

# SOMA News

VOLUME 22 ISSUE 8 April 2010

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

# WINTER/SPRING 2010 SEASON CALENDAR

# **April**

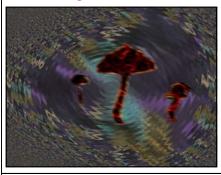
April 15th » Meeting—7pm Sonoma County Farm Bureau Speaker: Mia Maltz

Foray: April 17th » Tomales Bay State Park See Page 2 for more info.

### May

May 20th » Meeting—7pm Sonoma County Farm Bureau Speaker: Peter Werner

Foray: May 15th » and 16th Morel hunt in the Sierras!!! See Page 4 for more info.





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 <u>any and all</u> mushrooms before you eat them!

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

# SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

# Mia Maltz Thursday, April 15<sup>th</sup> 7 PM at the Farm Bureau

Mycorenewal and Biodiversity:
Investigating the effect of fungal amendments for increasing plant establishment in contaminated soil



Mia Rose Maltz is a co-founder and Executive Director of the RITES Project and BioRemedies Corporation, and has lived in west Sonoma County for eleven years. Mia has been learning about mycology, mushroom cultivation and mycorestoration for fourteen years and has taken several mycology classes at San Francisco State University with Dr. Dennis Desjardin, at UC Berkeley with Dr. John Taylor and Dr. Tom Bruns, and with Paul Stamets, founder of Fungi Perfecti. She was certified in Permaculture Design in 1999 from the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center and she enjoys teaching about Permaculture, mycology, and bioremediation. Mia is currently pursuing her Masters of Science degree in Environmental Microbiology at Sonoma State University and is continuing her research in the Plant and Microbial Biology Department of UC Berkeley where she is exploring alternative strategies for the restoration of contaminated soils and water.

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SOMA's Amanita muscaria logo by Ariel Mahon

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dispatch from the duff . . .

The March Foray proved to be another excellent time at Salt Point State Park. About 60 to 65 folks came and enjoyed the great weather, collecting a few edibles and sharing a delicious pot-luck lunch. People came early and some stayed late to make the most of a wonderful day outdoors. Since there hadn't been much rain in March, the mushrooms were not as bountiful as in January and February. But, the coastal wild flowers have started to bloom and we were delighted to see Douglas Iris, Indian Paint Brush, and Calypso Orchids.

New books were added to the Bookstore recently. We now have copies of:

- "The Mushroom Cookbook", J. Schultz; a very popular cookbook.
- "Mycelium Running", P. Stamets; inventory restored on sold out book.
- "Wild Mushroom Cookbook", by Nims, also very good.
- "Mushroom for Dyes", M. Rice and D. Beebee; another inventory restored.
- "Mushrooms Without Fear", a guide for beginners.

All are available at each Speaker Meeting on the third Thursday of every month or through the website.

The slate of candidates for the SOMA Board 2010/2011 season will be announced next month. If you have interest and would like to volunteer to help the group, please contact me through the website or phone 1-707-823-1376.

The "Found" objects were out for all to see at the Foray. One fork was claimed, the rest of the items . . . the useable items, were donated to the Hospice in Sebastopol. Now the garage has some freed-up shelf space and is ready for next season's collection.

The 2009-2010 mushroom collecting season in our area appeared to be winding down . . . then it rained. We'll decide and then announce whether the forays in April or May will be held. Any suggestions are appreciated. Feel free to volunteer a thought or three.

Best regards, -Jim Wheeler

# FORAY OF THE MONTH

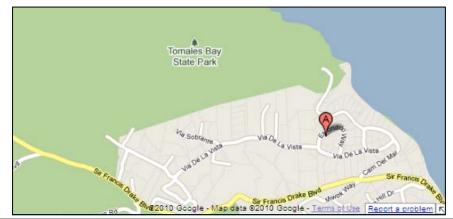
# Saturday April 17th 2010

Meet at Heart's Desire Beach in Tomales Bay State Park at 10 AM.

# \$7 daily parking fee per car at TBSP!

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 Michael Miller at (707) 431-6931 for more information.

We will meet at Heart's Desire Beach. As mushrooms are likely to be scarce, members are invited to enjoy the spring day, the beaches, as well as foray. After the foray we will retire to the nearby home of Jim and Mary Olsen for our potluck. There are rumors of BBQ oysters. Please bring your own place settings and utensils. The address for the Olsen's is 75 Escondido Way in Inverness.



# "A Not So Innocuous Inonotus..."

went to the March SOMA Foray hoping to find some red gilled Dermocybes like the ones Darvin has found deep in the pine duff in the past at Salt Point this time of year. Decided to check around close to "camp" at Woodside, poking under the huckleberries at the base of Bishop pines ~ all of the "obvious" places, rather than joining the group forays off into the hinterlands. Nothing, nothing, except a lovely fresh golden *Inonotus tomentosus* nestled in the grass under a pine...

