



SOMA News

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 8

APRIL 2008

*SOMA IS AN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO MYCOLOGY.
WE ENCOURAGE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS BY SHARING OUR ENTHUSIASM
THROUGH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND GUIDED FORAYS.*

2008 SEASON CALENDAR

April

April 17th » Meeting—7pm
Sonoma County Farm Bureau
Speaker: **David Campbell**

May

May 15th » Meeting—7pm
Sonoma County Farm Bureau
Speaker: **Dr. Chris Kjeldsen**
Important Membership Meeting!!



EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING IDENTIFICATION

After seeking medical attention, contact **Darvin DeShazer** for identification at (707) 829-0596. Email your photos to muscara@pacbell.net. Photos should show all sides of the mushroom. Please **do not** send photos taken with cell phones—the resolution is simply too poor to allow accurate identification.

NOTE: Always be 100% certain of the identification of any and all mushrooms before you eat them!

A free service for hospitals, veterinarians and concerned citizens of Sonoma County.

SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

David Campbell

Thursday—4/17—7PM—Farm Bureau

Fungimental Mycophagy

A forest to table discussion
about the basics and beyond of eating wild mushrooms.



David Campbell... has been collecting, studying, eating, teaching and writing about wild mushrooms for 40 years. He has served on the council of Mycological Society of San Francisco (MSSF) for the last 9 years, 2 as president, and remains on council as their 'immediate past president'. For many years he has been on-call with the regional Poison Control Center for mushroom poisoning incident response in Marin County. With a primary mycological interest in edible and poisonous mushrooms, David has led innumerable fungal forays for the membership of MSSF and SOMA. He was employed for several years as a mushroom hunting guide and event facilitator at author David Arora's annual mycological field seminars. As an expert mycophagist (one who safely eats a wide variety of wild mushrooms) and experienced outdoor group foray leader, David recently founded MycoVentures, Inc. as a vehicle for his various mycological endeavors, and continues his long standing partnership with Charmoon Richardson and the Wild About Mushrooms Company as their 'Foray Director', guiding organized wild mushroom events and adventures locally and afar.

SOMA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Bill Hanson
(707) 837-8028

VICE PRESIDENT

Jim Wheeler

SECRETARY

Bill Wolpert

TREASURER

Julie Schreiber
SOMAtreasurer@SOMAmushrooms.org

COMMITTEES AND BOARD MEMBERS

BOOK SALES

Bill Hanson
(707) 837-8028

CULINARY QUESTIONS

Caitlin Marigold
SOMAculinary@SOMAmushrooms.org

CULTIVATION CLUB CHAIR

Position Vacant

FORAYS

Bill Wolpert
SOMAwalk@SOMAmushrooms.org

MEMBERSHIP

Jim Wheeler
wheeler.j.d@att.net

MUSHROOM DYE COORDINATOR

Dorothy Beebee
SOMAmushroomdyes@SOMAmushrooms.org

MUSHROOM PAPER COORDINATOR

Catherine Wesley
(707) 887-0842

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORS

Darvin DeShazer
(707) 829-0596
muscaria@pacbell.net

Chris Kjeldsen, Ph.D.
(707) 544-3091

Chris.Kjeldsen@sonoma.edu

SOMA CAMP DIRECTOR

Chris Murray
SOMAcampinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA CAMP REGISTRAR

Linda Morris
SOMAregristar@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA NEWS EDITOR

Tom Cruckshank
SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA WEBMASTERS

Dorothy Beebee and Martin Beebee
SOMAinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Julie Schreiber
julieschreiber@hotmail.com

BOARD MEMBER

Eric Marigold

SOMA's *Amanita muscaria* logo by Ariel Mahon

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As we step dryly from the winter mushroom season we can look back on a very fruitful eight months. The beginning was also a bit dry, the chanterelle season was spotty. Then the rains came, lots of rain. The boletes were stimulated by the saturation and fruited in vast numbers. In December the boletes, matsi, blacks and candy caps crossed into the mid-winter growth. January brought one of the best hedgehog seasons in memory. The yellow foot was shy this year and came out late in January to add to our baskets. The cornucopiodes kept growing and growing it was the best of the ten years I have been in the sport. I have many quarts of dried blacks in my stash.

Our year also included a memorable winter camp, the Sunday night dinner was fantastic. The weather turned in our favor and ended camp with two inches of hail. What a beautiful end to camp that was. I still get comments from folks who say that the camp was the most fun they have had in a long time. New friends were made and old friends came together for our one and only fundraiser. It was more a fun-raiser.

