

## Don't Forget The Fair!!!!

31st Annual MSSF Fungus Fair

Saturday and Sunday December 9-10

# Mycena News

Mycological Society of San Francisco

December 2000, vol 50:12

## Elsewhere In This Issue...

<i>The Presidential Preamble</i> .....	2
<i>Cultivation Corner</i> .....	6
<i>Culinary Corner</i> .....	5
<i>Mz. Myco-Manners</i> .....	9
<i>Calendar</i> .....	10

### Society Officers:

President: Terri Beauséjour (510) 278-5998  
 Vice Pres: David Rust (510) 430-9353  
 Secretary: Jeanne Campbell (415) 457-7662  
 Treasurer: Sherry Carvajol (415) 695-0466

### Select Committees:

Forays: Jim Miller (510) 530-5038  
 Book Sales: Norm Andresen (510) 278-8998  
 Membership: David Bartolotta (415) 621-3166

### Membership and Subscription Information

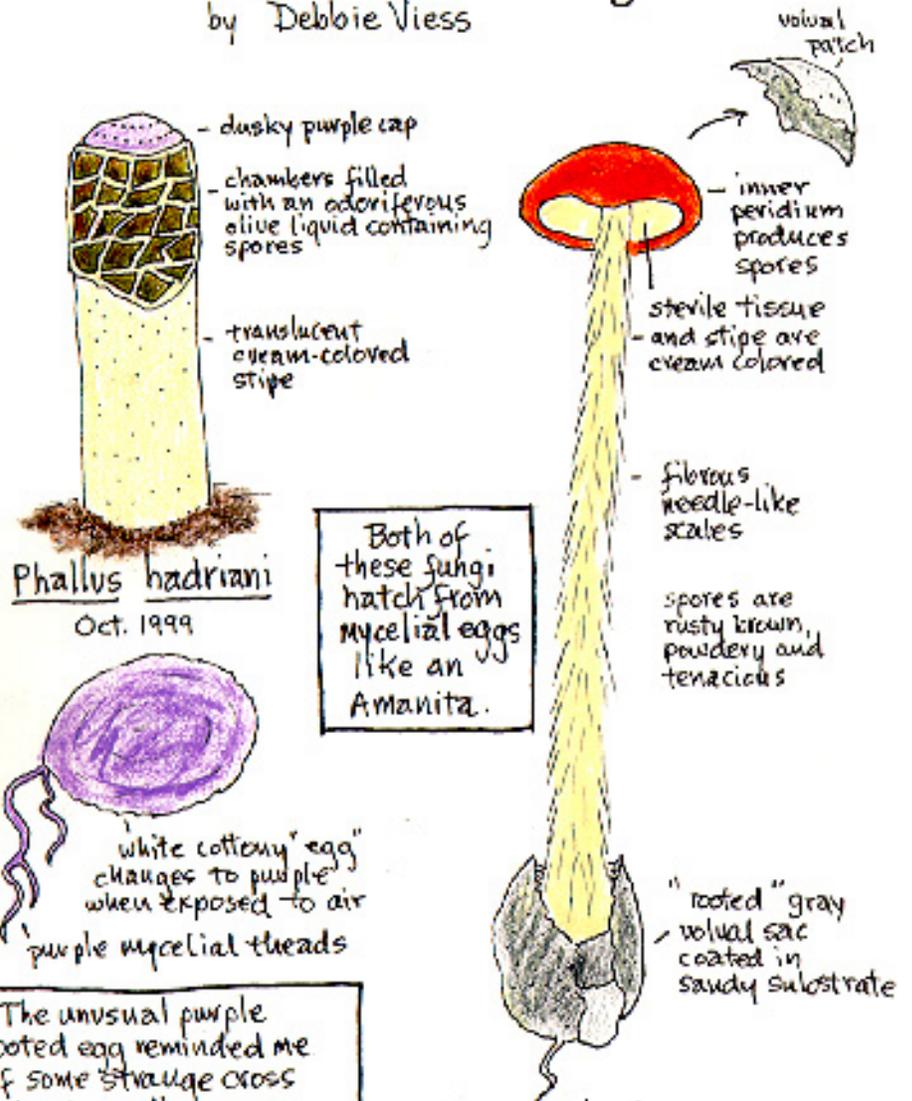
To join the MSSF and receive this newsletter, send a \$25 check, payable to MSSF (\$20 for seniors 65 and over and full time students), to MSSF Membership, 2750 Market St. Suite 103, San Francisco, CA 94114-1987, Attn: David Bartolotta. Please include contact information: home and/or work phone numbers and email address. New and renewal memberships will be current through December of 2001. To change your mailing address, please notify David. 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 \$32 payable to NAMA. Send it to David at the same address. For further information email David at david@bartolotta.com or call at (415) 621-3166.

