

Next Meeting July 14, 2003

SPORES Afield

The newsletter of the Colorado Mycological Society

July 2003

From the President's basket

As I wrote this article in mid-June, the rain was beating against the windows in a steady rhythm and my thoughts turned to visions of vast fields of *Boletus edulus* and chanterelles. I had already found more kinds of mushrooms than I had seen in the last two years, and we weren't even to the normal start of the season. Things looked great for finding mushrooms in July and August, but they don't look so great for our annual Mushroom Fair that is scheduled for August 17th. No one has stepped up and volunteered to be the Fair Chair, and if we don't find a volunteer by the July meeting, we are going to cancel the Fair for the first time in memory.

I am appealing to you to volunteer! We need someone willing to coordinate the efforts of our members. It won't take much time because we have been holding these Fairs for years, and many members know what needs to be done. It's a great way to learn more about mushrooms and a good way to meet some interesting people. If you think you might be interested, call me at 303-648-0048 and let's talk about it!

Speaker for the July meeting:

Rick Kerrigan

"Agaricus: Mycology or Masochism?"

Agaricus is seductively easy to identify – to the genus level. Free gills that are white to pink when young and become chocolate-brown in age (with only chocolate-brown colors in spore prints) are

sufficient to distinguish species of *Agaricus* from other mushrooms. The heartbreak begins when the name of the species is desired. As the saying goes: "Learn the name of a mushroom: you'll be wrong."

The difficulties have several origins. *Agaricus* species present relatively few distinctive characters to aid in identification; those that are present (for example, cap surface and color, veils) are often variable from collection to collection. *Agaricus* has attracted both too much attention and not enough attention from mycological writers: several species have multiple synonyms, while others have no names (or only misapplied names). There are apparently also several complexes of 'inter grading' forms that may or may not be distinct species. In North America the sort of expert consensus that now exists for European species has never been achieved, largely because too few resident mycologists have pursued a serious interest in the genus, and those often only briefly.

There are, however, reasons for positivity. Some characteristics, particularly spore size, are reliable enough to be very useful for species identification. Biochemistry including odors and color changes is increasingly being validated as the most reliable criterion for recognizing natural groups (sections) within the genus. DNA sequence data is demonstrating that good morphological species concepts are just that – good. More importantly for the future, DNA data are providing unambiguous new characters for the recognition
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Upcoming Events

- July 14th** Dr. Rick Kerrigan
"A garicus: Mycology or
Masochism?"
- Aug 14 -17** Crested Butte Mushroom Festival
See artical on page 7 this issue
- Aug. 16th** Fair Setup
- Aug. 17th** Annual **CMS Mushroom Fair** at
Denver Botanic Gardens
- Aug. 18th** Dr. Orson Miller,
Subject to be announced
- Aug. 21-24th** Telluride Mushroom Festival
- Sept. 8th** Cook & Taste, information in
August *SporesAfield*
- Oct. 13th** To be announced
- Oct 19th** End of the Season Fungi Feast

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

2003 CMS Foray Schedule

The board of directors has voted to limit attendance at the forays to members only. Members wishing to bring a guest must accompany the guest on the foray. Guests will not be allowed to attend by themselves. Non members may join CMS and go on the foray by giving the foray leader a check made out to CMS for \$23.00. The Board requests the cooperation of foray leaders in this matter.

Please note that car-pooling from the meeting area to the foray location is strongly encouraged. It is often difficult to find a place where several cars can pull off the road together to foray. Carpooling is a good chance to meet and talk with other CMS members on a one-to-one basis. Try it, you'll like it!

