



# SOMA News

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SONOMA COUNTY MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
A NON-PROFIT 501(c)(3) EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY, DEDICATED TO THE MYSTERY AND APPRECIATION OF LOCAL FUNGI SOMAmushrooms.org

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 6

FEBRUARY 2008

## 2008 SEASON CALENDAR

### February

Feb. 16th » Joint foray and Park clean-up with MSSF and Stewards of the redwoods at Salt Point State Park.

Feb. 21 » Meeting—7pm  
Sonoma County Farm Bureau  
Speaker: Dorothy Beebee

Feb. 23 » Joint foray with the California Native Plant Society. SPSP.



**NOTE:** SOMA does not condone or encourage the ingestion of psychoactive mushrooms.

Always be 100% certain of the identification of any and all mushrooms before you eat them!



### EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING IDENTIFICATION

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

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

## SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

### Dorothy Beebee — 2/21 — 7pm — Farm Bureau



**D**orothy Beebee, a member of the **Sonoma County Mycological Association (SOMA)** for over 18 years, and a founding member of the **International Mushroom Dye Institute**, will present an illustrated lecture to SOMA on “**Fiber and Fungi - The First 40 Years**”.

Included in the talk will be slides of the fungi species she collects to produce a full range of color, samples of mushroom dyed fiber arts, polypore paper and the mushroom pigments to paint on them. She will also have some Sonoma County dye mushrooms to show, samples of the dyes they produce on silk, wool and other fibers, as well as material from the recent **13<sup>th</sup> International Fungi & Fibre Symposium**.

The art of mushroom dyeing was discovered over 38 yrs. ago by Miriam C. Rice of Mendocino, CA. Dorothy is the illustrator of Miriam C. Rice's 3 mushroom dyeing books, **Let's Try Mushrooms for Color**, (Thresh Publications, 1974), and **Mushrooms For Color** ( Mad River Press, 1980). She has continued to work with Miriam, documenting and illustrating the fungi used in mushroom dyes, polypore paper, and mushroom watercolor pigment which has now resulted in Miriam's newest book **Mushrooms for Dyes, Paper, Pigments & Myco-Stix**, which was just published in December, 2007 by Mushrooms for Color Press. This is a compendium of all of the fungi & fiber work that Miriam has done over the last 38 years, with many of the illustrations from Dorothy's own mushroom dye notebooks.

Dorothy has presented dye workshops & lectures for a number of Mycological societies in the US, as well as teaching dye and illustration workshops at International Mushroom Dye Symposia in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Australia. Dorothy also writes a monthly mushroom dyeing column for the **SOMA Newsletter**.

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SOMA's *Amanita muscaria* logo by Ariel Mahon

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Our fungal fun and fund raiser, **SOMA Winter Camp**, was a roaring success. Those who came as guests and those who came as volunteers had a rousing good time. Camp has become so well organized, so well planned and so well carried out that it seems to be effortless. Like a great artist, or great musician or a great performance, it looks easy. The Sunday night feast was the best meal I have ever eaten and I have enjoyed meals in some of the most expensive restaurants. The kitchen staff, all volunteers, under the direction of Patrick Hamilton, rolled out a meal with a dozen little packets, parcels and bites of the most exotic tastes you can imagine. The entire crowd burst into a standing ovation toward the end of the meal, which pulled everyone out of the kitchen for a bow. Mark Todd assembled the finest cheese presentation you can get outside a professional tasting. Some of the finest cheeses in the world were offered before the main meal. Wine makers Julie Schreiber and David Keys poured their offerings and other wines that were generously donated by our finest local wineries. We also enjoyed a selection of excellent beers on tap donated by Lagunitas Brewery.

The classes, lectures, workshops, forays and featured speaker presentations were carried off beautifully. Campers were treated to excellent weather and clean, warm, well lit accommodations. Mushrooms were plentiful, even beginners came away smiling. The weather held off until Monday afternoon, then, all hail broke loose! Within thirty minutes the CYO grounds had an inch thick layer of hail on everything. What a finale. To everyone that participated, thank you for making the 2008 camp a success.

