



S O M M A

VOLUME 25 : 3

NOVEMBER 2012

SPEAKER OF THE MONTH



Rytas Vilgalys

November 15th at 7pm

Mushrooms and Climate Change: Fungi in a Changing World

Dr. Vilgalys' lab group at Duke uses molecular approaches to study fungal natural history at a variety of levels ranging from populations to species and communities. Research areas include: 1) the Fungal Tree of Life Project and the origins of fungal biodiversity; 2) Molecular epidemiology and population genetics of fungi. Genetic studies are aimed at elucidating mating systems and life history in wild mushroom species as well as symbiotic fungi including human pathogens; and 3) Community ecology of fungi in the environment. His lab is sampling DNA directly from the environment using state-of-the-art technologies such as high-throughput sequencing, microarrays, and bioinformatics to study how microbial communities respond to environmental change.

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CALENDAR

November 15th	Speaker at Farm Bureau 7pm	<i>Rytas Vilgalys</i>
November 17th	Foray at Salt Point State Park 10am	
November 18th	SOMA Epicurean Group Potluck	
December 15th	SOMA Holiday Potluck	
January 19th-21st	SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp	
February 21st	Speaker at Farm Bureau 7pm	<i>Walt Sturgeon</i>

LIMERICKS BY CHARMOON

Then one time I overheard
A mushroom say to a bird
If I could fly like you do
I could avoid being stew
Now isn't that really absurd?

I find it so hard to know
Why things turned out just so
But mushrooms excite me
And highly delight me
And have helped me so much to grow

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

Next year, the Sonoma County Mycological Association will celebrate its Silver Anniversary! We will be 25 years old in the summer of 2013! Darvin DeShazer, a founding member of SOMA and current Science Advisor, noted that the idea to start the club was discussed in the summer of 1988 and then organized into the association in December. The first SOMA meeting was held in the laboratory of Chris Kjeldsen, also a founding member, at Sonoma State. Shortly after, the first SOMA Newsletter was published in February 1989, with Bev Kjeldsen serving as editor.

From those early beginnings, SOMA has grown to over 290 members and has established a well regarded reputation as an excellent group, supporting public education in the enjoyment and science of Mycology. Throughout our history, this success has been dependent entirely on the support and commitment of volunteers. The Board of Directors and the Monthly Foray Leaders are staffed by volunteers and the annual SOMA Camp is planned and presented all by volunteers. Members of our Association like you.

Publicity for SOMA Camp 2013 has started and you may have noticed newspaper articles, or flyers posted at various sites in the county. Over the years, the most effective method of publicizing camp has been by word of mouth, like a recommendation from a current member or someone who has attended camp previously. The support of our membership is needed every year to make SOMA Camp as successful as it is.

Please take a few moments and consider attending camp, if you are not already, or if you have friends that would be interested. Let them know about the unique opportunities of SOMA Camp. Please see the SOMA website for a current list of classes and activities available.

Registration is easily accomplished using eforms available on the website. If you, or your friends, would prefer to submit a written application, just send me an email and I can help. Remember, you do not have to be a member of SOMA to attend camp.

In this newsletter you will find a note regarding the SOMA financial statement available on the web-site. The SOMA by-laws mandate an annual financial report must be submitted to the membership when gross income exceeds \$25,000. The statement shows that we are in very good financial condition. A reserve of over \$25,000 will ensure the club's stability for a number of years. SOMA's annual expenses are not covered by membership dues only. The profit made from camp is the primary source for the money in the bank account today and lets us cover operating expenses, hold monthly speaker meetings, and present scholarships to elementary and high school students that participate in science fairs in Sonoma County as well as graduate students in Mycology attending universities or colleges in Northern California.

It is important to know that our house is in good fiscal order, but only dedicated volunteers will continue to give SOMA a strong, lasting presence over the next 25 years. Let's all help get there together!

