



SOMANEWS

VOLUME 28: 3

November 2015

November Speaker: Dorothy Beebee "Past *Pisolithus*, Now Onto *Phaeolus*"

November 19th, 7:00 PM, at Sonoma County Farm Bureau (See directions last page)

The "Dyers Puffballs" (*Pisolithus arhizus*), seem to have come and gone, though a thoughtful SOMA friend brought in a few fairly fresh ones into the SOMA meeting in October. Just that same morning Tom Cruckshank found a splendid fresh *Phaeolus schweinitzii* over under a Douglas fir in Sebastopol – so at least there is some hope, though there be so little rain so far. That *Phaeolus* was taken in for "show and tell" at the meeting with some bright *Phaeolus* dyed wool samples.

Now is the time to start looking for those little telltale yellow "burbles" of fresh *Phaeolus* near the base of old Douglas fir trees, or stumps. They will often reappear in the same location year after year. Within a few days the layered rosettes of rust and chocolate brown will form, with bright yellow rims. That's when you need to pick them, before they turn all dark brown with age.

With this wonderful "Dyer's Polypore" from which Miriam Rice first extracted an extraordinary dye, the most brilliant range of pigment emerges when it is FRESH with a bright yellow rim, and then the dyes seem inexhaustible, dyebath after dyebath. Just for fun, try painting with some *Pisolithus* concentrated chocolate brown dye on a golden *Phaeolus* dyed silk scarf, and enjoy the colorful bounty of a mushroom dyers Autumn in Sonoma County!

She will explore the processes of making mushroom dyes, the dye fungi used in Sonoma County and around the world, and show some of the fiber arts created with them. Dorothy has presented mushroom dye workshops for mycological societies across the USA, taught overseas in International Fungi & Fiber Symposia, and has been active in the coordinating and teaching over the years in the popular Fungal Fiber Arts program that was originated by Miriam Rice at a SOMA Camp almost 18 years ago, and will continue to be explored and celebrated at SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp 2016!



NEED EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING ID?

After seeking medical attention, contact Darvin DeShazer for identification at (707) 829-0596. Email photos to: muscara@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!

SOMA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Jim Wheeler
SOMApresident@SOMAmushrooms.org

VICE PRESIDENT

Rachel Zierdt
SOMAvicepresident@SOMAmushrooms.org

SECRETARY

Gene Zierdt
SOMAsecretary@SOMAmushrooms.org

TREASURER

Judith Tye-Angell
SOMAtreasurer@SOMAmushrooms.org

COMMITTEES & BOARDS

EPICURIAN GROUP

Chris Murray
SOMAculinary@SOMAmushrooms.org

FORAYS

Patrick Hamilton
mycochef@sbcglobal.net

MEMBERSHIP

George Riner
SOMAmembership@SOMAmushrooms.org

MUSHROOM DYE COORDINATOR

Dorothy Beebee
SOMAmushroomdyes@SOMAmushrooms.org

SCHOLARSHIPS

Rachel Zierdt
scholarships@SOMAmushrooms.org

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORS

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

Chris Kjeldsen, Ph.D.
(707) 544-3091
chris.kjeldsen@sonoma.edu

SOMA CAMP REGISTRAR

Chris Murray
SOMAregritar@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA NEWS EDITOR

Charles W. Thurston
SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA WEB MASTER

Martin Beebee
SOMAinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

OPEN POSITION
Volunteer@SOMAmushrooms.org

Dispatch From the Duff

November 2015: SOMA attended the North Bay Science Discovery Day held at the Sonoma County Fair Grounds in October. Many, many children and parents had a very good time looking at displays, taking part in the hands-on exhibits and self-directed experiments. We set up the Fabric Arts display stand and an exhibit that featured mushroom identification using their odor. Darvin and Jane Deshazer, Julie Schreiber, and Jessica Holloway personed the booth, fielding the countless questions asked.