**Mycena News** is the newsletter of the Mycological Society of San Francisco and is published monthly from September through May. Send or email newsletter submissions by the 15th of each month to Beth Sampson, 1227 Masonic St. apt# 8, San Francisco, CA 94117. phone: (415) 863-7677, email: y49@slip.net.

Editor: Beth Sampson  
 Printing/Mailing: Mother Lode Printing,  
 Jackson, CA

## A Tale of Two Hatchlings

by Debbie Viess



*Phallus hadriani*  
Oct. 1999

Both of these fungi hatch from mycelial eggs like an Amanita.

*Battarea phalloides* Sept. 2000

The unusual purple rooted egg reminded me of some strange cross between a dinosaur egg and a plant!  
 The strikingly beautiful fruiting body is best viewed in areas of excellent ventilation.

Specimens were brought to MSSF General Meetings by Fred Stevens + Mike Wood.

This stinky stalked puffball does a fine imitation of a mushroom... but it produces spores on the top of its cap.  
 Days after retiring to mycompost bin it continued to produce copious amounts of powdery rusty brown spores which coated everything in sight.

# Presidential Preamble

By Terri Beausejour

Greetings, friends! This is of course, a big month for the MSSF. The 31st annual fungus fair will be held on December 9th and 10th at the hall of flowers. Forays and the Id process will take place on Friday, December 8th. It is really exciting to participate in the setup process – beginning in the mid-afternoon, in will come boxes and boxes of specimens collected from all over the Bay area – often from as far north as Mendocino and as far South as Santa Cruz. These are then sorted by foray location, and the Id process begins. Our Id process committee is lead by our Scientific Advisor, Dr. Dennis Desjardin, and includes several of our most taxonomically knowledgeable and adept members along with several of Dr. Desjardin's graduate students. What commences is an intense process of identifying, labeling and recording around 300 species in just a few hours. Once identified, the specimens are moved to the display tables for artistic arrangement by some of our more aesthetically astute volunteers.

Meanwhile, the rest of the hall will be abuzz with the setup of educational displays, signage, book, t-shirt and mushroom kit sales, habitat and mushrooms in the garden displays, and, of course, Chez Chanterelle. It is quite an exciting and exhausting day, yet many hands do make light(er) work, and of course all of the volunteers are treated to a warm and hearty hot meal and libations that evening. If you haven't yet participated in fair setup day, I highly recommend it – a very rewarding and fun experience. Of course, there are volunteer opportunities on both fair days as well, and volunteers are given free entrance to the fair for two hours or more of contributed time.

In other news, I will give a brief summary of the November council meeting. David Bartolotta reported that our current membership count is 676. This includes honorary memberships and institutional members. He also reported that the 2000 roster is almost complete – just one minor technical issue to resolve and it will be ready to go to print.

We also had a brief discussion about the MSSF library. According to a knowledgeable source, the MSSF possesses one of the best mycological libraries in the country! We would therefore like to make some improvements so that the library is more accessible and so that a complete catalog is available to all members. If you have ideas about improving the library, please let me know, or talk with our librarian, Beryl Durnell. And look for some announcements and positive improvements during the coming months.