Our foray chairman, Tom Taggart, expects additional forays to be added to this list. You can see an updated version of this schedule on our Web site at "Forays." <http://www.cmsweb.org>

- Sunday, July 13 - Larry Renshaw will lead a foray to the Winter Park area. Meet in the Northeast parking lot at the intersection of Morrison Road and I70 at 9:00 AM. Bring a lunch. Larry will lead a cook-and-taste if we find edibles. Call Larry at 303-648-0048 or email him lmr@hotpop.com for more information.
- Saturday, July 19 or 26 - Beth Rognerud will lead a foray in the Breckenridge area. Bring a picnic lunch. Call Beth at 970-453-9199 or email her at beth@mountaintees.com for the date and more information.
- Saturday, August 2 - Chris Hardwick will lead a foray. Meet in the Northeast parking lot at I70 West, Exit 259 [Morrison Road & I70] at 9:00 AM. Call Chris at 303-237-0356 or email him at cchardwick@yahoo.com for more information.
- Saturday, August 9 - Tom Ruzicka will lead a foray. Meet in the Northeast parking lot at I70 West, Exit 259 [Morrison Road & I70] at 9:00 AM. Call Tom at 303-447-2740 or email him at tomruziicka@mindspring.com for more information.
- Sunday, August 17 - Jason Salzman will lead a city foray to find mushrooms for the Mushroom Fair. Details will be in the August issue of *Spores Afield*.
- Saturday, August 23 - Ed Lubow will lead a foray for new members. Meet in the Northeast parking lot at I70 West, Exit 259 [Morrison Road & I70] at 9:00 AM. Call Ed at 303-680-7724 or email him at elubow@home.com for more information.
- Saturday & Sunday, August 23 and 24 - **Creede Mushroom Weekend** - Larry Renshaw, President of CMS will be leading forays searching for Boletes and Chanterelles. Cook and taste with wine included. For more information call Larry at 303-648-0048 or email him at lmr@hotpop.com

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UPDATE ON THE *AMANITA PHALLOIDES* POISONING IN THE L.A. AREA

Submitted by Marilyn Shaw, CMS Toxicology Chair.

Nathan Wilson of the Los Angeles Mycological Society, in the April issue of *The Sporeprint*, has provided more information on the *Amanita phalloides* poisoning that occurred around April 1 in Altadena, CA.

He reports that the patient was an illegal immigrant who worked as a gardener and had no health insurance. For the previous week he had what he thought were digestive problems. He tried various over the counter and home remedies, but he eventually became disoriented and confused, at which point his family took him to the hospital. At the hospital it was determined that he had eaten a mushroom from a garden about a week before, and that his liver had been seriously damaged.

Wilson was called to identify a mushroom specimen which was retrieved by a relative of the patient. Although the specimen was far from perfect and was very dry, there were enough features for Wilson to identify it as an *Amanita* species.

Being from northern California, he was also familiar with the strong unpleasant odor of older specimens of *A. phalloides*. (Note from M. S.: My son who lives in the Bay Area likened it to that of a dead animal which may explain why dogs sometimes eat it, resulting in fatalities.)

Since *A. phalloides* has not been common in southern California, some other members of LAMS thought it was probably *A. ocreata*, also a deadly species. However, Wilson had tested the specimen with KOH and found it did not turn color. *Amanita ocreata* turns a bright yellow when exposed to KOH, but *A. phalloides* does not. The specimen was sent to Dr. Ann Pringle at UCB who is doing a study on the genetics of the latter and its spread in California.

In addition to the liver involvement the patient's kidneys were also failing. He was a prime candidate for a liver transplant. According to Wilson's

report, Emergency Medicaid does not cover transplants. However, within two days, the patient's family and their church had raised the needed \$160,000.

Meanwhile, the patient's condition was improving. In previous years *A. phalloides* has been considered a very rare mushroom in southern California. However, there have been several collections of it this year. This species was probably imported to California in the 1940s with cork oak for the wine industry. It eventually made the transfer to California coastal live oak and has spread widely in northern California, becoming, according to mushroom aficionados there, one of the most common mushrooms in that area.

(Note: This case is demonstrative of the fact that most deadly mushrooms don't dispatch people instantly as happens on TV. The amatoxins take five to seven days to do that.)