This year also brought to light some of the serious concerns facing Salt Point State Park. We found great friends in the persons of rangers Heidi Horvitz and Woody. Not only are they mushroomers but share a deep love of this great public resource. The clean-up day in February brought the San Francisco, Sonoma County and East Bay societies together with park management, we all want to work for a healthy future for SPSP. The year also brought a vast number of members who are willing to pitch in and make our all volunteer organization function. Thank you for your help.

Today we look forward to the Spring boletes and Morels in the mountains.

Take care, Bill Hanson

-Bill Hanson

FORAY OF THE MONTH

NO MORE FORAYS THIS SEASON!

One of the driest Marches on record has curtailed the season. On the March foray fungi were scarce to say the least. About twenty people attended. The folks who did show up enjoyed the beautiful day and rubbing elbows with other fungal fanatics. We had a couple of first timers and some old hands. One member even came all the way from Wisconsin! That would be Colleen Vernon, sister of newsletter contributor Nancy Jo Wood.

It is time to look to the mountains for morels and spring porcini. Good luck and see you at SPSP in September.

Fungi Discovered at Salt Point on the SOMA Foray—2/22

Amanita lanei
Cantharellus tubaeformis
Craterellus cornucopioides
Crepidotus sp.
Hydnellum aurantiacum
Hydnum repandum
Hydnum umbilicatum
Hygrocybe flavescens
Hygrocybe psittacina
Leptonia sp.
Nolanea sp.
Polyporus alveolaris
Russula cremoricolor
Trichoglossum hirsutum



Mushroom Dyes Out Into the Sun...

I finally realized that once again, the Sonoma County mushroom-dye season is quieting down, at least for me. Once again, I'm not saving any old leftover dyes liquid, because I've noticed that many lose their color and rapidly deteriorate after a few months in solution. – Of course I haven't tried freezing the dye baths because there just isn't the room in my fridge..... Hard to let them go, but into the compost they went – especially when the labels have fallen off or been eaten away by the odd curious slug...The only one I'm holding onto is a large glass jar of *Pisolithus tinctorius*, to which I continue to add fresh young specimens as they appear. I have found that it is better to dry the mushrooms or freeze them while fresh, and then make new dye liquors as needed. So these cool Spring evenings still invite a few woodstove fires behind which to dry fungi fruits – there are occasional reports of *Omphalotus olivascens* still being found, and I can remember years past when the occasional *Dermocybe phoenicea* could be seen nestled under the pine needle duff at Salt Point...

Thanks to my fervent SOMA foray collectors, I've had a nice choice of dried fungi to take to demonstrations and classes this year, and they travel well – (in well labeled clear sealed plastic bags, right on top for the airline inspectors to check)... *Dermocybes* spp, *Omphalotus olivascens*, *Sarcodon fusco-indicus* and many of the Hydnaceae have produced tried and true (and in some cases even more intense color) in dye pots when nothing fresh is available for a demonstration...Thank you again, friends!

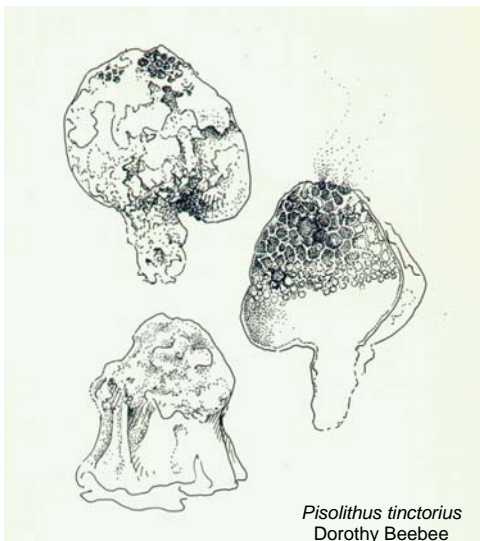
I think that the *Dermocybes* still emit the most vivid dye hues when used fresh, but this year the dried *Omphalotus*

olivascens continued to amaze me with the intense purples (with or without alum mordant) and deep forest greens (w. iron mordant) that they produced when reconstituted in the dye pot months later. Another earlier discovery that I've continued to expand on, is Miriam Rice's technique of pouring boiling water over the *Dermocybes* to check the color, and then actually letting the fibers (wool, silk, and mohair) steep in the dye for 24 - 48 hours on the back of the wood stove – no cooking, to produce some truly amazing color. I'm now doing this with all

of my dyes, and the resulting color has a clarity and brilliance not matched by the cooking method! Patience is the lesson, and it is richly rewarded!!! (Bye, bye PG&E...) And this works with the dried mushrooms as well as the fresh. I tried this many years ago with natural dyes from plants – making a "sun-tea" with the dyes for wonderfully clear colors.