First instinct was to think it was a late blooming Phaeolus schweinitzii, but that dyer's polypore emerges as dark orange to cinnamon brown rosettes with brilliant yellow rims in the Fall, and has a compound fruiting body of rosettes, preferring to hunker down near Douglas fir. And, this time of year they are all dark chocolate brown with maturity. But hey! ~ a dye mushroom is a dye mushroom, and the Inonotus was the only one in town, so I happily took it back to a picnic table to make a detailed sketch. while awaiting the rest of the foravers to return....

This fruiting body of the Inonotus, simple rather than compound, has a warm ochraceous-gold suedelike surface texture with some concentric rings of fine hairs – a real challenge to my drawing pen, so I decided to add some colored pencil to try and evoke the subtle

Tom found the only one re

"Sketch of *Inonotus tomentosus*, and the dyes it produced on wool and silk with alum and iron mordants."

hues and texture... Fortunately I was saved from too much hairy detail by the return of the hungry foragers, and the promise of a divine lunch spread! Other folks had also found samples of this polypore, so I had a nice group to take home to try for a dye the next day. The dyes turned out to be muted yellow and gold with both alum and iron mordants, (and not the same rich in-your-face lemon yellow intensity that a young Phaeolus produces), but a lovely warm range of ripened wheat hue none the less.

Tom found the only one red-gilled Dermocybe on this March

foray, - a young specimen with the red gills barely visible, and a much lighter brown colored cap than we see with our customary red-brown silky capped Dermocybe phoenicea, and I was wondering if it might indeed be Dermocybe semi-sanguinea, but alas, it "disappeared" off of the specimen table before I had a chance to take it home for closer observation and experimentation. I should have heeded Tom's admonition to grab it and run! Didn't even get a chance to take photos of it - did anyone else? If so, I would love to see a copy - please send to dbeebee@sonic.net!

Young specimens of the orange stalked *Hydnellum aurantiacum* were the other dye mushrooms found in fairly good abundance. Those I DID get to bring home for their promise of blue-green dyes – about which I'll write *next* month!

# Little Things Can Make Big Changes

Mary Olsen © 2010

At the SOMA Meeting this month Mia Maltz will talk about mycoremediation. Go!

In January of 2008, I attended my first Mushroom Camp. I was looking to fill a space between something and something else when I noticed Bob Rawson and Mia Maltz were doing a presentation on breaking down toxic substances with mushroom mycelium. I went.

Downstairs in that dark room, sat Bob and Mia with a laptop. They talked. What they had to say hit me like a brick. Humble, modest fungi contain such amazing properties that they can transform highly poisonous substances into innocuous ones. The meek shall inherit the earth.

Bob and Mia outlined the research they are doing in Ecuador to break oil down into its non-toxic components. We all know about the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska in 1989. Although it has slipped out of our consciousness, it is an ongoing tragedy. We don't all know about another oil disaster in South America, many times larger in magnitude.

In Ecuador, home of the Amazonian Rainforest, Texaco, later purchased by Chevron, created an ecological disaster such as our planet has never known. As they went about deciding where to drill for oil, they displayed a recklessness and contempt for the land and the people that never would have been tolerated here. They dumped crude oil into the Amazon. They discharged it into pools where it slowly sank into the ground water. The

repercussions are enormous. The indigenous people have suffered hideous effects – they have cancers, skin diseases and neurological diseases. Their crops have withered, their animals sickened.

Dorothy Beebee

To add insult to injury, Chevron has insisted that it bears no responsibility. Their biologists and ecologists claim that all allegations are false. You may want to order the movie "CRUDE" on Netflix. It chronicles the class action lawsuit, waged now for 13 years and soon to be settled (supposedly) – that may force Chevron to pay 37 Billion dollars to clean up the disaster. It is a very engaging documentary.

Coincidentally, another documentary, "The Black Wave: Legacy of the Exxon Valdez", by director Robert Cornellier, came out in 2008. PBS has been airing it recently, and it is also available on Netflix. Many of the chemicals used for "remediation" have opened a Pandora's Box of additional problems, especially for the workers who applied them.

So that class last January had a ripple effect in my family. My daughter Sarah, an environmental science major at Santa Cruz, just returned from three months in Ecuador with Mia Maltz, learning about mycoremediation. She came home covered with insect bites on the outside, but fired up on the inside. Who knows what course these ripples will take....?

Earth Day is coming. Fire up the VCR, rent the movies and brew up a big pot of black bean soup.

# "Nocturnals, Diurnals, Wet Chicken Feathers and a Barkative Dog"

Who in the heck invented this equinox thing? Jeez—it takes me six months to get over it and then they have another one. What's up with that? I have learned to just not re-set my clocks (car, truck, watches, office, home et al) because in November everything will be alright. (Oh—and there is that pesky thing where I don't have a clue how to re-set anything.)

