



S O M M A

VOLUME 24 : 3

NOVEMBER 2011



SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

Dr. Matt Trappe

November 17th at 7pm

Shaking the Fungal Tree of Life

Dr. Matt Trappe is a forest ecologist specializing in mycology, disturbance ecology, nutrient cycling, and soil microbiology. His Doctoral dissertation examined the effects of natural and man-caused disturbance on mycorrhizal fungi at Crater Lake National Park. He is an author of “The Field Guide to North American Truffles” and leads monthly truffling forays for the North American Truffling Society.

His talk explores the evolutionary relationships between mushrooms and truffles. The image-rich presentation goes through the orders of the fungal kingdom that have both epigeous and hypogeous taxa, illustrates their often counterintuitive relationships, and shares ecological and historical anecdotes about them. The talk runs about 60 minutes and covers a lot of ground - both above and below.

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CALENDAR

November 17th ————— Speaker at Farm Bureau at 7pm
Dr. Matt Trappe

November 19th ————— Foray at Salt Point State Park

December 1st (Thursday) ————— Board Meeting at 7pm

December 9th ————— Potluck Dinner at Farm Bureau at 7pm

December 17th ————— Foray at Salt Point State Park (tentative)

January 4th ————— Board Meeting at 7pm

January 14-16th ————— SOMA Mushroom Camp

January 19th ————— Speaker at Farm Bureau

LIMERICKS BY CHARMOON

One time, I saw oysters up a tree
 At a height I could reach safely
 So I grabbed my camp stove
 Climbed up to the trove
 And cooked them while up in the leaves

I used to hunt mushrooms at Pete’s
 He had land with lots of boletes
 But then Pete had to go
 New owners came, so
 To get the boletes I now sneak

EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING ID



After seeking medical attention, contact Darvin DeShazer for identification at (707) 829-0596. Photos should be emailed to: muscaria@pacbell.net and need to 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% sure of the identification of any and all mushrooms before you eat them!

This is a free service for hospitals, veterinarians, and other concerned citizens of Sonoma County.

FROM THE FRONT DESK

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President's Letter

DISPATCH FROM THE DUFF

October's speaker, Leon Shernoff, detailed the many changes in the taxonomy of the genus, *Boletaceae*. The first part of the presentation focused on the recent addition by Desjardins, Peay and Bruns of *Spongioforma squarepantii*. This treasure was found in Lambir Hills National Park, Malaysia, in 2010. The unusual nomenclature was enough to capture the audience's attention and sense of whimsy. Turned out the submission was rejected, initially, but later accepted after Desjardin and his colleagues insisted they could name it whatever they liked. Leon was very interested in a scientist's work from the 17th and 18th century. He called attention to Pier Antonio Micheli's experiments that showed fungi reproduced from spores and not spontaneous generation. Micheli used a series of experiments and microscopic examinations to prove his idea. The early myco-history was interesting to many in the audience, especially the students from Santa Rosa Junior College, who attended and took notes as extra credit in their biology class.

We continue working to produce a permit system at the behest of, and in cooperation with, the California State Park Rangers. It will be web based and will require each applicant to attend an educational/informational session. We are working through a somewhat lengthy agreement that will define SOMA's responsibilities and the procedures required to issue permits and report all fees collected. Meetings are scheduled through November and we expect to complete the agreement soon. After the website under construction is proven, an introduction date will be announced. However, before the permit system is in place I must request all members to adhere strictly to current Park requirements. Urge your friends and fellow pickers to collect only within the park boundaries, park their car sensibly (not because of convenience), and respect the limit on amounts collected. We need to give the Park Rangers and Park Staff our complete support.

SOMA Camp 2012 registration started in October and it appears all "Early Bird" options will be taken. In addition, registration signups are ahead of last year. We think camp will be full and all are looking forward to this year's presenters, classes, cooking and craft classes. Dr. Weil's presentation this year will be a highlight for SOMA and we are looking forward to welcoming him and taking him on a foray.

Foray lost-and-found...