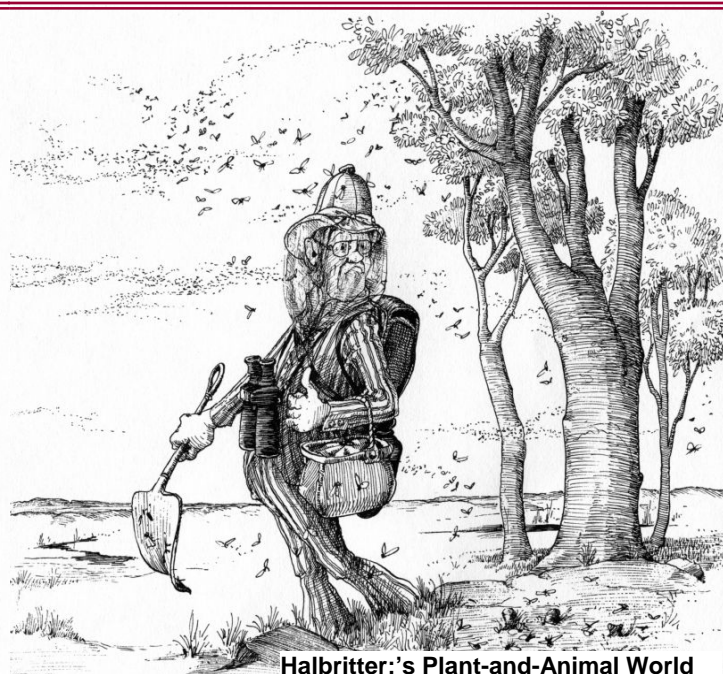
It would be an interesting experiment to do some tests for comparative light fastness using the 2 methods.... How important is the element of heat for setting the light and color-fastness of mushroom dyes????? Will the sun provide enough to set the dyes? I'm going to try it with my favorite "Jack-o-Lanterns" (*Omphalotus olivascens*), because I know it already works with the *Dermocybes* with their amazingly water

soluble pigment. It would be neat if someone else wanted to make a parallel and well documented set of tests on this subject, now that the sun is past the vernal equinox. Time to get out the sun tea glass ½ gallon jars again, pour boiling water over some dried fungi, and give it a try! Is anyone up for a parallel experiment so we can report on our results next month? Give me call, (707) 887-1300, or dbeebee@sonic.net.



Flaky Flytrap
amanita muscata

From the wilds of Abuzzi. Cunning noncomestible, this catcher of flies has so far eluded the human touch. The few who have succeeded in separating the flies from this fly-by-night fungus have found no fungus at all.



Halbritter's Plant-and-Animal World

Normally, as mushroom seekers, we don't think of taking our pets along on forays for obvious reasons. I have taken my Red Heeler on an outing or two when I was hanging back with the picnic basket and shooting the breeze with my favorite woodsman, Skip, and his dog on private property we have access to. It would be a big mistake to show the Australian Cattle Dog by example how to nose around in the leaves. This would become 'a job' to this obsessive overachiever. Just as it would be crazy to take your beloved Beagle along, nose to the ground. No force on Earth could stop Snoopy from taking off after a scent of jackrabbit or perhaps deer. Many breeds are just not suited to this activity, and the rest are beyond returning to their canine wild roots. They are not welcomed for practical reasons and, in most cases, legally on most properties. This leads me to the story about the dog named Blue that I read about March 6th in Chris Smith's column in the Press Democrat.

If you missed the story, Blue was found guarding over his deceased masters body, supposedly having been on guard for up to two weeks. Dog and master were a close unit as they were in business together sniffing for black diamond truffles in Mendocino County. Yes. Blue was a truffle sniffer. The #1 sniffer among Bill Griner's lot of pit-bull mixes. Lest your perception alarm



goes off at this story, let me remind you that the famous "Dog Whisperer" Caesar Milan's favorite dog is the dog of pit-bull origin. And a recent story of a batch of abused pit-types that were rescued ended happily with most being placed after assessment. Turns out they are surprisingly much more adaptable than their rap sheet reputation.

