

SOMA NEWS

SONOMA COUNTY MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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November 2014

DENNIS DESJARDIN SPEAKS AT SOMA on November 20th:

Dennis Desjardin is Professor of Biology at San Francisco State University. He received a Master's Degree from San Francisco State University (1985) studying with Dr. Harry D. Thiers, and a PhD from the University of Tennessee (1989) under the guidance of Dr. Ronald H. Petersen. He also had the privilege of being trained by Drs. Alexander H. Smith, Rolf Singer, Meinhard Moser and Egon Horak.

He has published over 120 scientific papers on the taxonomy and evolution of mushroom-forming fungi in which he described 225 new species and 7 new genera. He is co-author of the field guide Mushrooms of the Hawaii (Ten Speed Press, 2002). He has active research projects in the Hawaiian Islands, Micronesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brazil, and the African islands of São Tome and Principe, funded by grants from the National Science Foundation.

A recent interest is in the origin and evolution of bioluminescent fungi. Born and raised in Crescent City, CA, he has been collecting and studying California mushrooms for nearly 60 years. Hear him speak on November 20th at 8:00 at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, in Santa Rosa. (See the last page for map and directions).



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EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING ID: After seeking medical attention, contact Darwin DeShazer for identification at (707) 829-0596. Email photos to: muscaria@pacbell.net and be sure to photograph all sides, cap and of the mushroom. Please do not send photos taken with older cell phones – the resolution is simply too poor to allow accurate identification.

NOTE: Always be 100% sure of the identification of any mushroom before you eat it!

THE SONOMA COUNTY MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (SOMA) IS A NON-PROFIT (501C) EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO MYCOLOGY. WE ENCOURAGE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS BY SHARING OUR ENTHUSIASM THROUGH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS AND IN GUIDED FORAYS.

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President's Letter

DISPATCH FROM THE DUFF:

SOMA Camp Registration is underway and appears to be filling up at a pace similar to previous years. We can look forward to listening to the Camp speakers, Gary Lincoff and David Law. Gary, as many members know, has attended a number of SOMA Camps. In addition to authoring many articles and books on mycology, he teaches mushroom identification at the New York Botanical Garden. This will be David Law's first SOMA Camp as a guest speaker. David is the CEO and President of Gourmet Mushrooms. His presentation will cover the importance of fungal species in the human diet with emphasis on the medicinal and nutritional benefits of mushrooms. The Board and Membership would like to thank Gourmet Mushrooms and members of its staff for the long and continued support of SOMA. We appreciate it very, very much.

The Monthly Guest Speaker in November is Dr. Dennis Desjardin, Professor of Biology at San Francisco State University. He will talk about some of his current interests and recent research. We hope to have copies of the newly published book, "California Mushrooms: The Comprehensive Identification Guide", available for purchase. Co-contributors to the book, Michal Wood and Fred Stevens will also attend. And all will be available to autograph a copy, should you choose to ask them. The complete SOMA Bookstore will be open, and there will be opportunity for club members, and the general public, to purchase that special gift for those special friends and family for the coming holiday celebrations.

The next SOMA foray at Salt Point State Park will be November 15th, a week earlier than the normal third Saturday of the month. A number of members requested the change in date to take advantage of early rains (perhaps) and to have wild fungi available for a Thanksgiving dish (perhaps). I think we can look forward to another glorious day at the Park, and with good fortune, an interesting collection of fungal finds.

