



**New Jersey
Mycological Assn.**

NJMA NEWS
Vol. XII

DECEMBER 1981
No. 12

President: Ray Fatto

Editor: Melanie Spock

DECEMBER MEETING - DECEMBER 13

Sunday, December 13th at 2:00 p.m. in the SCEEC auditorium: a general membership meeting. Officers for 1982 will be elected, after which the slides entered in the photo contest will be viewed and judged, and prizes for the winning entries will be distributed.

Following the slide presentation we will join in an early celebration of the Holidays.

SPECIAL MEETING - DECEMBER 29

Tuesday, December 29th at 8:00 p.m. in the downstairs classroom of SCEEC: Dr. Richard Homola of the University of Maine will be lecturing on "Cup Fungi". Cup fungi represent a major group of Ascomycetes usually found growing on logs or on the ground. The one most familiar to most is Peziza aurantia, the "orange peel" mushroom, which can be easily spotted because of its bright orange color.

In previous years Dr. Homola, who is chairman of the Botany Department at the University of Maine, has lectured to us on various topics such as the Boletes and the genus Lactarius.

JANUARY MEETING - JANUARY 10

Sunday, January 10, at 2:00 p.m. in the downstairs classroom of SCEEC: Dr. Clark Rogerson will discuss the genus Amanita.

Dr. Rogerson is Senior Curator of Cryptogamic Botany at the New York Botanical Garden. He is also editor of Mycologia, a professional journal of mycology.

PHOTO CONTEST

There has been a slight alteration in the rules for the photo contest. Since selection of the winning slides will take place during the meeting, the deadline for entering slides has been changed. Al Leyenberger will be accepting entries as late as the December meeting.

Also, Al's telephone number appeared incorrectly in the last newsletter. The correct number is: 201-444-3531. My apologies to those who tried to call him.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership fees for 1982 are due. Individual membership: \$7.50; family membership: \$10.00. Checks are payable to NJMA. Mail them to Mrs. Margarete Turchick, R.D. #1, Box 166, Franklin, N.J., 07416.

ADVANCED NOTICESMUSHROOM IDENTIFICATION COURSES

During the spring NJMA will be offering three courses in mushroom identification:

Introduction to Fungi - Saturday, March 20th;

Instructor: Dorothy Smullen

Introduction to Mushroom Field Identification - Saturday, March 27th;

Instructor: Robert Peabody

Introduction to Mushroom Identification Using Microscopic Features - Saturday, April 17th;

Instructors: Dorothy Smullen and Robert Peabody

More information about the courses and tuition charge will appear in next months news letter. Direct all question to Anna Gerenday, tel.: 201-822-1465.

NORTHEASTERN MYCOLOGICAL FORAY - 1982

The Seventh Annual Northeastern Mycological Foray will take place in East Stroudsborg, Pennsylvania on August 19-20th. It will be held in conjunction with the NAMA Foray which is traditionally a four-day event.

Further details about the foray will be published as they are announced.

EVERLASING PIGGY-BACK GARGANTUAN PHLOGIOTIS HELVELLOIDES

P. helvelloides is an uncommon magnificent jelly fungus with ear like or trumpet shaped sporophores. It is not common. I have seen it thrice in thirty years. This year, in late July, we stumbled onto a troop of this species along a cinder path in Ithaca that had hemlock logs as retaining walls. There was water seepage onto the path - a most "inhospitable" ecological niche for such an elegant entity. Well, I immortalized the colony on Kodachrome 64, plucked a few for reference and dismissed it from my mind on the supposition that such a fragile fungus in a "hostile" ecological niche was destined for mycological nirvana soon. One month later while pumping my Schwinn along the cinder path, I dismounted from the cycle to investigate the Phlogiotis patch. I could not believe what I saw! There were twice as many entities and some with gigantic sporophores! How so? Well, reflecting on the water sorptive capacity of other jelly fungi, I reasoned that Phlogiotis is capable of performing two processes to regenerate old growth viz. absorb H₂O from the massive white gelatinous base and store the H₂O in the "rubbery" tissue. But wait, the plot "thickens". In late September, I returned to the Phlogiotis patch and beheld the "miracle" of the decade. The same "trumpets" I saw in August had young sporophores growing from the "mother". Some of these "mother ears" contained 20-30 miniature replicas of the original fungus. Clark Rogerson examined these midgets and discovered each had mature cruciate basidia!

Do all colonies of Phlogiotis "wheel and deal" with the vagaries of weather and live a "long life"? Do the piggy-back midget regenerate from spores retained in the old tissue?

- Sam Ristich

"HONEY MUSHROOM" MYSTERY

For about a year now reports about the honey mushroom, Armillariella mellea, have been appearing in the newsletters of the mycology clubs of North America. It all began with Sam Ristich's and Ed Bosman's accounts in last December's issue of Sporeprint, the newsletter of the Connecticut Valley Mycologicoc Society, of two incidences of poisoning. One of these cases involved nine people who ate honey mushroom collected in the same location. Four people, all in the same family, suffered from gastroenteritis. All four drank alcohol with their meal. In the other case, involving one person only, the mushroom was collected from the sawdust pile of an abandoned saw mill located in an area of coniferous forest. This person collected there before and suffered no ill effects. However, this time he simply sauteed the mushroom rather than par-boiling it, as he was accustomed doing on earlier occasions.

