

# NJMA news

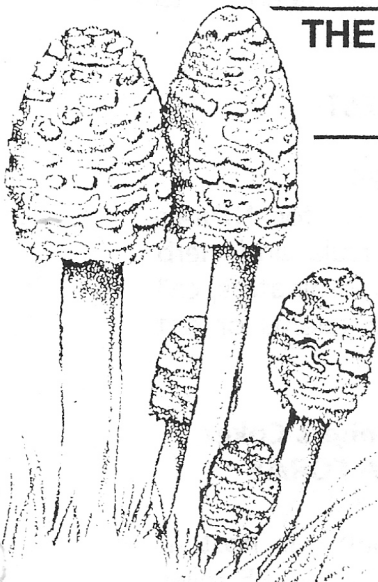
VOL. 24 #4

JULY-AUG. 1994

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**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY  
MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

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*Coprinus variegatus* GH

**OFFICERS:** Hanna Tschekunow, President  
Dorothy Smullen, Vice President  
Grete Turchick, Treasurer  
Carol Raine, Secretary  
Sue Hopkins, \_\_\_\_\_

**CIRCULATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EDITORS:** Alex Adams & Carol Titus

**DEADLINE:** 10th OF EACH EVEN-NUMBERED MONTH

**DUES:** CALENDAR YEAR: \$10 EACH OR \$15/FAM  
Mail checks (payable to NJMA)  
TO: Grete Turchick, \_\_\_\_\_

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## CALENDAR

### Our Club -

- JUL 10 Meadow Woods (Ray Fatto)
- JUL 31 Stephens State Park (Alex Adams)
- AUG 14 Holmdel Park (Joe Kuczynski)
- AUG 14 Culinary Group: "Texas" barbecue, Millington, 2:30
- AUG 28 Mahlon Dickerson Reservation (Artie Grimes)
- SEP 11 Cheesequake State Park (Bob Hosh, Carol Raine)

### and in **The Region - The Nation - The World - The Galaxy**

- JUL 10-16 Advanced Foray, Steuben ME (Bessette) \_\_\_\_\_
- AUG 14-21 5th Internat'l Myco Congress, Vancouver \_\_\_\_\_
- AUG 18-21 Northeast Mycological Foray (NEMF) \_\_\_\_\_
- Aug 25-28 Telluride, CO Conference \_\_\_\_\_
- SEP 2-5 NAMA Foray, near. Asheville NC \_\_\_\_\_
- SEP 9-11 Chas Peck Foray, Racquette Lk NY \_\_\_\_\_
- SEP 16-18 Conn.-Westchester (COMA) Foray, Hebron CT \_\_\_\_\_
- SEP 25-OCT 1 Fall Foray, Steuben ME (Ristich) \_\_\_\_\_

## CULINARY GROUP PICNIC & DINNER

### DON'T MISS OUT -CALL-CALL-CALL

Recipes will be provided by the co-ordinator, Maurizio Russi.

Due to the limit of 32, members will have first dibs, and guests must be approved. Goers provide their own place setting, wine, glasses, and serving utensils. Keep track of your expenses, which will be shared among the group. **This ain't pot luck;** it is important that all members follow through on their assignments. If there are problems, questions, or changes, let Maurice know so they can be dealt with. **Also,** starting with the picnic, a suggestion box will be present for you to comment on the format, schedule, and possible improvements. **Directions:** Take South Maple Ave past SCEEC. Cross river, uphill to blinker and turn right; site is Millington Firehouse, on left at bottom of hill (Railroad is too far.) **For picnic,** pass firehouse. At RR, go left on Division Ave, right on Stonehouse, and left to 141 River Rd. From I-78, exit 36 and north on King George Rd. Right on Haas, cross river and right on River Rd. Lost?