- wooden ladle; small chip on end; very nice modern design.
- coat, polyester fleece; left at picnic area Saturday, October 22nd, with a \$50 bill found in a pocket. If you can identify the manufacturer, the color, the size and a special feature of the coat, it might be returned to you – contact me through the website.

Best regards,
Jim Wheeler

EDITOR'S NOTES

I appreciate any and all feedback, contributions, and donations:
SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

Ben Garland

WHAT'S STIRRING IN THE DYE POT?

In Praise of *Pisolithus*... Again!

Dorothy Beebee

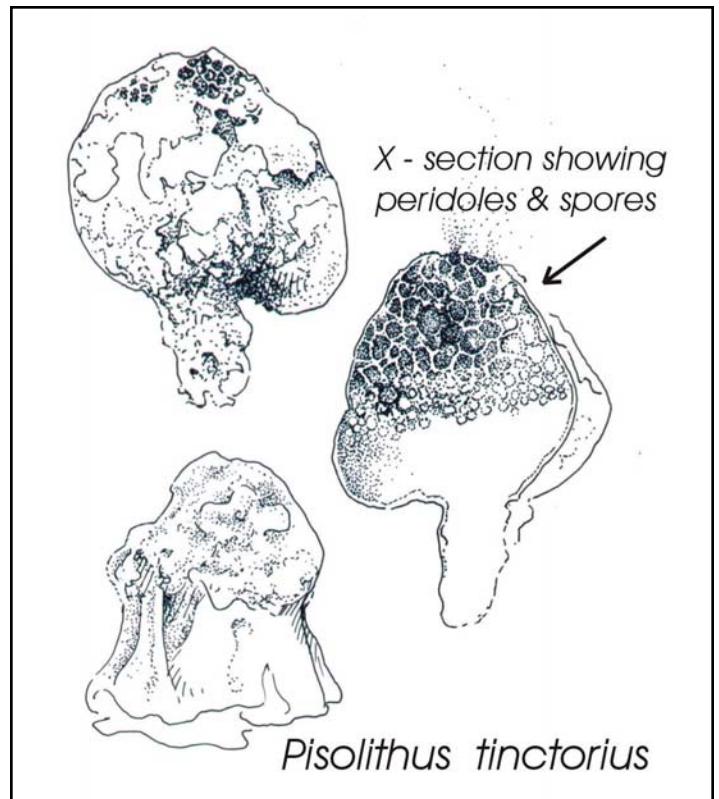
The ubiquitous puffball *Pisolithus tinctorius*, as the name “tinctorius” implies, is a veritable treasure-trove for dye pigment, releasing colors in a range from the darkest brown-black to a rich gold dye on wool, silk, hemp and cotton depending on the age of the fungus and proportions used.

This is truly our first dye mushroom of the West coast season – as I get reports of it poking up through driveways and tucked along roadsides in late summer, without benefit of any rain at all. And Megan Romberg finds it in along geothermal fumaroles in New Zealand. (See October 2011 issue of the SOMA newsletter) – and I wonder if it can be found in a similar hot spring habitat up at The Geysers?)

We treasure this popular puffball that we use for dye at SOMA Camp, and Gayle Still likes to dye with it in her Shibori silk dye class to produce gorgeous dark brown, bronze and gold hues on silk scarves with the intricate Shibori patterns. Liann may also be incorporating *Pisolithus* in her class on “Fabric Design with Mushroom Dyes”. Its “fragrance” while simmering exiles it to cook OUTSIDE, however!

All these praises aside, *Pisolithus* can be a real pain to use when it is fully mature, when all of those little pea-like structures (peridioles) within its husk have turned into sacs of very fine dusty spores, and it becomes quite literally “hydrophobic”, defying going into a watery solution without a fight. (Again check out the great photo of a cross-section of one in last month's issue of the SOMA Newsletter). Best to be armed with a dust mask and heavy stones on top of a heavy plate you don't ever want to use again, to hold down those spores under water and under control in the dyebath! That is why a fresh gooey immature *Pisolithus* is primo! However, we will take them in any condition, and confined to a plastic bag and frozen, or in a tightly lidded jar, so they can be used for many a future SOMA dyebath.

