



S O M M A

VOLUME 26 : 1

SEPTEMBER 2013

SPEAKER OF THE MONTH:



Christian Schwarz

At the Sonoma County Farm Bureau

970 Piner Road, Santa Rosa

The September SOMA meeting speaker will be Christian Schwarz, speaking on “Amateurs at the Helm - The unique role of citizen scientists in assembling the North American Mycoflora Project.” Schwarz asks, “What is the North American Mycoflora Project? Why is it important? What sort of work is involved? How can I help?” All these questions will be answered, and much more will be illustrated in this talk. Mushroom identifiers of all levels - especially amateurs - will be critical players in compiling a list of every species of macrofungus in America. It’s an exciting time

for mushroomers!, he says. Christian Schwarz has been seriously interested in fungi since age sixteen. He got his start in San Diego, but the long, dry summers didn’t suit his lifestyle, so in 2006 he emigrated to Santa Cruz, the land of milk (caps) and honey (mushrooms). He studied at UCSC, and spends much of his time collecting, photographing, and teaching about mushrooms. He is currently in the midst of coauthoring “Mushrooms of the Redwood Coast” - an illustrated field guide to western macrofungi with Noah Siegel. Mushrooms satisfy his curiosity with their seemingly endless forms; from the grotesque to the bizarre to the sublime. This has led him to search for mushrooms throughout the United States, as well as in Costa Rica, Mexico, and Europe.

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CALENDAR

September 19th ————— SOMA Meeting & Speaker

September 21st ————— SOMA Foray

October 17th —————BAMS General Meeting

October 24-27th —————NAMA Foray

December 6th & 7th —————MSSF Fungus Fair

January 18 & 19 —————SOMA Camp Auction & Raffle

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Oregon Lobsters, p 7. Credit: Anna Moore

EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING ID



After seeking medical attention, contact Darwin 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

Welcome all members to the 2013/2014 Northern California wild mushroom collection season. We are expecting a banner year for edibles and fungi of interest through the winter of 2014 and decreasing in the spring. The weather forecast is for ample rainfall to ensure an abundant and long fruiting season. We will hold them to it this year.

I would like to welcome Charles Thurston to the Newsletter. He accepted the editor position this spring with much encouragement and relief. Charles has extensive experience with the written word and we feel fortunate he has come on board. Many thanks to Ben Garland and Tom Cruckshank for their efforts to ease the transition and spending time with Charles to help prepare him for the tasks at hand.

Another change for SOMA is the graduation of Aaron Miller from Healdsburg High School. Aaron has led many, many forays and as many of you know, very successful forays to collect edible mushrooms. He has matriculated at the University of California at Berkeley.

The Board will propose a change in the SOMA By-Laws at the September Farm Bureau meeting. This is the wording of an addition:

“The Board of Directors, Executive Committee, standing committees, special committees, sub-committees of the Board of Directors are authorized to meet by electronic communication media so long as all members may participate.”

Over the last 7 or so years meetings were postponed or delayed because a quorum could not attend on a particular night. Schedules were changed and some Board members used their weekends to ensure club business was carried out in a timely manner. The Board felt the ability to use these techniques would add some flexibility to the demands placed on people's time. It would also increase the number of people who could participate on the Board. The use of electronic means to meet, introduce motions, discuss motions and vote will be a change for the group. But with some practice we think we can manage the new forum and ensure SOMA remains in compliance with our By-Laws and expectations of the membership. If you have questions or any suggestions, please attend the September meeting or write to me on the club website.

The SOMA Camp 2014 committee planning met over the summer and sketched out the basic structure for camp while seeking presenters and speakers. The details will be released on the web-site and in the October newsletter.

The list of Thursday night speakers for season 2013/2014 is complete and will be published next month. Because four graduate scholarships were awarded, the list was finished much earlier this year. It will be a pleasure to hear from each of award recipients. In November, Roo Vandegrift, from the University of Oregon, will speak about his thesis and the results of his research from this summer.

We will apply for a Special Event permit at Salt Point State Park and attempt to continue to meet at Woodside Campground and collect mushrooms on the third Saturday of each month. The mushroom collection permit system discussed the last two years is still on the stove and has been redefined to allow SOMA to ally with the Fort Ross Conservancy. The FRC is non-profit group that oversees and operates the State Park at Fort Ross. After completing a “Memorandum of Understanding” and receiving approval from the FRC Board, the State Park System and SOMA Board, the details of the permit system, i.e. how to obtain one, what to pay, will be published.