**SUNDAY PICNIC 2:30 at the Smullens Aug 14 '94: Texas Barbecue**

**SATURDAY DINNER 6:30 at the Firehouse Oct 15 '94: Northern Italy**

### NEMF FORAY ULSTER CO., NEW YORK 18-21 AUGUST '94

The Mid-Hudson Mycological Assn. hosts this year's foray at the Granit Hotel, near New Paltz exit of the Thruway. See last newsletter. Register by 21 July. After that date call Ursula

Hoffman for info on availability:

If you haven't been to NEMF, try it. Much of the benefit is in the side-by-side display of identified species. For those who have ever wrestled with nuances of color, scaliness, tube "largeness" or gill attachment, finally giving up and going to bed, this is your chance to discriminate!

### FUNGUS FEST SCEEC

02 OCT '94

Mark your calendar now for NJMA's biggie of the year. Ursula and Herb Pohl will again be the co-ordinators; call them to volunteer your talents or get planning meeting date(s).

### 1994 Dr. Wm. Chambers Coker Memorial NAMA FORAY

02-05 SEPT '94

Asheville Mushroom Club will host at Montreat Conference Center, 15 miles east of Asheville. See last newsletter or write NAMA '94 Reg c/o Joe Miller 10

### 3RD ADIRONDACK MUSHROOM WEEKEND

21-24 JULY '94

Led by Dr. Alan Bessette. Lodging at the luxurious Hotel Saranac. Ray Fatto will be guest mycologist. Contact Dr. Bessette, Biology Dept., Utica College of Syracuse Univ., 1600 Burrstone Rd., Utica, NY 13502.

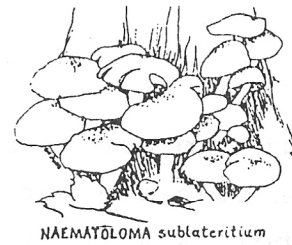
### 14th ANNUAL TELLURIDE MUSHROOM CONFERENCE

25-28 AUG '94

Telluride, CO. Contact Fungifile, PO Box 480503 Denver, CO 80248-0503 or call (303) 296-9359.



## PEEC WEEKEND '94



The annual Victor Gambino Memorial Foray, a.k.a. PEEC weekend, was held on the weekend of June 17-19 at the Pocono Environmental Education Center, and once again it was a rousing success.

From the time the participants received their beautifully printed reservation confirmations in the mail, we could tell what kind of hard work and preparation foray chairpersons Bob and Barbara Peabody had put into making PEEC weekend a success.

Upon checking in we were given our cabin assignments and colorful badges that will serve as a nice memento of our foray, then it was off to the dining hall.

After dinner and orientation Bob delivered a very interesting and informative lecture on local mycological history. He taught us all a great deal about the different types of terrestrial and geologic habitats found in New Jersey, as well as the history and accomplishments of some noted mycological researchers in the New Jersey-Pennsylvania area. This was topped off by some delicious strawberry shortcake provided by Barbara Peabody.

On Saturday morning there were forays in the Dingman's Ferry and Indian Ladder areas. The weather not being as dry as it was last year, much better luck was had by all, with creps, oysters, club fungi, slime molds and many other types of fungi collected.

After lunch it was time to sort and identify this bounty, with Dorothy Smullen, Ray Fatto and Gene Yetter doing microscopic analysis, chemical tests and "keying out" the various species. The rest of us were free to observe, ask questions, and learn all we could about the process of mushroom identification. As usual after our forays, Gene made a computer record of every species identified. We are lucky to have him to do this very valuable job for us.

Next we were treated to a mycophagy demonstration by our treasurer Grete Turchick, long recognized as the "morel queen" of New Jersey and a wonderful cook. Paul Meyer and myself assisted in serving Grete's goodies, which included sauteed sulfur shelf (donated by Bob Peabody), pickled honey mushrooms, oyster mushrooms and morel soup.

Afterwards former president of our club Dr. Gene Varney shared with us some of his expertise in the field of mushroom cultivation. We learned how easy it is to grow many species of mushrooms at home-- outdoors or inside, and how careful one has to be to make sure that the mushrooms that grow are definitely the mushrooms one has "planted" A mistake could be fatal!

Following dinner we had a visit from Harry Lubrecht of Lubrecht and Cramer, Ltd., sellers of hard-to- obtain books on mycology and other subjects. Bob Peabody then introduced this year's club officers, and new members John and Theresa Patane and their children Peter and Claudia, whose fanciful drawings of striped mushrooms, spotted mushrooms, cupcake mushrooms, jailbird mushrooms, glittering wonder-rooms (very rare) and other hard-to-find species entertained us all weekend.

