



SOMA News

VOLUME 22 ISSUE 2

October 2009

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

2009/2010 SEASON CALENDAR

October

Oct. 15th » Meeting—7pm
Sonoma County Farm Bureau
Speaker: Taylor Lockwood DVD

Foray Oct. 17th » Salt Point

November

Nov. 20th » Meeting—7pm
Sonoma County Farm Bureau
Speaker: TBA

Foray Nov. 21st » Salt Point

December Potluck on the 11th.

SOMA Camp January 16-18, 2010

Please take note: all membership renewals will occur in the month of September henceforth. **Please renew your membership now if you have not done so.** If you feel a prororation of dues is required, please email the membership person: Jim Wheeler at wheeler.j.d@att.net or by phone at 823-1376.



EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING IDENTIFICATION

After seeking medical attention, contact **Darvin DeShazer** for identification at (707) 829-0596. Email your photos to muscaria@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

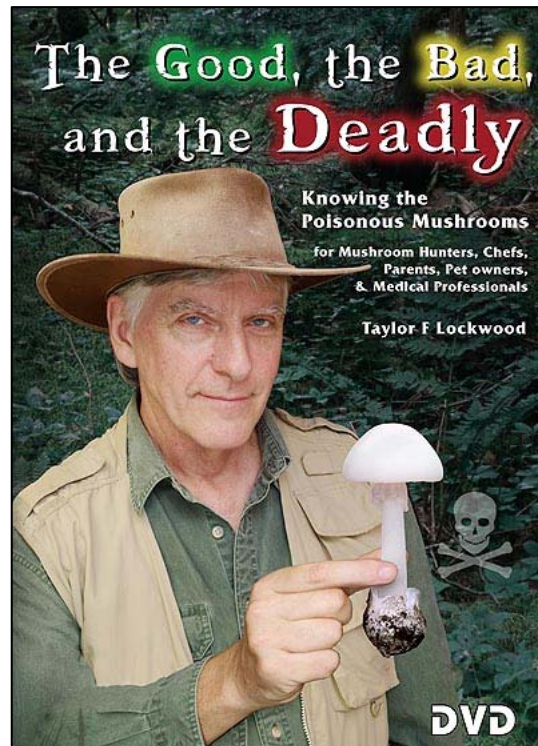
**Special Showing of the latest DVD by
Taylor Lockwood**

October 15th—7pm—Farm Bureau

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE DEADLY

The Good, the Bad, and the Deadly teaches you the basics about toxic mushrooms and their edible look-alikes. It's an essential tool for mushroom hunters, cooks, parents, pet owners, and medical professionals. In this video, Taylor Lockwood:

- Dispels the myths about poisonous mushrooms.
- Gives you a close-up field tutorial.
- Highlights symptoms for eight groups of toxic mushrooms.
- Teaches many botanical and common mushroom names.
- Includes a short lesson on taking mushroom photographs.
- The Good, the Bad, and the Deadly is delivered in Lockwood's lively, down-to-earth style and features his beautiful mushroom photography.



SOMA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Jim Wheeler
wheeler.j.d@att.net

VICE PRESIDENT

Vacant

SECRETARY

Karen Kruppa
SOMAscretary@SOMAmushrooms.org

TREASURER

Julie Schreiber
SOMAtreasurer@SOMAmushrooms.org

COMMITTEES AND BOARD MEMBERS

BOOK SALES

Vacant
(707) 837-8028

CULINARY QUESTIONS

Vacant
SOMAculinary@SOMAmushrooms.org

CULTIVATION CLUB CHAIR

Ben Schmid
SOMAcultivation@SOMAmushrooms.org

FORAYS

Ben Schmid
SOMAforay@SOMAmushrooms.org

MEMBERSHIP

George Riner
SOMAmembership@SOMAmushrooms.org

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

Linda Morris
SOMAcampinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA CAMP REGISTRAR

Lou Prestia
SOMAregistrar@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA NEWS EDITOR

Tom Cruckshank
SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA WEBMASTERS

Dorothy Beebee and Martin Beebee
SOMAinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Gina Kuta
Volunteer@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA's *Amanita muscaria* logo by Ariel Mahon

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dispatch from the duff

Under clear skies and brilliant sunshine, SOMA completed another "pick-up day" in Salt Point State Park. The rangers asked that we travel to specific sites and search for debris. Each site selected was a wide area that allows vehicles to pull off Highway 1 safely and the people who did so over the past year left a bunch of throwaways that should have been put in bins or kept in the car. Disgustingly poor manners on their part.

