
Mycena News

Mycological Society of San Francisco

November, 1999, vol 49:11

Elsewhere In This Issue...

President's Corner	2
Notes from the Road	2
Culinary Corner	3
Mendocino Foray Announcement	4
Holiday Dinner	5
Miriam Rice & Mushroom Dye Institute	6
Fungal Follies	7
Black Goo on Grapes	8

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Membership and Subscription Information

To join the MSSF and receive this newsletter, send a \$20 check, payable to MSSF (\$12 for seniors 65 and over and full time students), to MSSF, c/o Wade Leschyn, 1609 Valley View Ave, Belmont CA 94002. Please include some contact information such as home and/or work phone numbers and email addresses. New and renewal memberships will be current through December of 2000. To change your mailing address, please notify Wade. MSSF members may also join or renew membership in the North American Mycological Association at a reduced rate by including with their MSSF check a separate check for \$17 payable to NAMA. Send it to Wade at the same address. For further information email Wade at leschyn@rahul.net or call at 650.591.6616.

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The Earliest Days

Here's a clip that gives a little view into the early days of the MSSF. It was submitted by **Larry Stickney**. Thank you, Larry!

SAN FRANCISCO NEWS

Wednesday, February 15, 1950

MUSHROOM HUNT PLANNED

A mushroom hunt will be held in Golden Gate Park Sunday under The direction of Ralph Mayer, mycologist, starting at 9 a.m. from the front of Steinhart Aquarium. Mr. Mayer invited the public to participate and suggested those who do bring a basket, a small trowel, wax paper and a lunch.

It was with this modest notice that The nascent Mycological Society of S. F. was engendered. Park officials were on hand to deter Mr. Mayer by insisting that picking things in The Park was absolutely forbidden. Mr. Mayer, a six foot six inch cauliflower-eared wrestler, countered that from his reading of the park rules all edible fruit in the park was exempt from such bans and specifically so stated therein. He challenged the astounded bureaucrats to take him to court if they felt fungi were not fruit. The hunt went on. So successful was the experience for those came that The Society was well enough established by March 30th that another notice appeared in the same paper on March 30.

The San Francisco Mycological Society will hold a field trip for mushroom study in the Marin County Hills Sunday. The group, equipped with lunches and baskets, will meet at Fillmore and Chestnut Streets at 9 a.m.

It is not recorded just where this foray went, but such a foray probably could not be held there today. Those were the *good old days*.

Shortly thereafter but undated is a Baghdad-by-the-Bay column by Herb Caen mentioning the club's colorful first President, Sal

Billeci, in connection with his expectation of finding truffles in the park. Dr. Harkness of the Academy of Sciences named some Tubers from California in the late 19th Century.

Says Caen, *rootin' tootin'* Billeci is hoping to train other members of the Society in the art of smelling out truffles before the task is entrusted to dogs. To them, I say all hail, S. F. Mycological Society may your noses never lead you *astray*.

Call for Membership Renewals

I want to appeal for early renewals of membership. Membership normally runs out in December, but I welcome membership renewals now.

I'd really like to spend my Christmas with friends and family and out mushrooming, rather than processing more than half of the societies total membership renewals in one month. So please renew now. Note: check your address label to see when your membership is set to expire.

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Continued next column

Wade Leschyn

President's Corner

Recently there was a discussion on the MSSF e-mail alias regarding open access to information and charging fees for some of our educational activities. I consider the mission and purpose of the MSSF to be one of education and public service. We are a non-profit organization, and only charge for events and activities in order to cover costs and allow us to promote our educational activities. This includes paying for our yearly scholarship fund, the fair, printing of educational materials, covering the costs of speakers at our monthly meetings, etc... We don't exist to make a profit. Restricting any of our educational activities to members only would go against our primary reason for being. It would be inappropriate to charge for forays such as the Land's End walks or any of the camping forays. These forays exist because of the generous donation of numerous members. These forays are wonderful educational experiences and are the first contact and/or activity that many have with the MSSF.

It would also be inappropriate to restrict newsletter access on the net to members only. Again, as part of our educational mission, open access to information is part of what we are and do. There may be the fear that we will lose a significant number of members because there really is no incentive to become a member when our meetings, forays, and newsletter are all open and available to non-members. Except for the newsletter these have all been available in the past for free. So far we haven't seen a large decrease in membership and I expect that we won't. Our membership fees basically cover the costs of printing and mailing the newsletter. If someone is reading it for free and not joining we really aren't losing anything. In answer to the question "why join at all if most of the activities are free?" I think that the best answer is for the friendships and the camaraderie that are an integral part of the society. See you out in the woods.

— Mark Thomsen

Notes from the Road: MSSF Members Travel to Europe

Jack Aldridge and his wife Connie are travelling in the mushroom season in France and Italy. Here's their report, taken from an Internet café in Nice, France:

I have attended two mushroom shows, one in Paris (Mycological Society of France) and one in Nice (MS of Provence). Both nice, but not the equivalent of our wonderful MSSF shows! The French certainly seem to take lots of chances eating things we'd be very wary of, such as many of the Amanitas, Tricholomas, etc that have similar look alikes which are toxic or deadly. Of course, the French eat many things that we'd avoid in America!

In the hills of central France (Massif central, near Vichy France, in the Auvergne (sp?)) we were taken on a "walk" (actually, a 4 hour forced march) to check out and collect *Boletus edulus*, by a local mushroom expert. The collecting was "fair", due to not enough rain, and perhaps a bit early, according to Bernard. However, each of us half filled a nice basket with choice cepes, beautiful and only a couple were wormy. The forest was covered with many species, including either *Macrolepiota rachoides*, a variant thereof, or *Lepiota procera*, depending on who you believed or which expert you consulted. I think it was *rachoides*, as the *procera* type we found in Southern France seemed quite a bit different, taller, rough stipe, etc.