The treasurer reported that our insurance and tax documents are currently in good order. Also, several donations have been

received to the Harry D. Thiers scholarship fund. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to this fund, please specify it by name on your check.

Our foray leader, Jim Miller, reported that the Mendocino foray is expected to be fantastic this year, with excellent collecting conditions and a wonderful menu plan, catered by Maria Moon, who will also cater Chez Chanterelle at this year's fair. Jim is also arranging several beginner's identification forays around the bay area in the weeks following the fair. Keep an eye on the calendar section for details, and if you can lead a walk or know of a good spot for a walk, please let him know.

Our fungus fair co-chair, David Rust, reported that all is going well with the fair preparations, although we do not have a t-shirt chairperson this year, so we won't have a new t-shirt at the fair this year. However, we have ordered several more of the 50th anniversary t-shirts, which sold out last year, and still have lots of nice t-and-sweatshirts in the inventory. If you or someone you know would be willing to help us out as t-shirt chair, please let me know. It is an important part of our promotional regime, and it also helps us cover our budget.

On another note, the new fair posters are ready for distribution. By the time you get this newsletter, it will be less than 2 weeks before the fair, so please pick up some posters and distribute them to your favorite store: grocery, nursery, outdoor store, etc. You can call or email any council member to find out who has posters available in your area of the Bay.

Bill Freedman has kindly donated a beautifully framed poster listing all the different professions one can follow with a degree in mycology. It lists everything from professor to brewmaster. We plan to display this poster at the fair and at our general meetings.

Please note that there is no council nor general meeting in the month of December due to the preparations and staffing for the fungus fair.

Given the current wonderful myco-conditions due to the early rain, I do hope your holidays abound with full baskets and good cheer!

Terri

## Membership Dues are Due!!!

If you have not yet renewed your membership please do so now, before the end of the year. If you don't renew now, this will be your *last* issue of Mycena News. Yikes! Please send your check of \$25 payable to MSSF to: MSSF Membership, 2750 Market St. Suite 103, San Francisco, CA 94114-1987 Attn: David Bartolotta

**Thank You**

## Report on the Priest Lake Idaho Foray Sept.22-24, 2000

*By Larry Stickney*

100 folks attended the Priest Lake, Idaho, Foray, dedicated to Kit Scates-Barnhart. We found Dorothy Brown still carrying on at 94, and not just a figurehead. She may not hear or see very well, but she still in charge! She founded the Spokane Mushroom Club with Dr. Alexander Smith's persuasion 35 years ago. He always felt this was the best area to find the most different fungi in all of the U.S. No one familiar with it would disagree.

Kit Scates at the ID table was going strong as ever. All appreciate her continuing contributions to mycological gatherings all along the Pacific Coast, from Canada to Mexico.

Owner Mrs. Hill was as gracious and busy as ever. She brought out for me to see a fine photograph of Arnold Reed kneeling by a large white *Russula* and holding a larger *Boletus edulis*. Arnold and Mrs. Reed visited here every fall for many years before and after the Spokane Club's annual forays. We much miss them both now.

Coleman Leuthy took over as foray mycologist for Nicolin Gray who fell ill and could not appear. Of course with many Northwest Key Council members present, and Mike Beug there with 60 of his students from Evergreen College, Cole was responsible essentially only for directive decisions. That isn't to say he wasn't awfully busy just the same. Doris Henderson served as Recorder for 238 different species. All the specimens kept well on the outdoor display tables in the freezing nighttime temperatures.

Ben Woo presented a little study of a few *Russulas* with his usual sly wit. His thoughts about the Shrimp Mushroom with all of its many color variations were comforting to all of us who often wonder if we really have found it or some thing else among the large population of colorful *Russulas* which number upwards of 1200.

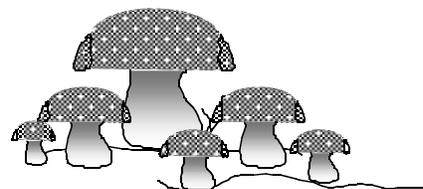
And a Canadian polypore expert from Okanagan, formerly Curator of Ottawa's National Mycological Herbarium, Jim Ginns, presented a well-rounded, well-photographed slide show of familiar fungi Saturday night.