Because of this confusement I get up real early and come to work. Around Cotati we have several very large chicken producers that make the air redolent of the aroma of wet feathers and other fowl things, especially in the morning when other smells have not made a presence. Sort of not too good.

And then there is my Danny dog who barks at everything from my truck at 0400. I think he simply likes to talk (go figure). Maybe those chicken smells make him a bit crazy. Or could it be something else?

Which (if you are still here) brings us to morels. How? Because we did and reports have been pouring in regarding early fruitings in orchards and logging areas at the lower elevations of the Sierras. I will be off next Wednesday with two well-known hunters near Georgetown to check.

Blacks are still coming up if you know where to look. Most everything else is going away.

# The Morel of the Story...

Save this weekend: May 15th-16th and plan to join us in the mountains for a SOMA Morel Foray. We're not sure exactly where we will camp overnight, but our destination will be in the vicinity of happy hunting grounds for Morchella enthusiasts. The simplest plan is to potluck for Saturday dinner and BYOB&L. (That is, bring your own breakfast & lunch.) Last year a few of us shared a *spectacular* meal while we 'roughed it' in the Sierras. Oh, the possibilities! A coordinator is welcome to step forward and share their good energy to make that happen again. Costs of the group campsite and expenses will be shared, so pre-registration is asked of you. Call 707-778-9877 and leave a message to get your name on the list.

TBA: location, location, location.





# Savory bread pudding

by Julie Schreiber

- 3 large onions
- 1 quart dried morels
- 3 bunches of asparagus
- 3 loaves of bread, day old if possible
- 2 quarts of heavy cream
- 12 eggs
- thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- nutmea
- olive oil
- salt and pepper



- 1. Cut onions into large dice. Sauté in olive oil with fresh thyme, salt and pepper until translucent. Cool after done cooking.
- 2. Rehydrate morels in cream by bringing morels and cream up to a boil and then taking off heat, add 2 bay leaves and a few shavings of fresh nutmeg to cream. Let cream and mushrooms cool off.
- 3. Remove tough end of asparagus. toss in olive oil, salt, and pepper and roast in oven at 350 until cooked through and able to bend. Let them cool. Cut into bite size pieces.
- 4. Remove crust on bread, cut into cubes, toast in oven to dry out if needed.

Combine bread, onions, asparagus and rehydrated morels in a bowl. Whisk eggs and combine with cream. Add salt and pepper to taste, approximately 1 to 2 T of salt will be needed. Pour cream and egg mixture over the bowl of other ingredients and mix everything together. Let the bread absorb the cream for at least 30 minutes.

Pour the bread mixture into a buttered pan if you want to make a large bread pudding or spoon into buttered muffin tins for individual portions.

Bake at 350 until they are done. Muffin size take about 20 minutes, large pans take longer. Test their doneness by inserting a knife and seeing if it comes out clean.

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got called back into active duty for the March Foray as Mike Miller was out of town. I had been at Sea Ranch in early February, but not in Salt Point for quite a while. But with the rain being fairly consistent over the season and as recently as 10 days before the foray, I was thinking that the season's usual suspects would be around our favorite park. Plus, it would probably be a small group, normal for the end of the season, with plenty of sun and nice weather. I was soon reminded of Frank Zappa's comment, "Everything you know is wrong".

Crikey! Forty people were waiting in the parking lot at Woodside by 10:10 and ready to go. I guickly enlisted a couple of SOMA sages and broke the group into 3 forays. I asked how many were newbies and about 16-20 people raised their hands. I took this group. Jim Wheeler and Tim Horvath took two other groups directly up from the campground. After I gave my group a short talk on what we were looking for, tips about the right environment and proper foray ethics, we caravanned up to the top of the Stump Beach trail, past the Kruse Rhododendron Preserve. It was a happy group and willing to go deep off the trail. However, while the mushrooms were there, they were all very desiccated, if not entirely decomposed. Very few mushrooms were brought back, and even those were pretty sad. They were the mushrooms you would not have looked at twice a month ago. But for my first-timers, this was success and everybody got something.

As usual, my group was last to arrive for lunch. As we pulled into the parking lot, there must have been 60 people swarmed around the food table. Many said they just arrived too late, but they foraged around the campground and found strange specimens that did not turn up in any other baskets.

There was not a lot of diversity among the pickings. The bulk of them were hedgehogs (long on the tooth), yellow-foot (with shriveled toes), and black trumpets (seriously graying).

The sun never did appear and it seemed to get colder as the afternoon went on. But there was no shortage of delicious food or wine.

