason@causecommunications.com.

Upcoming Events

- May 10th** Jason Salzman, "City Mushrooms"
- May 15th** Morel Foray, see article this page
- June 14th** Dr. Jack Murphy, "Mushroom Ecology and Population Biology"
- July 12th** Ellen Jacobson, "Agaricus"
- Aug. 21st** Fair Setup
- Aug. 22nd** Annual CMS Mushroom Fair at Denver Botanic Gardens
- Aug. 23rd** Dr. Tom Volk,
Subject to be announced
- Aug. 19-22nd** Telluride Mushroom Festival more information on page 7 of this issue.
- Sept. 13th** Cook & Taste, **Chairperson needed** Contact CMS President Chris Hardwick.
- Oct. 13th** "The Beauty and Diversity of Mushrooms", winning slides from NAMA photo competitions.

Bring mushrooms for identification and display to any meeting.

All meetings are held at the Denver Botanic Gardens in Mitchell Hall at 7:30 pm unless otherwise announced.

Program Co-chairs
Vera Evenson and Marilyn Shaw.

One of our members has severe asthma and has requested that people please refrain from wearing heavy perfumes and colognes.

Thank you.

Foray News for May

May 15 - Our first scheduled foray this year will be led by Bill Windsor on Saturday, May 15. The subject of the foray will be Black Morels.

Be sure to bring your CMS membership card or your current copy of *Spores* with you. If you are not a member you can become one at the foray for the standard new member fee of \$23, which will also get you copies of *Spores Afield* for the rest of the year.

FORAYS MAY BE CANCELLED IN THE EVENT OF DRY WEATHER. CALL FIRST IF IN DOUBT.

We have a need for people to lead forays. You do not need to be an expert identifier to lead a foray. You only need to be willing to lead a group of people to a location where mushrooms can be found. If you would be willing to lead a foray, please contact Ed Lubow at (303) 680-7724.

Board meetings:

These will all be held at 6:30 pm just before the monthly meeting in Mitchell Hall.

1st Board Meeting: May 10, 2004, 6:30 pm.

2nd Board Meeting: July 12, 2004, 6:30 pm.

3rd Board Meeting: Sept. 13, 2004, 6:30 pm.

4th Board Meeting: October 11, 2004, 6:30 pm.

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 *Spores Afield* as part of their membership.

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

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

Follow the 'signs' to collect

Morel mushrooms

By William Windsor

Do you have a favorite path or natural place that you like to walk? If so, and if you have been walking this path for several years, then perhaps you are already aware of the many signs that are placed in your view to provide you with critical information about that place. The signs are everywhere, but for many of us, they have become incomprehensible, invisible and overlooked.

We live in a world that is ordered, inter-linked and cyclical. Through focused observation of the natural world, we are given 'signs' that can help us to understand and operate in harmony within this natural order. This article will discuss the signs of Spring, and how observing these signs can lead you to a delicious and difficult to find natural bounty, morel mushrooms.

Finding morels in the state of Colorado is about being in the 'right place' at the 'right time'. Map and calendar references are too simplistic and likely to fail in providing a novice with adequate information to find morels. This is because the growth of morels is conditional upon a complex and symbiotic relationship of environment, weather, topography and other bio-systems. Luckily for us all, specific signs are provided in nature that can guide us to our desired fruiting bodies.

Let's start the search with the signs that point to the 'right place'. Plant and topographic indicators provide confirmation of proper morel environment. In Colorado, Yellow Morels are found along creeks and rivers in the lowlands. They are usually associated with Narrow Leaf Cottonwood trees. Look for wide flat zones within river flood plains. The presence of Motherwort and Mints are indicators of good hunting grounds. Black Morels grow in the foothills and mountains within stands of mixed Pine and Aspen trees. While Black Morels are more widespread than Yellow Morels, wide flat areas that hold water are almost always a superior environment than hillsides. The

presence of Pasque Flowers and Calypso Orchids are good indicator plants for Black Morels.

Morel mushrooms in the state of Colorado fruit as early as mid-March in the lower flat-lands to as late as mid-July in the mountains. However, in any given micro-environment, prime morel fruiting will only last about ten days. Luckily, the same moisture and temperature conditions that trigger morels to fruit, also trigger specific growth patterns in common plants. You can use these 'easy to find' plants as a specific indicator of the 'right time' to find morels in specific locations.

