

NJMAnews

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Nov/Dec 1998

The official newsletter of the New Jersey Mycological Association.

Whistle Etiquette

NJMA Officers
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 Terry Horvath

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Learning basic whistle calls may get you out of trouble if you find yourself foraying in unfamiliar territory and you lose contact with the rest of the group. A whistle is a convenience that sometime may get you out of trouble, and its sound carries better than a yell. If you know some simple signals, a whistle simplifies communication in the woods. (Even if you are the one that hears the whistle, it is a good thing to know what it means. -Ed) Remember the following calls and their meanings.

1 long-1 short (Tweeeeeeeet. Tweet!) like a marching band directors signal for "ready...go!" means "Let's gather. Come in" This is a call for foray leaders only.
1 short - 1 long (Tweet. Tweeeeeeeet) is the reverse of the above. It means, "I'm coming."

1 short (Tweet) can be used to keep track of a partner paralleling you out of sight. It means, "I'm here. Are you there?"

3 medium length blasts (Tweeeet. Tweeeet. Tweeeet.) means "I'm lost. Help!" Pause. Listen. Repeat. (If you hear the call, the appropriate response is 1 short-1 long for "I'm coming.")

If you are the signaler, repeat your whistle at five second intervals. If you hear a whistle, stop and carefully listen for the second call to determine the signal and the direction from which it is coming. You may be helping someone who really needs you. *Taken with thanks from Sporophore-Newsletter of the Mycological Association of Washington, DC. Potomac. Found in Mainely Mushrooms Vol 13 #4*

Calendar — NJMA

Nov 1	NJMA Program and Meeting	SCEEC
Nov 7	Culinary Dinner (still time to call!)	Saunders/Sidney
Nov 8	CANCELLED - Hackensack Reservoir Foray	Bob Peabody
Nov 29	Holiday Party and Elections	SCEEC
Jan 3	NJMA Program (to be announced)	SCEEC

Other Events of Interest

Jan 30 '99	NOFA-NJ conf on organic farming & gardening	Cook Coll, New Bruns
Apr 15	Pilobolus at Community Theater	Morristown
Aug 12-15	NAMA Conference '99	Missouri
	(note the change in projected date)	

Directions to SCEEC (Somerset County Environmental Education Center (908) 766-2489 Route 287 to Exit 30A (North Maple Ave/Basking Ridge). Follow N. Maple Ave as it bends left and becomes S. Maple Ave in town. Follow S. Maple Ave past Lord Stirling Stables. Go left on Lord Stirling Rd (Great Swamp sign on the right). SCEEC is about a mile. Park in the lot, NOT in front. **Meetings start at 2 p.m.** Contributions to refreshments (snacks or \$) are appreciated.

Nov 1 Program Features Forays

The November 1 program will allow us to enjoy (vicariously) two fall-flung mushroom excursions. Susan Hopkins will share her impressions and beautiful slides of NEMF - Quebec. We understand that at least 14 members of our club attended that foray and were delighted to find lots and lots of mushrooms; a welcome treat after a dry New Jersey summer. Rod Tulloss will tell us about !NAMA-Mexico Foray! This foray occurred in neo-volcanic region 60 miles east of Mexico City. Rod will tell us how the collecting went in pine, oak and fir forests of that habitat.



Last Foray of the Season

Mushroom hunting is always enjoyable. Even if you find nothing to fill your basket, you can take home memories of a soothing walk in the woods and perhaps some gentle conversation with like-minded folks. There is one more opportunity to foray with friends. Bob Peabody will lead the foray at Hackettstown Reservoir. The colors are beautiful out there this time of year. Hope you can make it. Don't forget your bag lunch.



French Cooking Culinary Dinner Still time to Reserve

Cooking from the Brittany and Normandy regions of France will be on the menu at the culinary dinner planned for Sunday Nov 7. Call Bob Saunders/ Rhoda Sidney at (201) 568-3919 at least a week ahead. They will provide recipe suggestions and directions. This is a cost sharing event. Guests (one per member) are welcome.

'Tis the Season to...

Mark your calendar (November 29) for the important (and fun) annual election of officers; winning slide presentation; and party.