Best regards,
Jim Wheeler

In order to comply with the SOMA Bylaws, the fiscal year financials have been posted on the SOMA website: <http://www.somamushrooms.org/members/>
username: member password: Pholiota [case sensitive]

I Love Multitasking

The Apple Falls From The Tree

They say “the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree”, so I am delighted to share the latest windfall from my daughter Myra, who has become fascinated with the mushroom dyes and crocheting hats over the last few years. She just recently posted this excerpt from her blog <http://hookedanddyed.wordpress.com/> “Hooked and Dyed”, and I was so pleased to read and share (with Myra’s permission) this fresh, hands-on approach with you all. Miriam would be/is pleased too, I’m sure! Back in 1978, I was working on illustrating Miriam Rice’s book *Mushrooms for Color* when Myra was born, and Miriam commented that all of my mushroom drawings suddenly had baby mushrooms next to them... At 6 mos. Myra accompanied Miriam and me up to Dave and Pam Largent’s home, (Mad River Press in Eureka) where the manuscript and illustrations were laid out on the dining room table, and their daughter Linnaea patiently babysat Myra for us. So the nascent spores have been germinating from the beginning! Last month I wrote about *Pisolithus tinctorius* from a seasoned dyers perspective – “from the bridge”, so to speak, and now here it is from a beginner’s view “down on the deck” – Dorothy Beebee

Myra Beebee ©2012

It’s my children’s fault. Before kids, I had mastered laying on the couch to a science; I excelled at lounging. Then I had my daughter. And two years later – surprise – twin boys! For almost a year, I was a stay-at-home mom to three children under the age of two. For almost a year, I had three children in diapers. I learned very quickly how to split my focus three ways, to get as much done in my free time as possible. (Honestly, a lot of my free time was me slumped into a chair staring at the wall from exhaustion.) I learned to multitask. And now I’m addicted.

Those sleep deprived, heaped in diapers days are long gone. My kids are now all in school, and I blissfully sleep through the night. However, lounging still isn’t an option. When I’m not rushing the kids to and from school, gymnastics, or play dates, I’m a college student. When they go to bed at night, if I’m not studying, I’m hopefully crocheting. And now once a week while the kids are at school, I go to my Mom’s house to dye wool with wild mushrooms.

My dog Marlowe and I take our morning walk along a seasonal creek in my neighborhood. It’s a favorite place for dog walkers, and sadly many of them don’t clean up after their pets. Why bring this up? Keep in mind that the sides of the dirt path are littered with piles of decomposing dog poop, and then you’ll get an idea of how absurd it was when this particular pile of brown stopped me in my tracks.

Yes, I actually touched this with my bare hands. Believe it or not, this is not a questionable mound of excrement – this is a dye mushroom named *Pisolithus tinctorius*, and it’s one of my favorites.

Some mushrooms will surprise you with vibrant pigment, like red or purple, hiding within its brown or yellow exterior. *Pisolithus* will not. It makes – brown. But those mushrooms that potentially produce a vibrant rainbow have a small amount of pigment per mushroom; you need a lot of them to dye enough yarn to crochet into a hat or scarf, for example.

This ugly little *Pisolithus* packs a lot of pigment within its brown spores; this mushroom can dye a lot of yarn; this guy (and the two others I found the same morning) are about to resupply my yarn



Photo credit: Myra Beebee

basket. Even though I was positive I had identified this mushroom correctly, there’s a simple test to prove it.

First step: pour hot water into a jar, insert the mushroom, and if the color changes – ta da! The next step is to add a yarn sample to see how the dye will affect wool, cotton, or silk.

Notice the brown spores (powder) on the top. That’s why it’s a good idea to do this dye outside.



Photo credit: Myra Beebee

I did not have a yarn sample, but I did have a large glass jar and a quest to capture the moment the pigment seeped out of the mushroom’s spores and into the hot water. I photographed the result. The water began to change instantly.

I haven’t dyed a new batch of yarn with my new mushrooms yet, and what shade of brown it will be is still a mystery. Until then, here’s a sampling from previous dye baths using *Pisolithus tinctorius*.



Photo credit: Myra Beebee

The First Time We Saw Mushrooms

Bob and Barbara Sommer

[*This is a guest article courtesy of Leon Shernoff's publication, Mushroom The Journal, online at <http://mushroomthejournal.com>*]

Thirty years ago, we were hiking in the woods and took shelter under a tree during a downpour. There was little to see as the rain continued, and we happened to look at the ground. Suddenly there was fungus (sound crescendo), all sizes, colors, and shapes, like none we had seen before. They were fruiting above ground, under the duff, on fallen logs, and on trees. Where had they been hiding all these years? We felt like the woman in Thornton Wilder's "Our Town", who returns after death to observe a day in her girlhood. She cannot bear to watch more than a few moments, and asks rhetorically, "Were we all that blind?"