President Hanna Tscheckunow then read the following inspirational quote from Goethe:

"Whatever you can do,  
or think you can, begin it.  
Boldness has genius, power  
and magic in it."

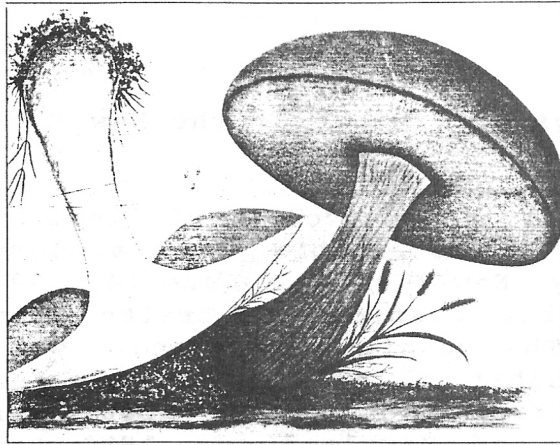
Again on the subject of cultivation, we next heard from our guest speaker, Dr. Richard Kerrigan, who is involved with the mushroom cultivation industry. He spoke to us about the genus Agaricus, to which the common cultivated mushroom belongs. We learned about many species of agaricus that grow in many different habitats, even in the desert. These different species are studied and experimented with in an on-going effort to produce a better "button" mushroom. Think about that next time you're in the supermarket!

Then it was time to hear some lovely, heartwarming stories, all with mushroom related themes, told by Carol Titus. While we listened to Carol's stories, Paul Meyer and Sue Hopkins labored to set up the wonderful wine and cheese smorgasbord they had brought, and with which we ended our evening in grand style.

On Sunday morning Jan Vansant talked to us about the distinguishing features of ferns, what kinds were sought for their edible "fiddleheads" and her favorite places to look for them. Jan's enthusiasm for the subject was very evident in her presentation, and she had brought many specimens of fresh and dried ferns for us to study afterward.



*Boletus Felleus,*  
"the bitter  
boletus."



*New York State Museum  
mycologist John Haines  
retrieved Mary Bannings  
illustrated manuscript from  
storage where it had been  
preserved for almost a century.*



## EACH A GLORY BRIGHT: MARY BANNING'S MUSHROOMS

June 24, 1994 - January 8, 1995

Crossroads Gallery

*Fifty-one vibrant watercolors of fungi painted by Mary Elizabeth Banning are featured in this exhibition organized by the New York State Museum. The illustrations are part of an unpublished manuscript, "The Fungi of Maryland," which was created by Banning, a schoolteacher and naturalist, from 1868 through 1888. These remarkable illustrations, along with scientific information and personal anecdotes written in the author's hand, were resented in the form of a bound book to the New York State Museum in 1890. Banning often consulted with Charles Peck, New York State Botanist, America's first professional mycologist, to whom she dedicated her book. As Mary Banning wrote in March 1889, "It may be thought by those unacquainted with the glowing colors found among fungi that some of my drawings are the creations of fancy, but such is not the case. I invite the careful observation of the skeptical and they will find that their paint boxes hardly afford pigments bright enough to sketch those beauties of the woods."*

*The following selection by New York State Museum mycologist John Haines was excerpted from an article first published in "The Maryland Naturalist" in 1989 and a speech delivered at the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame in 1994.*

### Mary Banning: The Woman Who Painted Mushrooms

Every once in a while in the course of history, a remarkable person lives, works, and dies and by fate is unchronicled in the historical record. Mary Banning's remarkable life started in Talbot County, Maryland in 1822 and by the time of her death in 1903, the fruits of her artistic and scientific labors lay in storage and had begun to fade from collective memory. It is only now, more than a century later, that her enduring paintings are displayed with pride in museums and their beauty and charm inspires people she never new, in a world she never imagined.