Pisolithus tinctorius is a “substantive” dye fungus, meaning that



it can be an effective dye without using a pre-mordant to produce a yellow-gold hue with good light and color fastness. Or pre-mordant with alum for a shimmering brassy gold with a greenish highlight (dependent on mineral content of the water) or use an iron mordant for the richest darkest hues. *Pisolithus tinctorius* is a steadfast friend of the mushroom dyer, whether beginner or advanced, and richly deserves our highest praise!



Photo credit: 39kf.com (Chinese online medical encyclopedia)

The Forager's Report

Patrick Hamilton

I was out in the garden yanking up spent corn stalks and whacking down withered bean vines looking for nice seed keepers for next year and noticed that The Old Mushroomer had ambled down the dirt drive and was gazing at me kind of strange like. Odd and all. Started talking with that "back in the day" stuff.

Since he was holding two Oliver's grocery bags fat full of boletes I took special notice though I'd learned that to engage him in this state has had its consequences. I walked over with the wheelbarrow naturally pushed in front and realized that it also served as a sort of barrier between him and me.

To get too close has had its problems. Things rub off. Soon not only do you look like the old guy but start to talk like him too. Doppelganger stuff, I suspect.

"So where'd you get those porcini?" I gathered up quick and queried. And he began again about back in the day. I interrupted.

"Back in what day? Just when was that? In the 70's? 60's? 50's? Hell—how many days do you have to go back to to get back those 'back in the days?' I meant something, say, like Medieval knights with their armor all rusted due to bad weather, cold castles, bad lubrications, chinked up and poorly made, and them saying something about how—back in the day—their chain mail fit better? And back in the day the, what—Ladies in Waiting didn't?"

He gave me that look, the one not unlike Jeff Bridges in the remake of "True Grit" spittin' tobacco and other drools too, spied me in the eye (out of his only one) and said: "You funnin' me boy?"

I did not know whether or not this was (swear) but I realized that everything he seemed to say was true but equally unbelievable and I was once again beginning to suspect some sorts of weirdnesses. I decided to spy a little better those two bagsful of porcini and asked him to show me just what he had.

"These here porcini, Paddy Boyo?"

"Ah, yes. What are in the bottoms of the bags? Look like pine cones to me."

"They are. Just thought I'd tweak you a little.

"Why?"

"Well—don't you need something to write about?"

After realizing that this was just another nightmare rather than a nightmare your columnist gathered himself up and remembered the true tone of these almost 20 years of foragers' reporting, cooking columns and whatever. Right here one is supposed to learn about when and where to go for what and not be taken on a rolly coaster ride of uncertain understandings.

So get this: porcini are happening in the Sierras and along the coast. Chanterelles too and fine amounts of shrimp Russulas (a favorite of mine). Divinations about how our season will be are just that but I will offer here that the porcini season is going to be real short.

Meanwhile, I did look into the old guy's bags and saw Sierran boletes and coastal boletes too. We decided to cook them up to see if we (discerning folks after all) could tell the differences, if any.

Sliced each into ¼" pieces and sautéed them in very hot "pure" olive oil (not extra virgin), S & P, crisp-fried on the outsides and still creamy puddin'-like in their middles and we tasted as only two gentlemen can.

"What'a you think, Paddy Boyo," the Geezer rattle-gasped. (Could that still be a chaw tucked into his jaw? Jeez and yikes.)

"I think that each of these has qualities intrinsic unto themselves."

"Wha?"

"I believe that every mushroom deserves its day in the sun, or pan, or whatever."

"And I think that you're full of it. Crammed up to your brim with B.S. And I am out of here."

So be it, I am weary to my bones of all of this. But I still can conjure up a pretty darn neat recipe that will make all of yourselves better for it.

I borrowed this a good while back from *Saveur* magazine but changed it a bit. Whenever I must think of The Old Mushroomer I somehow attendantly think of bacon or pork or just plain lard. You know—stuck in saddlebags or in a chuck wagon's pantry kind of vision. And cowboy coffee and all.