We visited a local bookstore to purchase a field guide, which we hoped would identify the fungi we had seen. (Notice the naïve wording of the statement, the hope that a book would identify the fungi.) Knowing nothing about mushroom guides, we chose Lange and Hora's *A Guide to Mushrooms and Toadstools* for its realistic water color illustrations. We relied on this book for several months, with limited success. Eventually, we noticed in the fine print that the book was originally published in Denmark. It did not cover some varieties common in our area and many of the technical names differed from those used locally.

The next step was to attend a meeting of the nearest mycological society. By happy coincidence, this was the time of the annual fungus fair. We were amazed by the variety of mushrooms displayed. The docents at the tables were knowledgeable and helpful; the guru at the ID desk, no mere mortal. This must have been what a visit to the Delphic Oracle was like. Suplicants lined up at the temple door to present their meager offerings, and with a glance, the guru made an authoritative pronouncement, "You found this under oak (or manzanita or in a grassy area)," followed by an unintelligible Latin phrase. Truly we were blessed to be so close to such wisdom. The docents at the displays seemed six feet tall; the high priest at the ID table nine feet tall. In our ignorance, we were tiny mycena.

At the book section of the fungus fair, we obtained field guides more suited to our region, including "David"* and "Gary."* Both were current, well-written, comprehensive, and usable by beginners, although each had its strengths and limitations. "Gary" emphasized East Coast fungi while "David," especially in his first edition, focused on the West Coast.

"Gary" employed stilted popular names that no one seemed to want or care about; "David" coined humorous phrases or provided neologisms. "Gary" was more helpful for keying by shape, "David" by spore color. This made "Gary" more suited to Bob's match-the-picture strategy while "David" required step-by-step keying, for which only Barbara had the patience and temperament.

We left our first fungus fair with head spinning; so many genera, species, look alike; where to begin? We forayed, asked questions, listened, and read. We found that sketching helped us learn species names. Our image files expanded with each new fungus drawn, making it easier to identify new varieties.

We made mistakes – though obviously none deadly. We thought

we had discovered a new species, but it turned out to be a curled up banana slug. On the day before his wedding, we inadvertently caused gastric distress in our son by feeding him undercooked Chicken of the Woods. Another minor gastric incident arose from misidentifying *Agaricus xanthodermus*. Eaten raw in a salad, it did not reveal its telltale yellow stain. Dyer's polypore (*Phaeolus schweinitzii*) and honey mushroom (*Armillaria mellea*) take on a variety of hues, depending on maturity and environment. We have rediscovered and re-identified them many, many times. Barbara wept openly when a ranger made her dump a dozen carefully wrapped specimens collected over a period of hours spent scrambling steep slopes through poison oak.

Fast Forward to 2003

Our library of mushroom books and periodicals has expanded to include field guides from distant places where we have forayed, classic reprints like McIlvaine and Krieger, coffee table books bought at moments of weakness, a few technical monographs beyond our ken, numerous cookbooks, and back issues of newsletters and magazines. We have a box of mushroom memorabilia containing a bumper sticker "We brake for fungi," mushroom-dyed wool strands, an artist's conk with names inscribed, assorted ceramic mushroom kitsch (mostly red or green replicas of *A. muscaria*) given to us by friends, a dried up ten-year old hygrophanous earthstar that still opens when immersed in water, and woolen gloves that smell like maple syrup, even though the candy caps were collected years ago.

We organized forays and served as fungus fair docents as repayment for the help given to us. The gurus we thought were so tall have shrunk in stature. They are no longer giants or gods, but mortals like ourselves.

We tried and failed to master microscopic ID. Our children's 120X microscope wasn't up to the task of differentiating spore characteristics. We continue to rely on macroscopic features. We have a lot of drawings classified as *Cortinarius* sp. and *Inocybe* sp.

Family and friends no longer regard our hobby with grave apprehension. Seeing that we are still alive and healthy after decades of mushrooming, and noting the frequent presence of forest mushrooms on restaurant menus, they concluded that we are neither suicidal or homicidal. We have introduced several friends and family members to the pleasures of foraging.