So, about 25 SOMA folks went to mileage markers that were selected and fanned out to do the cleaning up. (Mileage markers are the white paddle signs along the road. They have a large number say 39, 40, 41, etc. and two smaller numbers at right angles. Those are exact mileage numbers noting the distance from the southern Sonoma County line). Our collected garbage tonnage didn't match last year's total, nor were any expired critters found. We did compile a hundred pounds, or so, of stuff . . . most of which qualified for recycle. Could it be that coast visitors are improving their bad habits? The rangers expressed their appreciation for a job well done and are looking forward to another clean-up day, perhaps in the spring.

We did have an extra hour of fun for a foray. The list of species found and identified can be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

Many thanks to members renewing their membership in September . . . a little more than half of us sent in a form or used the Paypal system. We plan to have each member access their file and renew on line each September. More details to follow later in the year.

Found: At September's meeting: slate blue, hooded sweater with a Nordic "snow" pattern on the chest and shoulders. Nice sweater.

Best regards,

Jim Wheeler

p.s. SOMA picked up 96 lbs. of thrash of which 33 lbs. was recycling.

FUNGI FOUND

Fungi seen at Salt Point State Park on 9/18/2009

All, except the first two, were collected within the park. Members collected before, during and after the Coastal Cleanup. Photos of most of them are posted on <http://mushroomobserver.org/>

Abortiporus biennis
Agaricus xanthodermus
Amanita calyptroderma
Amanita constricta
Amanita franchetii
Amanita pachycolea
Amyloporus campbellii

Cantharellus cibarius var. *roseocanus*
Cantharellus formosus
Chroogomphus vinicolor
Cryptoporus volvatus
Fomitopsis pinicola
Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca
Leucoagaricus rubrotinctoides
Rhizopogon
Trichaptum fuscoviolaceum
Tylopilus porphyrosporus

Thanks to SOMA Science Advisor:

Darvin DeShazer

FORAY OF THE MONTH

Saturday, October 17th

Meet at **Woodside Campground** in **Salt Point State Park** at 10 AM.

\$8 daily parking fee per car now at SPSP!

Bring a potluck dish to share; vegetarian dishes are always welcome! Please bring your own glasses, plates and eating utensils. Besides the positive environmental reasons and benefit to the gastronomic experience, it will help minimize the amount of trash to be hauled out. Contact foray leader Ben Schmid at (707) 575-4778 for more information.

Members are asked to avoid hunting the club site for at least two weeks prior to a SOMA event. It's only through your cooperation that all members can enjoy a successful foray and experience the thrill of the hunt.

Well, this year I was delighted to be once again invited back to Cordova, Alaska – but this time to teach classes in **Polypore Papermaking** and **Making Myco-Stix™**..... exciting prospects, since the last time I actually made any paper was at least 20 years ago under the tutelage of Miriam Rice, but had never taught an actual class. I had actually taught Myco-Stix classes at Symposia in Finland, Australia and Mendocino, but not the papermaking. So time to refresh my skills (or lack thereof...) What to use? I do not generally collect Polypores for my own use – and usually pass them on to Catherine for SOMA Camp. But fortunately, I happened to have a few old display specimens laying around...

The first “trepidatious” experiment was with a beefy specimen of good ol’

Phaeolus schweinitzii (“Dyers Polypore”) gleaned by Tom C. – It had been picked fresh several months previously but was now quite dry. I first broke the large polypore up into tiny bits and soaked them for several days. Then I blended up the soaked pieces as finely as I could, poured them into pint sized plastic containers and put them in the freezer for several days. Miriam recommends doing this as a preventative measure ~ a means of destroying the eggs any little critters which might emerge later in the finished paper and start munching on it – unless of course if you really *want* lacy paper.....

Many tries at making paper – but the too thick, short deep chocolate brown colored fibers of the *P. schweinitzii* broke apart easily. It was hard for me to get a smooth thin piece... (maybe this is one polypore to which another mushroom, like *Trametes versicolor*, should be added for extra strength –)

The polypore papers were then dried by stacking them between layers of felt and newspapers under weights: a large cobblestone, a 6” iron railroad section (Miriam’s), and my 12 lb. cat “Moonshadow”, who very happily obliged by napping contentedly on the whole stack! I also made a many sheets of linter from this polypore to mail ahead to Cordova, to supplement whatever we found up there in the coastal Chugach rainforest.