There was one little period of concern. As we were enjoying the food and camaraderie, we were informed that 3 foragers did not make it back. This happens from time to time, so we waited a little while. Still, none returned. So a small group went out to where they were last seen and began an organized search. We had notified Woody and he was looking too. But no sooner had we started than a signal was heard that one of the lost ones had been found. And when we went back to the camp site, the other two had shown up. And, there was still food left! It is easy while you are wandering around, looking at the ground, to get disoriented...especially on a grey day when the sun is not apparent. It is always good to carry a whistle as you soon learn that your voice does not carry very far in the forest. Stay calm, and if you have no idea which way to go, stay where you are. We will find you.

Stay tuned for the next foray. If we get a good rain, (as forecast while I write this) there may be yet another foray in April. Check the website, somamushrooms.com.

May your basket provide,

-Bill Wolpert



# Dinner with Mushrooms!

Carol Rice © 2010

A group of country friends from the Baptist Church wanted to get together on a regular basis to socialize, and play games. The lady of the house was to prepare the meal.

When it came time for AI and Janet to be the hosts, Janet wanted to outdo all the others. Janet decided to have mushroom-smothered steak, but, mushrooms are expensive. She then told her husband, 'No mushrooms, they cost too much!'

He said, 'Why don't you go down in the pasture and pick some of those mushrooms? There are plenty in the creek bed.'

She said, 'No, some wild mushrooms are poison.'

He said, 'Well, I see varmints eating them and they're OK.'

So, Janet decided to give it a try. She picked a bunch, washed, sliced, and diced them for her smothered steak. Then she went out on the back porch and gave Ole' Spot (the yard dog) a double handful.

Ole' Spot ate every bite..... All morning long, Janet watched Ole' Spot and the wild mushrooms didn't seem to affect him, so she decided to use them.

The meal was a great success, and Janet even hired a helper lady from town to help her serve. She had a white apron and a fancy little cap on her head.

After everyone had finished, they relaxed, socialized, and played Phase 10 and Mexican Train Dominoes. About then, the helper lady from town, came in and whispered in Janet's ear, 'Mrs. Williams, Ole' Spot just died..'

Janet went into hysterics. After she finally calmed down, she called the doctor and told him what had happened. The doctor said, 'That's bad, but I think we can take care of it. I will call for an ambulance and I will be there as quickly as possible. We'll give everyone enemas and we will pump out everyone's stomach. Everything will be fine. Just keep them calm.'

Soon they could hear the siren as the ambulance was coming down the road. The EMT's and the doctor had their suitcases, syringes, and a stomach pump.

One by one, they took each person into the bathroom, gave them an enema, and pumped out their stomach. After the last one was finished, the doctor came out and said, 'I think everything will be fine now.' Then he left.

They were all looking pretty weak sitting around the living room, and about this time, the helper lady came in and said, 'You know, that fellow that ran over Ole' Spot never even stopped.'

Janet probably never heard of: 'When in doubt, throw it out!'

On Amanita Bravado Michael Beug © 2010

want to provide some background in support of Darvin DeShazer's cautions and Michael Kuo's cautions regarding consumption of Amanita species. Those of you who are relatively new to mushrooming also might want to read "What's for Dinner?" in the July 2009 Spores Afield (at cmsweb.org).

Let me start with some ancient history. Ninety years ago the death rate from amatoxins in Great Britain was averaging about 1 death per year much as it was averaging about 1 death per year in North America up until recently, when the rate appears to be increasing (though it is too early to tell whether or not the rash of poisonings and deaths in recent years is statistically significant). Both countries were and largely still are mycophobic. No surprise. Anyone want to guess how many people were dying in France 90 years ago? In 1923, out of 990 cases, there were 381 fatalities! France is a country with a long history of mycophagy. What has changed in France? In 1925 the French government passed laws that required that trained market inspectors work in all markets to identify mushrooms for the public and prevent mushroom fatalities.

In countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as Eurasia, Asia and other areas where there are not good systems of mushroom identification, it has been reported that there can be hundreds of deaths from mushroom poisoning per year (check for yourself by Googling "Overview of the Environment and Health in Europe in the 1990s EUR/ICP/ECHO 02 02 05/06 page 7, 29 March 1999). In short in mycophillic countries the death rates from mushrooms can be very high - because people are testing edibility by procedures such as cooking the mushroom with rice and if the rice does not turn color, they deem the mushroom edible - they do not have tools to accurately identify

mushrooms. I have been contacted by concerned mycologists from several countries in Asia and the Middle East seeking help in stemming the high death rates in their countries. Even though plants are far more deadly than mushrooms, people have learned which plants to avoid, but far too many have not learned which mushrooms to avoid. In India and Mexico as well as China and Nepal, villagers are going to the woods for mushrooms because they are poor and cannot buy food - sometimes whole families are wiped out when the foragers bring home a deadly Amanita species. You can read how people in Nepal identify their mushrooms in Fungi Vol 2 No 1 Spring 2009 pages 44-45 in an article by Tika Ram Aryal - it is eye-opening.