We keep "David" in the trunk and "Gary" at home for reference use. We never go anywhere (other than on airplanes) without a pocket knife and paper bag. We have lost the obsessive desire to add new varieties to a list or to identify every LBM. If a mushroom isn't edible or sketchable, we leave it alone. We are inured to debates about technical nomenclature. If the common name remains the same, we don't care if the white coats call it *Lepista nuda*, *Clitocybe nuda*, or *Tricholoma nudum*.

The glen where we first "saw" forest mushrooms is closed to public access. We continue to think of this magic place in reverential terms.

* "David" Arora and "Gary" Lincoff are the authors of the two most popular field guides in America: **Mushrooms Demystified** and the **Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms**.

Oregon Coast Report

Anna Moore

October has been the strangest month here on the Oregon Coast. For three months it was warm and dry, very dry, one for the record books. Finally the rains came, and now won't stop, well over 10 inches since Oct 15. Usually it takes about 10 days to 2 weeks after the first good rains for the boletes to pop up. I've been looking in all my good spots and thinking that around October 25th I might start to see a button. On Oct. 24 I found one perfect king bolete button and a number of Cortinarius species – so the season has started, finally. The golden chanterelles that were beginning to dry up and mold did finally start to grow as well as some lovely *Hydnum repandum*. There should be a decent show at Mt. Pisgah on Oct. 28th with more species showing up.



October 19 - 21 was the Yachats Village Mushroom Festival. I took as many species as I could find in my area (some over 2 weeks old in my refrigerator) but it was slim pickings for the display tables. My best specimens were a two headed cat (*Catathelasma ventricosum*) and a large *Sparassis crispa*.

The whole village gets involved – the local restaurants serve mushroom dishes and the stores sell all sorts of products like knives, truffle slicers, dried mushrooms, fresh mushrooms (mostly lobster mushrooms this year), medicinal powders, and yummy cordyceps and candy cap cookies.

Florence is mostly a town along the Siuslaw River on habitat formed by sand dunes, but Yachats is stretched out along the coastline on old



lava flows. At the festival, I led mushroom walks at the Gerdemann Gardens, an unusual botanical garden tucked into the hillside next to the Siuslaw National Forest. There was one large *Boletus edulis* found there and lots of small but interesting species were just starting to appear. My photos this month include a few from the gardens. Some of the experts giving talks and leading walks during the weekend were Dr. Matt Trappe, Dr. Steven Carpenter, Dr. Nancy Weber, Dr. Dan Luoma and Dr. Charles LeFevre – most of them were from Oregon State University in Corvallis.

The Cascade Mycological Society had a 2 day foray at Honeyman State Park with Steve Trudell, co-author of *Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest*. We collected for the upcoming show at Mt. Pisgah and did find a lot more species than a week before. The club members stayed in Yurts and we were allowed to use the Nature Center to lay out our treasures. I saw a few people find young *Boletus edulis* buttons but did not see any in the specimens!

Happy hunting now that the rains have come to CA and I hope there is more to report from Oregon for December!



SOMA CAMP IS COMING!!! REGISTER BEFORE IT SELLS OUT!!!

It's not too soon to mark your calendar for 2013 SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp, held from Saturday January 19th to Monday January 21st. This year, you can expect another great camp with changes that might make more aspects of camp accessible to you. Mushroom Camp offers many activity options over the three-day weekend, with new offerings every year. For 2013, the new "track" approach to scheduling will give campers the option to focus on areas of special interest if they wish. Tracks will include beginning identification & collection; fiber arts; cultivation; mushrooms in cooking; medicinal use of mushrooms; and current technologies in ID & classification. All activities are open to all campers, though some class sizes are limited, and some may require pre-registration (in fiber arts, and in some cultivation and cooking courses). See the SOMA website for a tentative camp schedule.

Register now at <http://www.somamushrooms.org/camp/>

Mexican Mushroom Mysteries

Gundi Jeffrey

I held my breath as I watched my husband Erik climbing a difficult, slippery slope in the Veracruz/Puebla mountain area of Teziutlan, known for its prolific production of wild mushrooms. “I know I saw something on the top of this little cliff,” he mumbled, and then I heard a shout of delight. “I did see something, Look...” as he came sliding down the slope, cradling a small, fragile black mushroom in his hand. “I’ve never seen anything like this before.”

Just then, we heard a whoop not too far off. “Wait for me – I’ve found a whole lot of *Agaricus augustus*.” So had, it turned out, many others in our group. Dinner would be a feast tonight. This not very common mushroom, known as “The Prince,” smells of almonds and is prized for its delicate, mouth watering taste.