Start looking for Yellow Morels in the low-lands when the leaves of Cottonwood trees are about 2 inches long and the leaf of the Narrow Leaf Cottonwood is about 3/4 of an inch long. If you are finding fresh Asparagus about 6 inches tall, or fresh Oyster Mushrooms less than two inches across, then morels are still a week or two away. Just as the prime gathering of asparagus ends, the prime gathering of Yellow Morels begins. Yellow and Black Morels fruit when Oregon Grape is in flower and when Motherwort and mints are about 10 inches tall.

In the mountains, the 'right time' to look for Black Morels is when the leaves of Aspen Trees are bright green and about the size of quarters. The blooming of Pasque Flowers marks the beginning of Black Morel fruiting in a localized area while the blooming of Calypso Orchids occurs mid-to-late season. With Black Morels, you can 'chase' the season uphill to higher elevations.

Learning to 'read the signs' will deepen your understanding and appreciation of the environment you live in. If you happen to be a 'shroomer', being able to read the signs provides the difference between stumbling upon a few mushrooms and herbs or collecting pounds of mushrooms and wild food (as well as natural medicines). With a little bit of study, lots of observation and time spent outdoors you will gain experience in reading the signs and placing yourself into the 'right place at the right time'.

West Nile Virus a looming threat

By Larry Renshaw

The West Nile Virus hit Colorado hard in 2003, but it could hit Colorado even harder this year! The Colorado Department of Public Health reports there were 2947 human cases of West Nile in Colorado last year. Sixty one of the cases resulted in death.

Distribution of last year's cases pretty well matches Colorado's population distribution, with the possible exception of Weld County (402 cases), and Larimer County (546 cases.) Counties largely unaffected last year may be at higher risk this year.

Most people infected with West Nile have no symptoms, but people over age 50 seem to be especially vulnerable to the severe forms of disease.

West Nile is spread by mosquito bites, making mushroom hunters particularly at risk, because mosquitoes and mushrooms both thrive on moisture.

The hours from dusk to dawn are peak mosquito biting times for many species of mosquitoes. Take extra care to use DEET repellent and wear protective clothing during the evening and early morning.

Learn what else you can do to minimize your risk: <http://www.cmsweb.org/west-nile.html>

**This is your last issue of
SporesAfield if you have not paid
your membership for 2004.**

If you have any questions as to the accuracy of the expiration date on the label or change of address, please contact:

Linda deLeon
14310 W. Fifth Ave.
Golden, CO 80401-5226
ldeleon@attbi.com
303-278-9582

Morel Crop Sprouting

March 22, 2004

KVAL TV 13, Eugene, OR.

Lowell, Washington - If you're into mushroom picking, then we've got a hot spot to go. Willamette National Forest Service officials say morel mushrooms are sprouting early this year, especially in the Clark Fire area southeast of Springfield.

But before you head out, there are some important safety tips to consider, says special forest products coordinator Dennis Beckner. "People need to keep a lookout especially when it comes to these hazard trees out there especially along the corridor which could come down at any time.

You can only harvest mushrooms in the Clark Fire area if you have a free use permit. Officials also suggest bringing along a good mushroom identification book before hitting the woods. Camping is restricted in the Clark Fire area.

For more information related to CMS, contact:

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Don't miss the fun!

The NAMA 2004 Foray in Asheville, NC

This is a first!

The North American Mycological Association will hold its 2004 annual foray in conjunction with the Mycological Society of America in Asheville, NC on Thursday, July 15th - Sunday, July 18th. The foray will be at the University of North Carolina at Asheville campus, in the heart of the city. In addition to all of the programs, forays and workshops which NAMA is offering, NAMA members will have the opportunity to remain for the full MSA conference at their own expense. Several joint activities are being planned with MSA. A keynote symposium on southern Appalachian biodiversity will be jointly hosted by NAMA, MSA and the Discovering Life in America program operating in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Numerous book sellers, vendors and displays will also be present.