Mary Banning was an educated and introspective person with an exceptional ability to express herself with either a pen or artist's brush .... She had the curiosity and drive that would have made her a first rate scientist, and that is



*Agaricus  
radicans,  
the  
"rooted  
collybia."*

what she wanted more than anything else in the world, but it was not often that a woman was allowed into the gentlemanly world of nineteenth century science....

Banning's mentor in mycology (the study of fungi) was Dr. Charles Peck of the New York State Museum in Albany, New York. He was at the center of mycology in North America during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and he helped many people in that field regardless of whether or not they had formal scientific training (Haines 1986). Banning sent

many of her scientific specimens to Peck and they are still curated at the New York State Museum. He corresponded with Banning from 1879 until 1897, but they never met in person. Their personalities as portrayed in their letters could not have been more different. Where Banning wrote of sporadic exciting mycological adventures and of personal sorrows, Peck wrote scientific descriptions in Latin, and kept a steady scientific pace during his forty-seven year professional career....

My involvement with the work of Mary Banning started when I came to the New York State Museum in 1969 to take on part of the mycological work started by Charles Peck more than a century before. Perhaps because I professed an interest in old mycological books, I was shown an oversize volume stamped "The Fungi of Maryland, M. E. Banning" in gold leaf on the cover. I was allowed only a brief glimpse of its bright illustrations by its protective curator. It was only later that I realized that this "book" was not a book at all, but an unpublished manuscript. A few years later I took on some new responsibilities which included the curation of the mycological collection where the manuscript was kept. My first act was to retrieve the manuscript from the herbarium where it had been stored, to my office where I could examine it in detail....

When the pages were finally opened to the light in my office, the vivid paintings fairly glowed off the bright white bristol board leaves with only a little coal dust at the edges. They were in almost perfect condition and had probably not been thoroughly examined for almost a century. The paintings seem a little exaggerated, euphoric perhaps, often without the little imperfections one would expect, and in color so intense that it can only have come from her mind's eye. They have a personal, even intimate, quality that transcends their mundane subject matter and illustrates the pain and joy of the artist....

The paintings have now been separated from their binding, and carefully cleaned with help from professional art restorers, matted, and selected ones expertly framed.... Her manuscript has been edited, some of her best paintings selected, and a foreword written in order to attract a publisher, but so far Banning's own words written in 1887 to Professor W.G. Farlow, of Harvard University, sum up the situation. She wrote "My illustrated book of Maryland Fungi is greatly enlarged since you saw it. It will never be published because of the expense." I have been captivated by this book, perhaps in a small way as Mary Banning was captivated by her mushrooms....

This remarkable woman's life and work have to do with the very things so much on our minds today — the environment, discrimination, family bonds, health care, and the economy. She has left a legacy of lessons about the important things in life, and she has imbued those lessons with dignity, style, and humility.

Nineteenth Century Mushroom Paintings on Exhibit at the New York State Museum in Albany.

Fifty one exceptional folk art style watercolors of fungi by Mary Elizabeth Banning are featured in the exhibit "Each a Glory Bright" at the State Museum in Albany, New York from June 24, 1994 to January 8, 1995. These remarkable mushroom portraits from Banning's unpublished manuscript, "The Fungi of Maryland," were painted between 1868 and 1889. The exhibit includes personal, often humorous anecdotes from her manuscript and letters about her collecting trips in her home state of Maryland. In 1890 the manuscript was presented by Banning to Charles Peck of the Museum who was her mentor in the study of mycology. It remained in storage and all but forgotten until 1981 when it was exhibited to the public for the first time. Her poignant letters to Peck reveal a contrast between her personal life filled with tragedy and failing health and the joyous days she found to explore her beloved mushrooms.

In her manuscript Banning describes an incident in 1880 when she discovered the Amanita strobiliformis illustrated in her manuscript "I was most agreeably surprised when met by an old German laborer who came racing after me with uplifted hands saying "I hab got some of dem fery fellows you be looking after! But dey be gross!" I offered him ten cents to upset the borrow. This small sum seemed to electrify him. Over went the wheel borrow turning out eight large agarics minus the base and they were useless to me. I asked the old man where he left the roots. Oh! Dey be up in the woods! I laf dem in de ground!" I offered him 15 cents more to bring them to me. Off he flew and in one half hour returned bearing an enormous clod of earth packed with large bulbs."