Our little group was rooting around the jungles and forests of the Mexican state of Veracruz, looking for wild mushrooms, both for culinary and scientific purposes. And three days into a week-long tour, we had already satisfied both purposes.

Together with Mexico’s top mycologists Erik and I – ex-Torontonians now living in central Mexico – lead mushroom expeditions into various fungi-rich areas of the country. We do it for fun and a little bit of profit, our participants – keen mushroom hunters all – learn a lot about the ecosystems, mushrooms and scientific knowledge of an exotic foreign place and the Mexican mycologists believe that, with so many people out in the woods, new discoveries will be made. We all seem to meet those goals every year, at least to some extent. This year, we hoped that Erik’s mushroom was going to be the prize of the excursion, perhaps even to be named after him.

The Veracruz tour is one of our favourite excursions, both for the variety of ecosystems we get to visit – from ocean-side jungles to high-altitude coniferous forests – and the splendid sight-seeing opportunities the state offers. And then there is Veracruz’s fabulous seafood cuisine.

We had begun the tour in the vibrant sea-side port of Veracruz, where we welcomed our group on the Hotel Colonial’s patio overlooking the city’s lively main square. The sounds of marimba bands, mariachis and soulful ranchero music soared in the background while we acquainted our participants – who came from Ontario as well as various states in the US – with the activities in store for them. We also introduced them to our technical leader, Dr. Gaston Guzman, affectionately known as the Father of Mycology in Mexico. He wrote

the first mushroom book in the country (followed by several more over the years) and then went on to become the world’s best-known expert on psilocybes, the hallucinogenic mushrooms so beloved by hippies and other mind trippers. Now a semi-retired professor at the Ecological Institute of Xalapa, Veracruz, he had brought with him his charming assistant, Etelevina Gandara, a 24-year-old student who already knew more about mushrooms than our entire group combined.

The next morning, our bus headed about 65 kilometres up the coast, to a beautiful bay and lagoon where the Ecological Institute of Xalapa had a forest station. This is where the institute’s mycologists and biologists study their jungle flora. An interesting site containing both humid jungle and arid sand dunes, it is home to wildly diverse plants and mushrooms. As we entered the jungle path, we saw tree trunks and branches covered with delicate, white mushrooms, almost transparent in the filtered sunlight. It turned out they were two varieties of pleurotus, both wild cousins of the oyster mushroom we can buy in grocery stores. And they were not only plentiful, but also edible.

Most of the mushrooms we saw on our jungle trek were very small, exotic looking specimens. Among them were fragile mycenae, psathyrellas and marasmius, a tiny, stalked puffball no bigger than a pin found in the sand dunes, various types of woody polypores attached to trees, a few white poisonous amanitas and many more. We were awed by the jungle foliage – massive strangler figs with roots devouring the land around them, climbing vines of all sorts, with leaves like huge elephant ears, and clumps of colourful wildflowers.

After about two hours, we broke through the jungle cover to find ourselves on a beach, blue ocean receding for miles, warm white sand under our feet. We trekked back to station headquarters and checked our finds. Everyone had full baskets ready to be inspected later in the day.

After a leisurely lunch at a tranquil restaurant off the highway, we were on our way again. Soon, our bus climbed into the hills – I had promised everyone a big surprise. We already had had one unexpected pleasure. It seemed that all of Veracruz state was inundated by a migration of large, lemon-yellow butterflies. We were constantly surrounded by clouds of them, even as we wound our way up the steep and narrow road to Quiahuiztlan, a small but fascinating archaeological site. This used to be a cemetery for a group

Continued next page

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/>

SOMA September and October Foray Report

Rachel Zierdt

Yes, the September foray was dry. Yes, there were few mushrooms. Yes, we had fun, anyway. SOMA's first foray of the season had about 20 attendees who enjoyed the opportunity to walk through the woods on an absolutely beautiful Saturday.

There were some newcomers to mushrooming and some long time club members. I think the furthest journey to the foray goes to a gentleman from Santa Cruz. This member of the Fungus Federation showed generosity by stating that he needed help when he uncovered a stash of smallish Chanterelles.

With the pickings of edibles very small, some of us felt very virtuous bringing some conks out of the forest using our prescribed 5 pounds per person. Dorothy Beebee was happy with the finds and plans on using them for papermaking at camp.