The conditions were not perfect, it being a week earlier than the preferred dates at the end of the month. (Hill's Resort had a sellout for that date already.) Rain had fallen Thursday making things look wetter than they really had been. Coleman took me on his favorite hike, north of the Resort along the beach on Friday morning. We found more than a dozen *Matsutake* buttons and a few *Boletus edulis* on a very brisk cold day. It was one of those days when every emergence into the warming sunlight by

the lake was very welcome, indeed sought after. In the afternoon I went south of the Resort along the beach and unearthed more than two dozen *Matsutake* as mushrumps, all tightly closed small buttons slightly pushing up the moss or duff. More showed up there Saturday afternoon for folks I sent there to look for themselves when they had seen none elsewhere that day.

Our personal Saturday foray north about 20 miles to Beaver Creek at the end of the Lake wasn't wildly successful, but it was a much warmer sunny day for walking through the woods once the sun rose higher in the clear blue sky. No sign of the wispy morning mists remained after nine o'clock. Only ducks rippled the mirrored lake surface which inverted snowy Lookout Peak. Chanterelles were scarce, and more often small white ones rather than golden ones. Whites show first even in Mendocino, don't they. Best find of the day was a long strip of deep orange Sulphur shelves on a snag which won first prize as a table decoration after surrounding it with other colorful fungi and mosses. Small prizes, mostly jars of Huckleberry Jam, were presented to a number of registrants for smallest, largest, rarest, most colorful mushroom. No one found a deadly species so that prize went begging. Isn't Priest Lake just wonderful ?

Hill's is so plush these days it is hard to believe what it once was back in the 60's. All the big old drafty two story lakefront cabins are gone and of course replaced. But Hill's kitchen remains remarkable, and the bar bigger. Morning huckleberry pancakes and syrup, scrambles eggs with bacon or sausage, and excellent coffee bring back old almost forgotten memories even in the much changed and enlarged dining room, now with a new big deck outside the plate glass windows. Less lake is visible from it these days because the Firs and Cedars have grown wider and taller; leased Forest Service land comes with unchanging, inflexible cutting restrictions, alas. The Saturday night Banquet for over 100 diners was impeccable; tender Prime Rib, whether rare or rined, bacon-laced green beans, real smashed potatoes, and a Huckleberry sauce over vanilla ice cream. My meal was preceded at the bar with fresh "Oyster Shooters", Puget Sound oysters from the resident saltwater tank, shucked into a cordial glass and laced with traditional sauces. I'd love to be there for more next weekend, when fruiting conditions will be much better. What a marvelous rotting world we share!



## The 31st Annual MSSF Fungus Fair December 9-10, 2000

The 31st Annual MSSF Mushroom Fair will be held at The County Fair Building /Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park, Saturday December 9, from 10am-5pm, and Sunday, December 10, from 11am-5pm. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for students with ID and children under 12. There will be thousands of mushrooms on display, cooking demonstrations, vendors and lectures and discussions on psychedelics, poisonings, medicinal uses, and more.

### The following is a schedule of events:

- Taylor Lockwood will be presenting his slide show, *Treasures from the Kingdom of Fungi*, in the early afternoon on both Saturday and Sunday.
- Paul Stamets will be speaking on Amanitas and Psilocybes on Saturday at 3:00, and on Bioremediation using oyster mushroom mycelia on Sunday at 3:30.
- Matteo Garbelotta will be speaking on Sudden Oak Death at 11:30 on Saturday.
- Janet and Richard Doell will be giving their Lichen presentation at 2:00 on Saturday.
- Mo Mei Chen will be speaking on Medicinal Mushrooms Sunday at noon.
- Mike Boom will be giving a Beginners Talk on Mushrooms at 2:15 on Sunday.
- Sat 2:00PM Patrick Hamilton, Mushroom chef extraordinaire AKA MycoChef will be cooking up culinary delights with wild mushrooms. Liberal samples will be given out throughout the demonstration.
- Sun 2:30PM Chef Sunita Dutt of Chinook restaurant in San Rafael will give a demo on cooking with wild mushrooms. Sunita is a longtime mushroom aficionado, a wonderful chef and a delightful teacher.