**On another matter**, there are some concerns from the state park staff about the heavy pressure Salt Point Park is getting from the mushroom picking community. There have even been rumors of closing the park to mushroom collecting. The San Francisco club, SOMA, the Stewards of Slavianka and the senior staff of Salt Point Park will host a first annual, 'We love our park' day. Join us on February 16, the Saturday before our regular club foray day. We will hear from park staff and learn about ways we can help maintain this precious resource. Bring a pot luck item and wine to share, come prepared to pick up trash. **We will meet at 9am at the Woodside Campground parking lot.** The clubs will provide trash bags, directions and maybe some gifts. Bring a folding chair, drinking water, your own flatware and wine glass with you. After the event there may still be time to find a few fungal treasures on your way home.

All the best to you,

**Bill Hanson** SOMA president

## 2 FORAYS THIS MONTH

### Saturday, Feb 16th

This foray is a joint foray with **MSSf** and the **Stewards of the Coast Redwoods**. The primary goal of this foray is to do a clean-up at **Salt Point State Park**. Come and show your appreciation for this treasure. See above.

### Saturday, Feb 23rd

This is a joint foray with the **California Native Plant Society**. Come and enjoy great camaraderie.

Meet at the southern end of **Fisk Mill Cove** in **Salt Point State Park** at 10 AM.

### **\$6 daily parking fee per car now at SPSP!**

Bring a potluck dish to share; vegetarian dishes are always welcome! Please bring your own glasses, plates and eating utensils. Besides the positive environmental reasons and benefit to the gastronomic experience, it will help minimize the amount of trash to be hauled out. Contact foray leader Bill Wolpert at (707) 763-3101 for more information.

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

**So, what WAS the 13<sup>th</sup> International Fungi & Fibre Symposium about, anyway?**

**W**ell, just imagine a SOMA Camp mushroom dye workshop experience 7 days long..... Where whatever you do during the day and evening is somehow related to Fungi and Fibre! And what's with the spelling of "Fibre" anyway? Well, that is tied to the word "International", since that is how the word is spelled everywhere else in the world, and over 100 fibre-folks came from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Scotland, England, Australia, the Canary Islands, and Spain to spend one wild and wooly week in Mendocino where Mushroom Dyes began almost 40 years ago.. Imagine all these languages being spoken, but know that the fiber artists ALL knew the Latin names of the dye and papermaking fungi!

-Imagine the first big challenge of "getting them all there." (with only 1 bus {MTA} a day...)

-Imagine the 2<sup>nd</sup> big challenge of "where to house them". (The Mendocino Hotel gave us an excellent rate just for the Symposium attendees!)

-Imagine only 5 classrooms available at the Mendocino Art Center....(But huge tents over the patio and deck to cover the "Dyes on the Deck" and mushroom displays.)

- Imagine the 4 dimensional Rubiks-cube planning of it all ~ classrooms 2 blocks away from the Art center which was 2 blocks away from the Mendocino Hotel, which was 2 blocks back down to Crown Hall where we had lunches and dinners.... And the town of Mendocino does not believe in street lights...

- And imagine the "storm of the decade" happening right before the Symposium, closing Highways 128, 20, 253 and all the back roads into Mendocino just 3 days before the Symposium..... (and toppling the last 150 ft, D. fir tree that I had left in my yard, slamming through and cutting my

uninhabited neighbor's house in half that morning, - in case you wonder why my hair is more silver than usual.....)

BUT,... imagine 100 happy folks actually getting there and having the time of their lives going on mycologist-led forays every morning and afternoon (rain or shine), doing mushroom dyes (6 different classes), felting scarves and bowls with mushroom dyed wool; exploring dyeing with unusual materials like bamboo, soy silk, reindeer hide, feathers, and fish scales; making masks and books out of mushroom paper, painting with mordants on silk, weaving small tapestries on circular looms, learning traditional American crafts like rug hooking and "penny rugs" using mushroom dyed wools, a class just for children in wool felting, Navajo spinning and weaving demonstrations, cultivation of mushrooms, classes in making "Myco-Stix" led by Herself: Miriam C. Rice, and lots of "open studio" time for individual, self-guided experimentation in all of the above! And that was just during the daytime...