I am constantly amazed at the mistakes that people make in North America, including club members. Let me give you some examples of what can happen to others. Last year I took two young men out for a day mushroom hunting and talked about lots of species that we found. I sent them home with Cantharellus cascadensis and told them how to distinguish Chanterelles from the non-poisonous but not very tasty Chroogomphus tomentosus and Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca. The next day one of the young men went out alone and collected a huge bag of Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca and fed them to friends thinking they were Chanterelles. No real harm done. But what if you had taken two friends out mushroom hunting in California and collected Amanita velosa and carefully explained how to avoid the deadly Amanita ocreata and Amanita phalloides. Then you

get a call two days later about the meal that one of your friends served to a bunch of their friends? Are you ready for that?

I have never personally found an Amanita velosa, however, after following the threads in on-line discussion groups, there is not a shadow of a doubt that I will be able to flawlessly identify a typical Amanita velosa when I see one. I am convinced that it will be easy FOR ME. However, even though it is considered a fine edible, I will not be adding it to my dinner menu. I could also safely cook and eat either Amanita muscaria or Amanita pantherina - but that does not make them edible species! It makes them poisonous species that can be detoxified IF YOU KNOW HOW. And if you want to get high, there are much better ways than by eating Amanita muscaria or A. pantherina. Very few people intentionally eat these two species more than once and yes I know some people who do like them for their mindaltering effects - but I have talked to over one hundred people who have eaten Amanita muscaria or Amanita pantherina to get high and have wound up in the hospital after having an

> experience that they would never want to repeat. But let me tell vou about the couple who knew that the Russians canned Amanita muscaria and then consumed it. This couple (from Chehalis, Washington) canned some Amanita muscaria - but they decided that the juice would be good in their spaghetti! The neighbors, hearing the crashing of breaking lamps and furniture, took the couple to the hospital - returning home to find the son had come home for dinner while they were out taking the parents to the hospital - so back to the hospital with the son. Are you ready for the repercussions of having taught someone how to detoxify Amanita muscaria but then have that

> person forget to tell THEIR friends to



Amanita ocreata from the 3/18 SOMA meeting. Note the yellow-red hues on the cap!

throw out the water?

Have you read my reports and seen how many people eat *Amanita muscaria* thinking they are eating a puffball? an *Agaricus*? or have mixed *Chlorophyllum rachodes* and *Amanita pantherina* together thinking they looked the same? On February 25, 2010 an elderly California man consumed one cap of *Amanita ocreata*, thinking it looked much like the mushroom he usually consumed – but since he ate only one cap and got prompt medical attention, he will recover, just like the man near Sonoma earlier in February 2010 who ate one egg of *Amanita ocreata*. The interesting thing about the most recent case was that both the veil and volva were absent in the specimen presented to the identifier.

I can go on with dozens more examples but I hope that you get my point. I agree with Darvin DeShazer. If you want to eat *Amanita* species, go ahead, but do not broadcast it. This is not keeping your head in the sand. This is saving precious livers for people who are medically in need; of saving some poor surgeon the agony of trying to save the life of some mushroomer who could not be bothered or did not know how to do a correct ID; of saving you and me and Medicaid the cost of transplantation and transplant drugs. Have you ever talked to a frustrated physician up all night trying to save the life of a person who could not be bothered to do an ID or wanted to get high? I have done so many times.

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We moved from Walnut Creek to Inverness on the Point Reyes Peninsula mostly to escape the scorching heat, but also to be closer to our favorite hiking area. Little did we know how good the mushrooming would be. The birding and wildlife watching is pretty wonderful, too.

Since we've been here almost one entire mushroom season, I have some suggestions for a few fungal adventures. They all involve food and hiking, so get out the picnic basket, your boots, camera and the maps.

Throw an oyster knife and a bread knife in the basket and head out to fill your gas tank. The only station in Point Reyes is \$.20/ gallon more than anywhere else. If you take the Point Reyes-Petaluma Road west from Petaluma you'll pass the Rouge et Noir Cheese Factory where a great picnic bargain may be had. When the brie and camembert pass their peak of perfection, they are placed on sale. Sometimes six, sometimes eight, half-pound -rounds are offered for \$20. Stock up. Yes, it freezes beautifully – really. ( If you prefer a different type of cheese, the Cowgirl Creamery has their own cheese, plus a wide selection of others. They are across from the Pine Cone Diner, one of four excellent restaurants in Point Reyes Station.) Slam on the brakes as you continue westward past the Nicasio Reservoir. A Highway Patrolman is shooting radar there, doing his best to replenish the county coffers. He is hiding behind a rock outcrop.