My next preparatory experiment was with pre-frozen ***Fometopsis cajanderi*** (also given to me by Tom C. –they were supposed to go to Catherine, but they never made it...sorry Catherine!) Much more satisfactory and consistent, thus making thin sheets of a creamy mauve-dusty rose paper – much like the underside of the polypore itself. After a few successful samples, I made the rest up into thick sheets of linter to mail ahead...

Then came ***Fometopsis pinicola***, a wonderful large dry old specimen, given to me by Charmoon; put it into large pan of water to soak for 3 days, decided to chop it up – easier said than done, though I found with having softened it by prolonged soaking, it peeled off into “growth layers”... I decided to cut off the dark parts leaving only the lighter tube/pores – (reminded me of preparing an abalone both in appearance and consistency)... maybe I’ll try to make paper out of the darker parts just for comparison? Then cut it into strips with garden shears, which were then cut into smaller chunks and left in water to soak. Remembering Miriam’s instructions, I rinsed the water 3 times, (each successive rinse going to water a different plant in the garden) Then I noticed that

the fourth rinse water with the chopped polypore was a strong yellow-gold! – ‘could not resist – threw in a set of fiber samples to sit there and soak in the sun for a few days, resulting in beautiful yellow-gold solar dyes! I had inadvertently reversed Miriam’s original procedure – of making paper from the detritus of the leftover polypore dye baths... now I was making dye from the water left over from soaking the polypores for paper! This paper from this “Red Belted Conk” had strength, a texture of fine oatmeal and the color of golden wheat.

Lastly came experiments with some ***Echinodontium tinctorium***, (“Indian Paint Fungus”) The paper color was gorgeous, a deep rusty orange-vermillion just like the teeth inside this tough toothed conk, but like the *P. schweinitzii*, the fibers were short and fragile, and the paper

broke easily because of it – in contrast to the strong paper made by both the longer fibers of *F. cajanderi*, and the *F. pinicolor*. Ironically, however the intense vermillion water left over from the soaking failed to produce any dye!!!! Yet this conk makes gorgeous watercolors and “Myco-Stix! The answer to this conundrum to be pursued at a later date! Again I made about 10 sheets of linter to ship north to supplement – if just for color – whatever we found around Cordova!!!!

So, ... very pleased with myself, I packed all of this linter made from the 4 conks, together with a couple of dozen pieces of felt, 10 wooden deckles and moulds, with metal screening, all in a Priority Mail box, 2 weeks ahead of my flight (so I wouldn’t have to pay \$25 for extra baggage aboard Horizon Air) and happily mailed it off.....

...It never arrived in Cordova, (and still hasn’t, almost 2 months later)... So what did I do? Stay tuned for the next chapter, next month... Go to www.mushroomsforcolor.com to see results!





Ever since returning from Alaska this last time I've been wearing to bed camouflage pajamas and a 357 magnum holstered at my side. Is that wrong? (It is uncomfortable but a big old Grizzly might take notice. Do we still have them here?) Is this a good way to begin this month's column?

It is very cowey today just south of Cotati. They've got cattle over beyond the south fence, sheep to the north, horses that way, a Rosie the Organic Range Chicken ranch right across Stony Point Road, and a donkey Shrek would be a proud friend to real close in the east. Aromas abounding, animal noises sounding, my sense of place, and simply stuff, confounding.

What is it about such that pleases the nostrils and ears of your reporter? All of us like forest smells too. Especially ones with "mushroom aroma."

What does that mean, exactly? Just what mushroom exhibits enough characteristics, well, "character," to have "mushroom aroma?" Smells like what-*Agaricus bisporus*-cooked in butter, Worcestershire sauce, and a wine reduction? These are the things that make me happy to enjoy, and understand, cowey smells and my sense of place.

Alaska-whoa! Most of you know that I cook mushroom dinners and have for many people many times. A perquisite is that invitations are proffered, plane tickets paid for, accommodations provided, and a vehicle for mushroom hunting too is given. And there is that bush plane trip landing on the beach to that remote cabin thing too.