Booth demonstrations will last approximately 1 hour.

In order to ensure that our Fair is a success, **VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED!** You can volunteer for a wide range of activities e.g. mushroom hunting, helping to set up & break down exhibits, T-shirt sales, admissions, fielding questions at mushroom tables, and many other fun & fulfilling chores.

Volunteering at least 3 hours over the weekend will earn you free admission to the Fair. Plus, we'll even feed you! To volunteer, please contact Lorrie Gallagher ([lorriegallagher@hotmail.com](mailto:lorriegallagher@hotmail.com), 510-250-2665) or Ron Pastorino ([Ronpast@aol.com](mailto:Ronpast@aol.com), 415-924-4818). For those individuals interested in gathering mushrooms for the displays, there are several pre-fair forays going out. Check the listings below.

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8: PRE-FUNGUS FAIR FORAYS AROUND THE BAY.

**San Mateo County, Memorial/Sam McDonald Park foray.** Fred Stevens: (650) 994-1374 or Mike Wood: (510) 357-7696. Meet at the Memorial Park Ranger station.

**Woodside, San Mateo County, Huddart Park foray.** Wade Leschyn: [wade@moggies.org](mailto:wade@moggies.org) or (650) 591-6616.

**Salt Point, Mendocino County foray.** Anna Moore: (510) 710-2020. Meet at Stump Beach Parking lot 10AM.

**San Carlos, San Mateo County, Crystal Springs Watershed foray.** Meet at Pulgas Temple on Cañada Road. Bill Freedman: (650) 344-7774.

**Willits, Mendocino County, Rock-n-Ridge Ranch foray.** Near Willits, CA. Foray will be held at a property owned by MSSF member Jan Donaghy. The property contains mixed woods — mostly Tanoak and Madrone. Contact Jan Donaghy: (510) 339-1569 or [janman955@aol.com](mailto:janman955@aol.com) or Mark Lockaby at (510) 412-9964, or [pozer900ss@aol.com](mailto:pozer900ss@aol.com).

**\*NEW\* Marin County foray.** The foray will take place at Roy's Redwood's, part of Marin County Open Space. This is a unique opportunity to foray in an area that is normally off limits. The number of participants for this foray will be limited, so call Bob Mackler at (510) 779-6756 to sign up and get more information.

For more details about The Fair or any of the Pre-Fair forays, call the Mycological Society of San Francisco's hotline at: 415-759-0495 or visit [www.mssf.org](http://www.mssf.org).



## Culinary Corner



by Bill Hellums

The Culinary Group's pre-Election Pig-Out was just that, a whole suckling pig. And unlike the national election that followed, there was no doubt as to who the winners were. The list of donors for the appetizers is so long we won't try to list everyone by name, but they provided a platform that any political party would drool for. And where the national parties had their "get out the vote" effort, we had Mark Lockaby and his consultant Jan Donaghy bringing in the fresh boletes for the sauce.

The number one slot on the ticket went to the roast suckling pig, provided by Tom Sasaki, with its running mates: citrus porcini sauce, created by Bill Hellums; a fabulous cream of chanterelle with truffled mashed potatoes, from David Eichorn; a crisp green salad and braised mustard greens from Lucia Paulazzo; roasted winter vegetables from Alvaro Carvajal; roasted pumpkin from Fred Kron; and spicy pumpkin cake with cream cheese frosting from Mary Ann Swazo. Rounding out the slate were punch from Leon Ilnicki and coffee from Bennie Cottone. But first there were appetizers: "Korozott" Hungarian spread from Paul, baked portobelli with cheese from Dave Bell, celery-root remoulade from Anna Uznanska, roast porcini with rosemary from David Campbell, Maui pineapples from Bob Ericsson, jalapeno-cheese-morel-tofu spread from Dulcie, veggie and goose-liver pate with mini tomatoes and olives from Wade Leschyn and Debby Payne, pate from Terry Brandburg and Sue Scarlett, pate from Dick and Marg Rhodes, gorgonzola and sour cream dip from Larry Stickney, and morel dip from Phil Brown.