Enter your slides in the contest. Add to the enjoyment of this traditional event- even if you have one slide to offer for consideration. Gene Varney

will accept slides at the November 1 meeting or by mail until November 13. (See contest rules in the Sept/Oct newsletter)

Plan your refreshment offering. The goodies are especially anticipated at this meeting. (However, they are welcome at ALL meetings.) Please bring snack and finger foods to share. Perhaps you will have something you have home-baked for the holidays.

Mushroom Gifts Anyone?

Unusual gifts for persons who have an interest in mushrooms can be found by calling Gourmet Mushrooms in Graton, CA. The toll-free number is 1-800-789-9121. They will send mushrooms they grow or you can "do it yourself". They offer kits for indoor mushroom cultivation (on a small scale), even morels (at the right season). Other stuff too.



DUES DUE

It's time to share some of your "green energy" with the club for another year of all the activities that make our club the success it continues to be. And what a bargain! \$10. one year individual membership and \$15. one year household membership gives you admission to all programs and activities, plus the newsletter to let you know what's happening near and far. Pay treasurer Bob Peabody at the Nov 1 meeting; the Nov 8 foray (he's leading it); or send it to him (address on front page). You may include a separate check for \$17., made out to NAMA if you would like to join the North American Mycological Association and receive their beautiful newsletter, informative journal and membership benefits. And remember, this green energy is "tax deductible".

Oops!

Credit for the NJMA club "wear your tee shirt" group photo should have gone to Ursula Pohl. Thanks for the photo, Ursula, let's have some more. **And that goes to all members.** Articles, photos, cartoons, poems, or any appropriate items are welcome.

Preserve and Store Mushrooms

by Tom Blades, *Mycena News* as reported in *SporesAfield* Sept. 1998

Should you be fortunate enough to find more mushrooms than you can reasonably consume while fresh, here are some ways you can deal with this delectable dilemma

Preserving - Always start with fresh specimens. Remove dirt and any bad parts. Slice into 1/8 to 1/4 inch pieces. Some of the most successful methods of preserving your bounty are:

Sautéing and Freezing: Sauté in butter or oil. (half and half is good -Ed) Don't add salt. You can use oils with no flavor of their own but many people prefer the taste of the butter. Mushrooms that require a lot of cooking and hold a lot of moisture, such as chanterelles, can be dry sautéed- that is, simply by placing in a hot pan to cook in their own juices. After cooling, place in air-tight containers and freeze. For even better results, use a vacuum packer so air in the container won't make the butter rancid over time.

Drying: Use a food dehydrator for the best and quickest results, but be sure to set it no higher than 115 degrees (if it has a thermostat) so the mushrooms are dried without being cooked. Air drying on screens outdoors (out of the sun) works on mushrooms that are not moist, but be sure to take them in at night. If drying on screens indoors, you can speed the process by using a heater or fan. A convection oven set to no more than 110 degrees sometimes works if you leave the door ajar to allow moisture to escape. You can also string slices or whole small mushrooms to air dry in a well ventilated place.

Blanching (par-boiling): Instead of sautéing, you may blanch them in salted, boiling water for 2-3 minutes. Plunge the mushrooms into cold water to stop further cooking. Dry on towels and store in plastic bags in the freezer. Again, a vacuum packer keeps them longer.

Storing and Reconstituting: Once you've preserved your mushrooms, you need to store them and -when the time is right- to reconstitute them.

Storing: Package dried mushrooms into air tight jars. Store in a cool, dark place. You might freeze them for a few days to kill off bugs, or keep them in the freezer. You should place sautéed mushrooms in air tight containers in serving-sized portions and then freeze them. You may process sautéed mushrooms in a food processor until the size of rice grains, then place them in ice cube trays and freeze. Store the cubes in plastic bags and use one or two cubes to flavor soups or sauces.

Reconstituting: Soak dried mushrooms in warm water for 30 minutes or more, to soften. Simmer tougher varieties. Save the soaking water for stock or reduce and use with the dish you are making. Allow frozen, sautéed mushrooms to thaw slowly and use immediately when thawed.

Tips for Different Species

Morels: Drying works best. You can dry the small ones whole. You may also sauté and freeze them, or blanch them and freeze them whole. Don't freeze them raw; they turn to mush.

Chanterelles: Sautéing and freezing is best. White and golden chanterelles dry well but are leathery. The best preservation method for black chanterelles is to dry them.