So who wants to be the next SOMA chef?" Who has the ability to take on the responsibility? Lots of perks but lots of works too.

The trip to Cordova, Alaska, was sponsored (yes-that is what I said) by the Chugach National Forest Service. They don't just encourage mushroom hunting on their (er, our) lands-they put on a Fungus Fest to promote it! Ah-local National Forest agencies, et al, please take note.

CLIP & SAVE

Mushroom Soup To Die For (Cordova)

Serving Size: 6 Preparation Time: 1:00

Amount	Measure	Ingredient	Preparation Method
3 ½	Tbsp	Butter, Unsalted	
1	Ea	Onion, Yellow	small dice
2	Ea	Carrots	chopped small
2	Stalks	Celery	chopped small
1	Clove	Garlic	minced
3/8	Tsp	Thyme	
1	Lb	Mushrooms	chopped
2	Tbsp	Porcini Powder	
1	C	Dry White Wine	
½	Qt	Chicken Stock	
½	C	Water	
1 ½	C	Half And Half	
		Nutmeg	
2	Tbsp	Brandy	
3	Tbl	Whipped Cream, Unsweetened	
		grey sea salt and black pepper	



Rozites caperata

1. Sauté onions, carrots, and celery with the thyme and garlic until softened. Add mushrooms and porcini powder and cook 15 minutes. Puree with an immersion blender or in a processor/blender.
2. Over high heat add the wine and reduce 10 minutes or until all alcohol aroma is gone.
3. Add stock and simmer 15 minutes more.
4. Over the same low heat add the 1/2 and 1/2 and simmer a few minutes more. Add salt and pepper.
5. Just before service add brandy and nutmeg to the whipped cream and dollop each cup with some.

Notes: Cordova

I brought some of our best wines for gifting and partying with the National Forest contact people and also guest speakers Steve Trudell (new book is Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest) and Lawrence Millman (is he everywhere?). Dear Dorothy Beebee was someplace else in town that evening. Sorry, again, Dorothy.

BTW-Steve told me that he quit the SOMA group list because we talk too much about food. I don't think we talk about much at all. A very inactive list. . . .

A fun aside: at the Sonoma County airport they do not charge for one case of wine being shipped with the passenger on board. This in the day where every bit of luggage seems to cost something. Go Sonoma County!

Mushroom reports. Lots of chanterelles are being picked in Washington and Oregon; the matsutake harvest in one of the matsutake capitals of the world, Crescent Junction, Oregon, is weird; the lobsters are apparently done on the coast; Montana matsies are slow; but local Sierra porcini have been fruiting.

I needed to do a chef demo one day up in Cordova but Connie Green and I were mesmerized by the Child's glacier and did not want to leave it while so much noisy calving was going on. Once she got in the car for the 52 mile fabulously beautiful dirt road drive back to town I realized there were no mushrooms for the demo-but heck-I was in Alaska and there were mushrooms everywhere. So in about 5 minutes we jumped into a forest and gathered maybe 5 pounds of delicious and pristine Gypsy mushroom's (*Rozites caperata*) buttons.

I grabbed one of the best cooks at the restaurant where I was doing my work and for the demo he did the actual cooking while I did the actual talking. Both can be done at the same time but certain cache can be awarded if another is doing the task part. I think I came across as being really important. Or not.

Don't we do a recipe here?

Not that I have ADD-but where do flies sleep?

Is this any way to end a column? Nah.

Ok, I will go on down that curvy road some more... Frequenting quite a few forums recently, mainly mycologically oriented, I have realized that it is so easy to become a crusty old sour puss who sends grouchy messages around. Every time I come in contact with crazy mushroom ids, ignorant proclamations by people who ought to know better that they have no clue, lazy minds, panic-mongering for the purposes of attention gathering, the low hum of senseless chatter on some topic that doesn't really have an answer one way or another, and many other forum phenomena, I get jerked slightly and get an urge to say something to "straighten matters". As a result I realize that I fail in the area that I preach -- it is not what they said, but how we react that counts... So, I have decided to develop a new attitude realizing that ignorance is a bliss, it is a wonderful human quality that needs not be disturbed. Unless someone feels ignorance crawling from the inside there is no way to inject that feeling from the outside and remain friends.