All in all, except for the pig — which was completely devoured by the opposition, a good time and feed were had by all.

*Unfortunately*, we had a much *larger turnout* than was expected, which *necessitated portion control* on some of the items. This seems to be a recurring problem, and is the cause for major concern. We plan for more people than make reservations, but it is difficult to anticipate a 30% increase in attendance, and not cost effective to prepare that much additional food on the chance that many will come. **So please, please, please, be considerate enough to the cooks to get your reservation in on time.**

The cooks like to eat too.

To make reservations for Culinary Group dinners, call Bennie Cottone at: (415) 731-8798 or Bil Hellums at: (415) 255-4950.

## Mushrooms

Overnight, very  
Whitely, discreetly,  
Very quietly

Our toes, our noses  
Take hold on the loam,  
Acquire the air.

Nobody sees us,  
Stops us, betrays us;  
The small grains make room.

Soft fists insist on  
Heaving the needles,  
The leafy bedding,

Even the paving.  
Our hammers, our rams,  
Earless and eyeless,

Perfectly voiceless,  
Widen the crannies,  
Shoulder through holes. We

Diet on water,  
On crumbs of shadow,  
Bland-mannered, asking

Little or nothing.  
So many of us!  
So many of us!

We are shelves, we are  
Tables, we are meek,  
We are edible,

Nudgers and shovers  
In spite of ourselves.  
Our kind multiplies:

We shall by morning  
Inherit the earth.  
Our foot's in the door.  
—Sylvia Plath

# Cultivation Corner

by Ken Litchfield

So we've already started to receive cultivation questions. Here's the first.

## Slugs and Snails Question

I already have my own mushroom garden that I started with kits. It's a lot easier than all that lab stuff. I've gotten some *Agaricus*, oysters, and *Stropharias* to fruit and they seem to have taken. My problem is the slugs and snails eating them before I can harvest them. They chew holes all over them and leave disgusting slime everywhere. I've just about given up on having any decent harvest of mushrooms or anything else in my garden. I've tried Deadline and it works good for a while and then they're back. Plus I don't like what it may do to pets or other animals or me for that matter. That stupid beer idea that everybody talks about doesn't work at all. I'll go out at night and the snails will be everywhere chomping down on everything in the garden but they won't even wash it down with a sip of beer. Just the idea of picking them creeps me out. What can I do? Help!

## Answer

This is probably the single most asked question in gardening. It may seem hopeless but things aren't nearly as bad as they at first may seem. The solution to your problem is partly observational, partly behavioral, partly attitudinal, partly philosophical, and all strategic.

Some friends that aren't quite of my own gardening philosophy enjoy coming home from a hard day of work and using their puttering time in the garden to unwind. They'll line up in a row any observable mollusk they find and claw hammer the faces of any fellow employees or bosses that graced their path that day. They tie a crab fork to a dowel to keep from having to bend over when they skewer people they don't like. It helps to wear a ski mask and goggles when they iron their cohorts into the neighbor's garden. Black and Decker makes a whole line of products that would appear to have been specifically designed for interpersonal relations and gastropod control. Mmmm, I can imagine feeling better already. Now down to business.

It sounds like you are presently overrun with a huge slug and snail population that is devouring everything. You may have to do a day or two of serious garden work to lay the proper groundwork but then only some very minor maintenance is required to keep everything running smoothly. Keep in mind that the very conditions that are conducive to mushroom production are also what the slimers like the best. And mushrooms are one of their favorite foods. First go through the whole garden and clean out all the debris, weeds, extraneous boards, empty pots, plastic sheets, etc. that make good hiding places. Prune up branches that are low to the ground or up against a wall to give you access to their resting places. Any seasonal spots such as a vegetable plot that has been harvested and is spent for the season should be dug up or tilled well to expose snail and slug eggs to the drying air and predatory birds and insects. The same for any open areas. Eggs are clear gelatinous globes for slugs with calcareous shells for snails, 2-5 mm in diameter in clutches of 5 to 70 or more.