Last Sunday, as I headed over to the club storage unit to return items used on the science day, I noticed 4 or 5 columns of vultures circling over eastern Sebastopol and the Laguna de Santa Rosa along Occidental Road. Curiosity drove me to check the phenomena on the internet. While learning some of the migration habits of vultures I saw that groups of them are called "wakes of vultures" and columns of circling vultures are called, "kettles of vultures". While pondering this interesting information, it started to rain.

Perhaps the 2015 season may not be lost completely. The weekend long soaking rain has revitalized the spirits of mycophiles. All seekers, collectors, identifiers, and epicureans could have a moment to appreciate the benefit of wet, gray skies over Northern California and continue to hope for the best rainy conditions through the coming winter. The November 21st SOMA Foray will be held as planned. The request to avoid trampling on dry paths and trails is still in effect, but Salt Point State Park is now open for mushroom collection. Please remember to practice good collection techniques and etiquette. The club has an excellent relationship with the Park Staff and we must continue to understand the rules and follow them. Remember, the limit of mushrooms per person was changed and is now 3 pounds per person.

Please try to attend the November Thursday Speaker Meeting. Part of Dorothy Beebee's presentation will prepare the audience to look for specific mushrooms species needed in Fabric Arts for SOMA Camp 2016. Also, the entire Bookstore inventory will be on sale. The Bookstore will be open early (6:30 pm) to allow more time for examining and purchasing. All books, glassware, and SOMA clothing will be available at 50% off the listed value. Could be your last chance to experience an outstanding purchasing moment for some time!

Justin Reyes, the sales manager for Gourmet Mushrooms, gave an interesting and informative presentation at the October meeting. He outlined the world-wide production volume and commercial markets for cultivated mushrooms. We learned there are 354 mushroom growers in the U.S., but only 67 certified organic producers. Annual per capita consumption in the U.S. is 2.5 pounds, and in Asia it is closer to 14 pounds. Justin covered some of the production techniques used at Gourmet Mushrooms and their current production capacity. The big news was the expansion of production capacity at their new plant in Western Michigan, near Grand Rapids. Justin brought sample packs of Gourmet Mushroom products for all attendees. Many of us learned interesting things about mushroom cultivation on a commercial scale and had a tasty reminder of Justin's presentation to take home.

Hope to see you in November on Thursday or Saturday at the foray.

**Best regards,
Jim Wheeler**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE :



- * **November Monthly Meeting Speaker: Dorothy Beebee.....page 1.**
- * **Dispatch from the Duff..... Jim Wheeler; page 2.**
- * **The Foragers Report: October 2015.....The Old Mushroomer; page 4.**
- * **Recipe of the Month: Salt Point Salad.....The Old Mushroomer; page 5.**
- * **The Many Marvels Of The Mysterious Mushroom.....David Suzuki; page 6.**
- * **Image of the Month: Giant Triple Mushrooms.....Carsten Holler; page 7.**
- * **SOMA Volunteer Board: New Listings.....page 8.**
- * **SOMA Calendar, Notices & Noteworthy Events.....page 9.**
- * **Map and Directions to SOMA Monthly Meeting.....page 10.**

JOIN SOMA! Your membership in the Sonoma County Mycological Association, or SOMA, is a great way to meet and interact with other mushroom enthusiasts. Head to <http://somamushrooms.org/membership> and sign up; the season is just beginning!

The Foragers Report: November 2015

Boletus Completus

By The Old Mushroomer

(This was written back during our last El Nino fall, 1997, for the MSSF "Mycena" if memory is up working well, if at all--or not):

I'm thinking Daffy Duck, I thought to myself. ("Thhat'ss right, bucko."). Remember how he talked? He would spit, lisp and slurp out letters so difficult to articulate--the sounds at the start of his words beginning with th's.