Zillions of small unidentified species, that Bernard would not even stop to examine, dismissing with a wave..."non comestible" (inedible), putting them in a disdainful category in the French mind, *bien sur!*

We now leave for Italy. Further reports as warranted.

— Jack Aldridge

Course on Edible and Medicinal Mushrooms by Mo-Mei Chen

Nov 13 -14, 1999

Taught by Mo-Mei Chen. Location: UC Berkeley

This special two day "hands on" mushroom workshop will introduce participants to the necessary skills, techniques, and equipment required to develop their own mushroom farm and produce an edible crop within a short time. Lecture topics will include: a discussion of mushrooms that occur in the San Francisco Bay Area, mushrooms that occur worldwide, new information on their many uses, nutritional and medicinal value, and the environmental conditions needed to grow them. In the laboratory portion of the course, strains of edible and medicinal fungi will be introduced. While working with your own culture, an overview of spawning and cultivation will be conducted.

On the second day of the course, participants will have the opportunity to visit mushroom farms and herbal stores in the Bay Area. During the field trip several techniques of preparation and cultivation of fungi will be further discussed including the environmental factors of light, temperature, humidity, and air exchange. In addition there will be demonstrations of the equipment needed for the production of fruiting mushrooms.

Lastly, participants will be given five culture strains that grow well in California. The cultures have been developed from worldwide collections. These strains include anti-cancer medicinal fungus *ling zhi*, wide-range temperature shitake, high-yield & short-growing-cycle oyster mushroom, American morel, and salad enoki.

Course fee \$200-220. For more information call Staci Markos 510.643.7008

Calendar continued from page 10,

Friday - Sunday, November 19-21: MSSF Mendocino Woodlands foray. The fee is \$80 per person for members \$90 per person for non members. This covers a rustic cabin with fire place, 5 meals and possibly some of the best mushrooming in hundreds of miles. Send checks to Norm Andresen at 16096 Selborne Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577. All checks should be made out to the MSSF. Cabins are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis (i.e., when payment is received). Close-in cabins go quickly, so reserve early! You can contact Norm at 510-278-8998 (call only before 8pm please) for more information, or email mandresen@home.com. See inside this newsletter for more details.

Friday - Sunday, November 26-28: David Arora's Thanksgiving Mushroom Foray. Join David Arora and friends for a weekend foray on the Mendocino Coast. \$150 per person. See last month's newsletter for full details, or contact Hilary Somers for reservations: 650.429.3875. Note: this foray is operated by David Arora, and is not sponsored by the MSSF.

Tuesday, November 30th: 4th Annual Mushroom and Wine dinner at Lalimes Restaurant in Berkeley. Blind tasting of 1995 vintage Burgundy's paired with a mushroom dinner. Call 510.527.9838 for reservations.

Tuesday, December 7: MSSF Christmas Dinner at the Snow Building at the Oakland Zoo. Dinner at 7p.m. \$30/members, \$35/non-members or at the door. Reservations to Zoe Caldwell, 3543 66th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94605, or 510.569.1554. Details inside this issue.

Friday, December 10: MSSF Scholarship application deadline. See inside this newsletter for details

Saturday - Monday, MLK Weekend, January 15-17, 2000: SOMA 2000 Winter Mushroom Camp. SOMA (the Sonoma County Mycological Association) is hosting its 3rd Annual SOMA Winter Mushroom Camp at Wellsprings, in Philo, Mendocino county. Details about exact cost to come in a future newsletter. Or contact Charmoon Richardson at 707.887.1888.

Monday, January 3: Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner For information or reservations, contact George Repinec at 415.731.5115 or Sherry Carvajal at 415.695.0466.

Sunday, January 16th: Chef's Foray. Tomales State Park. To volunteer call David Bartolotta at 415.621.3166. Keep an eye out for details in a future newsletter.

Friday - Sunday, April 28-30, 2000. MSSF 50th Anniversary Foray. Forays begin on Friday. Location to be determined. To volunteer contact Tom Sasaki at 415.776.0791.

Addition to MSSF Officer List

The List of Officers of the 1999-2000 Mycological Society of San Francisco (MSSF) was printed in last month's issue of the newsletter. Since then, we've had one new addition. **Margaret Grace** has volunteered to be the official MSSF insurance advisor. Thank you, Margaret!

Culinary Corner

We had an well-attended meeting and dinner on October 4th. The hors d'oeuvres were all excellent and too numerous to describe. We continued the dinner with a hearty Leek Soup by Lucia Paulazzo, followed by a fresh lettuce and roasted beet salad, created by Tom Sasaki. David Bartolotta produced a roasted Pork Loin with a fresh Porcini and Mustard sauce that was simply divine. It combined smoothly with Lisa Bauer's Braised Red Cabbage and Monique Carment's Red Potatoes with onions and champignons. A keg of Beck's OctoberFest beer brought in by Al Carvajal provided the refreshment and Bill Hellums supplied delicious rolls and fresh butter. The dinner was capped with Mary Ann Swazo's outstanding Apple Cake topped with whipped cream and coffee supplied by Inez and Carl Rhodin. All that was missing was the Cognac and Cuban Cigars! But then, we are a health conscientious group these days.