And because I had noted very early on that in our wonderful mushroom hobby there is a disproportionately large number of frustrated loners with an attitude, I am very concerned about the dangers of becoming one myself. After spending hours in front of a microscope and being consumed in consulting countless

sources one tends to develop expertise and know a lot of details, but if you look at it from a distance, it doesn't really matter all that much. Well, it matters to those who are driven to know it all, but not to the rest who don't care. My wife, for example, absolutely doesn't give a damn about any *Russula* or *Cortinarius* ids and projects the typical club-level "edibles first" attitude. In fact talking about them at any length suggests to her that I am not thinking about her and the "other priorities"... So, after a major effort at work or at the hobby, being tired and slightly jaded, I am most capable of issuing a "sound verdict" against some silly id when I get onto the forums to relax.

I do not know why I am writing all this, but the entire thread started that way, nobody seems to know where it's going... Like driving through the Midwest a couple of weeks ago -- I had no idea where I am going and certainly had no intentions to ask directions... It felt so dreamy, so free.

I am in a very boring meeting right now pretending to be writing a critically important message... You should see how serious I look...

Editor's note: This is an email posting by local treasure Dimi to one of the list forums.

Humorous Vignette

"Wildman" Steve Brill © 2009

Here's my favorite story about Joe Brandt, from my website's Oyster Mushroom page:

One day, after lots of rain, my friend Joe found ten pounds of oyster mushrooms on a dead tree on a lawn by a house along the side of a road. He stopped his car, ran across the lawn with his pocket knife, cut down the mushrooms, returned to his car, and sped off with his prize.

Ten minutes later, the state police came after him. He'd been spotted running across the lawn of the State Prison's warden waving a knife. Certain that he was headed for jail, Joe showed the cops the mushrooms and explained that wasn't an escaped prisoner bent on bloody revenge. They sent him off with a no more than a warning.

Then, two weeks later, after more rainstorms, Joe happened to be driving along the same road when he spotted twenty pounds of oyster mushrooms on the same tree. This time he went and knocked on the door and asked the warden for permission.

The warden scratched his head and answered: "Sure, be my guest. Take all the mushrooms you want. And thank you so much for stopping by to ask. You wouldn't believe the nerve of the last guy who found mushrooms on my tree!"

From The Wild Vegetarian Cookbook by Steve Brill (Harvard Common Press, 2001), which includes dozens of wild mushroom recipes (available, signed, from my site for \$34, including shipping/handling)

Here's a recipe from the book your readers might enjoy:

Oysters Newburg

Lobster Newburg, a traditional gourmet dish, contains high-cholesterol, detritus-eating shellfish and egg yolks, along with high-fat butter and heavy cream. It reminds me of my ex-girlfriend-beautiful but deadly.

This recipe, one of my favorites, exchanges oyster mushrooms for the lobster, and substitutes a luxuriant but healthful, mock cream sauce for the dairy and eggs. It reminds me of my current

girlfriend-beautiful, healthy, and all-around fantastic. The unusual ingredients are available in any health food store.

¼ cup canola oil or olive oil
¼ cup corn oil
12 cups oyster mushrooms or other mushrooms, sliced

MOCK CREAM SAUCE

1 cup water
½ cup black locust blossom wine or sherry
2/3 cup silken tofu, drained
¼ cup flaxseed oil or corn oil
6 tbs. lecithin granules
2 tbs. kudzu or arrowroot
2 tsp. Vege-sal or 1 tsp. salt, or to taste
1 tsp. nutmeg, ground
½ tsp. paprika
½ tsp. liquid stevia or 2 tbs. honey, barley malt, or rice syrup
¼ tsp. cayenne hot pepper, or to taste

1. Sauté the mushrooms in the canola and corn oil 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, purée the sauce ingredients in a blender.
3. Stir the sauce into the mushrooms and bring to a boil over low heat, stirring often.
4. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer 10 minutes.

Serve on toast or with pasta.

Serves 6

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

<http://www.wildmanstevebrill.com/>

"Wildman" Steve Brill
America's Best-Known Forager
320 Palmer Terrace, Apt. 2A
Mamaroneck, NY, 10543
(914) 835-2153

Wild Mushroom Warning: The Scaber Stalks (Leccinum species) May No Longer Be Considered Safe

July 18, 2009 @ 10:23 am



The potentially toxic *Leccinum atrostitipitatum* (left) alongside the Edible *Boletus edulis* (right).