But back to Blue. On checking with Chris Smith today, there is a chance that Blue is still at-large. A neighbor was trying to feed a few that had straggled away from efforts to catch them. The others were reportedly destroyed due to their circumstances. Their quiet lives were sent in a spin when their master passed away. The days spent under hickory trees in the fresh air with a friend were over.

I have no doubt that these dogs were capable of finding the subtle smell of a particular mycelia. Just as rescue/recovery animals can detect the vibration of human life or nuances of decay, their senses and intuition are on a different metaphysical plane than ours. We should be so lucky to have this talent, although myself having a

heightened olfactory system can tell you, it can be a blessing and a curse.

So I have been thinking of Blue, and wishing him well, wherever he may be. Asking the SOMA members to take their hats off to him as a kindred spirit.

OUR VISION STATEMENT

In 2005, SOMA began a process of self-review and planning. With the help of a professional (David Warner), we gathered for a brainstorming session about the future of our club. We asked ourselves the question, "Where do we want to be in five years and beyond?" With the understanding that answering this question really is a process, the Board has been able to set aside time for the practice of "Visioning." A result of those discussions is the following simple vision statement. We hope you'll agree that it elegantly defines our club and its direction.

***SOMA IS AN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO MYCOLOGY.
WE ENCOURAGE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS
BY SHARING OUR ENTHUSIASM
THROUGH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND GUIDED FORAYS.***

Sudden Oak Death

The California Oak Mortality Task Force will be holding their spring training sessions this year in Sonoma and San Mateo Counties. As in previous years, each session will begin with indoor presentations covering symptoms & diagnosis, regulations, landscape & forest treatments, and best management practices; the afternoon will be out in the field looking at symptoms and demonstrating treatment techniques. New this year is an afternoon field station specifically addressing bay pruning and other horticultural activities to keep oak trees healthy. Continuing Education credits are expected from DPR, ISA, and the Urban Forest Council.

The sessions are free, but you must register online at www.suddenoakdeath.org to reserve your spot.

Sonoma County – April 22, 2008

Sonoma Development Center, McDougal Chapel

15000 Arnold Drive, Eldridge, CA 95431



While driving up to the North Coast the other day I came up behind the usual slower moving vehicle and I was reminded what bugs and yet entertains me so much about certain drivers as they are going uphill into a slight curve when they brake. Brake? What gear are they in?

There is a reason that even automatic transmissions have a gearshift lever easily reached by even the most timid and confused driver. How about using it? Great idea.

Anyway this time behind such silliness allows me time to think about the upcoming morel season and about any mushrooms that might be coming up. Musing on morel hunts brightens even those dark periods while I am trapped following challenged drivers.

I don't think I've ever been on a bad morel hunt. . . .

But no more fantasizing of what could be happening soon. How about pondering on this occurrence (or lack of) now--what's happened to all the Agaricus? Used to be that right in the middle of blacks' season up along the North Coast we'd be picking several varieties of delicious dark brown gilled goodies in pastures seen while driving on Highway 1. Right there near Pink Rock just north of River's End restaurant Agaricuses at one time were popping up in solid white patches and were easily grabbed under the old and rusty barbed wire fencing (or a quick hop over worked too).

Where did they go?

Yesterday Linda Morris and I took a break from work and drove out sweet sweet Chileno Valley Road for lunch at Nick's Cove just north of Marshall. Golden yellow and some dark orange poppies and puffy white clouds were just perfect at midday.

She spotted a big and fat and rather lop-sided giant puffball just a bit too far under a new barbed wire fence to reach. It was her first sighting of one, ever. I once picked maybe 8-10

very large ones above Stinson Beach on the side of Mt. Tam off Highway 1 but I don't see them much any more either.

I know that mushrooms can be cyclical in their fruiting patterns but it has been a long long time since I have heard of large Agaricus flushes. What kind of cycle is that?

When I lived in Mill Valley in the early '90's a couple of us would run up and down Tennessee Valley for a morning jog and one year (maybe 1992) there were literally 100's and 100's of Giant Horse mushrooms on both sides of the trail. I hiked up to that airplane navigation beacon/transmitter thing near Hawk Hill and saw a whole bunch more. I filled 4 brown shopping bags. . . .

Where'd they go? I don't get it.

April is the month to start going up to the Sierras to check on your natural morel patches at the lower elevations. Start at 3,500' or so. Look for new fiddlehead ferns and small Miner's lettuce as correct indicators for exposure (heat/elevation/direction). Check out logged tracks and campgrounds around fire pits and tables. Have fun and good luck!