The potluck luncheon was greatly enjoyed by everyone. The cooks amazed us all with the variety and tastiness of all the dishes shared. Darwin acted as our ID person and identified the 20 or so different specimens we brought out of the forest.

Fungi displayed at the SOMA Foray
Salt Point SP October 20th 2012

Amanita constricta
Amanita gemmata group
Antrodia sp.
Cantharellus formosus
Chroogomphus vinicolor
Fomitopsis cajanderi
Fomitopsis pinicola
Fuligo septica
Gymnopilus sp.
Gymnopilus ventricosus
Hypholoma fasciculare
Inonotus sp.
Leucopaxillus gentianeus (from home)
Phaeolus schweinitzii
Pleurotus ostreatus
Pluteus pellitus
polypore on Madrone
Ramaria sp.
Russula olivacea
Scleroderma sp.

Mexican continued from page 6

of Totonac Indians who made their home in the region. Overlooking miles and miles of azure ocean, the site is studded with tiny buildings that appear to be temples but are actually *casas de muertos* – houses of the dead. Each guards a particular grave. And here, too, were thousands of butterflies streaming all around us.

Each day of our tour offered a different adventure. We went to El Tajin – one of the best known archaeological sites in the country – where we kept our eyes open for fungi while listening to our guide explain the uses of mushrooms in ancient times. Basically, people about to be sacrificed were given hallucinogenic mushrooms to put them into an otherworldly trance while their hearts were cut out. We followed this adventure with a lunch at Xanath, a privately owned ecological preserve, where indigenous Totonacs prepared a typical pre-hispanic meal, which included empanadas filled with tiny edible mushrooms (part of the oyster family) that grew on nearby trees.

We stayed at the ex-hacienda – now a quaint hotel surrounded by 80 acres of coffee and citrus plants – built as a weekend getaway by the first president of Mexico, Guadalupe Victoria. Although not much of the original structure remains, his *temezcal* (a type of steam bath) is still there and available for use. Although most of us were too tired, a few hardy souls had a local shaman lead them through the *temezcal* ritual after dinner. But, before that, we looked for fungi on the grounds of the hotel, working up quite a bit of heat in the process. We cooled down by taking some river rafts to a nearby waterfall hidden deep in a huge gorge.

Then we headed for the hills of Teziutlan, which is famous for the mushrooms to be found in its environs. Oddly enough, you have to head out through suburban building sites to get to where the mushrooms are. But once there, you're in deep, damp woods covered by a canopy of vines. As I mentioned earlier, we found a huge treasure trove of "the prince," which is one of the best edibles you can find. Almost everyone filled their baskets with this aromatic

'shroom, along with many other choice specimens. Dr. Guzman was beside himself when he saw Erik's find, saying he had never seen this fungus, obviously a *psilocybe*, before and that it might be a newly discovered species. How would *Psilocybe erikus* sound? Erik thought it would sound just fine.

We found more unusual mushrooms at our next hotel in the outskirts of the famous coffee town Coatepec, the exquisite ex-hacienda Zimpizahua, now also a hotel and working coffee plantation. What makes this hotel so special is that you are never far from water – fountains, streams, little waterfalls abound on the grounds. Banana trees were in flower, as were brilliant bougenvillias everywhere. And the butterflies had followed us, too.

We had chosen this hotel for its proximity to Xico, a quaint mountain town famous for its coffee, mole (a sauce made up of many spices, chiles, fruits and nuts) and waterfall. We sampled the mole (it was delicious) at a local restaurant and then continued the hunt for mushrooms at the huge waterfall, Texolo, which was featured in the Michael Douglas film *Romancing the Stone*. They were plentiful here, probably because of the constant moisture created by the falling waters. .

All too soon, it was time to say goodbye. To make up for the parting, we consoled ourselves with visions of a mushroom named after Erik. That, however, was not to be. After intensive study at the labs, Dr. Guzman determined that the mushroom had been recorded previously after all – just not in the state of Veracruz. It was a *Psilocybe subzapotecorum*, named after the people indigenous to the state of Oaxaca, where it was originally found. One of its effects is said to be delusions of grandeur.

Gundi is a dear friend of Mycochef Patrick Hamilton
Mex Tours website: <http://www.mexmush.com/>

SOMA

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Issue 25:3 NOVEMBER 2012

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 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 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