My favorite hunting hike is at the top of Mt. Vision, reached by a steep switch back road off Sir Frances Drake, 3.5 miles north of the tiny hamlet of Inverness. It is almost 4 miles to the parking lot at the top. From here you have spectacular views of Tomales Bay, Mt. St. Helena, Mount Diablo, Drake's Estero, Bodega Head and the Farallon Islands in the wide Pacific. Whenever we have visitors we take them up here. The young Bishop Pine forest just east of the parking lot hides a trail that goes north and south. This area, the Inverness Ridge, was ravaged by the Mt. Vision Fire twenty three years ago. It is interesting to see how quickly the forest reestablishes itself.

In the late fall we found gorgeous crimson Fly Agarics here. A little later the Elfin Saddles were so numerous it was hard to avoid stepping on them. Candy caps were everywhere.

After all the rain in mid- January we found butter boletes. And later, in February, Slippery Jacks.

We dry the Slippery Jacks, grind them up in the blender and add them to the mushroom powder we make with dried porcinis, various boletes (zelleri and butter). We use the powder to flavor stews and soups and sauces. In March the Slippery Jacks were still here, though not so abundant.

From the top of Mt. Vision you can also continue south, through an FAA station that looks like an extraterrestrial landing pad. If you go south from the pad there is a trail that comes out, eventually, in a mountaintop neighborhood accessed by Drake's View Way. The turnoff for this road, from SFD is halfway between Inverness Park and Inverness. This is a long hike with lots of ups and downs, and I recommend having some buddies leave a second car at that end.

Otherwise, you can have your picnic on a bench that looks west over the Pacific, if the day is fine. If not, you get a good look at the fog layer. From here a trail goes down, down, down. Again, a friend's car parked at Muddy Hollow (off Limantour Road) would be perfect. If you don't have any friends, stop by our house on your way and see if we are available.

Hopefully your picnic includes oysters that you've picked up at Drake's Oyster Farm. The turn off for the oyster farm is just a bit farther up Sir Frances Drake, about half a mile beyond the Mt. Vision Road turnoff, or 5.3 miles from the Inverness Post Office. The Oyster Farm Road is narrow and made of crushed oyster shells. Drive slowly. There are picnic tables there, and, if you've brought your kayak you can put in there. The National Park Service has been trying to get the oyster farm out of the park for years, the issue being a commercial enterprise inside a National Park. This is one Sierra Club campaign I cannot support. I vote with my taste buds on this one.

Speaking of which, did I mention the Busy Bee Bakery in Inverness Park? Wonderful pastries, cakes and cookies and also a very nice mushroom quiche. How appropriate.

After mushrooming and feasting you may be ready for some beach lolling. Check your map and take your pick – they are all nice, but only Kehoe allows dogs. You'll need a jacket or a windbreaker. You've probably noticed that this area is about 10 to 15 degrees cooler than wherever it is you came from. And that's why I love it.

# **Agaricus at the Foray**

Jim Olsen © 2010

verything was great, really. I was with my just-about-to-graduate-from-college daughter and my lovely wife at the foray at Salt Point. It was a perfect day, bright and mild. Good friends, and many new faces abounded. I was in the 'I'm just happy to be here on this fine day' frame of mind. I really didn't care if I found anything, it was just so nice to tramp around in the woods. At least that was my rationale, but really I was having



the end-of-the-season blues. What? Boletes gone? No more Chanterelles? Just a few dried up blacks and hedgehogs? Nothing but sunshine and heat to look forward to.

So I'm making my best brave face, driving to upper Stump Beach Trail with my daughter (who is just back from spending three months in Ecuador on Mia Maltz's project) when I see it, slam on the brakes, and shout out 'Sarah! Go pick that gorgeous mushroom!' It was big and beautiful – an Agaricus, chocolate gills, no volva.

Now, rewind to SOMA Camp in January. Fred Stevens was giving a class on Agaricus and I was going. Here was a whole group that I felt too timid to ID, much less munch, so I needed help. Fred's class was straightforward, eminently understandable. And I loved it! I emerged brimming with confidence, and delighted that mushroom season didn't have to end with winter. Since then we've found a few Campestris in a field (quite good), and looking for more.

Now return to Kruse Road, and my prize. Yellowish russet cap—that's suspicious. Slight almond scent, not phenol—that's good! We took it home, and ID'd *Agaricus silvicola* (found under tanoak), and cooked it up simply, just oil, and salt. It was delicious, with a haunting complex flavor, very mushroomy. Next time we'll put it over chicken breast pounded like scaloppini, with some butter. And yes, thanks to a wonderful class at camp, the season isn't over just yet!

