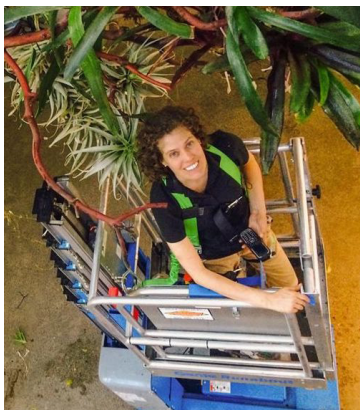




April 21
General Meeting Speaker



Kristen Natoli

“Leafcutter Ants at the California Academy of Sciences: Escapades in Interspecies Interactions”

As Assistant Curator at the California Academy of Sciences, Kristen Natoli is responsible for the management of all life in the academy’s ‘Rainforests of the World’ exhibit. Kristen has a background in horticulture and over twenty-five years of experience working with plants under glass. She has a passionate interest in the dynamic and complex interactions present in all living systems, stemming from her undergraduate work in plant ecology at Cornell University. Finally, Kristen provides primary care for the Leafcutter Ant exhibit at the Academy. Indeed, no one could pry these ladies and their favorite fungi from her care. They are her favorite living creatures in the entire museum.

My Most Recent Conk Quest

Wendy So (with David Arora)

Why would a mushroom enthusiast purposefully plan a trip to Edmonton in the winter? Because life is not complete until one ventures out on snowshoes, in subfreezing temperatures, in pursuit of stiff, frozen fruiting bodies. This past March, the Alberta Mycological Society hosted just such a conk quest among birch, spruce and aspen woods on private lands outside Breton for those who enjoy finding their mushroom sightings without foliage obstruction and brush. The local organizer, Martin Osis, hunted in style with black leather jacket and tobacco pipe, and just in case anybody doubted he was Canadian, without gloves. His wife Melanie was also stylin’ it with purple snowshoes and a matching down jacket.

Having never used snowshoes before, it took me about ten minutes to get them on, during which time someone in the group spotted a tinder conk (*Fomes fomentarius*) on a birch. Just a few minutes later foray leader Bill Richards spotted the first chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*) and every member accepted the challenge to find at least one on his or her own. A moment later I spotted my first, and was about to say it was much easier to find them than advertised,



Hunting for tinder conk with the Edmonton Mycological Society

PRESIDENT'S POST

Hello MSSF Members,

Hope you all are doing well as we officially enter our spring mushroom season. For those of you who are starting to get morels on the mind, be sure to read the announcement in this issue about some of our MSSF spring foray updates from our Past President Curt Haney. Remember, plans can change quickly with these forays given the weather and forest bureaucracies, so check announcements from our Yahoo group: mssf@yahoo.com. I also encourage you to list any scouting updates if you make it up to any of the burn zones over the next couple of months so we can all reap some success despite the limited rain supply. And of course, remember to be safe in the mountains this season.

I want to remind everyone that we have our Annual Meeting coming up on May 19th. The MSSF council has recently announced the nomination of incoming officers and councilors for the 2015-2016 term; they are listed in this issue of *Mycena News*. Elections will be by the majority vote of MSSF members present at the May General Meeting, provided that a quorum is present. I encourage all members to attend this important meeting and help support the future of the society. This will also be our last meeting before the summer hiatus. MSSF general meetings will resume in September at a new meeting location: the County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park.

On the meeting front, it was a pleasure having Michael Beug speak at our last meeting about his recent book about ascomycetes. I also want to thank Curt Haney, Kevin Sadlier, and Carol Reed for running our merchandise and used book sale before the meeting. It was such a success we've decided to do it once more at the April pre-meeting social hour. Bring some change and come away with some great MSSF stuff! You'll also come away with a better understanding of how smaller creatures interact with fungi when Kristen Natoli from the Cal Academy of Sciences speaks in April.

Once again, I had the ability to fill my backyard and work space with recycled mushroom blocks, thanks to the biannual Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip and Potluck organized by the Garrone family and MSSF Cultivation Chair Ken Litchfield. Big thanks to the Garrones and Ken for putting on another great event that may have broken the attendance record with well over 140 attendees. If you missed out, be sure to mark your calendars for this October, Halloween weekend, for the next farm visit.

Thanks again to all of you who help make the Society a great organization. Remember to share your love of the forests and mushrooms with a friend, and bring them to the next meeting if you can. We'd love to meet them!

See you in the burn forests,

- David

CULINARY CORNER

Patricia George

Will there be morels and our other spring or summer fungi this year? Like planting a garden, planning a mushroom foray is usually an act of faith. We can only plan wisely and be ready for disappointment. Even in years of more cooperative weather, it's possible to get skunked. Perhaps that is part of the romance of it all. A little disappointment never hurt anyone too terribly, and a nice day in the woods is its own reward for most foragers.