Miriam C. Rice making Myco-Stix

Photo by Dorothy Beebee

Paul Stamets agreed to be our keynote speaker at the Symposium, and there was so much interest in Myco-Remediation within the community of Mendocino that he gave another sold-out presentation open to the public. We were also honored with the presence of Robert and Christine Thresh who had the vision and imagination to publish Miriam's FIRST book, "Let's Try Mushrooms for Color" in 1974, and who couldn't believe where the whole concept had gone! Miriam had shown them her sample experiments 38 years ago, and they told her to go home and write a book about it. She did, and here we are! And, of course the grand banquet celebrating Miriam's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday - with Happy Birthday sung in at least 6 different languages!!! The NEXT Symposium will be hosted by Sweden in 2010. See you there!

Check out [www.mushroomsforcolor.com](http://www.mushroomsforcolor.com) Website to see some colorful photos of it all!



Camp 2008

Well, well, well. A lot has happened in the last month, don't you think. I read a "Farmer's Almanac" weather forecast last November that called for January to be the "wet" month based upon the abundance of acorns last fall. I was wondering, how far wrong can you go predicting rain in January?...not very. If you had to pick one month for rain in this area, January would be a very safe bet. I was discussing this on Saturday with biologist, Peter Leveque, on a LandPaths nature hike on the Jacobs Ranch. He is a retired professor and it miffed him to link acorns and potential rainfall. However, over 24 hours on Friday, January 25, he recorded 3.5 inches of rain...the most he had ever recorded in one day over the last ten years. Certainly other places, including Petaluma, got substantially more. Other weather statistics confirmed that our rain event was a once-in-a-decade affair. So, can seemingly unrelated events be linked. Must our rational minds always prevail?

Before we finished 2007, the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Mycoblitz at Point Reyes National Seashore occurred. It has been simplified to only one day of foraging and the specimen tables in the Red Barn made it much easier to see different fungi. I was there a little early and ended up taking about 15 budding 'shroomers to the Sky Trail off the Limatour Road. The brush was dense so the hunting was somewhat difficult. In spite of that and the heavy drizzle, everyone was very interested and was having a good time. A good friend of mine, George Clyde, was along and recording bits and pieces of my explanations for KWMR radio. He combined it with other short interviews, including Tom Bruns. When I listened to the archived link, I was shocked to hear that the opening remarks were of me suggesting you can "taste mushrooms" in the field. I had said that you had to know that you weren't tasting potentially deadly mushrooms, but I had nightmares of people going into the woods and "tasting" for edibility.

The Wild Mushroom Camp was great. Rains moistened everything a couple weeks prior and then allowed everything to dry out a little. While it did get a little frosty, nobody was picking frozen mushrooms as in recent years. The weather was winter perfect, almost tropical for Tom Volk and his students from Wisconsin. But the mushrooms were not as abundant as I would have expected for moist earth and warm days. I assisted Don Bryant with a foray around Lake George. We found some blacks for the first time since I have been going. But overall I thought the quantity of mushrooms was down around Camp, as with forays south. That did not hold true for Salt Point forays. They came back with baskets full of all kinds of mushrooms. On Sunday, I led a small but enthusiastic group around Westminster Woods. They were gung-ho for the trails less traveled, no matter how steep. By the end of our time, we all felt like best friends and everyone had a nice bag of blacks. Christian Kallen, a reporter for the Press Democrat, tagged along with David Campbell's foray and captured it well on video and then posted it on-line. He also snuck into the kitchen to document the multitude of mushrooms there and spoke with Mia Maltz about myco-remediation. (Go to Green Living/Green TV on the PD

website.) I overheard several comments from guests that it was the best Camp yet. Patrick and his kitchen staff still manage to raise the culinary standard.

Getting back to yesterday with LandPaths, Fritz Hoddick and I were invited to help identify mushrooms. We are trying to establish some good relationships with the land stewards of Sonoma County. Our forays at Salt Point are no longer a certainty for the future. I think we need to try and better understand what it is we are trying to accomplish at our forays as the attendance continues to grow. I strongly believe we need to show ourselves to be better caretakers of the land. This year, I want to emphasize how we should leave the forest. I want to educate the public, as well as our members, that to leave discarded mushrooms along the trail is not a pretty sight for those who are there for other purposes. SOMA needs to be seen by the Parks as an organization that gives more than it takes. To do otherwise, in this age of decreasing revenue for the Parks, makes their decision to exclude us a no-brainer. I encourage everyone to reach out to groups like LandPaths and volunteer if you have time. Talk about mushrooms. People are interested and we forget, compared to the general public, how much we know.