# A Recipe for Pig's Ears (Gomphus clavatus):

inse the pig's ears thoroughly. Pat dry and slice very thin. In a lightly oiled sauté pan place a piece of ginger to flavor oil and cook over high heat to release the flavor. Place the thinly sliced pigs ears into the pan and toss over high heat until lightly browned and caramelized (about 5 minutes). At this point add a clove or two of garlic to taste. Don't put the garlic in earlier as it will burn and provide an unpleasant bitter taste and aroma. Just let the garlic release its flavor and slightly brown and then immediately add a couple tablespoons of chicken stock and cover. Let stand to steam for 1 minute. The stock will have evaporated by this time. Place the pigs ears on paper towels to drain any excess oil and cover tightly with another layer of paper towel. Fold the edges of the paper towel inward to form a tight package of pig's ears. While still very hot transfer the package to the garbage can. This is the best treatment I know for pig's ears. by David Bartolotta (May he RIP)



# Where is Sudden Oak Death in Sonoma County?

wet winter and spring is good for plants and it's good for pathogens, too. The sudden oak death (SOD) pathogen requires water and temperatures around 70 degrees F to spread naturally. Some years are "good" for the pathogen, and some are dry and not good for the pathogen. The weekend of April 17th we are going to find out if conditions are "good" for (SOD) to once again spread through our county. And you can participate... read on.

The Sonoma County UC Master Gardener SOD Specialists will be hosting a Sudden Oak Death Blitz, April 17, and are asking all Sonoma County residents concerned and curious about SOD to participate in this weekend citizen science project. All ages welcome. After this weekend you will have a good idea of where SOD is throughout Sonoma County, and what symptoms to look for

# 1. Attend a Saturday morning meeting on April 17th .

Here you will learn how to identify and collect symptomatic leaves from SOD host trees.

There will be two meetings in Sonoma County:

9-10:30 am at the Environmental Discovery Center in Spring Lake Park, Santa Rosa

10-11:30 am at the Healdsburg Branch, Sonoma County Library

At this meeting you will learn where SOD is in Sonoma County and how to recognize symptoms of SOD infestation.

2. Go look at your trees and collect samples.

Spend some time Saturday or Sunday inspecting the trees in your yard or somewhere else within the County (with permission, of course). We can suggest places for you to collect leaves if you don't have a place in mind.

# 3. Return samples Sunday afternoon, April 18th.

There will be a drop-off site for your leaf samples. From here they will be driven to a UC Berkeley pathology laboratory for diagnostic testing.

- 4. Get a notification of the results as soon as they are available.
- 5. Attend a meeting where UC Berkeley Plant Pathologist, Dr. Matteo Garbelotto, will discuss the results and what they mean for Sonoma County.

To participate, just come to a meeting. If you can, RSVP to this email or the Master Gardener help desk, 565-2608. For more information go to http://ucanr.org/sonomasod or call the help desk.

Lisa Bell Agricultural Program Assistant Sonoma County UC Cooperative Extension 133 Aviation Blvd., Suite 109 Santa Rosa, CA 95403 (707) 565-2050 Ikbell@ucdavis.edu

# **Looking Ahead...**

The Howard Foundation in Willits CA is hosting its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Wine and Mushroom Train ride to Camp Mendocino on November 6th, 2010. A mushroom cook-off is planned and Mendocino Wineries will be offering tastings along with pairings with a variety of wild mushroom dishes. The train will be leaving from Willits and Fort Bragg in the morning. It is approx. a two hour trip to Camp Mendocino, which is off highway 20 in the beautiful redwoods along the river.

Special wild mushroom speakers and chefs will be present during the train ride and the campgrounds.

The event also includes a wild mushroom hunt/hike, silent Getaways in Mendocino County auction, continental breakfast at the train station before boarding and chocolate mushroom truffles and Port on the way back.

All for the price of \$125 a ticket.

The event is to benefit the building of the Howard Memorial Hospital Campus.

For more information: breno@saber.net

8 SOMA News April 2010

| <b>SOMA</b> Membership Application and Renewal Form  Regardless of what others may think of me, I wish to become a member of the <u>SO</u> noma County <u>M</u> ycological <u>A</u> ssociation, 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 plus website download if desired)                 | SOMA News,    |
| City:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                    | ate:Zip:         | □ \$20 for family membership who do                                                    | not require a |
| Phone(s): Home:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Cel                | II:              | mailed newsletter (website downlo                                                      |               |
| E-mail:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                    |                  | □ \$20 for seniors with mailed newsle (plus website download if desired)               |               |
| I am interested in participating in the following activities (Check):                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                    |                  | ☐ \$20 for seniors— <u>website download only,</u> (help SOMA and the environment out!) |               |
| Culinary Group Mushroom Forays Cultivation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                    |                  | □ \$250 for <u>Lifetime Membership</u> with website                                    |               |
| Mushroom Dyes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Mushroom Papermaki | ing Newsletter   | download!                                                                              |               |
| Other ideas/comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | S:                 |                  | Checks to: P.O. Box 7147                                                               |               |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                    |                  | Santa Rosa, CA 954                                                                     | .07           |
| YOU CAN NOW R                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ENEW/JOIN ONLIN    | www.SOMAmushroom |                                                                                        |               |

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There is a really big Earth Day celebration this year at the San Francisco Exhibition Center, **April 10th—11th**. Of interest to SOMA is the fact that **Paul Stamets** will be there, along with 199 other speakers.