Next season the Newsletter will be looking for new contributors to keep it going and at least mildly interesting. You don't have to be a Hemingway, or Vonnegut (duh—you're reading this column), or anybody other than one who thinks folks might get some value in the sharing of experiences relating to mushrooms.

It's volunteers who make SOMA what it is and we as a group are always looking for new people to add to this wonderful group of folks who just like getting wet in the woods together. If you look around at Camp or at our forays what you see is us and we always like more "uses" to be put to good uses.

Here's a simple and seasonal dish that is always a hit. You make it and you'll be a hit too:

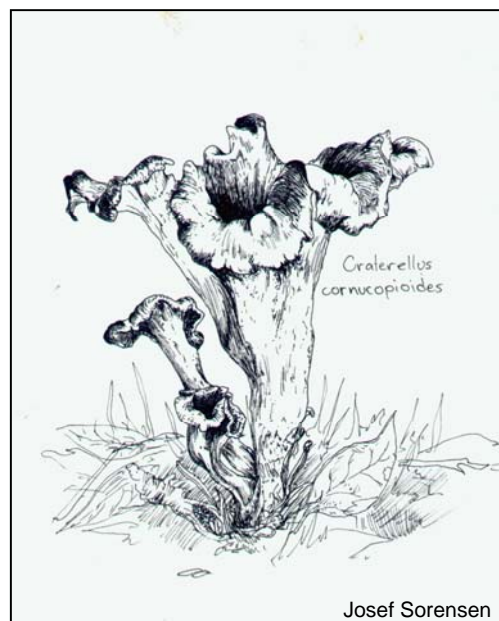
CLIP & SAVE 

Asparagus With Black Chanterelles, Crisp And Sweet Garlic

Serving Size: 4 Preparation Time: 0:30

Amount	Ingredient	Preparation Method
2 Lbs	asparagus	trimmed, washed
4 Tbl	extra virgin olive oil	
1 Can	black chanterelles	chopped
8 Cloves	garlic	cut 1/8"
½ Tsp	red pepper flakes	
½ Ea	Meyer lemon	zested
	sea salt and fresh black pepper	

1. Sauté the asparagus in 1 tbl of the oil until almost tender and then immediately plunge them into ice water to refresh. Drain and set aside.
2. In the same pan sauté the mushrooms in 1 tbl of the oil until softened and well cooked, remove from the pan and set aside.
3. In two tbl of hot oil fry the garlic for just 5 seconds (do not burn!), in the same pan, remove and set aside.
4. Place the asparagus into the same pan, heated over medium high, add the mushrooms and heat through. Add the garlic, chile flakes, squeeze the lemon over and add the zest. S & P.



Genetic technology reveals how poisonous mushrooms cook up toxins

Nov. 12, 2007 EAST LANSING, Mich.

Heather Hallen spent eight years looking for poison in all the wrong places.

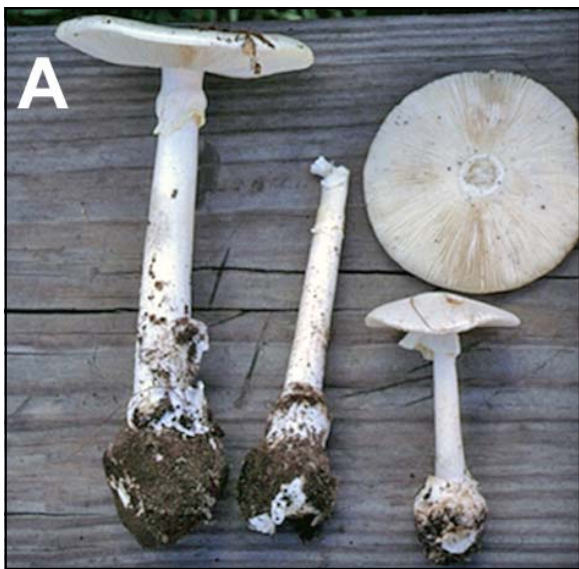
Alpha-amanitin is the poison of the death cap mushroom, *Amanita phalloides*. The Michigan State University plant biology research associate was looking for a big gene that makes a big enzyme that produces alpha-amanitin, since that's how other fungi produce similar compounds. But after years of defeat, she and her team called in the big guns – new technology that sequences DNA about as fast as a death cap mushroom can kill.

The results: The discovery of remarkably small genes that produce the toxin – a unique pathway previously unknown in fungi.

The discovery is reported in today's Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. It is work that not only solves a mystery of how some mushrooms make the toxin – but also sheds light on the underlying biochemical machinery. It might be possible one day to harness the mushroom genes to make novel chemicals that would be useful as new drugs.