The October foray was well attended: 40-45 people came. Although the drive north along Highway One was clouded in mist, the sky was clear and bright for the foray. There were many first-time foragers in the group. Most folks who come to a foray read about SOMA on the internet, while a few hear about them from friends. Sometimes, campers at Woodside Campground see the group gather and become immediately interested. At the October foray, the interest among these spectators was so great that two camper families joined in the hunt. After turning in membership forms they contributed their lunch to the pot-luck. We also had two staff members of the, 'Lake Tahoe News' join on their first foray, Publisher, Kathryn Road and reporter, Susan Wood. It was very nice to meet them, to answer their questions, and to guide them through the biology and some of the techniques of wild mushroom collecting. Both Susan and Kathryn were very enthusiastic and energetic members of the group. The forager furthest from home was Kurata Sayaka. Sayaka is a Food Science major at Shinshu University in Ira, (Nagano Prefecture) Japan and is an intern at Gourmet Mushrooms. Her area of study is animal feed and nutrition, particularly the use and benefits of spent food process substrates in animal feedstock. Saturday was her first wild mushroom foray and she told the group how much she enjoyed the day. Sayaka returns to Chikuma, (NP) in December and is eager to learn more about wild mushrooms in Japan and to forage there. All of the novices had many compliments for the club and the chefs and expressed their good fortune for being in the right place at the right time.

"Leftovers" at the October Foray: Metal serving spoon; Wine glass from the "Duncans Mills" Art Festival; Two serving plates; house and wreath rim decoration; Ceramic serving plate; wicker weave edge trim. Please let me know if you would like to have them returned and we will arrange to get them to you.

Best regards,
Jim Wheeler

October Foray Table @ Salt Point Park



Photo of the Month



Amanita calyptrata (Corcorra)

Credit: Chris Murray

The Forager's Report: November 2014

By Patrick Hamilton

"What a Day For a Daydream"

Sitting here writing this report looking out south beyond the platform plywood songbird feeder which is at times a Copper's hawk feeder to the pastured black an-guses doing their cud just on the other side of the barbed wire fence and up in the sky there are these fab sirus clouds striating across the skies and I am struck dumb once again by how lovely it all is. And there are mushrooms afoot too!

We've had sprinklings of rain periods just tucked so in between warm sun-shining days and that has made for fine fruiting of good edibles and other such and sort.

One of the favorites of early season foragers is the Spy Mushroom (*Clitopilus prunulus*) but since it fruits next to the biggest prizes of all the woods around here it is often overlooked as the darn good edible it can be. Pick some next time you're in the porcini districts and sauté in butter, S & P. That's it. Real fine.

Another often overlooked and easy to i.d. early bird once you get the hang of its Friesian qualities is the quite attractive *Russula olivacea*. Crunchy texture, filling in the pan and belly, and tasty too: What else do you need from a fungus, anyhow? Some like in the sauté pan olive oil with finely chopped garlic.

It has rained again (Friday 10/31) and we're hoping this will truly wet the ground beneath the duff and whet our appetites further to be tramping about without trampling too much. Yeah--that's it!

We here at SOMA Central have a new credo regarding the timeliness of getting out the News and so to accommodate this deadline this is soon to be shortly done.

The porcini season might have come and gone or gone and come, sort of shot its wad of spores, if you get their drift, in the breeze. Sprouted earlier than usual and got buggy quick but some did pick enough to assuage even the most difficult to please.

Marvelously matsutakes were found sitting kind of lonely-like upon our id table in October but that was assuredly sooth for the upcoming winter months.

To support our News editor--Charles Thurston--in his quest to make all the contributors to his rag on time (at least one time, surely) this ends right here. Except for the recipe part.

I don't know about you folks but I do love grilled porcini slabs in the pan or over flame and especially when they can put over a Papa Murphy's thin crust plain cheese pizza. What's good is also to quick cook over medium low some garlic and shallots and with some oregano or marjoram top the slabs wit dat and you gots to be in Heaven!

That's all folks!



Clitopilus prunulus Credit: mushroomhobby.com



Russula olivacea

Credit: Wikipedia



Boletus edulis

Credit: Patrick Hamilton

Recipe of the Month: From Eating Well

Creamy Mushroom Toast Points

Makes 8 servings, 2 each. Time: 1 hour 40 minutes
INGREDIENTS:

CREAM SAUCE WITHOUT THE CREAM

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup finely chopped onion
2/3 cup long- or medium-grain white rice
5 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or
“no-chicken” broth (see Tip)
1 cup dry white wine
1/4 teaspoon salt, or more to taste
Freshly ground pepper, preferably white