In her final letter to Peck in 1897 she writes "I barely know how I ever came to part with my illustrated book. I am now a great invalid from rheumatism and it would be such a source of pleasure to me. It afforded me so many happy hours that it lingers in my memory. To tell you the truth I often long to see it and call it my own once more, but this could not be."

Three programs on fungi will take place at the Museum this fall. Gary Lincoff is tentatively scheduled to lead a mushroom walk and identification session near Albany in early October. A fee of about \$30 will be charged to cover expenses. A children's workshop with fungi is scheduled at the museum on September 17 and will be repeated November 19. Microscopes will be provided to see spores and hyphae, participants will see fresh fungi, learn how to make a spore print, and make a drawing (Fee \$12, recommended for ages 9-12). The third program is a very special mushroom diner on October 16 prepared by the Mansion Hill Inn near the Museum, preceded by a tour of the "Each a Glory Bright" exhibit by John Haines (ca. \$35).

For further information contact John Haines at Rm. 3132 CEC, NYS Museum, Albany, NY 12230 or Telephone (518) 474 5809.

The last scheduled event of the weekend was a seriocomic presentation by poison control expert Hanna Tscheckunow entitled "Dying with Mushrooms", not to be confused with last year's presentation on dyeing (wool) with mushrooms. This amusing and informative lecture featured slides of Grete Turchick's charming grandson demonstrating important mushroom identification techniques. Definitely a budding mycologist there, Grete!

All of the lectures were accompanied by beautiful slides, handouts and/or displays. Many thanks to everyone who made this weekend as special as it was, including Joe K., who once again was on hand to make sure everyone had enough candy and pens, all the speakers, the staff at PEEC, and everyone who helped with setup, cleanup or donated materials, and special thanks to Bob and Barbara, for making this weekend one we will all remember for a long time.

--Carol Raine

### Eggs Stuffed with Mushrooms

*Jaja Faszerowane z Pieczarkami*

*Henryka Woźniak  
Warsaw, Poland*

6 ounces mushrooms, chopped  
1 teaspoon butter  
5 hard-cooked eggs, with shell  
1 small bunch parsley, chopped  
1 teaspoon mayonnaise  
salt and pepper to taste  
chives or parsley, chopped

Sauté the mushrooms in the butter, until soft. Carefully cut the eggs in half without peeling. Separate the egg yolks. Mash the egg yolks, add the chopped mushrooms, parsley, 1 teaspoon pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Blend together. Add the mayonnaise; mix. Place the mixture into the egg whites, forming a hill on top. Arrange each egg on a lettuce leaf. Garnish each egg with a teaspoon of mayonnaise each. Sprinkle with chives or parsley. Serves 5.



### Mushroom Soup

*Zupa Grzybowa*

1 1/2 ounces dried mushrooms  
2 yellow onions, sliced  
1 pound beef with bone  
1 3/4 quarts water  
1 carrot  
2 parsley roots  
1 celery stalk  
salt and pepper to taste  
2 tablespoons sour cream  
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped

Clean the mushrooms, cover with water and soak for 1 to 2 hours. Cook with the chopped onions, covered until tender. Strain the broth, remove the mushrooms, and slice. In a separate pot combine the cleaned meat and bones, water, and salt. Cook slowly for 30 minutes. Add the vegetables and cook for another 30 minutes. Set aside to cool for 1 hour. Separate the broth and add it to the mushroom broth. Add the spices and mushrooms. Add the sour cream and garnish with chopped parsley. Serve hot. Serves 6 to 8.

Note: To make this without meat as a Christmas Eve soup, use 1/4 pound butter in place of the beef.



First Class Mail

# COLOR ME

## CALVATIA CYATHIFORMIS

3-7" across, smooth when young then minutely cracked-tesselated white then tan-brown to purplish-brown.

Spore mass white then soon deep purple-violet. Spores 3.5-7.5 $\mu$ , round with distinct spines.

July-November, grassy places lawns and pastures. Edible and good when young.