One of the nifty things about mycology (the study of mushrooms) is that the field is still largely unexplored, new finds and findings turn up all the time. This is a less-nifty thing about mycophagy (the eating of mushrooms, particularly wild mushrooms). It too is still largely unexplored, and new information about bad reactions turns up — not all the time, but frequently enough. Here's the latest from mushroom expert Bill Bakaitis.

LECCINUM ALERT

On July 14th, I received a call from New England Poison Control Center at Maine Medical center. An elderly man was in a New Hampshire Hospital with a severe, life threatening, illness contracted after eating Mushrooms. No specimens were available for imaging, but there were only two mushrooms involved, both Boletes. One was described as a 'King Mushroom', possibly in the *Boletus edulis* complex. The other was probably a Leccinum. Both identities were initially determined by two of the mushroom eaters, all of whom were self described as "good, knowledgeable mushroom collectors"

Two of the three people who collected and ate the mushroom developed GI symptoms three to five hours after the meal. One of them, an adult woman, sought treatment at the emergency room for her distress that evening. The elderly man, developed GI symptoms somewhat later, did not go to the hospital and felt a general malaise the next day. The third person, an adult man, had no symptoms at all.

Three days after the meal the older man was admitted to the hospital in poor condition.

Among other symptoms was a very low platelet count which led to the leakage of blood throughout the body. His skin was covered with bruises. He was bleeding from the brain and various internal organs. In addition he had very low sodium levels. Surprisingly, there was no liver damage.

Due to the severe and odd symptoms, a multi-person conference call was initiated, and Marilyn Shaw, who has considerable experience with Leccinum poisonings, was invited to participate, along with a MMC's Toxicologist, the attending Physician, and MMC's poison control specialist. Members of the family were interviewed over the phone and their initial identifications of the mushrooms were accepted/confirmed as appropriate. The conclusion reached was that it was probably the Leccinum which had initiated the cascade of events leading to the man's critical condition.

Leccinum have traditionally been described as one of the Boletes safe to eat, but this case illustrates a growing concern for this group. Toxic reactions are known/thought to have been caused by *Leccinum* (*Tylopilus*) *eximius*, *L. atrostitipitatum*, *L. aurantiacum*, *L. scabrum/insigne*.

(Continued on page 7)



Leccinum insigne

Recently, the Rocky Mountain Poison Control Center has noticed a great many cases of GI distress caused by members of the *Leccinum scabrum/insigne* group. (see Lincoff, Audubon Guide to Wild Mushrooms, p. 579)

Many field guides describe these as edible, but in light of the growing number of cases involved, many of us who work with poison control across the nation are now advising mushroom collectors to avoid the *Leccinum* group when collecting for the table. They are a notoriously difficult group of mushrooms to identify.

I will be preparing an illustrated lecture on this topic for the Mid-Hudson Mycological Association but thought this warning should be circulated now at the height of the collecting season.
<http://www.midhudsonmyco.org/index.html>

**All Photos accompanying
this article by Bill Bakaitis.**



Leccinum aurantiacum

Within the past decade or so the orange-capped *Leccinum aurantiacum* has been reported to often cause Gastro-Intestinal distress. Its flesh will slowly bruise, then gray to purple-black. (see Lincoff, p. 577) This one was found at a NEMF Foray, identified by trained mycologists and displayed for attendees to learn from.



Tylopilus eximius

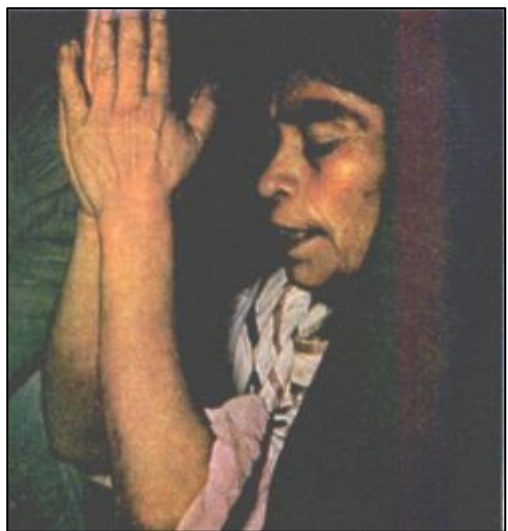
Tylopilus (Leccinum) eximius can also cause severe Gastro-Intestinal distress.