MUSHROOM TOASTS

1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms
1 cup warm water
16 1/4-inch-thick slices baguette, preferably
whole-wheat
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil plus 2
tablespoons, divided
1/4 teaspoon salt plus 1/8 teaspoon, divided
Freshly ground pepper to taste
12 ounces fresh wild mushrooms, such as
morels or chanterelles, cleaned
3 tablespoons minced shallot or green onion
1 cup Cream Sauce without the Cream
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon dry sherry, or to taste
Fresh basil for garnish

PREPARATION

1. To prepare cream sauce: Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring, until soft but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes more. Add broth and wine and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer until the rice is very soft and the liquid is greatly reduced, about 25 minutes. Cool slightly.

2. Transfer the mixture to a blender and puree, in batches if necessary, until smooth. (Alternatively, puree in the pot with an immersion blender.) The consistency should be similar to a pourable sauce; add more broth or water as needed. Season with 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper, preferably white pepper.

3. To prepare mushroom toasts: Preheat oven to 400°F.

4. Place porcini in a bowl, add warm water and let soak for about 20 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, brush baguette slices with 2 teaspoons oil and season with 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Arrange on a baking sheet and toast in the

oven until lightly browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Set aside on the baking sheet until ready to serve.

6. Cut fresh mushrooms into 1-inch pieces. Line a sieve with a paper towel, place over a bowl and strain the porcini; reserve the liquid. Squeeze the porcini to remove excess water, then chop into 1/2-inch pieces.

7. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add shallot (or green onion) and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add all the mushrooms and cook, stirring, until they begin to brown and the moisture has evaporated, about 5 minutes. (Add a few tablespoons of the mushroom-soaking liquid if the mushrooms start sticking.) Transfer the mushrooms to a bowl. Add 1/2 cup of the reserved soaking liquid, 1 cup of the Cream Sauce, mustard and sherry to the pan. Heat, stirring, just until the mixture starts to bubble. Return the mushrooms to the pan, season with the remaining 1/8 teaspoon salt and pepper to taste and gently stir until heated through.

8. To serve, top each toast with about 2 1/2 tablespoons of the mushroom mixture and garnish with basil, if desired.

NUTRITION

Per serving: 171 calories; 6 g fat (1 g sat, 4 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 26 g carbohydrates; 1 g added sugars; 5 g protein; 2 g fiber; 413 mg sodium; 222 mg potassium.

Nutrition Bonus: Iron (36% daily value)



Himalayan Viagra Fuels Village Economies

By Gerry Everding

Overwhelmed by speculators trying to cash-in on a prized medicinal fungus known as Himalayan Viagra, two isolated Tibetan communities have managed to do at the local level what world leaders often fail to do on a global scale -- implement a successful system for the sustainable harvest of a precious natural resource, suggests new research from Washington University in St. Louis.

"There's this mistaken notion that indigenous people are incapable of solving complicated problems on their own, but these communities show that people can be incredibly resourceful when it's necessary to preserve their livelihoods," said study co-author Geoff Childs, PhD, associate professor of anthropology in Arts & Sciences.

Writing in the current issue of the journal *Himalaya*, Childs and Washington University anthropology graduate student Namgyal Choe-dup describe an innovative community resource management plan that some conservative capitalists might view as their worst regulatory nightmare.

In one remote village, for weeks in advance of the community-regulated harvest season, all able-bodied residents are required to show their faces at a mandatory roll call held four-times daily to ensure that no one is sneaking off into the nearby pastures to illegally harvest the precious fungus.

While regulations such as these might seem overly authoritarian, they've been welcomed by community residents desperate to get a grip on chaos associated with feverish demand for yartsa gunbu, a naturally-occurring "caterpillar fungus" prized in China for reported medical benefits. Use of the fungus as an aphrodisiac has earned it the nickname Himalayan Viagra.



Ophiocordyceps sinensis

Credit: Avax News

Yartsa gunbu (literally 'summer grass, winter worm'; *Ophiocordyceps sinensis*) results from

a fungal infection that invades the bodies of ground-burrowing ghost moth caterpillars.