In November, the Culinary Group will have its monthly dinner and meeting on Monday, November 1st. The theme this month is "Neptune's Banquet." We want to explore edible mushrooms with "marine" common names, such as *Pleurotus ostreatus* (Oysters), *Hypomyces lactifluorum* (Lobster), *Russula xerampelina* (Shrimp Russula) and *Ramaria botrytis* (Coral). If the finicky "god of the rains" contributes its share, these mushrooms should be "in season" by the end of October. So, you go out and get them! Of course, we will be happy to partake on ANY good edible you find. The menu for this dinner will be:

Hors d'oeuvres

Chanterelle, Lobster & Oyster Mushroom Bisque

Salad

Fillets of Salmon with Wild Mushroom Ragout

Steamed New Potatoes

Green Beans with Porcini

Bread & butter

Mulled Wine

Dessert and Coffee

Reservations are a must. Please call George Repinec at 415.731.5115 or Sherry Carvajal at 415.695.0466 to reserve a spot. Bring your own dishes, silverware, preferred beverage, \$12.00 per person and, most important of all, an hors d'oeuvre to share.

Regards,

Alvaro Carvajal

Miriam Rice, Mushrooms for Color, Papermaking and the International Mushroom Dye Institute

In 1971, when artist/teacher Miriam C. Rice serendipitously plopped a piece of yarn into a pot of boiling mushrooms, a natural dye source was born. Miriam thought of colored inks for her wood block printing and, when word got around, local spinners, dyers and weavers thought of color for their yarns. Much experimentation, testing, and enthusiasm during the 70's produced a spectrum of colors, the first book ("Let's Try Mushrooms for Color"), and creations by textile artists that resulted in a traveling-exhibition sponsored by the Mendocino County Museum in Willits, California. In 1980, the second book, "Mushrooms For Color", (Mad River Press, 1980) was released and it continues to be the primer for mushroom dyers around the world.

In 1985, INTERNATIONAL MUSHROOM DYE INSTITUTE was established under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3) as a non-profit organization for educational purposes. IMDI is committed to encourage the use of fungal pigments; to further research on their extraction and employment on cultivation of especially desirable dye fungi; and to financially aid artists and researchers to participate in the international symposia and exhibitions.

IMDI continues to fulfill its mission by furthering laboratory research on mushroom dyes, pigments and papermaking; by supporting students, artisans and textile artists in their studies and projects; and spreading knowledge at international symposia, public fairs, exhibits and schools.

For more than 20 years, Miriam has been teaching workshops in mushroom dyeing, and more recently, papermaking at the Mendocino Art Center as well as participating in the annual San Francisco and Sonoma area mushroom fairs.

It is the IMDI's wish to carry the banner of Miriam's fungi/fiber pioneering efforts into the future and to formally organize for public access the vast collection of research papers, books, personal experiences and related literature to be housed at the Pacific Textile Arts Library in Fort Bragg, CA. For further information, please contact

IMDI, PO Box 703, Mendocino, CA 95460 (e-mail dye fungi@mcn.org)

By Nancy Denison, board member of IMDI and also a member of the Pacific Textile Arts Board (reprinted with permission from the Pacific Textile Arts Newsletter, Fall 1999)

Salt Point Foray

November 13 - 14

Dave Campbell's Salt Point Foray and pot luck will be one week later than originally planned to improve the mushrooming, but I have a hard time believing that he can improve the pot luck dinner again. This event often draws many of the best cooks in the MSSF who duel mushroom dishes like knights of old. The collecting can be spectacular. So bring a dish and a mushroom book to upper campground (Woodside). Be there Saturday at 9:00 am to meet up with the group, and later participate in the meal. The date is November 13 - 14. Call David for more info or questions: 415.457.7662.

SOMA Winter Camp

Registration is now open for the 3rd Annual SOMA Winter Mushroom Camp, to take place on MLK Weekend, January 15 - 17, 2000. The 3 day event, a benefit for SOMA, will again be held at Well-springs, in Philo, Mendocino county. The comfortable camp is situated near redwoods and wineries on the Navarro River, in the scenic Anderson valley. Numerous forays, workshops, classes, and evening slide show programs will take place, along with fantastic mushroom feasting. Confirmed events at this time include mushroom pigments & dyeing with Miriam Rice, home oyster mushroom cultivation with Tom Alexander, a Mykweb experience with Mike Wood, and mushroom paper making. Additional classes and workshops are in development. Chef Rick Sajbel will again be running the kitchen, creating our marvelous mushroom meals.

Cost for the 3 day weekend is \$135, which includes all meals, lodging, classes, forays, workshops, and fun. (And hopefully mushrooms to bring home!). Earlier registrants will get preference in cabin assignments. Attendance is limited.

To register for the SOMA Winter Mushroom Camp, please send a \$50 deposit (or entire fee), along with your name, phone numbers, mailing address, and e-mail, if available, to: SOMA Camp, PO Box 1088, Forestville, CA 95436. Please make checks to SOMA. Upon receipt of your registration, a confirmation will be sent. Directions and further information will be sent at a later date. If you have any questions, please contact Charmoon Richardson, the SOMA Camp Coordinator, at the following numbers, or write to the above address. We hope to see you there! Phone: 707.887.1888. e-mail: charmoon@trr.metro.net

**FAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
CONTACT MARK THOMSEN FOR
DETAILS AT 510.540.1288**

1999 MSSF Holiday Dinner

Tuesday, December 7

Mark your calendar for one of the society's most exuberant events. This year's Holiday Dinner will take place Tuesday, December 7, 7:00 p.m., at the Snow Building at the Oakland Zoo. Like most MSSF events, this dinner is a volunteer effort. And, volunteers are needed! To help out in food preparation, serving, or organizing or if you've got questions about the dinner, contact Sherry Carvajal at 415.695.0466. For reservations contact Zoe-Amy Caldwell at 510.569.1554 or send her the form below to 35433 66th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94605. Reservations must be received by December 1. Reservations are highly recommended. The cost of the dinner is \$30 for members and \$ 35 for non-members or at the door. Please make your check payable to MSSF.