Continued at bottom of next page...

How Are a Fisherman and a Mushroom Forager Alike?

By Rachel Zierdt

How are a fisherman and a mushroom forager alike? They might not like sharing their secrets.

This wasn't the case with Dick Perrone. Having won a silent auction item at SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp, my husband Gene and I rose at 5 AM one May morning to collect our prize, a fishing trip with Dick at Lake Sonoma. We all realize how dry it has been so who would have expected that the date we chose would be the only day in four months that it rained?

Undaunted, we climbed into his aluminum fishing boat and prepared to listen to our teacher's advice on how best to catch a crappie or bass in this lake. Dick was a patient instructor, handing me and Gene each a pole and telling us to hang the line overboard. He then slowly trolled the shoreline, motoring close to the sides of the lake explaining that fish typically are in shallow water... (Secret #1)

Being a forager, I watched the landscape slowly scroll by looking at the hills surrounding the lake thinking that mushroom habitat looked likely (shows you where my mind is). In this method, Gene and I managed to snag about six fish that we kept. A few were too small and got thrown back.

Dick used special lures which he said were about 50 years old. He bought 1000 of them for three cents a piece back in the day and is still using them today. Amazing...(Secret #2)

Now, don't ask me about his special spot (Secret #3), because I have been sworn to secrecy, but we did go over to it and managed to catch a few bass since our trolling of the shoreline wasn't netting enough bites.

Everyone who knows me understands that I have a low tolerance for discomfort, so when I found myself soaked through to my underwear after three hours of on again, off again, rain I called a halt to the trip. The two men would be too macho to ever do that.

After we took the boat out of the water, we found a sheltered picnic area where Dick fileted and cooked the bass (two types) and crappies that we caught. Delicious.....

Yesterday, Gene and I tried our hand at fishing solo. Unfortunately, even with using Dick's secrets, we only snagged two small fish that we threw back...so there must be something special that maybe even Dick didn't share with us.....it will be up to us to develop our own secret lores, spots, and times....shhhh, not much different than mushroom hunting.

SOMA CAMP DONATION REQUEST

In search of items for our silent auction ...last year this event netted over \$1600 for scholarships...let's aim higher this year...

Ideas for silent auction: fishing trip, wine tastings, truffles, dried mushrooms, bottles of wine, artwork, home-made knitted items, garden items, tickets to shows, gift certificates to spas (items should be worth \$25 or more). If you are soliciting any items from merchants etc. we are happy to provide them with a letter to acknowledge their donation.

RAFFLE DONATION REQUEST

Another fundraiser is planned for scholarships which netted over \$1,000 in the past. I am looking for straw baskets to place items in and smaller items (maybe kitchy mushroom themed)this year we will doing baskets in themes...Some examples might be....I am blue, My kitchen really needs this, Made in China, Grandkids coming... etc..I hope to have 50 baskets that people can try their luck at in the raffle so you can see almost anything will work.

Please advise if you can donate. Rachel; rzierdt@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S LETTER continued...

The September foray will be more about "pick-up, clean-up" activity as in the past. We have safety vests, heavy duty trash bags and plastic gloves if you would like to use them. We will assemble at the Woodside parking lot, talk a bit about the day's activities and anything else you would like to discuss. I look forward to seeing you there.

Best regards,
Jim Wheeler



Chinese mushroom

Credit: Taylor Lockwood

THE OLD MUSHROOMER

by Patrick Hamilton

Well I finally figured out how to look in the last place first so as not have to say to myself, “How come you didn’t look there first?” Now that wasn’t an easy thing to do--took some real hard thinking--but once you get how to do that everything becomes more clear. Stuff like the meaning of life or what’s on the other side of the Universe and even why do mushrooms fruit when they want to and not when we want them to sort of things.

I was thinking about getting a brain prosthesis, a sort of crutch to help my cranium hobble on through the days I’ve left to explore the woods, each time almost like a puppy dog just learning life, but they don’t really make them. They can get liver and other organs transplanted, arms reattached, skin grafts done, eye balls fixed and false teeth implanted but they don’t do such friggin’ brain devices and many might need it.

But for those of you who might not, please read on. Those who do, please read on. Those of you stuck inbetween might re-consider just about everything.