Maybe it's time to do a little relandscaping of your garden area and dig up anything that isn't too big and rearrange it to make the most of sunlight for the plants and viewing for you. Spread a finely textured, uniform, light colored mulch such as sawdust or grass clippings so that the bodies of roving snails and slugs stand out in contrast.

In the process of doing all this work you will encounter a multitude of snails and probably lots of slugs as well. Have handy a 5 gallon bucket of soapy water, a tablespoon of Ivory liquid in 1/2 gallon of water for the slugs you find. Picking them up with kitchen tongs works great for the blennophobic. The soapy water interferes with their slime system and they won't be able to crawl out. Have handy another 5 gallon bucket with a damp towel covering the bottom so when you toss in the snails they won't break their shells. A wet towel to drape over the top keeps them from escaping. Tongs aren't necessary for snails because their shells act as slime-free handles.

In selected locations around your revamped garden place several 1 foot wide boards 2-3 feet long, a liftable, collectable length. They should be slanted so that one long side is against the ground and the other is raised about 2-3" high with rocks or bricks. Your molluscan friends will now gather themselves for you under their gastropodal corrals and you can wrangle them up in your bucket brigade during their daytime sleep. Try to complete all the work in one day so that the molluscan environment has been totally revamped before nightfall. If necessary invite over some friends for a gardening party and then go help them do theirs or offer to share some territory or produce with them if they don't have gardening space.

Besides the boards for their corrals you need some grazing pastures and salt licks. As you have observed, beer is only minorly effective on snails, but it is one of the best treatments for slugs. It acts as both bait and demiser. It isn't the alcohol in the beer that kills them. It is apparently the yeast smell and flavor that attracts them like cows to a salt lick and the liquid then drowns them. The beer can be stale so the alcohol is evaporated and they will still come to it. If the bowl has completely dried up and then gets moist again that is enough to reattract them. They are generally attracted most to Budwiser and Michelob and least to Pabst Blue Ribbon. But if you just mix 1 cup water with a teaspoon of sugar and a 1/4 teaspoon yeast that will attract them. Set the bowl so the lip is about level with the soil and keep the liquid level deep enough so they can drown. For the snails purchase one or two sixpacks of bedding marigolds and pot them one per pot in six inch pots that can be sunk into the ground in strategic locations throughout the garden. Put them into the ground while it is still light, brush the leaves gently with your fingers, and be ready to go out starting at dusk to wrangle up your herd as it goes to marigold pasture. Within 15 to 30 minutes after dark you will find that your marigolds are acting as snail magnets drawing toward them the elongated bodies of any snails within a 4-5 foot radius. On the first night you may find twenty to thirty or more magnetized snails gravitating toward each marigold as if you are watching multiple mini marigold horror movies. You have to go out every 15 minutes or so to collect all the magnetized snails around each marigold before they actually reach their prey or the plants will be mowed down right before your eyes. Each of these wrangled snails from your snail drive goes into your snail bucket. Around bedtime lift the marigold pots from the ground and put them in a mollusk-free area. Repeat the process for several nights in a row and you will see a great drop off in your slimer population. Then you will only need to repeat the process periodically on a convenient night. If you haven't had rain for a while and it's time to water your garden wait

*continued on page 7*

*Cultivation, continued from page 6*

until the day of a convenient evening and water about 2-3 hours before dark. Then put out your marigold pasture. Right after dark go out with your bucket and all the moisture will bring out whatever stragglers are still hanging around the garden.