Photo by Gene Broderick

Speaking of doing good, our next outing is 2/16 and we will be joined by our friends from MSSF (Mycological Society of San Francisco) and it is a Clean Up Day at Salt Point. You can be assured that there will be good food and time for a little poking around, too. Goofy prizes are being planned. Please plan to attend this fun event and help SOMA make a difference.

The next regular foray follows on the weekend after, 2/23. The California Native Plant Society will be joining us. Come broaden your knowledge base and share some of yours.

See you in the woods.

**-Bill Wolpert**  
SOMA Foray Leader



Photo by Morgan Kaldean

**Ready to Foray at SOMA Camp!**



**W**e are now living "A.C." (Kind of like the always Anno Domini.)

In the year of our Camp this is now "After Camp." Almost an after life experience. Or an out of the body deal. A, "Can we all just relax now?" thing.

How about you folks?

How are we doing after so many gave so much for so great an event? Energies expended out into the Universal Gathering Spot of Such Things (UGSOST, aka "ughsauced").

Acronymically speaking, "ughsauced" might be what my back was yelling at me this morning as I duck-walked out of bed attempting to gather enough good thoughts to counter the nasty bits devilishly delivered by my bad side. My logical side. The part of me that tries to take care of me. "No more Camp. Never again."

Or maybe being sauced in an ugly way needs to be considered here.

Actually—in this year's kitchen we kept the alcohol level quite low. Until after service. . . . Hey—the donations are stored there.

Walk Wolpert had to return 2 full kegs back to Lagunitas Brewery. Come on folks—we can do better.

The new Camp caterer, Jan, got some fine donations from us. A few leftover bags of onions, some shallots, a hotel pan of pate, etc.

The kitchen volunteers got to take home whatever we had AC.

Next Camp the top year-after-year kitchen volunteers will be getting chef jackets with the SOMA logo and their names on them. Cool.

CLIP & SAVE

And how about that standing, stomping, clapping, ovation for the volunteers? Don't know about you but standing ovations occur rarely in my life. Actually—about once a year.

And thinking of next year, how does a Coastal Asian Wild Mushroom Cuisine sound ?

But what of what wild mushrooms are to be found in the woods here now? Isn't this what this column is for?

We know that blacks are springing forth mightily, winter chanterelles too. Hedgehogs seem to be in a not so good year. Golden chanterelles around here are just starting to show what they might do.

Right about now I start reviewing my fire information for upcoming morel expeditions. See where I will be spending gasoline and time reconnoitering good looking spots.

Last summer I made notes on logged areas in the Sierras, their elevations and exposures, and wrote in my calendar when might be the best time to go take a peek.

Hope you have done the same. But if not a map to these areas can be purchased from me by sending in a self-addressed, stamped, envelope with a check amount based on how good the information you are seeking is worth. (After all the volunteer hours Camp takes one does have to make a living.)

Many requests for the Camp dessert recipe have come across my figurative plate and I, along with Todd Humphries (whose recipe this is), have decided that we could print it here. You have got to be very mindful that the "candy caps" you pick for this are really that. And this is a food professional's recipe. Have fun. Any variation close to this recipe will work, I'd bet.

**Camp 2008 Candy Cap Brioche Bread Pudding**

**Recipe By: Martini House in St. Helena, CA**

Serving Size: 6 Preparation Time: 1:45

Amt./Meas.	Ingredient	Preparation Method
18 Oz	heavy cream	
3 ½ Tbsp	candy caps, dried	
3 ½ Tbsp	brown Sugar	
3 ½ Tbsp	sugar	
3/8 tsp	salt	
1 ea	whole eggs	
2 ea	egg yolks	
¾ tsp	vanilla extract, pure	
½ loaf	brioche (standard Pullman size)	cubed
1 ¼ Tbsp	golden raisins	
1 ¼ Tbsp	currants	
1 ¼ tsp	maple syrup (if needed)	



Photo by Morgan Kaldean

1. Scald cream and infuse candy caps for 1 hour. Taste to see if further time is necessary. Need maple syrup?
2. Add sugars, salt, and vanilla to infused cream.
3. Temper cream to eggs.
4. Strain through chinois.
5. Place cubed bread, raisins, and currants in a hotel pan. Pour custard over. Press down to evenly coat everything. Cover with foil.
6. Place pudding in a 4" full-size hotel pan and add water half way up the sides.
7. Bake at 350 for one hour, rotating once.
8. Take foil off and cook additional 8-10 minutes to slightly brown.