"We think we have a factory that spits out lots of little sequences to make chemicals in *Amanita* mushrooms," said Jonathan Walton, MSU plant biology professor who leads Hallen's team. "Our work indicates that these mushrooms have evolved a mechanism to make dozens or even hundreds of new, previously unknown chemicals, besides the toxins that we know about."

Of the thousands of species of mushrooms, only about 30 produce alpha-amanitin. Most of them look much like their edible cousins. But poisonous mushrooms are powerful in folklore and in history. In 54 A.D., Emperor Tiberius Claudius was fed a death cap mushroom by his wife Agrippina to put her son Nero on the throne of Rome.



Samples of poisonous *Amanita bisporigera*, the Destroying Angel mushroom, are shown above. Photo by Heather Hallen.

Alpha-amanitin kills people by inhibiting an enzyme necessary for expression of most genes. Without the ability to synthesize new proteins, cells quickly grind to a halt. The intestinal tract and the liver are the hardest hit as they come into first contact with the toxin. By the time symptoms show up, a liver transplant is often the only hope.

Hallen, a mycologist, gathers mushrooms in the Michigan woods and often is called upon to help identify mushroom species for veterinarians, parents of small children and local hospitals – often in a desperate race to beat alpha-amanitin's effects.

Walton's lab works to understand the biochemical pathways by which natural products are synthesized in fungi. Fungal natural products that benefit human health include penicillin and the immunosuppressant drug cyclosporin. Studying their biosynthesis could lead to the discovery and development of new medicines.

To find the elusive gene for alpha-amanitin, they used what they term "brute force" – a new machine at MSU that can sequence immense quantities of DNA quickly. The 454 LifeSciences pyrosequencer generates 100 Mb DNA sequence in one overnight run - twice the size of a fungal genome. Traditional sequencing methods require months to yield the same quantities. What they found was a gene that encodes the toxin directly – with no need to first synthesize an enzyme that in turn would make the toxin.

"The RNA goes in, and out comes the backbone of the toxin," Hallen said. After its initial synthesis, the toxin is then modified in several ways by the mushroom to make it exceptionally poisonous.

Walton said the discovery poses some interesting evolutionary questions. For example, why do only some mushrooms produce this toxin? And how did a handful of other, unrelated mushrooms evolve the same trait? Finding the genes points to how the trait could appear in one mushroom, but not how it evolved in mushrooms that aren't related to *Amanita*.

Hallen and Walton also see the doors opening to a diagnostic test that could use DNA to determine if a mushroom is toxic or not. Identifying a mushroom by shape and color alone is often impossible if the mushroom has been cooked or partially digested, yet rapid and accurate identification in an emergency room situation is critical.

The work was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to the Plant Research Lab, the MSU Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station and a Strategic Partnership Grant from the MSU Foundation.

Contact: Jonathan Walton, Plant Biology: (517) 353-4885, walton@msu.edu; or Sue Nichols, University Relations: (517) 353-8942, cell (517) 282-8472, nichols@msu.edu

<http://newsroom.msu.edu/site/indexer/3244/content.htm>

The Sacred Mushroom Seeker: Essays for R. Gordon Wasson.

Riedlinger, Thomas J. (Editor). (1990).
Portland, OR: Dioscorides Press. ISBN: 0-931146-17-8
Description: First edition, 283 pages. Festschrift.

Contents: Preface, foreword by Richard Evans Schultes, 25 unnumbered chapters, 3 appendices: A. Gordon Wasson's Account of his Childhood, B. Bibliography: R. Gordon Wasson and Valentina Pavlovna Wasson, C. The R. Gordon Wasson Ethnomycological Studies Series, index, contributors.

Contributors: Michael A. Britten, J. Christopher Coe, Robert C. Doniger, William A. Furst, Gaston Halifax, Albert Horowitz, Irmgard Weitlander Johnson, La Barre, Frank J. Lowy, Terence Naranjo, Jonathan Richardson, Thomas J. Riedlinger, Carl A. P. Ruck, Richard Evans Schultes, Alexander T. Stresser-Pean.

Excerpt(s): Returning to the subject of the sacred mushrooms, Gordon gladly recounted the high points of the first night he had taken them, more than 30 years past. I got the impression it gave him a genuine thrill of excitement to harken me back to the dark little hut in Huautla, though this was a tale he must have told often.

"Imagine the feeling!", he challenged me. "The darkness was total except for the glowing red embers." Now I was the one who sat wide-eyed, listening carefully, as Gordon recalled the amazing events of that evening.