Anyhows, Good Buddy and I are looking forward to yet another upcoming mushroom season as so should you be. Very soon the Sierra fall porcini will be fruiting and they’ve been my favorite boletes for the table forever. It could be the elevation of 6,000’ and above where they grow in our central Sierra that is so attractive; up there camping is real sweet and trout fishing might even be sweeter. Or maybe it is because it is still kind of an uncrowded venture. Not that many folks pursue those beauties and one can still pick a whole bunch if a patch is happened upon at just the right time. Good Buddy likes to brag about how he once picked 80 pounds of #1 buttons in less than two days, even had a Forestry Service employee helping him! Zounds!

These porcini are great raw in a Sierran salad, sliced very thin, tossed with real good olive oil, Meyer lemon squeeze, and Maldon flaky sea salt, freshly ground pepper. Yumbos.

Another fun thing to do with ‘em is grill over your camp fire (bring an old refrigerator shelf) until a tad crispy and cooked through (sliced 1/4” thick is good here) and set aside while you grill your butterflied trout. Meanwhile, on your camp stove, sauté up some shallots and garlic in butter, add a bit of Pinot, reduce, add heavy cream, reduce, and then plate the porcini kind of laid out like locomotive wheels (sort of), put the trout atop and then sauce, S & P. Yumbos, redux.

Old Buddy Patrick just came back from Mexico where he’d been hunting hongos in Oaxaca with tales of Zapotec guides and fellow members of Mexican Mushrooms club. Much of what he said and found were reported on Yahoo Groups MushroomTalk and our own SOMA. Much of what he says must be taken with a grain of sand because he writes weird at times.

But what is not weird is this month’s recipe which he asked me to write for him. Think maybe he got into some of those famous Oaxacan mind-altering mushrooms?

So here goes:

Psilocybin Saute with Oaxacan Mole, *Ole!*

Oh just kidding. Yep. Instead, try this one adapted from Oaxacan chef buddy Susana Trilling who runs her famous “Seasons of the Heart” cooking school in Oaxaca and also makes the time to lead mushroom forays up into the sometimes “cloud forests” (10,000’ elevation!) of the Sierra Juarez above the Valley of Oaxaca. This recipe is involved, but so is life, Chapulines.



Mushroom Foray in Oaxaca

Source: Seasons of the Heart

THE OLD MUSHROOMER

Continued from previous page...

Mole Amarillo de Setas y Puerco

(Yellow Mole with Oyster Mushrooms and Pork)

Serving Size :12 Preparation Time: Two Hours

Amount & Ingredient	Preparation Method	Amount & Ingredient	Preparation Method
1 1/2 pounds pork (shank is good or shoulder)	cut 2" pieces	1 onion, white	
Salt and Mixed Mexican seasonings (your choice) for the stock plus onion, carrot, and garlic chunks		1 teaspoon Mexican oregano or marjoram	
2 pounds oyster mushrooms		1 teaspoon cumin seed	
1/2 onion, medium		2 tablespoon lard	
7 cloves garlic		2 chayotes	peeled and sliced into thick wedges
2 chiles anchos (in Mexican markets)	stems removed, seeded, deveined	5 carrots	peeled, slice thick lengthwise
7 chiles guajillos (Mexican markets)	stems removed, seeded, deveined	1/2 pound green beans	trimmed
5 tomatoes, ripe		6 ounces prepared masa	torn into large pieces
2 tomatillos	husked	3 Hierba Santa leaves (Mexican markets)	finely chopped
	continued.....	1/2 onion, medium	finely chopped
		chiles serranos or jalapenos to taste	finely chopped
		5 Mexican (Key) limes	cut in half

FOR THE PORK: In heavy pot combine 3 quarts water and Mexican stock ingredients (try oregano, marjoram, anise seed is good here but not really Mexican) and bring to a boil. Add meat, boil again. Skim off foam, toss.

Lower heat to simmer, cook, covered until tender--about 1 hr. Remove meat from pot and set aside.

Reduce stock by simmering uncovered for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, strain the stock, S & P. Reserve.

FOR THE MUSHROOMS: Boil 4 quarts water in a stockpot, add the mushrooms, onion, garlic, salt. Lower heat, simmer 1 1/2 hours. Strain. Set both aside.

FOR THE MOLE: In a medium size saucepan heat 2 quarts mushroom stock and pork stock combined.

Cook chayote, tomatoes, and tomatillos separately in another pot. Place each vegetable aside in a bowl.

Toast chiles on a comal or griddle until they blister and begin to give off a bit of smoke. Soak in water for 10 minutes. Remove and reserve the water

Toast the onion and garlic the same way as above, set aside. Tomatoes and tomatillos the same and when the skins begin to move away from the fruit, peel them and set aside.