Paul's speaking at 4:45PM on the main stage on Saturday "Solutions from the Underground: How Mushrooms Can Help The World", and on Sunday at 12 noon, in the Mezzanine, on "Growing Your Own Mushrooms".

You can find all the info you might want at:

http://www.greenfestivals.org/

**David Arora** will be speaking to the MSSF general meeting on Tuesday evening, April 20th, at 7:30 pm. Directions to the meeting place can be found by clicking Randall Museum at mssf.org.

http://www.mssf.org/meetings/randall.html

For those interested in visiting **Tibet** and experiencing the fantastic mushrooms there, MushRoaming tours will be hosting two trips in 2010.

- 1. Cordyceps Expedition to East Tibet May 24 to June 6, 2010
- 2. Fungal & Floral Foray in Tibet July 14 to 27, 2010

More info at: www.MushRoaming.com

SOMA friend **Daniel Winkler** leads these tours and I am sure they are a lifetime experience. An interesting article by Daniel can be found at link below.

"The Mushrooming Fungi Market in Tibet exemplified by Cordyceps sinensis and Tricholoma matsutake"

http://tinyurl.com/yzwo783

Get thee to the Cornell Mushroom Blog for some pretty cool new content including *Mushrooms as Sacred Objects in North America...* 

http://blog.mycology.cornell.edu/

David Rust

# **Italy Truffle Tours in October**

More info: David Campbell MycoVentures 415-457-7662

http://snipurl.com/v3bgg [www\_mycoventures\_com]

Deadline for the May 2010 issue of **SOMA News** is April 21<sup>st</sup>. Please send your articles, calendar items, and other information to:

SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

# NAMA 2010 - 50th Anniversary Foray

**August 12-15, 2010**, at the YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch, Winter Park, Colorado

Information at NAMA and CMS (Colorado Mycological Society) Co-Chief Identifiers: Cathy Cripps, Vera Evenson

Faculty: Scott Bates, Denis Benjamin, MD, Michael Beug, Roy Halling, Rick Kerrigan, Michael Kuo, Brandon Matheny, Michelle Seidl , Jack States, Walt Sundberg, Rytas Vilgalys, Tom Volk, Nancy Weber

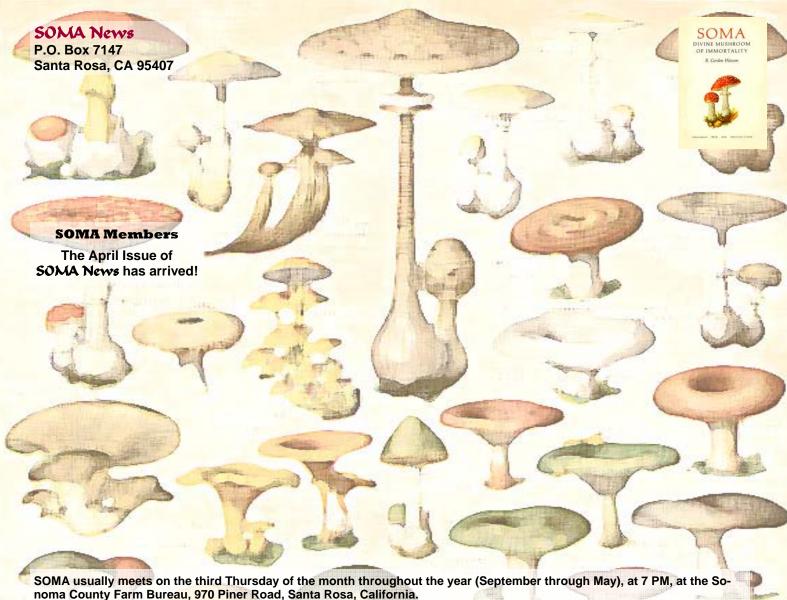
The Colorado Mycological Society is delighted to welcome NAMA to the Centennial State for NAMA's 50th Anniversary Foray, August 12-15, 2010. The foray will be held at the same location as NAMA's memorable 1983 foray, YMCA of the Rockies Snow Mountain Ranch, 14 miles from Winter Park, high on the western slope of the Continental Divide at 8,700 feet. Nearby Rocky Mountain National Park is celebrating its 95th Anniversary this year, and at least one of our forays is planned to study fungi in that area.

We hope to see you in August! Info at:

http://www.namyco.org/events/index2010.html

Linnea Gillman Colorado Mycological Society NAMA 2010





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 1/4 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.