When he finished, I asked how often since then he had taken the mushrooms.

"About 30 times," Gordon answered, "but not for many years now. Have you ever taken them?"

"Yes," I admitted. Then I told him of something peculiar I had experienced when doing so. Though I do not believe in conventional spiritual entities, the mushrooms had induced a strong feeling that some kind of spirit was present, an invisible, silent entity that stood at the opposite verge of my consciousness. I sensed it to be, not an angel or devil, but something connected in some way to earth and the physical realm; perhaps a tutelary spirit such as primitive societies believed to be dwelling in trees, rocks and rivers.

"Have you ever had a similar experience?," I wondered.

Gordon leaned forward again, intensely interested, "There's definitely something there," he told me. "I've written a chapter about it in my next book. It's precisely what I feel on the subject. I weighed every word."

By this, I later learned, he meant his theory that entheogens make people who ingest them aware of the "god generated within." This is not to say the substances themselves are gods, or even that the god within is nothing but a chemical effect. It may be that they awaken us, if only for several hours, to the presence of a real god within or near ourselves, a god that may be one with and also transcendent of our human flesh. Gordon's book, *Persephone's Quest: Entheogens and the Origins of Religion* (1986) ... does not favor any one of these or other explanations. It seeks only to affirm that "sacred" psychoactive plants-the entheogens-have a certain spontaneous power to compel religious ideation. (Thomas J. Riedlinger, *A Latecomer's View of R. Gordon Wasson*, pages 215-216)

Casino mogul bids record \$330,000 for giant white truffle

Dec. 1, 2007, 9:19PM

Associated Press

FLORENCE, Italy — A Macau casino mogul bid a record \$330,000 at auction Saturday to win a giant white truffle dug up in Tuscany, organizers said.

Billionaire Stanley Ho made the winning bid for the 3.3 pound truffle during an auction staged simultaneously in Florence, London and at Ho's Grand Lisboa hotel in Macau, said auction organizer Giselle Oberti.

The price bested the previous record for a truffle of \$212,000, she said.



The unusually heavy truffle was dug up last week by truffle hunter Cristiano Savini, his father Luciano and dog Rocco in Palaia, a town about 25 miles from Pisa. The Savinis said Rocco started sniffing "like crazy" when he zeroed in on the fungus.

Guinness World Records lists a 2.86 pound white truffle found in Croatia in 1999 as the biggest.

Truffles usually weigh from 1 to 2.8 ounces apiece. Slivers of white truffles, with their strong aroma, are prized in Italy to flavor pasta sauces and rice dishes.

Proceeds from the auction were to go to an Italian organization that helps sufferers of genetic diseases, a group that helps street children in London and Catholic charities in Macau.

Calls to Ho weren't immediately returned late Saturday.

The Ecuadorian Mycological Society and the
Amazon Mycorenewal Project present...
Mycotour Ecuador 2008!



Join us on a mycological tour through the Amazon, Andes and coastal regions of beautiful Ecuador. The country's leading mycologists lead you through striking landscapes for a unique perspective on Ecuador's rich diversity. We will:

- Search for culinary, medicinal and unique mushrooms.
- Hear about the traditional uses of mushrooms among Ecuador's diverse cultures.
- Learn how oyster mushrooms are being used to help clean up oil spill contamination in the Amazon.
- Relax on beaches, mountains, jungle getaways, and the Galapagos Islands!

Option 1: July 5-18, featuring coastal Ecuador, Andean highlands and Galapagos Islands

Option 2: July 21-28, featuring mycoremediation in the Amazon region and highland cloud forests

Also ask us about assistance with mycological research in Ecuador, internships and study abroad options for university students. We speak English and Spanish. Cost does not include airfare and required travel insurance.



A percentage of profits from the tour supports the Amazon Mycorenewal Project, an initiative to investigate the ways *Pleurotus ostreatus* can be used to restore lands damaged by the Chevron-Texaco oil spill, the largest in history. The Amazon Mycorenewal Project works with communities whose health, land and livestock have been afflicted the contamination.

To sign up or for info about costs and itinerary please contact Jess Work: jesswork@gmail.com

SOMA Membership Application and Renewal Form

Regardless of what others may think of me, I wish to become a member of the Sonoma County Mycological Association, a Non-Profit, 501 (c)(3), Corporation dedicated to the promotion of the knowledge and appreciation of local fungi.