NOTES : Talk to Patrick about each step. original recipe was for 15+/-

The mushroom dye workshop at SOMA camp this year was a lot of fun, keeping Harriman Hall hopping on Saturday afternoon. We enjoyed our inaugural run leading the introductory dye class, and were happy to have such an enthusiastic group of class participants. Following an introduction about the history, techniques, and some references associated with mushroom dyeing, the participants assembled and dyed yarn and silk samples.

This year's dye baths were bold and beautiful, with bright colors provided by the following species:

- Phaeolus schweinitzii (dried) – olive-brown (iron mordant) and mustard yellow (alum).
- Pisolithus tinctorius – light beige (iron) and pink-tan (alum).
- Dermocybe semisanguinea (dried) – dark royal purple (iron) and bright magenta (alum).
- Dermocybe malicoria or cinnamomeus – peach-pink (iron and alum).
- Omphalotus olivascens (dried) – grey-purple (iron) and rich olive green (alum, especially on silk).
- Boletus appendiculatus (dried pores) – pale grey-green (iron) and lovely lemon yellow (alum).

We'd like to thank the following folks for their assistance in getting it all to come together so well: Dorothy Beebee for her invaluable guidance and loan of much of the equipment; Anna Moore, Patrick Hamilton, Lynn Marsh, Theresa Wistrom and Marilyn Buss for donating mushrooms; Gayle Sill for her shibori scarf demonstration; and especially class volunteers Liann Finnerty and Marilyn Buss. You all helped make the class such a vibrant success, and we look forward to dyeing at camp all over again next year!



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## DONATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS — SOMA CAMP 2008

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SOMA would like to acknowledge and thank the following businesses and individuals for their generous donations to our Camp. It is only with the help of these kind hearted persons and companies that we can provide the quality of experience you receive at the SOMA Camp. We also very much appreciate all of our Club members and others, who have donated their personally collected mushrooms to the Camp. We THANK YOU all very much!

**Readers, please frequent these businesses and be sure to thank them!**

### Dinner Donations:

**Clover Stornetta** – Petaluma, CA – <http://cloverstornetta.com/>

**Franco American Bakery** – Santa Rosa, CA

**Gourmet Mushrooms & Mushroom Products** – Graton, CA – <http://www.gmushrooms.com>

**Lagunitas Brewing Company** – Petaluma, CA – <http://www.lagunitas.com/>

**Oliver's Market** – Cotati, CA – <http://www.oliversmarket.com/>

**Sonoma Muffin Works** – Sebastopol, CA

**The Martini House** – St. Helena, CA – <http://www.martinihouse.com/>

**Twin Hills Apple Ranch** – Sebastopol, CA – <http://www.twinhillranch.com/>

**Wine Forest Mushrooms** – Connie Green – Napa, CA

### Wine Donations:

**Dry Creek Vineyards** – Healdsburg, CA – [www.drycreekvineyard.com](http://www.drycreekvineyard.com)

**Ferrari-Carano Vineyards** – Healdsburg, CA – [www.ferrari-carano.com](http://www.ferrari-carano.com)

**Mill Creek Vineyards** – Healdsburg, CA – [www.millcreekwinery.com](http://www.millcreekwinery.com)

**River Bend Vineyards** – Healdsburg, CA – [www.intowine.com/river-bend-ranch-winery](http://www.intowine.com/river-bend-ranch-winery)