While there have been recent expeditions to see what is happening up in the Sierras, reports on mushroom fruiting activity are not yet available. However, I did visit the local grocer to check the availability of wild mushrooms.



It's morel season

I found only raggedy hedgehogs, black trumpets, sweet tooth and some decent yellow feet, all from Oregon. Nothing wild, but lots of nice cultivated species. No morels were on the shelves.

Last year's morel forays into the Yosemite area were an adventure to say the least. Permits were required but picking was verboten where morels were in the greatest abundance. Roads were patrolled, and pickers busted if they accidentally wandered into the restricted areas. If caught, the fine was ridiculously high, but more than a few risked it to gather incredible numbers of morels. As is normal for us, the campground where we stayed was the scene of great eating and sampling of home brews, singing, campfires and general good cheer. We had some rain and snow at higher levels but everyone was in good spirits. I still have a good amount of dried morels on my kitchen shelves that I gathered there, some surreptitiously.

I have included a morel recipe on page four. If you are using dried morels, pour boiling water over them and let them steep for twenty minutes, until they are softened. Shake them off and then rub them to make sure you have removed any grit that may have traveled home with them. Let the soaking liquid sit for several minutes so the grit falls to the bottom or pass the liquid through a coffee filter and then keep the liquid to use at another time. Most of the flavor from the dried morels ends up in the soaking liquid. Don't waste it! Dry the morels of excess moisture. Morels are incredibly versatile and especially good with chicken. Of course, if you do not have or wish to use morels in most recipes, you can substitute them with shiitake, preferably fresh.

Continued on page 4

when I was told it was growing on aspen, not birch, and was therefore a 'false chaga,' *Rhytidiella baranyayi*. When harvested with an axe, the exposed interior of the true chaga glittered like golden sand, whereas the false chaga was extremely difficult to remove, even with an axe, and inside looked like your typical wood, which it was.

It was quite enjoyable and beautiful: no wind, no clouds, just sunshine, snow, and the motionless trees. In two hours we were able to find at least eight different conks and clinkers. We also learned the different tracks of rabbit, coyote, deer, moose, and cougar. I kept some tinder conks as a memento and took them home with me. I learned they can be used as tinder, or burned and used as smudge or soaked in canola oil and used like a candle. The chaga we collected will be processed into a tincture and sold at the Mycological Society's events. I prophylaxed with some of the tincture because our hosts in Edmonton, who did not venture out with us, caught debilitating colds. I don't know of any placebo-controlled study of chaga effects but the tincture tasted pleasant and I didn't conk out or come down with anything.



After David Arora's talk to the Aboriginal Law Students' Association, we were given two different whitish conks that smelled strongly of anise long after they are picked. One was *Haploporus odoratus*, which was carved into necklace beads by northern indigenous peoples. It grows only on willow while the other fragrant species, *Trametes suaveolens*, favors birch. Both serve as fragrant reminders of my adventure.

I am grateful to the fine people of Edmonton and the Mycological Society for their friendliness and generosity. They even stayed up until midnight after the Society banquet and took me to Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park to see the aurora borealis light up the night sky. It was my first time, and I will always remember it!

NEW & USED MERCHANDISE SALE: RANDALL MUSEUM: April 21

The MSSF monthly general meeting location is moving to the Hall of Flowers starting in September 2015 due to the renovation of the Randall Museum. In preparation for the move, the MSSF will be holding a huge sale of new and used merchandise in order to reduce our moving and storage costs during the closure of the Randall Museum.

Prices on all merchandise will be drastically reduced in order to clear the shelves and save money on having to store excess merchandise for an extended period of time. We will be selling sweatshirts, tee-shirts, an assortment of mushroom books, as well as over 50 used books recently donated to the MSSF. The first 20 people to purchase an item will receive a free MSSF waterbottle!

The sale will start at 6:30PM and is open to all MSSF members in good standing. Members of the general public who attend will be allowed to purchase merchandise beginning at 7:00PM.