Update: Bill's follow up article for consulting mycologists and the scientifically inclined has now been posted on Dianna Smith's Mycology website.

http://web.mac.com/diannasmith1/FUNGIPHOTOS/BILL_BAKAITIS_Articles/BILL_BAKAITIS_Articles.html

Original article here:

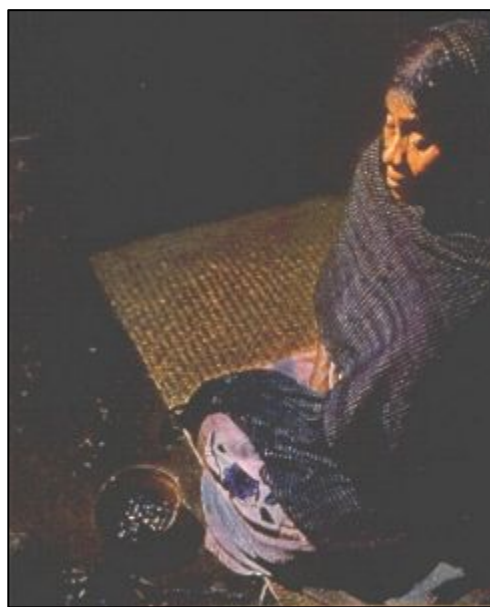
<http://leslieland.com/blog/2009/07/wild-mushroom-warning-the-scaber-stalks-leccinum-species-may-no-longer-be-considered-safe/>



CHANTING early in the night, Eva Mendez lists her qualifications: "Am I not good? I am a creator woman, a star woman, a moon woman, a cross woman, a woman of heaven. I am a cloud person, a dew-on-the-grass person."

mushrooms in Mexico, I ate them in a dried state in my bedroom in New York, and found that if anything they had gained in their hallucinogenic potency.

From the many mushroom celebrations that I have now witnessed, nine in all, it is clear to me that at least in the Mixteco country the congregation is indispensable to the rite. Since the congregation, in order to participate, must be brought up in the tradition, any white persons should be greatly outnumbered by the Indians. But this does not mean that the mushrooms lose their potency if not eaten communally. My wife and our daughter Masha, 18, joined us a day after the ceremony that I have described, and on July 5, in their sleeping bags, they ate the mushrooms while alone with us. They experienced the visions too. They saw the same brilliant colors; my wife saw a ball in the Palace of Versailles with figures in period costumes dancing to a Mozart minuet. Again, on Aug. 12, 1955, six weeks after I had gathered the



MEDITATING silently, Eva Mendez sits before her mushroom bowl. Though she ate twice as many mushrooms as the rest, she stayed calm and dignified, often lyrical in her exhortations, sometimes impatient when spirits did not come.



ON MORNING after eating mushrooms, Wasson and his wife review his notes, taken in the dark. Jars contain mushrooms later sent to Heim.

explanation for this strange cultural cleavage separating us in a minor area of our lives. Our method was to gather all the information we could on the attitude toward wild mushrooms of the Indo-European and adjacent peoples. We tried to determine the kinds of mushrooms that each people knows, the uses to which these kinds are put, the vernacular names for them. We dug into the etymology of those names, to arrive at the metaphors hidden in their roots. We looked for mushrooms in myths, legends, ballads, proverbs, in the writers who drew their inspiration from folklore, in the clichés of daily conversation, in slang and the telltale recesses of obscene vocabularies. We sought them in the pages of history, in art, in Holy Writ. We were not interested in what people learn about mushrooms from books, but what untutored country folk know from childhood, the folk legacy of the family circle. It turned out that we had happened on a novel field of inquiry.

It was a walk in the woods, many years ago, that launched my wife and me on our quest of the mysterious mushroom. We were married in London in 1926, she being Russian, born and brought up in Moscow. She had lately qualified as a physician at the University of London. I am from Great Falls, Montana of Anglo-Saxon origins. In the late summer of 1927, recently married, we spent our holiday in the Catskill Mountains in New York state. In the afternoon of the first day we went strolling along a lovely mountain path, through woods criss-crossed by the slanting rays of a descending sun. We were young, carefree and in love. Suddenly my bride abandoned my side. She had spied wild mushrooms in the forest, and racing over the carpet of dried leaves in the woods, she knelt in poses of adoration before first one cluster and then another of these growths. In ecstasy she called each kind of by an endearing Russian name. She caressed the toadstools, savored their earthy perfume. Like all good Anglo-Saxons, I knew nothing about the fungal world and felt that the less I knew about those putrid, treacherous excrescences the better. For her they were things of grace, infinitely inviting to the perceptive mind. She insisted on gathering them, laughing at my protests, mocking my horror. She brought a skirtful back to the lodge. She cleaned and cooked them. That evening she ate them, alone. Not long married, I thought to wake up the next morning a widower.