**Schug Carneros** – Sonoma, CA – [www.schugwinery.com](http://www.schugwinery.com)

**Sterling Vineyards** – Calistoga, CA – [www.sterlingvineyards.com](http://www.sterlingvineyards.com)

**Wellington Vineyards** – Glen Ellen, CA – [www.wellingtonvineyards.com](http://www.wellingtonvineyards.com)

**White Oak Vineyards** – Healdsburg, CA – [www.whiteoakwinery.com](http://www.whiteoakwinery.com)

### Mushroom Art:

**Kelly Earnshaw** – Pengrove, CA – Mushroom Bead Necklace

**Patricio Hamilton** – a.k.a. – Mycochef – Cotati, CA – *Arte de la Cocina*

**Steven Kalb** – Steven Kalb's Renaissance Ironworks – Ft. Myers, FL –  
[www.Kalbironworks.com](http://www.Kalbironworks.com) – Mushroom Metal Sculpture

### Mushroom Kit Spawn:

**Amycel/Spawn Mate** – San Juan Bautista, CA – <http://www.amycel.com/>

### Music:

Music by **Skiffle Symphony** – Sonoma County, CA

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## CAMP RHAPSODY

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How can one begin to express the remarkable event that SOMA Camp has become? The volunteers were amazing from seasoned experts...you know who you are, to the great pool of newcomers who jumped right in and made it superb!

What others are saying...

"We've created a monster..."—Patrick Hamilton—Camp MycoChef Extraordinaire

"Congratulations. Amazing success of an event; scope with food, lodging and programs all very well organized and brilliantly executed by *smiling* people. Hat's off to SOMA. You guys are very fortunate to have such a deep and dedicated talent pool of quality volunteers, top to bottom. A big pat on the back for all of you from all of me!"—

David Campbell—President—Mycological Society of San Francisco

"This is the perspective of a beginner, totally new to the organization and to Mycology. But who has done a lot of event organizing. First, thanks to all who worked hard to put it on. Overall, it was a fabulous event. It far exceeded expectations. I go to France for three weeks every year and even from that perspective the Feast was one of, if not the, best meals of my life. The foray leaders were excellent. We went out with Norm and David and both were informative and amusing and really communicated their enthusiasm for fungi. Double plus for David, his class on edibles and his cooking demo were also excellent. And the latter was really tasty."—David and Suzette Welch

"SOMA camp was fantastic."—Christopher Berry

"I will tell you I had a glorious time. I really loved the paper making class, it made me feel joyful, and hopeful. I was the Queen of Sheba during the abundant feast, waited on by your most gracious staff like I was ROYALTY."—René La Mar

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**T**he black trumpet (*Craterellus cornucopioides*), also known as the black chanterelle and horn of plenty, is a distinctive mushroom in both appearance and flavor. It resembles a very dark petunia, with black, gray, or brownish flesh forming a trumpet shape. It is smooth both inside and out, with no gills. It is perhaps the most difficult mushroom for the eye to see in the woods, rivaling if not surpassing the morel in its ability to hide undetected against the background of the forest floor.

Black trumpets are pickable at two or three inches in height, but can sometimes grow up to six or seven inches tall, resembling clusters of black or dark gray rabbit ears. Fresh or rehydrated, they have a unique deep, delicious taste; not 'mushroomy' at all, and unlike any other flavor with which I am familiar. Black trumpets are a true wild mushrooms which cannot be cultivated, so their appearance in markets and restaurants is restricted to their natural season during the few winter months of the year.

In Northern California, "blacks," as mushroomers call them, are generally found growing with tan oak trees, often near redwoods scattered within a tan oak woodland. They also tend to appear beneath huckleberry bushes, making for some serious hands-and-knees activity under the shrubbery. On sunny days when the forest floor is dappled with light and shade, it's especially difficult to pick out the mushrooms' dark, hole-like forms. The best conditions for hunting black trumpets are lightly overcast days. Heavier overcast makes the woods dim, which is challenging, but still easier on the eyes than the harsh contrasts of a bright sunny day.

In Northern California, black trumpets usually begin fruiting in late December, and will continue to appear through March or April. As with all mushrooms, some years are better than others for the black trumpet. In a good year, at a good area, one can fill a grocery sack in an hour or two. In a poor year, one is lucky to fill a lunch sack. They often come in groups or clusters, and can be quite picturesque. They are rarely attacked by insects or foraged by other animals, so the hunter's main competitors are only other mushroom hunters.