Whenever poisoning by A. mellea is mentioned, someone will rise in defense of this favorite woodland species. We all know someone who prefers eating it sauteed, without parboiling, and who has done so for many years without apparent ill effects. However, cases of poisoning by A. mellea have been documented. It appears that several factors may be involved. One possibility is that we may be dealing with a water soluble substance, a toxin that may be removed by par-boiling. Alcohol is implicated in more than one incidence. It is also likely that the toxin is produced only by mushrooms growing in subtrates of certain chemical composi-

tions. Coniferous habitat has been noted in some cases. Since not everyone is affected, individual sensitivity may also play a role.

Not enough detail has yet been gathered about poisoning caused by A. mellea. As Ed Bosman noted, further evidence will likely be provided by our non-parboiling friends. If you know anyone who has suffered any ill effect, please let us know, noting as many details as possible. We need to know method of preparation, nature of the illness, site of collection, and whether alcohol was consumed with the meal.

*Tina Marasmius
the One Genus Genius.*



Do you think there could be a Rozites with white spores?

- Anna Gerenday

EXPLODING, FIMBRIATED CAPS OF CLITOCYBE CLAVIPES

Into the primeval forest of white pine I strode with the mycophagy-minded class and beheld the spectacle of the century. As far as the eyes could behold, the pine needle duff was festooned with unearthly entities - Clitocybe clavipes with exploded caps. My conservative guess was about 10,000 sporophores of clavipes grew in this plantation - an awe inspiring sight per se - but, among these thousands of "club footed" Clitocybes were hundreds of weirdly distorted forms. Many caps reminded me of grey "popovers" that went "poof" to form all kinds of fascinating designs on the caps. Why? I don't know. Virus, protozoan, injury, deficiency or genetic aberration. Other people have seen these exploded caps. Ann Petersen sent me a blow up 5 years ago which I did not recognize until I saw this epiphytotic in September. Emily Johnson sent me some beautiful shots taken in Cooks Forest. Similar malformed caps are not uncommon in Collybia = Tricholomopsis platyphylla and Pluteus cervinus. In three species of Russula and two species of Entoloma, I have found the Siamese syndrome - where a miniature cap without a stem grows "gills up" on the mother cap. But this syndrome must have entirely a different causal agent. This particular pine plantation had a hard clay-rocky substrate. How important is substrate or dry weather? Or are we dealing with other causes? What information can you add to the fascinating tale of the club-footed Clitocybes with exploded caps?

- Sam Ristich

BOOK REVIEWMushrooms in Color

By Orson K. Miller, Jr. and Hope H. Miller. Published by E.P. Dutton; 304 pages, illustrations, \$11.50 hardcover

Orson Miller is one of our outstanding American mycologists, and any new mushroom book bearing his name must be treated with respect. This new book, written in conjunction with his wife, Hope, is intended for the growing number of beginners in the study of mushrooms.

Neophytes invariably ask three questions: Is it edible? Where can I find it? What book should I use? The book takes aim at the first question by identifying those species that are safe and describing the toxic mushrooms that may be encountered. The importance of such information cannot be overlooked since there are many look-alikes.

Habitats are described in some detail, but to find mushrooms one must also be lucky. Conditions have to be right and you must be there at the right time.

Mushrooms in Color is essentially a picture book. Descriptions of species - 162 in all - and large color photographs face each other for easy reference. Small white arrows superimposed over the pictures point to salient features to aid in identification.

An introduction explains the business of collecting: the best time to collect, toxins, keys and nomenclature. An appendix gives the habitats of the fungi as well as their range, microscopic measurements and authorities (hardly for the beginner) and a glossary. A bibliography and index are also included.

Nearly all the photographs were taken by Orson Miller himself. They are large, but sometimes not clear or true in color.

To the question of what book to use, the answer is: this one. Unfortunately, the book construction appears less than substantial. Will this trail book designed to be stuffed into a pocket stand up under hard use? Maybe.

- Philip B. Stein

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RECIPES FOR TURNING THE RATHER ACRID P. BETULINUS INTO TASTY

"SARATOGA CHIPS"

In 1895 or thereabouts, a Boston Mycological Club member thought that nothing could be done about making Piptoporus (Polyporus) betulinus palatable except, maybe turning it into "Saratoga chips". No one ever tried to accomplish that until Margaret Lewis' successful experiment in response to the challenge - "What is a "Saratoga chip?" - in the Boston Mycological Club's Bulletin.

Recipe No. 1

Use absolutely fresh, young caps of any size which are still fairly soft and insect free. Peel off pellicle. With a sharp knife edge remove pores. Slice 1/2 to 3/4 inch wafer thin strips. This is easier to do if left in freezer till quite firm.

Place on cooky sheet in single layer. Sprinkle very lightly with vegetable oil and with either hickory smoked salt or onion salt. Bake in moderate oven for 10-20 minutes until slices turn into brown chips. Watch very closely. Turn off heat, and leave in oven for crispiness.

The chips brown better if they are dry when placed in oven. Overcooked, they char or blacken.

Recipe No. 2

Prepare as in recipe no. 1. Deep fry in oil till slices are toast brown. Place on paper towel to drain, and sprinkle with either hickory smoked salt or onion salt.

Editor's Note: At the 1981 Northeastern Mycological Foray Mrs. Lewis won and award with this contribution.