Blend the chiles with their water, puree until smooth, strain. With the mushroom stock blend the vegetables (except for the chiles) and the oregano and cumin. After 2-3 minutes add enough mushroom stock to blend until smooth. Pass through a strainer, set aside.

In a heavy pot or cazuela heat the lard until smoky, add chile mixture and fry well, about 15 minutes over medium high. Add tomato and onion mixture and fry until bubbly.

Blend the masa with 2 cups mushroom stock until smooth. Add this to the pot used above and heat through. It will thicken, stir. Slowly add 4 cups pork stock. Salt to taste. Add mushrooms, cook 10 minutes more. Add the Hierba Santa leaves, continue to cook uncovered until nice and soupy. Add more pork stock if too thick.

Reheat the vegetables and pork in the reserved pork stock. Place pieces of pork and vegetables on each plate, cover with mole, serve with rice and tortillas. *Ole!*

All California Club Foray

The fifth biannual All California Club Foray (ACCF) will be held January 24-26, 2014 in Albion, CA. Chief mycologist, Dr. Terry Henkel, and two of his grad students from Humboldt State University will assist with taxonomy. This event includes catered meals, comfy lodging, and mushroom hunts in the bountiful Jackson Demonstration State Forest near Mendocino. This foray is open to any current member of a California mushroom club and NAMA members. Cost is \$175 per person and includes two nights lodging and all meals from Friday evening through Sunday breakfast. Pre-registration is required. Registration and detailed information can be found at: http://bayareamushrooms.org/forays/accf_2014.html

Contact David Rust, 510.468.5014

SOMA Financials Available

SOMA Treasurer Karen Kruppa advises that to comply with the SOMA Bylaws, the fiscal year financials have been posted SOMA website at the following link: <http://www.somamushrooms.org/about/>. User Name: member & Password: Pholiota (case sensitive).

Pavelek Scholarship Open

Applications are open until Oc. 31 for the 2013 Henry Pavelek Sr. Memorial Scholarship of \$1,500 from the North American Truffling Society. Henry Pavelek Sr. joined NATS in 1982 and later served as President. His energy and enthusiasm for truffles and truffling provided much of the driving force that established NATS as a sustainable organization. Applicants should be grad students or outstanding undergraduates researching physiology, taxonomy, phylogeny, ecology, animal interactions, commercial harvest, or culinary attributes and uses of hypogeous fungi. The recipient will be announced at the NATS Dec. 7 meeting and potluck in Corvallis. The application form can be accessed by clicking on its link at www.natruffling.org.

SOMA Scholarship Winners

by Rachel Zierdt

Many of you realize that one goal of SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp is to generate funds for scholarships. In the past 3 years SOMA has expanded our scholarship program from one that gave graduate level scholarships to an award system where we honor and recognize science achievement from kindergarten to grad school.

This year Jim Wheeler, Lee McCarthy-Smith and I judged two science fairs and presented 8 awards ranging from \$50 to \$150. We also received submissions of applications from graduate level students. Historically we have given a few \$1500 awards to grad students. This year, these wonderfully talented applicants merited four scholarships.

Arthur Grupe is a Master's candidate at Humboldt State University. He wishes to travel to Guyana to study several underdescribed Neotropical Basidiomycetes. Benjamin Waitman is a PhD candidate at University of California Davis. He is studying Nitrogen deposition to see how it might be affecting fungal diversity. He is concerned that this may ultimately affect phosphorous and water uptake by trees. Andrew (Roo) Vandergrifts attends the University of Oregon and is seeking a PhD. He will be studying the life cycle of endophytes (microscopic organisms). He plans to use his award to travel to Ecuador where he plans to apply his knowledge to aid humanity. He will also translate his dissertation into Spanish. Our final award winner is Sydney Glassman. She is studying at the University of California, Berkeley, where she is investigating the below the ground effects of Sudden Oak Death on fungal communities.

We are pleased to be able to assist these young scientists to further the study of fungal communities. It is hoped that many of these winners will be presenting in the upcoming year.

Thank you all who come to camp and help provide the funds for these winners.

2014 Calendars Are Available

Taylor Lockwood announces:

The new calendars are here! Special prices/page for Mailing list members, as before.

http://mushroom.pro/a_products/calendars/cal-2014/cal-2014.400.sp.php

Or write him at: Taylor F. Lockwood, 300 Pinecrest Road, Mount Dora, FL; 32757

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?