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- Thursday, August 21 through Sunday, August 24 - **Telluride Mushroom Conference**. Manny Salzman, longtime member of CMS, organizes this conference. You can pick up Chanterelles by the basket full when the weather has been cooperative. Call Manny at 296-9359 for more information. www.shroomfestival.com

High Summer Garden Tour

Golden and Lakewood

Discover how color, form and design enhance a late summer garden.

Saturday, August 2, 2003

9 am - 3 pm

\$15.00 before the event

\$20.00 the day of the event

For tickets call: 303-639-9110

or visit www.dpff.org

Mycology on the Internet

<http://www.bluewillowpages.com/mushroomexpert/suillus.html>

By Ed Lubow

One of the main things we do with mushrooms is identify them. If you want to find some nice edibles, you need to know what to look for so you don't end up on one of Marilyn Shaw's reports.

You can do as a few of us have and purchase a library of books on mushrooms, then spend a bunch of time looking everything you find up in a few books at a time to help make sure you're right. Another way to get good information on identification is to hit the Internet. There are lots of excellent keys published on the Internet to help you identify those strange ones you bring home that somehow just don't quite match the species in your books.

The site listed above has an excellent key for the genus *Suillus*. Personally, I often find *Suillus* that aren't quite any of the species listed in my books. This key, at the site MushroomExpert.com, provides a nice guide to the genus without resorting to the use of a microscope.

Today (June 18), I found a few *Suillus* growing under pine trees near a grocery store near where I live. Looking them over, they resemble *Suillus granulatus*, but they're not. So I take a few home and try keying them out with my books. The keys seem to converge on *S. granulatus*, but that doesn't seem quite right to me. Keying them out at this web site gives me the choice of four similar species, including *S. granulatus*. Reading the short descriptions, I think these are probably *S. kaibabensis*, which differs from *S. granulatus* mostly in the color of the pore surface.

Going back through my books, the only reference I can find to *S. kaibabensis* is in *Mushrooms Demystified* by David Arora, which lists it in the comments under *S. granulatus* with the statement, "*S. kaibabensis*, common in the Southwest, with a buff to pale cinnamon or yellowish cap." His key mentions it, but you have to guess that the Denver

area is in the Southwest to conclude that these are indeed *S. kaibabensis*.

In conclusion, the next time you've found an odd *Suillus* that doesn't seem to identify quite right, try firing up your computer and hitting the Internet. See if maybe you don't get a bit more satisfying result there.

(Speaker continued from page 1)

of species, both familiar and new. Finally, the study of *Agaricus* in North America, though not a fast-track, high-profile endeavor, and utterly devoid of both fame and fortune, continues to make fairly steady progress. Meanwhile, new discoveries await the prepared.

Colorado is a good place to make such discoveries. There is a diverse array of *Agaricus* in the state's various habitats, and many are not well-known to experts. Based on dried specimens sent to him by E. Bethel in 1898 and E. B. Sterling in 1903, Peck described five species of *Agaricus* from the plains east and west of the Rockies: *A. praerimosus*, *A. solidipes*, *A. rutescens*, *A. sphaerosporus*, and *A. chlamydopus*. I have never encountered these species, but from discussion with CMS members I suspect that some of them are collected regularly each year. They deserve critical study in order to be fully characterized in modern terms and placed 'back on the map' of well-known species.

I've had the pleasure of visiting Colorado on only a few occasions, but those trips were sufficient to discover and confirm two new montane species (*A. amicosus* and *A. cuniculicola*: Kerrigan 1989, *Mycotaxon* 34:119-128). I'm aware of at least three other species or subspecies from the Colorado Rockies that need (new) names. A regional treatment of species diversity would also be very welcome.

I look forward to every trip west, and each opportunity to continue to advance our knowledge of *Agaricus* in the western region. I hope that when we meet on (or around) July 14, you will bring fresh specimens and photographs of local *Agaricus* to discuss.