You make the following and even good folks might find you a bit weird—but they will gobble it up like a tom turkey strutting for his hens.

Recipes on page 5

SPECIAL OFFER TO SOMA HOME WINEMAKERS AND HOMEBREWERS

In response to numerous requests, not to mention suggestions following last year's Camp libations protocol (also known as 'Happy Camp') the wine and brew procurement group hopes to have a separate and special table for the home-made stuff. Here's your chance, do-it-your-selver, to share your accomplishments with your fungal frenzied friends, in your own, non-commercial venue. We hope that if you choose to donate some of your best vintage you will thrill us with tales of late night hardships, early morning heartaches, and triumphant settlings the following Spring. If interested (or even mildly tempted) contact me at:

Jim Olsen -- jimwineprof@sbcglobal.net

THE FORAGER'S RECIPES *continued from page 4*

Bacon Tempura

6 servings - 30 minutes

Amount	Measure	Ingredient
12	ea	strips thick-sliced slab bacon
		vegetable oil
2	ea	egg whites
1 1/2	cups	all purpose flour
1 1/2	cups	club soda
		sea salt

1. Cook strips for about 10 minutes, drain. Save fat for another use. (A facial?)
2. Heat 2" of oil in a pot to 375.
3. Meanwhile, whisk whites until soft peaks form (aren't they pretty?). Using a rubber spatula, fold in 1/4 of the flour, then 1/4 of the soda, into the whites, folding thoroughly after each addition until batter is smooth.
4. Working in batches, dip bacon into batter, then deep fry, turning once, until bacon is golden brown and crisp. Season and serve immediately.

Eat with whatever you want to. These'll improve any repast. Oh—wait: You can use this coating for tempura mushrooms too.

Serve with...

Paddy Bayou's Remoulade

10 servings - 15 minutes

Amount	Measure	Ingredient	Preparation Method
1	cup	mayonnaise (homemade is great but so is Best Foods)	
1/4	cup	tomato paste	
1	Tbsp	brown sugar	
2	Tbsp	creole mustard (or any, really)	
2	Tbsp	lemon juice, fresh	
1	tsp	Worcestershire sauce	
6	each	scallion	chopped fine
2	Tbsp	parsley	chopped fine
2	Tbsp	horseradish	
1/4	cup	celery	minced
1	tsp	Sriracha sauce	

Mix all together and let sit for an hour or so.

JOIN SOMA!

Membership in the Sonoma County Mycological Association (SOMA) is a great way to meet and interact with other mushroom enthusiasts, learn more about identifying fungi, and share interests such as cooking and cultivating mushrooms. Sure, most of what SOMA does is open to the public, but wouldn't you rather join SOMA and get all the goodies?

Check out our membership page on the web...

<http://somamushrooms.org/membership/membership.html>

OREGON COAST REPORT

Anna Moore

The Fall mushroom season on the Oregon coast was late, but after some 5 inches of rain and a little time, the boletes made an appearance. At first there were only a few but the week of Oct. 17 brought them up in good numbers. It looks like a very good bolete season is underway. Other notable edibles: Chanterelles, Matsutake, Hedgehogs (*H. repandum*), Sparassis, Laetiporus. The first *Amanita muscaria* buttons are showing and the hardwood leaves are turning colors. Everything looks brighter out now. The weekend of October 21-23 was the Yachats Mushroom Festival and the 30th the Eugene Mt Pisgah show. Next year put Oregon on your schedule for a late October trip north.



Photo credit: Anna Moore



Photo credit: Anna Moore



Photo credit: Anna Moore



Photo credit: Anna Moore



Photo credit: Anna Moore



Photo credit: Anna Moore

MUSINGS ON AGARICUS

Jim Olsen

Agaricus augustus – Could it be?

Here in Inverness, on my home street, I've had the good fortune to harvest and enjoy a handsome and fairly regular crop of *Agaricus augustus* – the 'Prince'. Happily, it fruits in late Spring and throughout the Summer, when mushrooms are hard to come by. And Oh! It is so tasty, among the very best. Big (even impressive) in stature, firm, and fragrant with almond aroma, it is a delight to munch.