#### An Amusing Tale...

When hunting mushrooms, there's a certain natural process of visual acclimation. Once the eye tunes into the look of a certain mushroom, it becomes much easier to find. Conversely, if they eye is not attuned, the treasures are incredibly easy to overlook. I had an interesting incident a few years back that illustrates this quite well.

I was taking a recreational walk with a non-mushrooming friend (I do have a few) in a local Sonoma County park. We weren't looking for mushrooms, but as we passed through a small copse of tan oak, I noticed a few black trumpets fruiting. My friend suggested we pick them, but I thought it would be better to wait and pick them on the way out, so we wouldn't have to carry them. I felt very safe in this plan, since we were in an area not especially known for mushrooms, and I had never seen other pickers at this spot. So we continued on with our walk.

We returned an hour or so later. To my great shock and dismay, I saw a young man down on the ground with a small paper sack. He was about 10 yards away from the mushrooms we had spotted earlier. As he noticed us coming into view, he hastily stood up, with a rather guilty look. We said hello, and my friend and I gravitated over to

the spot where we had earlier seen the mushrooms. They were still there. As the young man came over to join us, a little girl appeared from out of the trees, carrying a large amanita mushroom. The man told us that he knew a few mushrooms and picked sometimes, and we chatted for a few minutes.

All this time the black trumpets were between us, right at our feet. At first, I wondered if he knew there were blacks at our feet. Then I wondered if *he* was wondering if *I* knew there were blacks at our feet.

After a bit, I couldn't stand it anymore. I asked him what was in the bag in his hand - maybe his lunch? He looked a little sheepish, then opened the bag to give me a look. It was full of acorns! He said he was collecting them to sprout, with the idea of selling the seedlings to a nursery. I had a hard time keeping a straight face. After some more friendly chat, we parted ways, heading in opposite directions. As soon as we were out of sight, my friend and I hid behind a big tree. We waited about five minutes to see if he returned to pick the mushrooms. He didn't reappear, so we went and made a fine harvest. Luckily for us, he never even saw them!

#### Into the Kitchen...

In the kitchen, black trumpets are a culinary treat. There are so few black foods that their appearance can be a little daunting in a dish, but once the taste is perceived, they become an object of beauty. The flavor goes quite well with red bell pepper or asparagus, and the bold color combinations are unusual and pleasing to the eye. Black trumpets' flavor also harmonize well with smoked foods such as smoked cheese or fish.

These mushrooms are generally easy to clean, assuming the dirty stem bases are trimmed at the time of harvest. Because of their trumpet-like shape, they sometimes accumulate a bit of forest debris in the center, so they should be torn open and examined before cooking. Rinsing in a basin of water will usually allow any debris to float to the top, where it can be easily removed. Because they do not have gills and their flesh is not especially absorbent, it is okay to get black trumpets wet. A trip through the salad spinner will remove any accumulated water.

With their strong, distinctive flavor, black trumpets carry themselves well in most dishes where mushrooms are appropriate. Sautéing is generally the best cooking approach, although they also do well in soups and stuffing. They will become tender with about 10 minutes of cooking, and usually contain enough natural moisture to use the dry sauté method described in the previous article about gold chanterelles. One of my favorite ways to use black trumpets is on pizza (see recipe at site below).

Drying in a food dehydrator is the best way to preserve an over-abundance of black trumpets. If you use dried blacks, be sure to include the rehydration liquid in the cooking process, as it contains lots of flavor and nutrients.

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[http://www.beyondwonderful.com/experts/quest/richardson\\_charmoon/content\\_mushroom.htm](http://www.beyondwonderful.com/experts/quest/richardson_charmoon/content_mushroom.htm)

Reprinted from *Beyond Wonderful* at the above link. Great recipes for blacks may be found at the link. Also, check out their cheese expert, our own "CheeseDude".





## SOMA Membership Application and Renewal Form

Regardless of what others may think of me, I wish to become a member of the SOnomā County Mycological Association, a Non-Profit Corporation dedicated to the promotion of the knowledge and appreciation of local fungi.



(Please Print)                       New Member                       Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

SOMA will not share your info!  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- \$25 for family membership (mailed SOMA News, plus website download if desired)
- \$20 for family membership who do not require a mailed newsletter (website download only)
- \$20 for seniors with mailed newsletter (60 years +) (plus website download if desired)
- \$20 for seniors—website download only, (help SOMA and the environment out!)
- Check here if website download is desired. Include your email address!