These dramatic circumstances, puzzling and painful for me, made a lasting impression on us both. From that day on we sought an

Continued Next Issue...

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 _____

☐ \$250 for Lifetime Membership with website download!

Mushroom Dyes _____ Mushroom Papermaking _____ Newsletter _____

Other ideas/comments: _____

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

www.SOMAmushrooms.org

YOU CAN NOW RENEW/JOIN ONLINE AT THE WEBSITE!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSSF Mendocino Woodlands Foray 2009

November 20-22--featuring author Gary Lincoff

This weekend long mycological event includes guided forays, classes, cooking demos, workshops and activities, including special programs for children. All on-site meals and lodging (Friday night through Sunday morning) are included in the basic \$150 dollar per person member rate. Reduced rates for off-site lodging (\$90) and child rates (5-12 \$75) are available. For non-MSSF members, add \$25 per adult / \$15 for children.

Event schedule details will be published, along with a registration form, at www.mssf.org in early October, and in the November issue of the Mycena News.

Send registration checks to:

Lou Prestia / MSSF 722 21ST Ave, San Francisco, CA 94121

Or electronic registration forms from the Web site may be sent to mssf@prestia.com

For more information on the Mendocino Woodlands facility, go to www.MendocinoWoodlands.org

David Arora's Annual Mendocino Mushroom Foray

Thanksgiving Weekend, Friday Nov. 27-Sunday Nov. 29

Join David Arora & special guests for a weekend of mushroom hunting, lectures, ID workshops and cooking. Beginners welcome. \$250 including lodging, \$175 without. Contact maxfun@cruzio.com or go to www.davidarora.com.

The other day I was perusing the snack aisle of my favorite Asian grocery store and some little chocolate dancing mushroom cookies jumped off the shelf and into my grocery cart. I tore them open as soon as I got home and found the absolute cutest cookie I've ever seen. Little one inch high mushroom cookies with a dipped chocolate cap. Absolutely wonderful - good chocolate and crunchy cookie base.

This called for something special, so I made little cupcakes intending to stick them on the top for decoration. I couldn't serve them till the next day because I ate every single one of them before the cupcakes came out of the oven. Had to go get some more.

They are made by the Japanese snack company Meiji, the same ones who make those little Pocky sticks. They are called Kinoko no yama, which means "Mushroom Mountain". Get some for your next birthday party.

Mary Olsen

Deadline for the November 2009 issue of SOMA News is October 21st. Please send your articles, calendar items, and other information to:

SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA CAMP 2010

SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp 2010

For the 13th annual **SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp** we are planting a theme: **Trees and Mushrooms**.

Nestled in acres of oak, madrone, tan oak, redwood, and Doug-fir near Occidental, California, we will move breezily from class to woods to dining feasts, enjoying it all. There is so much to take in! Mushroom forays, gourmet mushroom cuisine, classes & workshops on mushroom identification, cooking, dyeing, paper-making, medicine making, photography, cultivation, and more.

Our delight is further assured with featured speakers:

Tom Bruns on Saturday evening and

Tom Volk on Sunday night.

Tom Volk with his favorite →

January 16-17-18, 2010 ~ Martin Luther King weekend.

Online registration available soon

<www.somamushrooms.org> Please join us!



SOMA News

P.O. Box 7147
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

SOMA
DIVINE MUSHROOM
OF IMMORTALITY
R. Gordon Wasson



SOMA Mushroom Camp
Wild
NEXT EXIT
January 16-18, 2010
Martin Luther King weekend

Forays, Classes,
Workshops, *Wild*
Mushroom Cuisine

Register Here
www.
somamushrooms.org

Guest Speakers
TOM VOLK Ph.D.
TOM BRUNS Ph.D.

Sonoma County Mycological Association presents
the 13th annual SOMA *Wild* Mushroom Camp

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.