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

The Dog Days of Summer

By Mike McCurdy

The dog days of the central California summer are difficult to endure for a mushroomer. After the morel and spring king season are in the books, it feels natural to relax, put the dryers away, tend to the garden, and maybe slip over to the coast in hopes of finding a prince or two. Then as it gets into late July something starts to happen. I begin to get restless without realizing why. Obviously there has been enough time off, and its time to count the days till the next season begins.

This gap used to be interminable, since for me, the next season would be the fall coastal season. I heard tell of a late summer fall season in the Sierras, but was always too busy with work to avail myself of it. Last year I realized that I was not busy, and decided to make up for lost time. In late July I began making trips to elevation, at first mostly stumbling around without a clue, and finally pointed in the right direction by some kind hints (i.e. lodgepole pine, lodgepole pine, lodgepole pine) from summer Sierra veterans. It was extremely dry, dryer than dry, dusty, and with each footstep loud, crunchy sounds rang out, yet mushrooms found a way.

Boletus edulis var. *grandedulis* was the target, yet many times I came back with none. I began to realize that if this is the only goal, then save your gas money. However, there wasn't one trip where I didn't find something new, and often exciting like: rare and not so rare truffles, cool Trichs, interesting Amanitas including muscaria representing a full spectrum of color from yellow to red, a small fruiting of the Gypsy, Cortis that even Dimitar liked, lots of polypores, awful, but striking Sarcodons, tons of Neolentinus that come out when nothing else will, with tennis ball sized specimens perfect for throwing, enough *Russula* in quantity and variety to make you think you are at Salt Point in November, and every once in a while the target mushroom.

One day, after weeks of exploration, I woke up in a fog, laying in a mountain meadow with aspen leaves floating down from the sky, or lodgepole pine needles falling in my face, I forget. As I looked around something seemed to be out of place. A little tan cap was peeking out of the grass. Then another, and another. Soon my basket was full of perfect, rock-hard buttons. The target mushroom. I snipped a little piece of the cap, and chewed it up on the end of my tongue to experience the nuttiest, most wonderful flavor in the world.

However, when I began to trim the base of one of these perfect little buttons, it was obvious that we (humans) weren't the only ones interested in this mushroom. How some little buttons can be so full of fly larvae, defies belief. The full basket was part of the dream. The fly larvae were not. A much larger percentage of what appear to be perfect little buttons seem to be riddled with worms, than I am used to seeing with coastal boletes. I am told that it's not always this way, and hope to prove them right some day. In spite of the fly larvae's best efforts, there always seem to be enough for the frying pan.

The 2012 fall Sierra season did not evolve to match the stories I had heard. The rains came late. Hard freezes came early. The porcini season was done. Nevertheless, the 2013 season bodes well so far, with more of a normal storm pattern, albeit spotty. Who knows what will come of it? Fingers crossed for warm gentle rains, a late freeze, and dryers working madly.

At the time of this writing the Rim fire rages out of control, while the American fire seems to be contained. Death and destruction lay in their wake, having lost lots of forest life, and sacred, hallowed places, but also, as is nature's way, cleansing, and renewal will come. We mourn for what is lost, and look forward to next year's morel season.

The Oregon Coast Report

By Anna Moore

Hello again from Florence, OR and the amazing Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area. This will be my ninth fall season here and every year has been so different -- this one appears to be really interesting. Rain in August! That may mean an early start to the fall mushroom season on the coast. We've had lots of fog drip and misty mornings, but August 29th was the first rain.

I was out in the sand dunes in the pines during the last week in August and the matsutake were coming up everywhere. I've been picking lovely rainbow chanterelles for a month now - robust firm buttons with condensed flavor. And of course the usual huge summer flush of lobster mushrooms are coming up in orange glory. Slugs love them more than most people do, but lobster chips are a preparation to showcase the unique flavor and texture of this mushroom.

Russulas are abundant in the summer months - all colors; the first Amanitas are showing up; the Oregon Reishi buds are growing on tree stumps. Even the weird *gastroboletus* have appeared along the edges of trails and roadsides. Dye *hydrellums* showed up in June and continue to grow into lovely sculptures. Finally the huckleberries are ripening. The wild blueberries are a lovely blue but definitely not sweet yet, if ever. The cultivated blueberries ripened very early and are almost gone. There is always something to forage for in the vast stretches of woods, sand dunes and seashore.

SOMA

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Issue 26:1 SEPTEMBER 2013

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