Some of the NAMA speakers scheduled to date for the foray include Orson Miller, Gary Lincoff, Walt Sundberg, Walt Sturgeon, Bill Roody, Coleman McClenaghan, Glenn Freeman, John Plischke III, Tom Volk, Greg Mueller and Andy Methven. We are very fortunate to have Bart Buyck from Paris who will be in the country studying *Russulas* of the southeastern US and will enlighten us all on this extremely variable genus. Workshops will include cooking, dying & paper making, photography, toxicology, microscopy, a beginners workshop and foray and many others. We will as usual be treated to the Mycophagy committee's wonderful mushroom dishes on Saturday. Some of the presentations will address the history of NAMA, Southern Habitats, Diversity of Southern Appalachian Fungi, an ATBI symposium and a Common Names symposium as well as others not yet confirmed.

The North Carolina forays have consistently garnered large numbers of diverse fungi. At least twice the number has exceeded 500 different species collected. With the city of Asheville surrounded by the Pisgah National Forest and the Blue Ridge Parkway and Great Smoky Mountains National Park close at hand, there are ample opportunities for good hunting.

The University of North Carolina - Asheville campus is located about 2 miles from downtown Asheville. Public transportation is available through the Asheville Transit Authority. There is also a local bus service

run by the city of Asheville that services the campus. All activities will be on campus within buildings encircling the campus square providing level ground and easy walking between venues. Lodging will be in the university dormitories which are double occupancy rooms. All meals will be catered and special dietary concerns can be accommodated.

In addition to on-campus housing, there are numerous motels and campgrounds within a short drive from campus. It should be pointed out that Asheville is a major tourist destination and those wishing to commute to the site should attempt to confirm off-campus reservations early. Numerous tourist and historical attractions are within a short drive from the campus including the Biltmore Estate (the largest private home ever built in America), the famous Grove Park Inn, the Cradle of Forestry and the North Carolina Arboretum just to name a few. While here you should plan to enjoy these wonderful side trips. Information on these and other sites will be provided.

The Asheville airport (AVL) is serviced by several airlines, including USAir, Delta, and Continental. Other airports within driving distance are Knoxville, TN (TYS, 2.5 hrs), Charlotte, NC (CLT, 2 hrs), Greensboro, NC (GSO, 3 hrs) and Raleigh-Durham, NC (RDU, 4 hrs).

A joint Saturday evening barbecue with NAMA and MSA is being planned on campus. Where else will you have the opportunity to gather with nearly 500 mycologists?

Additional information will be forthcoming in the *Mycophile*. Lodging at the UNC-Asheville campus will be limited so be sure to register early for this very special occasion. You must be a member of NAMA to attend the foray. If you are not, you can include your membership with the foray registration. Members of local affiliated clubs, including CMS can join NAMA for \$32. Be sure you include mention of your CMS membership.

Reprinted from *Mycophile* March/April 2004
NAMA web page: namyco.org

Mushroom Supplements: Caveat Emptor

This article ran in the January/February 2004 Mycophile the newsletter of the North American Mycological Association. By Phyllis Cole.

During my term as President of NAMA, I received many emails requesting help on everything from identification to information on fungi to possible solutions relating to fungal attacks on trees in Bolivia. While I could help with few such questions, most were promptly answered with the assistance of NAMA members on the NAMA list < clubs@namyco.org > and other members familiar with a particular topic. The following email inquiry and a response from a physician raise the timely issue of mushroom supplements, along with all the other supplements in common use.

Dear Ms. Cole,

I have been trying to get some objective information about a dietary supplement I saw in a health food store. Perhaps you can help me.

It's called "Mental Clarity" . . . and it purports to help stimulate the regeneration of neurons, in addition to helping reverse the buildup of plaque in brain tissue that characterizes Alzheimer's disease. The ingredients are as follows:

Lions Mane (<i>Hericium erinaceus</i>)	680 mg.
Cordyceps (<i>Cordyceps sinensis</i>)	80 mg.
Oregon Polypore	80 mg.
Pearl Oyster	80 mg.
Reishi Mycelium (<i>Gandoerma lucidum</i>)	80 mg.

My basic question is this: are there any possible digestive side effects or drug interactions that might dissuade me from giving this to my 80-year-old mother, who is in the middle stages of Alzheimer's? She is currently taking Aricept, Paxil and Ambein on a regular basis. If you can't provide me with an answer on this, can you direct me to someone who might be able to? (Obviously, someone not connected to [the manufacturer].) Thanks in advance for your help.