END-OF-SEASON FUNGI FEAST!

CMS is planning the end-of-season mushroom banquet at the *Boulder Cork* on Sunday October 19. Doors open at 5:00 PM and dinner will be served at 5:30 PM. All members and friends of CMS are cordially invited to attend.

The *Boulder Cork* restaurant has provided quality food and excellent service since 1969. The food at the *Boulder Cork* is an impressive display of creativity and variety, masterminded by Chef Jim Smailer. He has been the Chef at the *Boulder Cork* for the last fifteen years. Jim has developed a passion for wild mushrooms, both in the woods and the sauté pan. He believes mushrooms should be prepared simply to let their own flavor be fully appreciated. Seating is limited to 65 people.

To reach the *Boulder Cork* from Denver, Go on I25 North to the Boulder Turnpike [US36]. Take Highway 36 to Boulder. Exit on to Foothills Parkway in Boulder. Go North on Foothills through town. Turn left on Valmont & then right on 30th Street. The restaurant will be on your left.



Boulder Cork
3295 30th Street
Boulder, Colorado

Please Register Me/Us For the End-of-Season Fungi Feast
Sunday, October 19

The cost of the End of Season five course dinner is \$45.00 per person, including tax and gratuity. Please mark your preference of entree in the boxes below. Space is limited. Don't miss out on this special dinner! Payment in full is required to reserve your place. Please make your check payable to the Colorado Mycological Society. Cost of the dinner for non-members is \$55.00 per person, including tax and gratuity.

Person 1: Braised Duck Prime Rib Pan Fried Trout

Person 2: Braised Duck Prime Rib Pan Fried Trout

Name[s]: _____

Address: _____

City/St/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Mail this registration to:

Tom Ruzicka
223 North Cedar Brook Road
Boulder, CO 80304
Phone: (303) 447-2740

*CMS Gala End-of-Season Fungi Feast,
Sunday, October 19,*

The 2003 Menu:



Appetizers

Tasting of Wild Mushrooms



First Course

Wild Mushroom Ravioli in Parmesan Cheese Sauce



Salad

Mixed Bell Peppers with Grilled Chanterelles



Entrees

*Roast Prime Rib of Beef with Horseradish Mashed Potatoes
and Sauteed Seasonal Wild Mushrooms*

or

*Pan Seared Trout with Lobster Butter,
Sweet Corn and Chanterelles*

or

*Braised Duck with Roasted Vegetables
and Mixed Wild Mushrooms with Mashed Potatoes*



(A Vegetarian (Portabello) Entrée also available upon advance request.)



Dessert

*Strawberry Blond Cheesecake
with Warm Chocolate Sauce*



Coffee or Tea



*Boulder Cork
3295 30th Street
Boulder, Colorado*



Boulder Cork

established 1969

The Moby Dick of Mushrooms

By Ellen Jacobson

In the foothills and lower elevations of Colorado, unseen by most mushroom hunters, the Moby Dick of mushrooms often grows in abundance. This handsome and excellent edible hides in plain sight in terrain where most experienced fungi seekers would never think to look. I found my first quite by accident on the steep west facing slope of Turkey Creek Road on the way to Evergreen buried in Ponderosa pine needles. As I wandered up and down the steep gullies that line this road, more and more mushrooms and mushrumps appeared until my basket was full; I had become a hunter of the Great White Bolete, *Boletus barrowsii*

Chuck Barrows, an amateur mycologist from New Mexico, who sent specimens to Alexander Smith for identification, first described *B. barrowsii*. For years this mushroom was considered only a subspecies of *Boletus edulis*, but eventually it was recognized as a separate species and now bears the name of its discoverer. Chuck collected many new southwestern mushrooms in his lifetime and he is a fine example of what a talented amateur can contribute to mycology.