Boletes: Slice and dry. (We once dried slices of boletes in paper plates in the back window of our car when we were on a camping trip -Ed.) Pores can be removed from older specimens if desired. Dried boletes age well and increase in flavor intensity. Boletes do well sautéed, and you can freeze rock-hard buttons whole. Grind dry boletes into powder and use for flavoring soup, sauces, etc.

Hedgehogs: Sauté or blanch and freeze. You can also dry or pickle them.

Lepiota: Slice and dry.

Oysters: Cut into strips and blanch, then freeze.

Agaricus: Dry. Even if you find a bargain price at the market.

Matsutake: Freeze or pickle. If dried, this species loses much of its flavor.

Frogs and Mushrooms

by Ruth David
from *SporesAfield* Sept 1998



The only known connection between frogs and mushrooms can be found in drawings of frogs sitting on or under "toadstools". The possibility exists that there may be a real connection, however.

It is well known that frogs are drastically disappearing from this planet. One theory is that something in the air, perhaps too much ozone, is poisoning frogs through their skins and also destroying their eggs.

The latest theory is that a killing fungus has been doing the frogs in. However, this theory admits that something in the environment has made the frogs susceptible to such a fungus. Is it possible that environmental factors may also be destroying the mushrooms? We don't really know, but acid rain in the Adirondacks destroyed fish which were once abundant in lakes there.

The problem in studying the environmental impact on mushrooms is that they don't "bloom" every year, and few blooms for several years may be followed by a year of a plentiful bloom. We do know that when forests are cut down or farms or malls replace natural areas, mushroom will disappear.

But what about areas that have not changed very much, where some have gone mushroom hunting for decades? Are there any reports from such areas? We now know that the meltdown some years ago in Russia affected mushrooms in that area.

Frogs are not exactly canaries, but they are certainly acting as a warning that something is very wrong with our environment. Could what affects frogs also affect mushrooms?



HUTCHESON MEMORIAL FOREST CENTER

SCHEDULE OF CONDUCTED TOURS, FALL AND WINTER 1998-1999

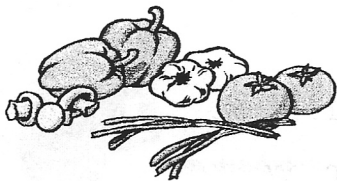
ALL TOURS ON SUNDAYS AT 2:30 PM OR **8:30 AM

OCTOBER 18	EDMUND STILES	ECOLOGIST
**NOVEMBER 8	CHARLES LECK	ORNITHOLOGIST
NOVEMBER 22	THOMAS MEAGHER	PLANT ECOLOGIST
DECEMBER 13	RICK LATHROP	FOREST ECOLOGIST
JANUARY 10	LOUIS CANTAFIO	ECOLOGIST
FEBRUARY 7	JAMES QUINN	PLANT ECOLOGIST
MARCH 7	JOHN KUSER	FORESTER
APRIL 4	STEVEN HANDEL	PLANT ECOLOGIST
APRIL 18	JEAN MARIE HARTMAN	PLANT ECOLOGIST

Trips marked with (**) leave at 8:30 AM.

Trips leave from the entrance of the woods which is on Amwell Road (Route 514) about 3/4 mile east of East Millstone, New Jersey. The trail through the woods may be muddy in places except in dry weather, so persons should come prepared. The trip through the woods takes between an hour and two hours. There is no charge and reservations are not required on these guided public tours.

Groups of more than ten persons may not attend the guided tours. Such groups are invited to write to the Director, Hutcheson Memorial Forest Center, Department of Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources, Blake Hall, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903 for special guided tours to be arranged at other times.