Well, put them in front of a really great tthummp sound and that is what I just caught the quivering of as I was tripped running into that wonderful Bishop pine stand along the magical stretch of good ole Highway number 1 in Mendocino County. What a lovely note it was. . . . Down I went at once into the myrtle and coffee berry hoping that what I'd heard was not going to be a squashed bolete, maybe just one with a slightly bruised ego. And I kinda knew the likelihood of hitting a watermelon there was probably remote. .

Aha, what a fine looking porcini he was, so proud to have made me stumble upon and on him. When hunting is going well I truly believe that boletes want to be found.

And that day things were going very well, indeed. The first real hunt of the year in California for those big and little nasties. What a variety, what a chase, what a time we had. We found butt-whacking boletes (when you inadvertently back into them while looking elsewhere) and elevator boletes a.k.a. *boletus erectus* (you are lying on the ground looking hard and then right next to you there is an improbable little elevator shaft with a car of pine needles riding atop the rising shaft of--yes, yes!). We ran into In-the-clearing boletes (where the sun breaks through the clouds and shines right on one of those little puppies that had been hard to find before) and then troop boletes (miniature soldiers marching in place under the huckleberry awaiting my ambush). It was indeed *boletus completus*.

It quickly became one of those days where a bag full here and a bag full there, all stashed in different parts of the back of the truck, grew into quite a large pile by the time we stopped to breath and count our wealth. "Too many," my friend Kathy stated straight-faced but dishonestly. "True," I lied equally and easily as I put more brown bags covered with plastic ones into my back pockets. Then, in unison, "Let's go back in!"

We returned the following weekend to see what, if any, would be left there after other pickers had spent a week in our area--(our area, yeah right). Kathy and I walked into some rather popular spots just to check how fast buttons would appear. Bingo!, right in the middle of a path that had begun as a lightly tamped down deer trail and now looked like a cow lane near the milk barn was a beautiful little guy about 4 inches tall. Nearby, hiding under a fallen branch, we found a large #1



***Boletus edulis*; Wikipedia**

that obviously had been missed.

So it just goes to show that first, they grow fast, and secondly, nobody gets them all! It really doesn't matter if you can't go on the perfect day of the week (say, Wednesday or Thursday)--what matters is that if you don't go you won't know.

The weekend after we were asked by the MSSF to help put on a good show and feed for some of the best chefs of San Francisco (some elite SOMA folks were there too). We erected a gypsy style tarp circus scene at Stump Beach and were told later that a great time was had by all. Few chefs have seen boletes in the wild and fewer had been given a guided safari to locate their own. One lucky hunter was so delighted that he cradled his biggo bolete in the crook of his arm as if it were a precious child. Cute.

I knew that I was not going to show any of them how to cook chanterelles--they all had many methods I was sure. Instead I prepared a simple dish that anyone can do providing they have access to a pile of number one porcini. (I knew that they probably did not, neener, neener). It was a raw bolete dish that we can call: (See page 5)

Recipe of the Month:

Salt Point Salad

By The Old Mushroomer

Salt Point Salad

(serves 6)

1 pound porcini (hard small buttons) cut in thin slices (1/16")

Note from November 2015: The porcini for this were supplied by the late great Char-moon Richardson.

The vinaigrette:

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 tbl extra virgin olive oil

1 tsp decent balsamic vinegar

1 1/2 tsp Italian parsley, minced

1 ea Meyer lemon, cut in half

Sea salt and fresh ground black pepper

Make the vinaigrette and toss gently with the porcini. Squeeze some lemon juice over. Serve 30 minutes later. Adjust the seasonings. Pugliese bread works well as a dipping accompaniment.



The Penny Bun, or *Boletus edulus*; Wikipedia

The Many Marvels Of The Mysterious Mushroom

by David Suzuki

(From the Huffington Post, Nov 8, 2015)

Until 1969, biologists thought mushrooms and other fungi were plants. They're actually more closely related to animals, but with enough differences that they inhabit their own distinct classification.

This and more recent findings about these mysterious organisms illustrate how much we have yet to learn about the complexities of the natural world. New research reveals mushrooms can even help plants communicate, share nutrients and defend themselves against disease and pests.