B. barrowsii appears to be a white form of *B. edulis*, but its habitat and fruiting season are much different. In Colorado, it usually grows with Ponderosa pine and fruits during June and early July. It seems to prefer hot, dry, steep, sunny, south and west facing slopes and is rarely found higher than 8500 ft. The peculiar, low, squatty gray shape can be very difficult to see and it is definitely not a 65 mile an hour mushroom. As you creep along at 10 miles an hour blocking traffic, watch for smooth granite colored 'stones' nestled in the long Ponderosa needles. Get out of your car, scramble up the bank, and begin your search.

This is a delicious mushroom, perhaps tastier than *edulis* and cannot be mistaken for anything else. Unfortunately, the worms like it as much as we do, so you must look for "rumps", mushrooms that are still partially buried under the duff, for

fresh non-wormy specimens. Ants also eat this mushroom and leave wide tracks particularly in the stalk. The worms I pay attention too, the ants I ignore.

With all the rain we have had, this could be a wonderful year for *B. barrowsii*. Good places to look would be Dedisse Park and Turkey Creek Road at the bottom end of Maxwell Falls; both are near Evergreen. Molly Gulch Campground, Rolling Creek area south of Bailey, and Deckers have all produced *B. barrowsii* in the past. Remember to look near south or west-facing slopes with Ponderosa pine trees below 8,500 feet.

CRESTED BUTTE WILD MUSHROOM FESTIVAL

The Crested Butte Wild Mushroom Festival will be held this year in Crested Butte, CO from August 14-17th.

An informative, interesting and always fun-filled event that includes forays and identification sessions, workshops, cooking classes with luncheons and fine local restaurants featuring mushroom based meals in the evenings. This year's Wild Mushroom Festival promises to provide many opportunities for learning and fun for novices and experts alike.

Larry Evans will lead forays again this year and Marc Donsky will conduct workshops on cultivating mushrooms. Some of Crested Butte's leading chefs will conduct mushroom cooking and fine wine workshop/luncheons. Larry Evans, from Missoula, Montana has traveled worldwide and written dozens of articles on mushrooms. Last year he identified 28 different mushrooms (including 2 types of truffles) that participants collected on forays, even in that extremely dry year. Marc Donsky, who has been studying and cultivating mushrooms for over 20 years, showed participants how to "grow their own" in what was clearly the most hands-on workshop of the Festival.

This year for the first time David Teitler will conduct a workshop on "Traditional Chinese Medicine, Mushrooms and You".

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(Crested Butte continued from page 7)

A licensed herbalist and acupuncturist, he has developed a line of 8 herbal tinctures that are especially useful for people with respiratory illness in dry climates which are marketed under the label "Dr. Dave's Herbal Medicines. Roger Kahn, Wild Mushroom Festival's co-chairperson and CMS member, will lead a foray for filmmakers and others who wish to join them.

Kahn, who has been gathering wild mushrooms in the Crested Butte area for over 30 years said, "This is a prime area for gathering mushrooms. The Crested Butte old timers, who were mostly Italians, Croatians and Slovenians, all had their favorite spots. Many newer residents, who are developing the recreation industry up here, have their own favorite places as well. In fact, one of the leading chefs in the area and I have already been gathering and enjoying false morels and march mushrooms, a promise of bountiful days ahead."

This year, for the first time, the Wild Mushroom Festival is actively cooperating with the Crested Butte Reel Fest, an annual event for short (under 60 minutes) film makers, directors, and producers which will allow Wild Mushroom Festival Participants to enjoy some of the Reel Fest events and Reel Fest participants to enjoy Wild Mushroom Festival activities. Mac Bailey, co-chair of the Wild Mushroom Festival said, "Who knows, maybe one of the Reel Fest people will be inspired to do a film on wild mushrooms and 'shroomers.'"

Cost for the entire Crested Butte Wild Mushroom Festival is \$65.00 (excluding cooking workshop/luncheons, which are \$18.00). For further information or to sign up, please go to <cbmushfest.com> or call 800-545-4505.