Cut along the dotted lines and post this half on your fridge or other handy place!

Fill in this half and mail to Zoe-Amy Caldwell, 35433 66th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94605 with your check!

Yes, I'd like to attend the MSSF Holiday Dinner!

Names of attendees:

MSSF Member (\$30) Non-member (\$35)

MSSF Member (\$30) Non-member (\$35)

My daytime phone number is: _____

My personal check or money order for \$ _____ is enclosed!
total

I'd like to volunteer to help. Please contact me!

The MSSF Annual Mendocino Foray – November 19 - 21

You will no longer have to endure those feelings of envy that you may felt when others have regaled you with stories, of that mushroom fairyland, Jackson State Forest. Have you not wondered where the pros go to hunt mushrooms? Come and join our merry band on the Mendocino Foray.

This MSSF foray celebrates mushrooms in a both social and educational way. The setting is Jackson State Forest, which stretches from the sea to the mountains. JSF contains almost all the important mushroom trees: live oak, bishop pine, tan oak, Douglas fir, chinquapin, and more. The common mushrooms encountered include: king boletes, yellow, black and white Chanterellus, sprassus, shrimp Russulas, Honey mushrooms, yellow feet and many others. JSF can be Salt Point on steroids.

Unlike some commercial mushrooming experiences, we at this foray are guests of each other. The meals will be prepared by MSSF members; this, I believe, improves fellowship and encourages everyone to participate and feel involved. The member-lead field trips will go to many locations in Jackson state forest, including include Simpson lane, pigmy forest, mushroom corners, road 500, and others too numerous to mention.

The fee is \$80 per person for members, \$90 per person for non members. This covers a rustic cabin with fire place, 5 meals and possibly some of the best mushrooming in hundreds of miles. **Don't be left out! Sign up early.** Send checks to Norm Andresen at 16096 Selborne Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577. All checks should be made out to the MSSF. Cabins are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis (i.e., when payment is received). Close-in cabins go quickly, so reserve early! You can contact Norm at 510.278.8998 (call only before 8pm please) for more information, or email nandresen@home.com.

Fungus Fair News – Artists Welcome! I am planning to coordinate artists to show and sell their work at this year's fair. At this point I do not know how many artists will be able to be represented, but if anyone has a favorite artist whose work they might think would be well-received at the fair, please contact me. I'm reachable via email at irbrandt@pacbell.net. — *Irma Brandt*



by
Mike
Boom

Last Thursday evening I had the pleasure of attending a meeting of the San Francisco Naturalist Society at the Randall Museum. I was initially disappointed to discover that they aren't really a nudist organization (I'm always confusing naturists and naturalists), but perked to attention as speaker **Quinn**

McFrederick got into his topic "Insects: the Other Other White Meat." Quinn discussed examples of insect and arachnid cuisine around the world, handed around live specimens of grubs and water beetles for examination, then led us into a set of appetizers that included roast crickets with guacamole on taco chips followed by mealworm cookies. Yum!

As I drove home in a blissful daze, my brain percolated with thoughts of a new mushrooming hunting regime, a world where experienced insectimycophiles storm ahead to get those really wormy boletes, ignoring the pristine specimens as far too boring. Among those bubbling thoughts was a great recipe for porcini risotto that doesn't call for any rice at all—but let's not get into details right here. Instead, let's ask why I'm talking about insects in a mushroom column. The answer: it's too dry right now for fungi. But not so dry I won't blab about 'em anyway.

The Bay Area

I usually report on the different parts of the Bay Area, but because I've seen and heard of so little fungal activity here I'm going to put it all together into a single report. We've had dry weather, which isn't surprising for late September and October, our true summer even though it falls technically in fall.

In mid-September, **Bill Freedman** reported various polypores on the peninsula, always a staple you can count on in dry weather. In particular, **Todd Spanier** found a large *Inonotus dryadeus* (weeping conk) growing from the roots of an oak tree in Portola Park where it's been for the last three seasons. Bill also reports *Ganoderma applanatum* (the artist's conk) and tells us to be on the lookout for *Pisolithus tinctorius*, the dead man's foot—particularly appropriate if it sticks its ungainly mass above ground for Halloween.

In October, **Lisa Bauer** prowled through Marin county and found several very firm chanterelles (*Cantherellus cibarius*) in fog drip, presumably firm because they haven't had any opportunity to get soggy through the agency of rain. She also found numerous russulas of unknown species that resembled the white/black-staining characteristics of *Russula albonigra*. She capped it all off with the first *Amanita phalloides*—death cap—she's seen this season.

Also in Marin county, **Jeanne Campbell** reports fruitings of *Laetiporus sulfureus*, the sulfur shelf, on eucalyptus. And further north, in Mendocino county, **Paul Hannsbury** collected a 25 lb. specimen from a black oak that he innoculated with mycelium three years ago. We should all keep our eyes out for *Laetiporus* if we're so inclined. It's a

beautiful and tasty polypore that pops up very early in the season with only the slightest hint of moisture. Beware, however, that some sulfurshelfivores have gastric trouble after eating sulfur shelves growing on eucalyptus or sulfur shelves that haven't been well cooked.

As for the East Bay, I haven't received any reports and haven't seen anything personally—but then I've spent most of my mushroom time up in the Sierras.