In early spring, pinky-sized spores of the fungus emerge from the caterpillars' mummified bodies and pop up in remote grassland pastures across the Tibetan Plateau.

Located high in the Himalayan foothills along Nepal's northern Gorkha District border with China's Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), the tiny rural communities of Nubri and Tsum have been ignored by economic developers for decades -- schools, roads and medical facilities are few and far between. Residents have long had little access to cash, with most scraping by on meager incomes from farming, grazing, timber sales and odd jobs.

With yartsa gunbu fetching more per ounce than gold in some Chinese markets, many villagers now reap as much as 80 percent of their annual income during the caterpillar fungus spring harvest season.

Although local incomes are still modest by Western standards, residents have seen average annual incomes rise from an average of a few hundred dollars to upwards of \$4,000.

But along with these riches has come serious concerns about the impact of money and outsiders on local traditions and the fragile alpine environment in which yartsa gunbu thrives.

Recent news coverage has focused on community tensions and infighting over harvesting practices, the flood of outsiders seeking to take part in the harvest and allegations of graft and bribery among community leaders.

In June 2014, a clash with police left two dead in a dispute between members of the local community and a National Park Buffer Zone

Himalayan Viagra...(continued)

Management Committee over who has the right to collect and keep fees paid by outsiders for access to yartsa gunbu grounds. Two more people died in a 2013 fight between Tibetan groups near Rebgong, China.

Meanwhile, outside experts warn that over-harvest of the fungus could cause irreparable damage to fragile high-mountain pastures, with some suggesting yartsa gunbu production already had declined by 40 percent.

Despite dire predictions, research by Childs and Choedup suggests that local communities are rising to the challenge. Their study documents how the residents of Tsum and Nubri have built on existing religious and cultural traditions to devise incredibly cooperative and creative systems to self-manage and regulate the community's annual fungus harvest.

The communities' harvest protocols, they argue, represent an indigenous form of regulatory management, one that may prove sustainable and equitable over the long-term.

Grounded in the resident's traditional rights to use surrounding pasturelands for grazing and other purposes, the yartsa gunbu management plans strive to manage the resource wisely while affording all residents a fair chance to share in the bounty.

Key components of the plans include:

- Restricting yartsa gunbu harvest to members of local households regardless of where they currently reside.

- Sizeable penalties for those caught harvesting outside of the community-enforced season; pre-season roll calls require able-bodied residents to check in at local meeting house four times daily (7 a.m., 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.)

- Requiring harvesters to register with their local villages and pay a small tax to finance projects that support the harvest.

- Prohibiting yartsa gunbu harvest on mountain slopes long considered sacred, thus establishing conservation sanctuaries that will help preserve fungus breeding populations.

Childs and Choedup's research documents a rise in social concerns associated with the sudden rise in incomes, but also finds many positive impacts on the lives of local residents.

The harvest provides an opportunity for people to improve their standard of living, start business ventures, enhance religious life, provide better

education for children, and mitigate the economic burden associated with deaths in the family -- improvements that have been made without the help of state-sponsored development initiatives, they argue.

"In the case of Nubri and Tsum, management practices that were devised independent of state interference may prove to be sustainable over the long-run,"

Childs said. "Although many observers have called for more government intervention in the harvesting and sale of yartsa gunbu, our research demonstrates that, at least in some communities, it is better to allow locals to manage the resource and reap the benefits on their own terms."

Story Source:

The above story is based on materials provided by Washington University in St. Louis. The original article was written by Gerry Everding.

Journal Reference:

Geoff Childs, Namgyal Choedup. Indigenous Management Strategies and Socioeconomic Impacts of Yartsa Gunbu (*Ophiocordyceps sinensis*) Harvesting in Nubri and Tsum, Nepal. Himalaya, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies, Vol. 34: No. 1, Article 7.