There's far more to mushrooms than the stems and caps that poke above ground. Most of the organism is a mass of thin underground threads called mycelia. These filaments form networks that help plants, including trees, connect to each other, through structures called mycorrhizae.

Scientists believe about 90 per cent of land-based plants are involved in this mutually beneficial relationship with fungi. Plants deliver food to the mushroom, created by photosynthesis, and the filaments, in turn, assist the plants to absorb water and minerals and to produce chemicals that help them resist disease and other threats. And, of course, a myriad of other life forms benefit from the healthy plants.

The structure and function of the mycelial networks and their ability to facilitate communication between physically separated plants led mycologist Paul Stamets to call them "Earth's natural Internet." He's also noted their similarity to brain cell networks. According to a Discover article, "Brains and mycelia grow new connections, or prune existing ones, in response to environmental stimuli. Both use an array of chemical messengers to transmit signals throughout a cellular web."

Research by Suzanne Simard at the University of British Columbia found that Douglas fir and paper birch trees transfer carbon back and forth through the mycelia, and other research shows they can also transfer nitrogen and phosphorous. Simard believes older, larger trees help younger trees through this process. She found that the smaller trees' survival often depends on large "mother trees" and that cutting down these tree elders leaves seedlings and smaller trees more vulnerable.

Researchers in China found trees attacked by harmful fungi are able to warn other trees through the mycelia networks, and University of Aberdeen biologists found they can also warn other plants of aphid attacks.

It all adds to our growing understanding of how interconnected everything on our planet is, and how our actions -- such as cutting down large "mother" trees -- can have unintended negative consequences that cascade through ecosystems.

Scientists are also finding that fungi can be useful to humans beyond providing food and helping us make cheese, bread, beer and wine. Stamets believes mushrooms can be employed to clean up oil spills, defend against weaponized smallpox, break down toxic chemicals like PCBs and decontaminate areas exposed to radiation.

He credits his interest in fungi to another fascinating aspect of many mushrooms around the world: their hallucinogenic properties. During college, Stamets spent a lot of time in the Ohio woods, where he first tried psilocybin mushrooms. They had a profound effect on him, and after his first experience, his persistent stutter went away. He later quit a logging job, because the work was destroying mushroom habitat, and began studying fungi at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

Since then, his research has led to fascinating discoveries of multiple possible purposes for fungi, including nuclear decontamination, water filtration, biofuels, increasing agricultural yields, pest control and medicines.

Research is also shedding light on potential benefits of the psychotropic properties of mushrooms, such as the 144 species that contain psilocybin. Indigenous people have long used hallucinogenic mushrooms for ceremonial, spiritual and psychological purposes -- and with good reason, it turns out. Psilocybin has been shown to improve the brain's connectivity. Researchers are finding the chemical can help combat depression, anxiety, fear and other disorders, and increase creativity and openness to new experience. This makes them potentially beneficial for post-traumatic stress, addiction and palliative care treatments.

We humans have made a lot of technological and scientific advances, and this sometimes gives us the sense that we're above or outside of nature, that we can do things better. Sometimes it takes a fascinating lifeform like a mushroom to shake us from our hubris and show us how much we have yet to learn about the world and our place in it.

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Senior Editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org.

Image of the Month

Giant Triple Mushrooms By Carsten Holler



"Giant Triple Mushrooms," 2010 (polyester paint, synthetic resin, acrylic paint, wire, putty, polyurethane, rigid foam, stainless steel). New Museum, New York.

SOMA Volunteer Board: Open Positions

SOMA Camp 2016 Volunteers

We are now accepting work exchange/volunteer applications on the SOMA Camp website at <http://www.somamushrooms.org/camp/registration/workexchange.php> for the 2016 SOMA Mushroom Camp.

Please read the work exchange/volunteer policy and requirements on the work-exchangewebsite before you apply. We will only be accepting applications through October 31st.