I am interested in participating in the following activities (Check):

Culinary Group \_\_\_\_ Mushroom Forays \_\_\_\_ Cultivation \_\_\_\_  
Mushroom Dyes \_\_\_\_ Mushroom Papermaking \_\_\_\_ Newsletter \_\_\_\_

Other ideas/comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks to:                      **SOMA**  
   P.O. Box 7147  
   Santa Rosa, CA 95407  
[www.SOMAmushrooms.org](http://www.SOMAmushrooms.org)

**YOU CAN NOW RENEW/JOIN ONLINE AT THE WEBSITE!**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### VOLUNTEER CORNER

To all of the volunteers that worked at this year's Wild Mushroom Camp. Thank you all for your participation and hard work. I have gotten nothing but glowing reviews for all of the work you did. You made the camp run very smoothly. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated.

We had a large number of SOMA members that have volunteered in the past decide to help out again. In addition we had new SOMA members who had never been to camp before decide to do work/trade. I believe that every person who volunteered had a great time learning about mushrooms, sharing their knowledge of mushrooms, and meeting new people, too. This year we decided to add on a couple of new tasks, the first was the foray sweeper. I think this was a really good idea and a great way to make sure everyone returned to camp. Thanks to all of you that took on this new job. Another new job was that of table service for the Sunday dinner. This was a great success. All of the people that were in the dining room really appreciated the speed at which the food came to the table. Amazing since they didn't know we had to wash some dishes to make sure everyone had dinner on the right plates. Thank you to the kitchen and the servers for making this experiment work so well.

Now that camp is over and you have had time to reflect, I am hoping that you will all send me comments and suggestions for next year.

Last year we had a thank you picnic in the summer for all volunteers which I plan on repeating, so keep your calendars open in July...

I would also hope that those of you who didn't volunteer this year will look for ways to be more involved in SOMA. We can always use a hand at monthly meetings, monthly forays, and other activities that happen throughout the year.

Julie Schreiber

SOMA Volunteer Coordinator

**Deadline for the March 2008 issue of SOMA News is February 21<sup>st</sup>. Please send your articles, calendar items, and other information to: [SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org](mailto:SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org)**

### SOMA CAMP!

If you missed camp this year you missed a great event. Please mark your calendars now for the next Martin Luther King weekend. This event has grown into a world class gala. Each year we strive to make it better, which is no small undertaking with all volunteer staff. I encourage all members to consider helping the club in some way. It is through your efforts that we can continue to hold camp, have our monthly pot luck feasts and host great speakers. We are always looking for members to step forward and shoulder some of the load, especially as Board members. As a Board member, you have the great honor of shouldering a disproportionate share of the load! But, it is worth every minute. So please consider batting clean up!



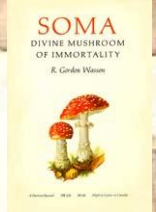
#### Picture 9 of 10:



The glowering eyes from 114 million light years away are the swirling cores of two merging galaxies called NGC 2207 and IC 2163 in the distant Canis Major constellation.

## SOMA News

P.O. Box 7147  
Santa Rosa, CA 95407



## SOMA Members

The February Issue of  
*SOMA News* has arrived!

SOMA usually meets on the third Thursday of the month throughout the year (September through May), at 7 PM, at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, 970 Piner Road, Santa Rosa, California.

Fungi are displayed at 7 PM, and speakers begin at 7:45 PM. Bring in your baffling fungi to be identified!

## Directions to the Sonoma County Farm Bureau

Coming from the south

- Go north on Highway 101.
- Past Steele Lane, take the Bicentennial Way exit.
- Go over Highway 101.
- Turn right on Range Ave.
- Turn left on Piner Road.
- At about ¼ mile, turn left into parking lot at 970 Piner Road.

Coming from the north

- Go south on Highway 101.
- Take the first Santa Rosa exit, Hopper Ave/Mendocino Ave.
- Stay left on the frontage road, (it becomes Cleveland Ave after you cross Industrial Drive).
- Turn right on Piner Road.
- At about ¼ mile, turn left into parking lot at 970 Piner Road.

970 Piner Road is marked by a star on the map at right.