Far-Flung Fungi

Peripatetic members of the MSSF have given me reports from trips they've taken to other parts of the U.S. **David and Jeanne Campbell** had a good time in September in the White Mountains of New Hampshire where they visited **Dulcie Hymen** and collected an impressive number of species not found or rare in California. Their lengthy species list included the edibles *Hericium americanum*, *Rozites caperata*, *Boletus edulis*, *Leccinum aurantiacum*, *L. astrospitatum*, and the incredibly delicious *Lepiota procera*.

New Mexico was another popular fungal destination as you read in last month's newsletter. **Lorraine and Bob Berry** add to the report: they found many small chanterelles and a couple of matsutake in northern New Mexico, then journeyed further north to Colorado, where they bagged about 40 lbs. of *Boletus edulis*. **Nancy Mirr**, president of the San Diego Mycological Society and an MSSF member as well, was at the New Mexico Mycological Society's August foray in the Jemez mountains, where they collected the edibles *Boletus barowsii*, *B. chrysenteron*, *B. edulis*, *Leccinum insigne* (the aspen leccinum), *Hypomyces lactifluorum* (the oyster mushroom), *Coprinus comatus*, *Sparassis crispa*, and *Cantherellus cibarius*. She reports that the New Mexico club has some very nice members, and this year's collecting was some of the best in memory. (She also says that you can sum up edible mushrooms in San Diego county with two names: *Lepista nuda* and *Helvella lacunosa*.)

Further afield, MSSF member **Marina Hsieh** has moved to the environs of Washington, D.C., where she's been out with the Mycological Association of Washington after late rains ended a drought and brought out fungi. She found black chanterelles, which are *Craterellus fallax* and *C. foetidus* there and have salmon-colored spores. Choice edibles are *Boletus separans*, *Hericium erinaceus*, and *Cantherellus xanthopus* (a "yellow-foot" chanterelle). Folks there were also quite excited to find *Laetiporus sulfureus*, *Pleurotus ostreatus* (oyster mushrooms), and *Lepista nuda* (blewits). I wish I had space to describe the rest of the species found. If you want the details, contact Marina at MHsieh@law.umaryland.edu.

Closer to home, along the north coast of California and in Oregon, news is grimmer: they're suffering a drought. **Connie Green** reports that profuse chanterelle buttons emerging in September have dried up and there's very little mushrooming going on in south and central Oregon. Northern Oregon and the Olympic peninsula are spitting out chanterelles (in Connie's charming turn of phrase), but in limited quantities along with small amounts of lobster mushrooms and matsutakes.

David Campbell, leading a late September foray in Oregon with

Continued next page

Follies, continued from previous page

Charmoon Richardson, knew some moist places to hunt. He reports this list of fungi collected:

Hydnum repandum, *H. scabrosum*, *Sarcodon imbricatum*, *Tricholoma magnivelare* (matsutake), *Albatrellus flettii*, *Cantharellus subalbidus* (white chanterelle), *Russula brevipes*, *R. xerampalina*, *Cantharellus formosus* (yellow chanterelle), *Polyozellus multiplex* (blue chanterelle), *Boletus mirabilis*, *B. edulis*, *B. erythropus*, *B. calopus*, *Chroogomphus vinicolor* (pine spike), *Coprinus comatus* (shaggy mane), *Amanita gemmata*, *A. pachycolea*, *A. franchetti*, *Catathelasma ventricosa*, *C. imperialis*, *Stropharia ambigua*, and various *Cortinarius* species.

Further south, Charmoon reports very dry weather and nothing of interest in Humboldt County. Weather reports there bear him out.

The Sierra Nevadas

The hot spot this time of year is often the Sierra Nevada mountains but, alas, it's literally too hot and dry this year for the most part. The thunderstorms that often bring lush fruitings of fungi have been very sparse. MSSF members such as **Fred and Barb Stevens**, **Debbie Viess** and **David Rust**, and **Larry Stickney** know the right moist places to prowl around, though, and came up with edibles such as *B. edulis*, *Pleurotus ostreatus*, and a *Laetiporus* or two. I myself had a good time collecting *B. edulis* in small numbers with my wife, **Lynn**, and **Connie Green** until we came across a Cyrillic newspaper in the woods and knew the jig was up.

The most fun (and fungal) trip for me this season was the MSSF foray at Yuba Pass. I'd like to tell you that we collected baskets of incredible edibles, but I won't lie—it was dry. It didn't matter, though. We found enough edibles to eat well in camp (*Russula xerampelina* tempura ala **Mike Wood** was my favorite), and we had a chance to concentrate on fungi we often overlook. We had at least four serious mushroom photographers on the foray (**Bolek Kuznik**, **Fred Stevens**, **Mike Wood**, and—occasionally serious—myself), so much of the foray was a bunch of fungirazzi flashing strobes at terrified mushrooms, promising to make them famous on Mike Wood's web site.

Dennis Desjardin's general mycology class was at the nearby San Francisco State field campus, and their collection added to our yielded quite a species list. I'll leave you with that list and the hope that we get rain—soon!