(Please Print)

☐ New Member

☐ Renewal

SOMA will not share your info!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

☐ \$25 for family membership (mailed SOMA News, plus website download if desired)

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

☐ \$20 for family membership who do not require a mailed newsletter (website download only)

Phone(s): Home: _____ Cell: _____

☐ \$20 for seniors with mailed newsletter (60 years +) (plus website download if desired)

E-mail: _____

☐ \$20 for seniors—website download only, (help SOMA and the environment out!)

I am interested in participating in the following activities (Check):

Culinary Group _____ Mushroom Forays _____ Cultivation _____

☐ Check here if website download is desired. Include your email address!

Mushroom Dyes _____ Mushroom Papermaking _____ Newsletter _____

Other ideas/comments: _____

Checks to: **SOMA**
P.O. Box 7147
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

www.SOMAmushrooms.org

YOU CAN NOW RENEW/JOIN ONLINE AT THE WEBSITE!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

★★★★★

Middle Atlantic States Mycology Conference Duke University in Durham, North Carolina from April 18-20.

<http://www.biology.duke.edu/masmc/>

★★★★★

April 26-27 2008 Mansfield Village Mushroom Festival, Indiana

<http://www.mansfieldvillage.com/2007/10/mushroom-festiv.html>

★★★★★

April 25th to 27th Morel Foray Roanoke, Virginia

http://www.morelmushroomhunting.com/2008_virginia_foray.htm

★★★★★

April 25th to 27th Missouri Mycological Society's Morel Madness 2008. Gather and camp out at Mark Twain Lake.

★★★★★

April 26 and 27, Peru, Nebraska for the Great Nebraska Mushroom Festival.

<http://www.nebraskathegoodlife.com/mushroomfestival.htm>

★★★★★

18th Annual Mountain Mushroom Festival Irvine, Kentucky plays host each year to the festival celebrating the delicious morel mushroom. The fair always falls on the last weekend in April and this year is the 26th and 27th.

★★★★★

May 21 - 24, 2008 The 17th International Congress on the Science and Cultivation of Edible Fungi, Cape Town, South Africa

<http://www.isms2008.co.za/>

★★★★★

15-18 May 2008 Boyne City, Michigan hosts the Boyne City Mushroom Festival <http://www.morelfest.com/>

★★★★★

May 18th Susquehanna Valley Mycological Society. The spring morel foray is on from 10 am to 1 pm in Shindagin State Forest, Candor, New York. <http://svmsonline.org/forays.shtml>

★★★★★

May 24 - 25, 2008 29th Annual Morgan Hill Mushroom Mardi Gras in California

<http://www.mhmushroommardigras.com/index.htm>

★★★★★

June 21-22, 2008 Glacier Institute in Glacier National Park offers an outdoor summer mushroom course.

★★★★★

Deadline for the May 2008 issue of SOMA News is April 21st.

Please send your articles, calendar items, and other information to:

SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

Offering your help at SOMA events ensures that the club will continue to thrive for many years to come. There are many ways to get involved: SOMA Camp, Culinary Group, Cultivation Club, Forays, and more. Contact a SOMA Board member if you would like to offer your services.

May is the month when new Board members are voted in to office. Think about joining the board or nominating someone you think would help SOMA in the future. We are looking for a foray leader, a speaker coordinator, a camp registrar, and more.

Julie Schreiber

Volunteer coordinator

julieschreiber@hotmail.com

H: 707 473-9766



SOMA News

P.O. Box 7147
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

SOMA
DIVINE MUSHROOM
OF IMMORTALITY
By Gordon Wilson

SOMA Members

The April Issue of
SOMA News has arrived!

SOMA usually meets on the third Thursday of the month throughout the year (September through May), at 7 PM, at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, 970 Piner Road, Santa Rosa, California.

Fungi are displayed at 7 PM, and speakers begin at 7:45 PM. Bring in your baffling fungi to be identified!

Directions to the Sonoma County Farm Bureau

Coming from the south:

- Go north on Highway 101.
- Past Steele Lane, take the Bicentennial Way exit.
- Go over Highway 101.
- Turn right on Range Ave.
- Turn left on Piner Road.
- At about ¼ mile, turn left into parking lot at 970 Piner Road.

Coming from the north:

- Go south on Highway 101.
- Take the first Santa Rosa exit, Hopper Ave/Mendocino Ave.
- Stay left on the frontage road, (it becomes Cleveland Ave after you cross Industrial Drive).
- Turn right on Piner Road.
- At about ¼ mile, turn left into parking lot at 970 Piner Road.

970 Piner Road is marked by a star on the map at right.