But, interestingly and tantalizingly enough, most of these lovely eminences come from one spot, where a load of wood chips was dumped two years ago. At this spot, I've picked *augustus* every two weeks or so for the last 8 months! Now as the *Agaricus* family are not known to be mycorrhizal, and one of their members is the ubiquitous cultivated 'button' mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*) isn't it possible that *augustus* could also be raised, in the proper circumstances? My experience is that they don't last too well, a few days at most, so commercialization is probably not on the horizon. But isn't it possible for most of us who have some semblance of a yard to cultivate them, for our own delight?



Photo credit: Michael Wood via mykoweb.com

I'd love to hear from those who have some knowhow about such things. Maybe I'll have to do a midnight excavation at my neighbor's woodchip pile!

NEWS OF INTEREST

NON-SOMA EVENTS [for informational purposes only]

Humboldt Bay Mushroom Fair

Redwood Acres Fairgrounds
Eureka, California
November 20, 2011; \$2 per person (\$1 children)
11am-4pm

- Mushrooms identified
- Mushroom books
- Cooking demonstrations with wild mushrooms
- Mushrooms displayed
- Mushroom questions answered

Gourmet Mushroom Madness

Ridell Preserve
North Sonoma County, California
December 2, 2011; \$50-75 per person (sliding scale)
10am-2:30pm

<http://www.landpaths.org/>

Discover the magnificent, moldy world of fungi. We'll join Autumn Summers, a local naturalist and herbalist, and Patrick Hamilton, the Mycochef, for a leisurely saunter on the beautiful Riddell Preserve near Healdsburg, highlighting edible, medicinal and common mushrooms, their amazing lifecycle, and how to find them. After our foray we'll hike back to the Riddell Cabin where Patrick will work his culinary magic and prepare some mushroom hors d'oeuvres.

AROUND THE WEB AND IN PRINT

Mushroom picking does not impair future harvests – results of a long-term study in Switzerland

Not new, but interesting nonetheless. From 2005: *The results reveal that, contrary to expectations, long-term and systematic harvesting reduces neither the future yields of fruit bodies nor the species richness of wild forest fungi, irrespective of whether the harvesting technique was picking or cutting.*

<http://www.bachtelpilz.ch/pdf/sdarticle.pdf>

DNA-based detection of the fungal pathogen *Geomyces destructans* in soils from bat hibernacula

*White-nose syndrome (WNS) is an emerging disease causing unprecedented morbidity and mortality among bats in eastern North America. The disease is characterized by cutaneous infection of hibernating bats by the psychrophilic fungus *Geomyces destructans*. Detection of *G. destructans* in environments occupied by bats will be critical for WNS surveillance, management and characterization of the fungal lifecycle.*

http://www.bu.edu/cecb/files/2009/08/Lindner-et-al_2011.pdf

SALT POINT STATE PARK REPORT

Ben Garland

I've only been at this whole mushroom hunting thing for a year (not coincidentally about the same time as I've been in Sonoma county), but this year's picking season seems to be coming in late compared to last year when we had earlier and more consistent rains. My first hunt this fall arrived on October 7th with my friend Amanda – we found a rather unimpressive quarter pound of golden chanterelles after 2 hours in the woods, because hey, we're in it for the camaraderie and scenery anyway, right?

The second trek was two weeks later on October 21st with my friend Arthur, roommate Tom, and two new SOMA friends that we met the night before at the SOMA meeting, Basil and Liz. We had a decent take after 3 hours in the woods: I found a single 3/4 lb porcini, Arthur scored about 1.5 lbs of golden chanterelles in one spot (wow!), and the rest of the gang found a few more smaller porcini and various amounts of chanterelles. Pretty good considering we weren't too far off-trail! I returned on the 30th with my friend Rachel

(her first time!) and we came back with 1/2 pound each of golden chanterelles and purple pig's ear after only 2 hours. Not too shabby.