Mycena News



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Please e-mail photos, comments, corrections, and correspondence to mycenanews@mssf.org

To subscribe, renew, or make address changes, please contact Zach Mayes:
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Past issues of *Mycena News* can be read online at www.mssf.org

MSSF Officers 2014-2015

President: David Gardella
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VicePresident@MSSF.org

Secretary: Eric Multhaupt
Secretary@MSSF.org

Treasurer: Henry Shaw
Treasurer@MSSF.org

Potato and Morel Gratin

- 4 large Yukon gold potatoes, or 6-8 medium, peeled
- As many morels as you can part with, or fresh oyster mushrooms or shiitakes
- 2/3 cup finely chopped leek or shallot
- 6 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2/3 cup half and half or cream
- 1/3 cup grated Reggiano Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Chopped parsley for garnish

Clean and chop mushrooms, and butter the bottom of a medium-sized casserole dish. Using a very sharp knife or a mandoline for slicing, cover the bottom of the dish with a double layer of thin slices of potato. Sprinkle over it some of the onion and mushrooms. Add a pinch of salt and some grindings of pepper over all of it. Dot a few small bits of butter around on the top and drizzle with half and half or cream. Repeat the layers until you fill the casserole. Cover the top layer with the cheese and drizzle a bit more cream around and over the dish. Cover with aluminum foil and bake in a 400 degree oven for 25-30 minutes. Remove foil and check with a sharp knife. If it goes down to the bottom easily, the potatoes are done. Return to the oven for another 10-15 minutes, uncovered, to brown the top. Sprinkle with parsley.

Hospitality Committee Thanks David Campbell: March Meeting Celebrity Chef

The Hospitality Committee sends a shout-out to David Campbell for preparing a winning trifecta of appetizers for the March meeting. The first contender was a black trumpet terrine with a smooth texture and a true *Craterellus* flavor. David, ever generous in all matters mycological, passed on his terrine recipe for your future enjoyment: see below. The second contender was a scrumptious sauté of morels, with that distinctive smoky undertone that bespeaks morels picked from an entirely legal public land burn zone. You may have noted that there was not an iota of dirt, grit, or other foreign objects in the morel dish, which was attributable to David's time-tested and painstaking morel cleansing process. Email us to learn more. Finally, David lit it up with a cherry and candy cap crumble, with candy cap whipped cream topping. You may also have noticed that there was not an iota of crumble or cream left in the serving dishes due to the irresistible flavors of this dessert.

YOU TOO can be a guest chef at a hospitality function at some point of your choosing in the future. Just email one of your Hospitality co-chairs: Eric: mullew@comcast.net and George: gwillis2@mac.com to let us know of your interest.



Black Trumpet Terrine (Original Recipe courtesy of Ian Duncan)

- Sauté one cup chopped mushrooms and one small onion (chopped) in 3 Tbsp. butter or olive oil until soft.
- Add one cup of cream and cook until slightly thickened.
- Whirl in blender, and then add 2 eggs plus 2 yolks, and one tsp. of salt.
- Whirl again. Pour into butter-coated ramekins and bake at 350 degrees in a hot bath (bain marie) approx. 40 minutes, or until a knife comes out clean.

2015 Spring MSSF Foray Schedule

Curt Haney

It's Spring Foray time again, with all the high hopes, great expectations, and uncertainty that the season brings. Last spring we scheduled two weekend morel camping forays in the Sierra. The first occurred the 3rd weekend of April, and was a great success, even with the fact that the Rim Fire burn zone was closed, and that it snowed on us! The second foray was during the first weekend in May and was also productive, although not as good as the previous. This year's rainfall was as aberrational as last year's, but in a different way.

We are currently scheduling two weekend camping forays for April 17-19 and May 1-3. Both will be headquartered at The Pines NFS Campground near Groveland. Watch your e-mails and the MSSF Yahoo group for additional pop-up forays that may be announced during April or May if the conditions warrant them. These additional forays will most likely be organized near Pollock Pines off Hwy 50, close to where the King Fire occurred last year. Some will be led by MSSF leaders, while others will be led by a designated organizer who will educate and brief attendees on how to work in small groups and safely lead themselves in and out of the forest. Forays will take place in two locations:

Traditional Natural Morel and Spring King Forays will be conducted in locations that were not burned by the 2013 Rim Fire or 2014 King Fire. You all know how this works: in the Stanislaus National Forest, arrange for a free personal use permit for yourself and observe the five pound picking limit. In the El Dorado National Forest, purchase a personal use permit for \$20.00 for up to 40 pounds of mushrooms, which is good all year.

Post-Fire Forays into the Rim Fire Burn Zone will take place at the Pines Campground, within driving distance of the burn zone from the 2013 Rim Fire. While the year after a fire is when morels are most productive, they can also fruit two years after a fire. Public access to the Rim Fire burn zone is no longer closed to the public. A free personal use permit, obtainable from a Stanislaus National Forest Service office, is required within the burn zone.

Sign-Up: Log into the members only area at www.MSSF.org and register in the "Event Registration" section. This will be a first come, first served registration process limited to the first 100 MSSF registrants. For shorter notice 'pop-up' forays, just show up at the designated foray meet-up location announced.