Albatrellus ellisii, *Albatrellus sp. flettii*, *Aleuria aurantia*, *Amanita gemmata*, *Amylocystis lapponica*, *Armillaria gallica*, *Bisporella citrina*, *Boletus calopus*, *Boletus haemitinus*, *Boletus zelleri*, *Calvatia subcretacea*, *Cantharellus subalbidus*, *Chlorociboria aeruginascens*, *Chroogomphus rutilans*, *Chroogomphus sp.*, *Chrysomphalina (Omphalina) luteicolor*, *Clavulina cinerea*, *Clitocybe clavipes*, *Coltricia perennis*, *Cortinarius alboviolaceus*, *Cortinarius spp.*, *Cryptoporus volvatus*, *Cryptoporus volvatus*, *Cystoderma fallax*, *Dacrymyces sp.*, *Dasyscyphus bicolor*, *Echinodontium tinctorium*, *Endotychum depressum*, *Fomitopsis pinicola*, *Fomitopsis pinicola*, *Galerina spp.*, *Gandoerma applanatum*, *Gandoerma oregonense*, *Ganoderma applanatum*, *Ganoderma tsugi*, *Gastroboletus turbinatus*, *Geopora cooperi*, *Geopyxis carbonaria*, *Godronia sp.*, *Gomphus bonarii*, *Gyromitra infula*, *Hebeloma spp.*, *Helvella lacunosa*, *Helvella leucomelaena*, *Heterobasidion annosum*, *Heterotextus alpinus*, *Hohenbuehelia petaloides*, *Hyaloscypha sp.*, *Hygrocybe conica*,

Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca, *Hygrophorus hypothejus*, *Hygrophorus purpurascens*, *Hypholoma capnoides*, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, *Hypsizygus tessellatus*, *Inocybe spp.*, *Laccaria laccata*, *Laccaria montana*, *Lachnellula arida*, *Lactarius deliciosus*, *Lactarius luculentus*, *Lactarius pallascens*, *Lactarius scrobiculatus*, *Leptoporus mollis*, *Lycoperdon perlatum*, *Macowanites sp.*, *Macrocystidia cucumis*, *Melanoleuca graminicola*, *Melanoleuca melaleuca*, *Mycena alkaliniiformis*, *Mycena amicta*, *Mycena citrinomarginata*, *Mycena galericulata*, *Mycena pura*, *Mycena sp.*, *Naucoria escharoides*, *Naucoria scolecina*, *Oligoporus leucospongia*, *Phaeolus schweinitzii*, *Phellinus sp.*, *Pholiota aurivella*, *Pholiota flammans*, *Pholiota flavida*, *Pluteus cervinus*, *Pluteus petasatus*, *Polyporus badius*, *Polyporus elegans*, *Polyporus melanopus*, *Polyporus sp.*, *Psilocybe montana*, *Pyrenogaster (Radiigera) atroleba*, *Ramaria formosa*, *Ramaria rasilispora*, *Ramaria spp.*, *Rhizopogon ellenae*, *Rhizopogon ochraceorubescens*, *Rhizopogon sp.*, *Rhodocollybia maculata*, *Rozites caperata*, *Russula adusta*, *Russula aff. cremicolor*, *Russula albonigra*, *Russula alutacea*, *Russula atrata*, *Russula brevipes*, *Russula brevipes var. brevipes*, *Russula brevipes var. acrior*, *Russula densifolia*, *Russula dissimulans*, *Russula murrillii*, *Russula mustelina*, *Russula mustelina*, *Russula semirubra*, *Russula simillima*, *Russula sp.*, *Russula stuntzii*, *Russula xerampelina*, *Sarcodon sp.*, *Scutellinia scutellata*, *Sedecula pulvinata*, *Stereum sp.*, *Strobilurus albidipilus*, *Suillus albidipes*, *Suillus brevipes*, *Suillus punctatipes*, *Suillus sibiricus*, *Suillus sp.*, *Suillus tomentosus*, *Suillus umbonatus*, *Thaxterogaster pingue*, *Thelephora terrestris*, *Trichaptum abietinum*, *Tricholoma atroviolaceum*, *Tricholoma portentosum*, *Tricholoma saponaceum*, *Tricholoma sp.*, *Tricholomopsis rutilans*, *Vesiculomyces citrinus*, *Xeromphalina caudicinalis*, *Xeromphalina kauffmanii*.

Good News from Salt Point

Last year the State Park staff was tentatively planning on starting to require the purchase of permits to collect mushrooms at Salt Point State Park. The latest news is that this plan has been dropped for now. Russian River District Chief Ranger Brian Hickey states that last season abuses of collecting privileges were down, with only two citations issued for mushroom collecting in the entire season. According to Hickey, a "tangible reason" would be needed to change the status quo at this time.

Let's encourage our membership, as well as the public at large, to avoid jeopardizing collecting privileges at Salt Point by remaining within the 5 pounds of mushrooms per person per day allowed by the park, and by refraining from collecting at Fort Ross and in Kruse Rhododendron Reserve where collecting isn't permitted.

— Mark Norton

David Arora's Thanksgiving Foray

Please see last month's newsletter for full details! To register or for more information, contact Hilary Somers at 650.813.9149, or hilary@hearne.com. Checks should be made out to David Arora and mailed to Hilary Somers, 4148 Briarwood Way, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

BLACK GOO MOLDS ALARM GROWERS ABOUT GRAPE VINE DECLINE

Two more fungal molds to disturb my breakfast hit the newspapers this morning, (San Francisco Chronicle, 10-13-99, Business Section, Peter Sinton). Called "The Black Goo Plague", it is spreading through the California wine country. The disease was first described in Australia in 1994 as black goo seeping out of the vascular cambial layers of the stem of the vine. Identified causative agents are three species of *Phaeoacremonium* and two of *Cylindrocarpon*, mold fungi universally found in soil, air and water growing peacefully as saprophytes or invasively as parasites. Doug Gubler, of UC Davis, recalls that the disease has been a minor problem for more than 60 years, has invaded about 1% of the state's grape vines and is increasing. It may be related to an older grape vine disease called "Esca", the cause of which was undetermined.