Sincerely, Bob Cohen

After responding to Mr. Cohen, I forwarded his request to the Clubs list and several other individuals. NAMA member Dr. Lawrence Leonard responded as follows:

Dear Mr. Cohen

This is in response to your request to NAMA for something on mushroom supplements and their possible help in Alzheimer's disease.

First, let me wish you and your mother the best, as did Phyllis Cole; I am sure it is very hard. And we all are looking to try to help in any way possible.

But, as an advanced amateur mycologist, a lover of mushrooms, and a physician, I must warn you to be *very* careful about adding any supplement to the medicines already prescribed by her physician. People, plants, and mushrooms are *chemical factories making thousands of different chemicals* . . . the good news and the bad, for obviously some fungi (mushrooms) are good for us-giving us bread, wine, antibiotics, cyclosporine, etc., and a good taste at mealtime. But the bad is that many are poisonous-from just plain upsetting to deadly-or interfering (as you fear) with other medicines. It is so important that anesthesiologists now are advised to ask all their pre-operative patients if they are taking any herbal supplements.

In addition, there is *no regulation* on the dose or concentration of supplements, so you may be taking half a "dose" or a much higher dose than intended. It has also been found, as there is little or no regulation of supplements, that they may be contaminated by other chemicals. So, beware, beware, and beware.

My best advice is to be sure her physician is up on the latest accepted treatments. The following are some web sites you might want to get into for further information. (Note that you may need to insert http:// before the address, although most servers no longer require this.)

(continued on page 7)

Telluride Mushroom Festival:

Forays, Workshops, Chefs' Cook-off, and Everything Else You've Always Wanted to Know about Mushrooms and More.

The annual Telluride Mushroom Festival—designed for people interested in edible, psychoactive, and poisonous mushrooms—will be held in Telluride, Colorado, Aug. 19-22.

The festival includes mushroom lectures, forays, hands-on identification and cultivation workshops, mushroom poetry, and a mushroom parade—which runs down the main street of Telluride and features festival participants dressed as mushrooms, spores, and other elements of the mycological world.

The Festival's second annual "Mushroom Cook-off Feast" features chefs from Telluride's top restaurants, who will prepare mushroom dishes to be judged by festival faculty. The winning chef will receive a chef's hat adorned with mushrooms, and festival goers will dine on the mushroom dishes.

Experienced guides will lead daily fungus forays in the forests surrounding Telluride, generally productive of a wide variety of wild mushrooms, particularly edible species, like chanterelles and porcini.

Nationally recognized authorities on mushrooms will present lectures and workshops:

- Ø Gary Lincoff, past President of the North American Mycological Association, "Wild Mushroom Identification;"
- Ø Paul Stamets, President of Fungi Perfecti (www.fungi.com), on "Medicinal Mushrooms;"
- Ø Ralph Metzner, Ph. D., author, *Teonanacotl: the Sacred Mushroom of Visions*;"
- Ø Dr. Emanuel Salzman, Co-editor of *Mushroom Poisoning*, on "Mushroom Poisoning."

Complete information about the Festival program, registration, lodging, and travel is available on the Festival's web site: www.shroomfestival.com. Or write, Fungophile, Attn. Mushroom Festival,

Box 480503, Denver, CO, 80248-0503. Call 303-296-9359. Based in Denver, Fungophile has sponsored the Telluride Mushroom Festival for 24 years.

Contact: Manny Salzman, MD 303-296-9359

(Supplements continued from page 6)

Go to www.mskcc.org/laboutherbs or to www.mskcc.org and click on Herbs, Botanicals. I briefly checked for cordyceps, and it is discussed there. Dr. Cassileth, who runs the site, is Chief of Integrative Medicine at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

See www.intelihealth.com and search for the term "herbs." This is the Harvard Medical School Consumer Health Information Site, which is very useful not only for herbs, but also for specific diseases.

See the Anesthesiology Society web site at www.asahq.org; go to "patient information" and then scan down to the right to Patient Education Brochures to the two herb brochures.

There is much more but this might be of some help. And again, my best to you and your mother.

Sincerely,
Lawrence M. Leonard, M.D.
Maine Mycological Society Association, Inc.

Anyone with other suggestions for Mr. Cohen may send them to me and I will forward them to him.
Phyllis Cole