Note: Due to the unpredictable nature of the weather, all scheduled and pop-up forays are subject to cancellation if mushrooms fail to fruit as predicted. All foray cancellations will be via MSSF e-mails and the Yahoo group.

US National Forest Service office locations, and mushroom collecting permit information:

Stanislaus National Forest:

SNF Supervisors Office, 19777 Greeley Rd. Sonora, CA (209) 532-3671

Mi-Wuk Ranger District, 24695 Hwy 108, Mi-Wuk Village, CA (209) 586-3234

Summit Ranger District, #1 Pincrest Lake Rd., Pincrest, CA (209) 965-3434

Calaveras Ranger District, 5519 Hwy 4, Hathaway Pines, CA (209) 795-1381

Groveland Ranger District, 24545 Hwy 120, Groveland, CA (209) 962-7825

(Free personal use permit, 5 pounds, cut mushrooms in half. Commercial permit \$4.00 per pound, minimum purchase of \$20.00, with up to a \$300.00 limit or 75 pounds total per person per year, do not have to cut mushrooms in half.)

El Dorado National Forest:

ENF Supervisors Office, 100 Forni Rd. Placerville, CA (530) 622-5061

Placerville Ranger District, 4260 Eight Mile Rd., Camino, CA (530) 644-2324

Pacific Ranger District, 7887 Highway 50, Pollock Pines, CA (530) 644-2349

Georgetown Ranger District, 7600 Wentworth Springs Rd., Georgetown, CA (530) 333-4312

Amador Ranger District, 26820 Silver Dr., Pioneer, CA (209) 295-4251

(Personal use permit \$20.00 per person for up to 40 pounds, permits good all year, do not have to cut mushrooms in half. Commercial permits may be available at a higher cost, call the supervisors office for more information.)

Tahoe National Forest:

TNF Supervisors Office, 631 Coyote St., Nevada City, CA (530) 265-4531

America River Ranger District, 22830 Forest Hill Rd., Forest Hill, CA (530) 367-2224

Sierraville Ranger District, 317 South Lincoln St., Sierraville, CA (530) 944-3401 Truckee Ranger District, 10811 Stockrest Springs Rd.,

Truckee, CA (530) 587-3558 Yuba River Ranger District, 15924 Highway 49, Comptonville, CA (530) 288-3231 or (530) 478-6253

(Personal use permit \$20.00 for 5 pounds, pick which two dates you want to collect, cut mushrooms in half. Commercial permits may be not available.)

Mycological Society of San Francisco
c/o The Randall Museum
199 Museum Way
San Francisco, CA 94114



"A World of Wonder at Your Feet"

April 2015, vol. 66:08

MSSF Calendar April 2015

Monday, April 6, 7:00 p.m. - Culinary Group Dinner
Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Pk., 9th & Lincoln, S.F.
Pre-registration required for attendance.

Tuesday, April 14, 7:30 p.m. - Council Meeting
Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco.

Fri-Sun, April 17-19 - Spring Morel Foray
The Pines Campground, Groveland, CA
24545 Highway 120 Groveland, CA 95321

Tuesday, April 21, 7:00 p.m. - MSSF General Meeting
Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco.
6:30 p.m. - MSSF merchandise sale
7 p.m. - Mushroom identification and refreshments.
8 p.m. - Speaker: Kristen Natoli

Fri-Sun, May 1-3 - Spring Morel Foray
The Pines Campground, Groveland, CA
24545 Highway 120 Groveland, CA 95321

Check the MSSF online calendar at:
<http://www.mssf.org/calendar/index.php>
for full details, latest updates
and schedule changes.

MSSF Volunteers Needed

Join the Council leadership, learn the inner workings of the MSSF and help shape the future of the society. Do your part by contributing your time to a 100% volunteer organization!

To learn more about all council and committee positions, go to: www.mssf.org members-only area, file archives, council member position descriptions. Or email David Gardella: president@MSSF.org; 602-617-0150.

The MSSF council has nominated the following MSSF members as the incoming society officers for the 2015-2016 term:

President: Brennan Wenck
Vice President: Jackie Shay
Treasurer: Henry Shaw
Secretary: Eric Multhaup
Councilors: Julia Cabral (1 year term), Tyler Taunton and Liz Sandiford (2 year term)

The election of officers and councilors will take place at the Annual Meeting, to be conducted during the general meeting scheduled on May 19, 2015 at 8 p.m.

Submit to *Mycena News*! The submission deadline for the May 2015 issue is April 15th.
Send all articles, calendar items and other information to: mycenanews@mssf.org