So far, its distribution has been spotty. Not every grape grower suffers from it. Most upsetting has been the recovery of these toxic molds from rootstock in commercial nurseries. 60 acres of the land used for research by world-famous University of California at Davis have been found to be similarly contaminated. This has led to an acrimonious, (not a fungus), feud between the growers and the suppliers. Growers blame nurseries for selling them contaminated rootstock; nurseries blame growers for not providing adequate care for their plants. Such saplings might be suffering from stress and have deficiencies in their immuno-suppressive systems. Legal suits are threatened. Disputes like this are not good for business.

These infections can be present for years, but recently, more and more growers are complaining that their plants are dying or failing to thrive. A cross-cut section through the stem reveals dark, gummy material exuding from the cambial, (vascular), layers of the vine, instead of the usual clear sap. Growth is stunted, grafts fail to heal, moist stem cankers persist, leaves turn yellow, and the stems become grooved. In a number of cases, the infections appeared in fresh rootstock planted to replace vines contaminated with *Phylloxera* root lice. Some owners tell of purchasing defective stock from as many as four nurseries. One company reports no trouble with their own cultivated rootstock and grafts.

Interest in this epidemic is worldwide. On October 1, 1999, an international conference on Black Goo and other invaders took place in Siena, Italy. 120 scientists from 20 wine-growing countries attended. Grape growers and wine makers are taking this problem very seriously. Two U.C. Davis post-doctorate investigators have been deployed to study the Vine Decline. The American Vineyard Foundation has allocated \$50,000 for this research.

Cylindrocarpon is a member of the genus *Nectria*, ascomycete molds usually producing bright orange, white or black bark eruptions called "sporodochia". Locally, we are familiar with attractive *Nectria cinnabarina*, the color of cinnabar, erupting from medium sized tree branches as multiple irregular lumps. Such invasions may be purely saprophytic, but the sexual phase of the organism can cause dieback on pear and apple trees.

So far, I have been unable to find web or other references with which

to review the nature and behavior of *Phaeoacremonium*.

Other grape vine enemies include: Powdery Mildew, (*Plasmopara viticola*), which threatened to destroy the French grape industry about 1870 until resistant rootstock from the USA was provided. This mold is nourished from inside the cells of grape leaves and is easily spotted as masses of powdery white fruiting bodies on the leaf surfaces. Bourdeaux Solution, which we use today as a fungicide for peaches and other plants, was first formulated to be sprayed onto grape leaves to keep *Plasmopara* under control and is used to this day in France; "Dead Arm" or "Eutypa dieback", (*Eutypa lata*), is caused by a fungus taking advantage of pruning wounds, blocking vascular channels, thus interfering with the plant's nutrition source; subspecies of *Botrytis cinerea* cause gray rot in peaches and strawberries, and are the source of much fungal damage, since they are capable of parasitizing a wide variety of plants. We have experienced the more pleasant effects from this fungus. *B. cinerea*, the "noble rot", when growing on overripe, moist grapes, is responsible for some of our most delicious wines, such as Chateau d'Yquem, late harvest (Spätlese) wines such as Eiswein and Sauternes.

Fungi are fickle and finicky. Sometimes they are terribly destructive and ruin our goodies; at other times they provide us with some of our finest and most nutritious foods and wines. Some forms are used for the biological control of other mold pathogens. Some are very selective in their choice of food; some are hoggish and make their meals from nearly anything. Some digest dead material; others invade living organisms; some make no such distinction. So it is a delight and not a displeasure to learn how they make their livings. And they have been novel reading experiences at breakfast time. (In the Eleven O'clock News on Channel 2, the day this was written, was an in depth review of the Black Goo problem. Let's hope it doesn't increase the price of fine wines.)

—Bill Freedman

Request for Dried Boletes

Dr. Andy Taylor writes us from Sweden: "We are carrying out a study in which we compare the DNA from the collections of European and American Boletes. At the moment we are interested in comparing *Boletus pulcherrimus* with *B. rubrosanguineus* and *B. satanas* from both sides of the great divide.

We are looking for dried material from *Boletus pulcherrimus* and *B. satanas*, and it is best dried in moving air at around 40 degrees centigrade - just normal practice for preparing herbarium material. If you can help I would be very happy to hear from you."

For more information or to donate dried material please contact Dr. Andy Taylor: Forest Mycology and Pathology, Box 7026 S-750 07 Uppsala, Sweden. Phone +46-18-672797 (direct) Fax +46-18-309245 email: Andy.Taylor@mykopat.slu.se

Miriam Rice & the International Mushroom Dye Institute

In 1971, when artist/teacher Miriam C. Rice serendipitously plopped a piece of yarn into a pot of boiling mushrooms, a natural dye source was born. Miriam thought of colored inks for her wood block printing and, when word got around, local spinners, dyers and weavers thought of color for their yarns. Much experimentation, testing, and enthusiasm during the 70's produced a spectrum of colors, the first book ("Let's Try Mushrooms for Color"), and creations by textile artists that resulted in a traveling-exhibition sponsored by the Mendocino County Museum in Willits, California. In 1980, the second book, "Mushrooms For Color", (Mad River Press, 1980) was released and it continues to be the primer for mushroom dyers around the world.

IN 1985, INTERNATIONAL MUSHROOM DYE INSTITUTE was established under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3) as a non-profit organization for educational purposes. IMDI is committed to encourage the use of fungal pigments; to further research on their extraction and employment on cultivation of especially desirable dye fungi; and to financially aid artists and researchers to participate in the international symposia and exhibitions.

IMDI continues to fulfill its mission by furthering laboratory research on mushroom dyes, pigments and papermaking; by supporting students, artisans and textile artists in their studies and projects; and spreading knowledge at international symposia, public fairs, exhibits and schools.

For more than 20 years, Miriam has been teaching workshops in mushroom dyeing, and more recently, papermaking at the Mendocino Art Center as well as participating in the annual San Francisco and Sonoma area mushroom fairs.