Mushroom Recipe Scrapbook

Salmon with Sauce of Black Chanterelles in Yogurt

Bake, broil, barbecue or pan roast some salmon. Then top it with this sauce-

- 1/4 lb black chanterelles (reconstituted), chopped and sautéed.
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp sorrel, chopped
- 1 tsp rosemary, fresh, chopped coarsely
- 1/2 cup yogurt, plain
- 2 tsp nuoc mam (Vietnamese fish sauce)
- 1/4 cup half and half
- 2 tsp lime juice, fresh
- 1 tsp ginger root, chopped

Except for the black chanterelles, mix all ingredients together in a blender, add the mushrooms. Salt and pepper to taste. This makes enough sauce for fish that serves 8.

from an article by Patrick Hamilton in Mycena News (San Francisco) October 1998

Pickled Oyster or Honey Mushrooms

- 2 cups sliced oyster mushrooms or slices (or caps) of honey mushrooms
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp dill seed
- 12 medium thinly sliced onion
- 12 tsp red hot pepper (optional)

Boil mushrooms for five minutes. Drain. In a sauce pan, add remaining ingredients except sliced onion and red hot pepper. Boil until sugar dissolves. Put mushrooms in a sterilized pint jar with sliced onion and red hot pepper. Pour the vinegar mixture over the mushrooms. Stir, seal, cool and refrigerate.

(the recipe as printed was for Oyster mushrooms but I think it will work for honeys too-Ed) from Spores Afield April 1996

Easy Mushroom and Bread Quiche

Spread a layer of stuffing bread crumbs on the bottom of an oiled pan. (Pepper Ridge Farm tastes best). Spread over the bread crumbs:

2 and 1/2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese

Blend together the following:

1 cup dry oyster mushrooms (reconstituted) or equivalent fresh

3 cups milk

1/2 cup powdered milk

5 eggs

dash of garlic powder

dash of onion powder

fine herbs

Pour the liquid over the cheese and bread crumb bed,

Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes until firm but not too dry.

from Mushroomers 8:5 9509 with these notes "This recipe was from our survivor's banquet. There was no name on the recipe, but it was a favorite" It is adapted from Diet for a Small Planet page 184.

"Hen" Turnovers

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F

Pastry: Combine 2 cups flour and 3/4 tsp salt in a bowl. Cut in 2/3 cup shortening and form into a ball by adding 5 tsp water. Cover and chill at least 30 minutes.

Filling: Clean 1 pound hen-of-the-woods mushrooms and chop fine. Heat 2 tbsp butter in a skillet. Add 1/2 cup finely chopped onion and 1/2 lb bacon, thinly sliced. Sauté until the onions are tender. Add the chopped mushrooms, 1 tsp chopped fresh thyme, salt and pepper to taste. Blend in 1 tsp flour and allow the mixture to thicken slightly. Put to one side.

Making the Turnovers: Roll out the pastry to 1/8 inch thickness and cut into rounds with a 2 and 1/2 half inch cookie cutter. Place a teaspoon of the mushroom mixture on one side of a round, fold over, and seal the edge by pressing it down with a fork. When all the turnovers are made, place them on an ungreased baking sheet and brush the tops with 1 egg yolk beaten with 1 tsp water. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes in preheated oven.

from Wild Foods by Roger Phillips with this note, "These delicious little turnovers were made by our friend Susan Hopkins and eaten in large quantities by me." (NJMA has enjoyed many mushroom treats prepared by Susan -Ed.)



Mushrooms



*Little lowly people of the earth
Who live unseen beneath the buried brown,
Will show their heads, a small community;
And bicker in their crowded little town.*

*A colony, all leghorn white and smooth,
Make appearance on a single day;
And raise their children all about as
chicks,
Up they grow, and then to move away.*

*One mushroom boy has freckles on his face.
His gangled legs will wobble in the dew
As if to say he does not care to dance
At all, despite his party suit is new.*

*Across the leafy ballroom, nests of girls
Await, all gowned in crimson, yellow,
green—
Heads together, whispering of him;
Each one hoping she will be seen.*

*The party is disrupted when a
squirrel
Appears, to nibble at a mushroom treat.
His tiny paws reach out to break a piece
From the edge, to turn it; then to eat.*

*The squirrel sees me, but does not scamper
off.
Perhaps he knows he need not be too shy.
We mushroom fanciers are gentle folk.
We come to visit mushrooms, squirrel and
I.*

This delightful poem was found in *Bee Tree and Other Stuff* by Robert Newton Peck. In it he says his mother once had a wild gray squirrel so tame it would enter their kitchen and scold until she found it something to eat. "Mama used to pick wild mushrooms to give her pet a special treat". Have any of you seen squirrels nibbling on mushrooms in the wild?

NJMA news
c/o Sue Hopkins



First Class Mail