My most recent hunt was solo on Friday November 4th. I camped out the night before and spent all day at the park, hoping to beat the Italians for any porcini that might still remain. I searched the pines for over 2 hours and found only two porcini – unfortunately they were old and should have been picked two weeks prior. I went deep into the woods, up the hills, back and forth... *niente*. I discussed it later with Mycochef Patrick and we agreed that it's likely the porcinis are done. The weather just wasn't right this year.

I did, however, come home with 1.2 lbs of golden chanterelles, a nice 0.3 lb single hedgehog (repandum), and a few shrimp russulas – remember this is after 8 hours in the woods! In my opinion we need another good 2-3 day continuous downpour to really get things going out at SPSP. Those little chanterelle buttons are dying to grow!

Pictures are *Amanita lanei* (left) and *Gomphus floccosus*, some of the more interesting specimens that I came across in the past few weeks.



Photo credit: Ben Garland



Photo credit: Ben Garland

MUSHROOM CAMP 2012

It's time once again to get SOMA's Wild Mushroom Camp on your calendar for January 14-16th 2012.

For the 15th year of camp, we are going to have another great line up of talks, workshops, forays and cultivation activities. Our special guest speaker, Andrew Weil, M.D., will regale us with his Saturday evening talk, "Mushrooms, Nutrition and Health."

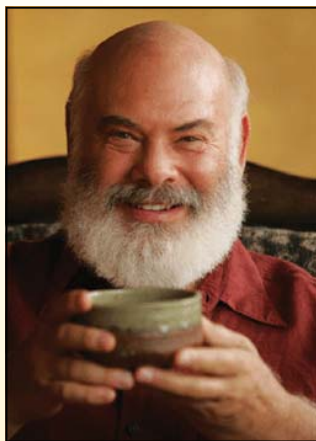
Dr. Weil has a long history of dealing with a variety of plants and fungi dating back to the early 1970s when he wrote his first book, *The Natural Mind*. Currently, Dr. Weil is Director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona, where he also holds the Lovell-Jones Endowed Chair in Integrative Rheumatology and is Clinical Professor of Medicine and Professor of Public Health. The Center is the leading effort in the world to develop a comprehensive curriculum in integrative medicine, which of course includes using mushrooms preventatively and therapeutically.

Dr. Weil maintains a popular website, Dr. Weil.com (www.drweil.com), writes a syndicated newspaper column, "Ask Dr. Weil," and appears in video programs featured on PBS. He lives in Tucson Arizona, USA.

<http://www.somamushrooms.org/camp/camp.html>

EARLY REGISTRATION LOWER PRICED TICKETS ARE SOLD OUT!

The Sonoma County Mycological Association
Presents the 15th Annual
SOMA
Wild Mushroom Camp



Find SOMA on
Facebook!!

Three days of great fun!

Forays
Feasting

Presentations

Mushroom Chefs!

Classes & Workshops

Artwork & Specimen Tables

Andrew Weil, M.D.

“Mushrooms, Nutrition & Health”

Patrick Hamilton—Mycochef

Among others!

\$325 full weekend

\$275 with offsite lodging

\$200 Child (Under 13)

\$165 Child offsite lodging

Includes lodging in shared,
comfy cabins, all meals, and
great mushroom camaraderie.

The spacious, modern cabins
are set amongst 225 acres of tan
oak, madrone, redwood, and fir.

January 14-16, 2012

Check the SOMA website for rates and more info!

Please REGISTER ONLINE at: www.SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMAcampinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org or 707-823-1376

SOMA

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Issue 24:3 NOVEMBER 2011

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

From the south:

- Go north on Hwy 101
- Pass the Steel Lane exit then take the Bicentennial Way exit
- Go over Hwy 101 (heading west) and then right on Range Ave
- Turn left on Piner Rd and go about 1/4 mile
- Turn left into Farm Bureau parking lot at 970 Piner Rd

From the north:

- Go south on Hwy 101
- Take the first Santa Rosa exit for Hopper Ave/Mendocino Ave
- Stay left on the frontage road (it becomes Cleveland Ave)
- Turn right on Piner Rd and go about 1/4 mile
- Turn left into Farm Bureau parking lot at 970 Piner Rd