It is the IMDI's wish to carry the banner of Miriam's fungi/fiber pioneering efforts into the future and to formally organize for public access the vast collection of research papers, books, personal experiences and related literature to be housed at the Pacific Textile Arts Library in Fort Bragg, CA. For further information, please contact IMDI, PO Box 703, Mendocino, CA 95460. (e-mail diefungi@mcn.org)

By Nancy Denison, board member of IMDI and also a member of the Pacific Textile Arts Board (reprinted with permission from the Pacific Textile Arts Newsletter, Fall 1999)

MSSF Scholarship Fund Increased!

This year's scholarship fund has been increased from \$2100 to \$2550, thanks to a generous contribution from the Lark Creek Inn. Thank you! The deadline for scholarship applications is December 10, 1999. Send inquiries/materials to Robert Mackler, 157 Mesa Ct. Hercules CA 94547, or see Sept or Oct's Mycena News for more details.

Struck Dumb by a Bonanza of Boletes

or The 1st Anniversary of My First Time

It was just last year during the Arora Thanksgiving weekend in Mendocino. Mike Wood was leading a foray out to Jackson State Demonstration Forest on that Saturday morning. Seven vehicles grouped near Hwy. 1 while we waited for stragglers.

Remembering the interesting specimens that I'd found at just that spot the year before, I jumped out of the car for a quick look around. "Not too much close to the road," I thought, "but maybe a little farther in there! I see a nice Amanita muscaria!"

As I bent to pick it, I glanced up. And there before me was row after row of King Boletes, marching off into the pines. My jaw dropped along with the muscaria. I picked the closest bolete, then as many as would fill my arms. Still speechless, I turned back towards the cars. I couldn't speak, and I certainly couldn't gesture. And by God I couldn't pick up any more boletes!

In mute appeal I stumbled back towards the row of cars. I must have been eloquent in my silence because the next thing I knew car doors were opening and shutting all along the row, until every person had tumbled out in pursuit of their own bounty. Everyone had plucked at least one bolete before the landowner appeared and threatened to sic her dogs on them. Fortunately, she let them off with a warning and any boletes already in hand. Me, I was back at the car loading up my cooler.

Man, I love hunting mushrooms!

- Debbie Viess



Lark Creek Inn & LaLime's Mushroom Dinners

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, LaLime's in Berkeley and the Lark Creek Inn in Larkspur are hosting mushroom dinners in celebration of the MSSF's Fungus Fair. Chefs Bradley Ogden and Jeremy Sewall of the Lark Creek Inn will feature, on November 9, 10 and 11, some of the following dishes: *Chanterelle Cappuccino with Rosemary Foam, Grilled Turbot, Black Trumpets, Lentils and Lobster Broth, Pancetta Wrapped Rabbit Loin, Porcini and Truffle Risotto*

Chef Frances Wilson of LaLime's will hold his 4th annual mushroom dinner on November 30, 1999, and will feature: *Potato gnocchi with roasted golden chanterelles and a game jus, A salad of black trumpet mushrooms, prawns and watercress with truffle oil vinaigrette, Crispy duck confit served on a pumpkin polenta with grilled endive and a porcini sauce, Candy cap cheesecake with a pecan crust.*

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50 YEARS!

November, 1999 vol 49:11

Calendar

Monday, November 1: Culinary Group's "Neptune's Banquet"
Details inside. For information or reservations, contact George Repinec at 415.731.5115 or Sherry Carvajal at 415.695.0466.

Tuesday, November 2: Second MSSF Fungus Fair organizing meeting. 7pm Randall Museum. Contact Mark Thomsen if you have ideas or want to volunteer or want to help organize some part of the fair.

Sunday, November 7, 10am-4pm: Lichen Seminar at California Academy of Sciences. A seminar of talks, displays, slide show and field trip. To reserve a space contact Judy Robertson 707.584.8099 or Janet Doell 510.236.0489.

Tuesday - Thursday, November 9-11, 1999: Mushroom dinners at the Lark Creek Inn, in Larkspur. See inside this newsletter for details.

Saturday, November 13, 1999: Microscopy Workshop. The CALS Lichen Society has invited MSSF members to its next workshop on microscopes. The specific topic is "Picture-book Microscopic Images", and will focus on the making of mounts that are clear and useful. If possible, please confirm your attendance via email to mikkimc@juno.com. Location: 401 Hensal Hall, San Francisco State University

Saturday, November 13, 1999: W.A.M. and Herb School-sponsored

Myco-Activities Day. Workshops on mushroom cultivation, paper-making, dyeing, ID, cooking, and medicine making are sponsored by Wild About Mushrooms and the California School of Herbal Studies. Note: Neither of these organizations are affiliated with the MSSF. Cost: \$40 for workshops/classes, \$15 extra for dinner & slides. Location: Herb School, in Forestville, Sonoma County. Call 707.887.1888 for more information or reservations.

Saturday - Sunday, November 13-14: Salt Point Foray with David Campbell. No need to reserve, just show up! See inside this newsletter for more details.

Saturday - Sunday, November 13-14: Edible and Medicinal Mushrooms: Cultures and Techniques. By Mo-Mei Chen at UC Berkeley. See inside this newsletter for details.

Tuesday, November 16: MSSF Monthly General Meeting. To be held, as usual, at the Randall Junior Museum in San Francisco. Doors open at 7pm for mushroom identification, book sales, cultivation tables, and various displays.

continued on page 3

For the most current Calendar information, call the MSSF hotline at 415.759.0495 or check the MSSF web site at: <http://www.mssf.org>