SOMA News Deputy Editor

We are seeking a deputy editor of the monthly newsletter to assist in all phases of material gathering, editing, layout and distribution. The position can be fulfilled from your home office, using your computer and phone, and our software, and would require approximately one day per month. The primary software is Word for documents, and In Design for layout. We currently use Excel and Mail Chimp for distribution, but are open to other methods/software. The website is currently being rebuilt, and hopefully incorporate more automation for the newsletter production and distribution in the near future.

The position would also be to contribute new ideas in coverage and/or channel distribution that will help spread our readership and drive new members for SOMA, wherever they may be located.

While the current goal is to create a backup editor and ease the workload, the eventual desire is that the deputy editor would assume the position of editor sometime over the near to mid-term. We are all volunteers at SOMA, and occasionally find it difficult to meet club deadlines without help.

If you are interested, please send an email to me, Chaz Thurston at chazwt@gmail.com stating your case and any skills that would ease your learning curve.

SOMA Director of Communications

We are also seeking candidates for a new position, director of communications, to work closely with the director of public relations and the board to enhance contact and information flow between club members, members of the board, prospective members, event participants, other clubs and the mycological world at large. The position requires someone comfortable with speaking to anyone or any group about almost anything, and the ability to electronically communicate through various channels.

The position will likely be incorporated into the board composition, sooner or later, and would require about one day per month, apart from monthly board meetings.

If you are interested, please send an email to Patrick Hamilton at mycochef@sbcglobal.net, describing your experience, skills and ability to donate time.

SOMA Director of New Membership

We also are seeking candidates for a new position, director of new membership, to help the club attract more, younger, enthusiastic members into the fold. The ideal candidate may be younger than the average board member, and should be familiar with multiple information channels that the club can utilize to offer new members all that SOMA does and can do. While the club now has a Facebook page, various affiliate Yahoo groups, we are seeking more and better ways to communicate with potential and new members. The candidate would help draft a campaign for new membership as well as new program elements for new members. The position likely will require one day per month in addition to attendance of monthly board meetings.

If you are interested, please email Jim Wheeler at SOMApresident@SOMAmushrooms.org.

SOMA CALENDAR, NOTICES & NOTEWORTHY EVENTS

SOMA Calendar for November & December 2015

Speaker at Santa Rosa Farm Bureau; Nov 19 at 7 PM. -- **Book store sale @ 40% off starts at 6:30!**

Foray at Salt Point State Park, 10:00 am, Nov 21 at 10 AM -- **IT'S ON!**

Board Meeting Dec 2 at 6:30 PM

Pot Luck Dinner at Farm Bureau; Dec 12th at 7pm

Foray at Salt Point Members Only; Dec 19 at 10 AM

SOMA CAMP AUCTION/RAFFLE DONATIONS SOUGHT

SOMA is requesting donations for the coming mushroom camp in January 2016, for use in the silent auction and raffle. Proceeds support the many scholarships SOMA presents to grade school through graduate research students. Contact Rachel Zierdt, SOMA vice president at SOMAvicepresident@SOMAmushrooms.org.

SOMA Financials Available

To comply with the SOMA Bylaws, the fiscal year financials have been posted SOMA website at the following link: <http://www.somamushrooms.org/about/>. Scroll to the "Members Only " section.

The Username and Password for access are:

UN: member

PW: Pholiota

Contribute to SOMA News!

The monthly SOMA News wants you to contribute to our pages with news about your life with mushrooms in Sonoma County and beyond. We need art images, photos, short or long stories, academic or other musings on mycology, recipes, notices, events and more.

The deadline for each issue is the weekend before the first of the month.

You needn't be a professional artist, photographer or writer to join in; just take an interest in sharing what you know and find with others!

Email me at chazwt@gmail.com or call 707-799-9766 with inquiries.

Thanks, Chaz Thurston
SOMA News editor.



JOIN SOMA!

Your 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> and sign up!



SOMA MONTHLY MEETING DIRECTIONS & MAP

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!