Yartsa Gunbu

Credit: Spicesmedicinalherbs.com

SOMA Calendar & Notes:

SOMA CAMP Silent/Live Auction and Raffle

Please consider donating items for our camp auction and raffle. Last year these efforts netted our scholarship program over \$3000. We were able to provide 2 additional scholarships with these funds. Just about anything can be used, including dried mushrooms, truffles, artwork, mushroom themed items, wine, dinners, trips, restaurant gift certificates, wine accessories (openers, carafes, glasses, etc.) Contact me if you have items at 824-8852, or give them to Jim or me at the next foray or meeting. Thanks Rachel.

SOMA Calendar 2014

Nov 5th -- Board Meeting at 6:30pm

Nov 15th -- Public Foray (Limit 50); at Salt Point State Park, Sonoma County; 10AM

Nov 20th -- Meeting Speaker Dr. Denis Desjardin; at Sonoma County Farm Bureau, Santa Rosa; 7PM

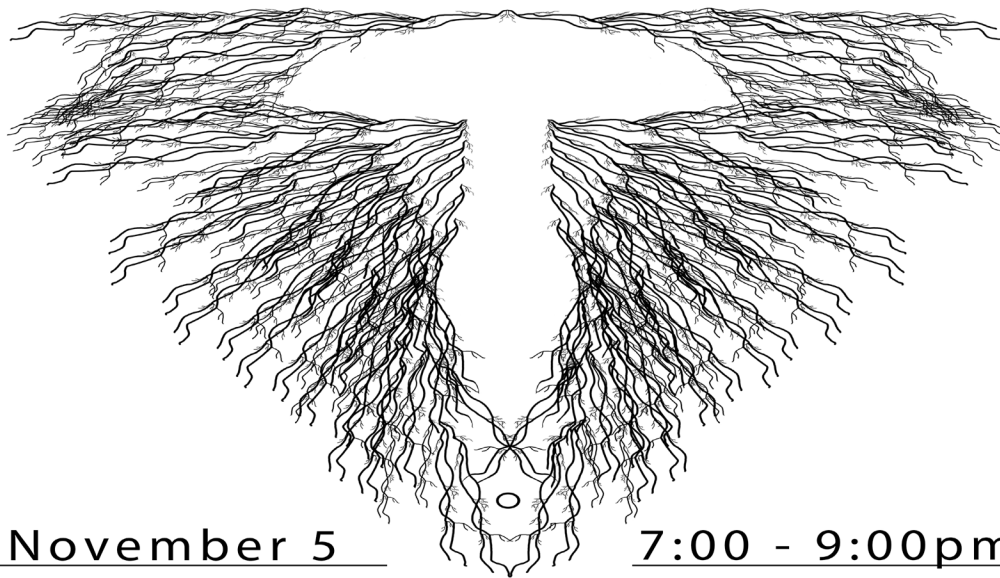
Dec 3rd -- Board Meeting at 6:30pm

Dec 13th -- Pot Luck Dinner; at Sonoma County Farm Bureau, Santa Rosa; 7PM

Dec 20th -- Members Only Foray at (Limit 40); at Salt Point State Park, Sonoma County; 10AM

Sebastopol Grange Presents RADICAL MYCOLOGY

6000 Sebastopol Ave (Hwy 12), Sebastopol, CA



November 5

7:00 - 9:00pm

Spawning Mycelial Networks

Learn how the concepts of fungal ecology and mushroom cultivation are tied with the means for creating resilient lifestyles and communities to present a novel worldview based on the cooperative relationships found throughout the fungal kingdom.

\$10-30

Suggested Donation



For more info visit: www.RadicalMycology.com/Tour

WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE A MEMBER OF SOMA?

JOIN US TODAY!

Membership in the Sonoma County Mycological Association, or 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? Head to <http://somamushrooms.org/membership>; this the mushroom season is just beginning!

Head to <http://somamushrooms.org/membership> and sign up!

SOMA CAMP 2015 IS OPEN FOR REGISTRATION!

SIGN UP TODAY!

<http://www.somamushrooms.org/camp/registration/index.php>

SOMA MAP & DIRECTIONS

SOMA usually meets on the third Thursday of the month throughout the year (September through May), at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, 970 Piner Road, Santa Rosa, California, 94931. Fungi are displayed at 7 PM, and speakers begin around 7:30 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 Road

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!