Let's say you have some special plants or newly sprouted seedlings or young plants just set out from pots or some mushrooms just pushing up from the substrate that you want to keep roving slimers from munching on. There are several reliable repellents that can be spread in a ring about 3-4" in radius around the target to be fenced in. Wood ashes, diatomaceous earth, crushed nut shells like walnut, hazelnut, filbert or pecan, egg shells, crushed charcoal, crushed sea shells or abalone shells, coffee grounds, powdered ginger, and sawdust can all be used as a desiccant/irritant singly or mixed according to what you may have available. You can also spray a mist of soapy water on the gritty barrier that will guarantee no crossings. The soap spray also works on the sides of pots, planter boxes, etc. The gritty barrier and soapy mist must be replaced after rain or watering.

Here is a recipe for a slimer bait that works pretty well with both snails and slugs. Mix 1 ounce of corn bran or wheat bran, 3/4 ounce powdered milk, 1 ounce corn starch, 1 ounce brewers yeast, and 1 pint beer. To this add 8 ounces of oatmeal or 8 ounces of dried Quack Grass, Agropyron repens, roots and leaves and run it through a meat grinder to make pellets. Air dry them and put them in bowls in strategic locations throughout the garden. Quack Grass has been shown to be a natural herbal toxin to snails and slugs. The oatmeal pellets will only be a bait.

Ivory liquid is a natural product and if used in a mild concentration will repel all slime producers and still break down easily in the soil. Never use salt which some people recommend as it is toxic to soil microorganisms and disturbs the soil ecosystem. Some people swear by copper stripping that give slimers an electrical shock when they try to cross it. But the band has to be 2-3 inches wide, continuous, and without debris laying on it and it is expensive. As it oxidizes it makes byproducts which are toxic to the soil and it ups the level of copper in the local ecosystem beyond the usual trace amounts. Deadline and other commercial baits contain metaldehyde which dehydrates snails and slugs till they die. It is also toxic to animals. Philosophically, it isn't necessary to waste money on corporate poisons when plenty of nontoxic controls are freely available. And it's really better to share your garden with your fellow organisms instead of giving up your money to their corporate destruction.

If you keep out the toxic products and stay organic you will have a better, healthier garden ecosystem that will both be conducive to plants and fungi and the predators that will feed on snails and slugs. Without the pesticides the diversity of organisms will increase including beetles, centipedes, millipedes, salamanders, garter snakes, mice, shrews, moles, birds, skunks, raccoons, and possums. You may not want some of these larger slimer predators as they sometimes damage the garden when rooting around for prey. Some people keep bantam chickens just to eat their snails but ducks are better slimer eaters and much more polite garden denizens. If there are poultry rules for your neighborhood you might be able to get around them if the duck is treated as a pet. Be sure to keep them protected from cats, dogs, and raccoons.

In case you haven't noticed we've put a lot of snails into that snail bucket. If you now lift the towel you will probably find

over \$100 crawling around. Yes, you have a bucket of that French delicacy escargot. The real thing. *Helix aspersa aspersa*, *Petite Gris*, little greys, the brown garden snails. They were introduced into California by French or Italian immigrants in the 1850s. In Europe where heliciculture is an art, snails are ranches carefully but in California, and particularly San Francisco, conditions are so conducive that you just have to go out and pick them up, especially if you have your board corrals. There are other snails besides the *Petite Gris*. The *Gros Gris* is *Helix aspersa maxima*, 20g to the *Petite's* 10g. *Helix pomatia*, the Burgundy or Apple snail, is a little smaller than the *Petite Gris* but generally considered to be tastier as is the *Helix leuorum*, the Turkish snail. For sheer mass there's the giant African snail, *Achatina fulica*, one of several giant African land snails that can reach 2 lbs and 15 inches long. Any snails you find in your garden will work, the larger the easier. And if you really want to be bold try using some of the larger slugs you collect as pre-hulled escargot. You should never eat any of the gastropods raw as they are known to carry various parasites that can do weird things when they get a human host into their life cycle. Besides, among slugs' favorite food, especially the banana slug, *Ariolimax columbianus*, is dog poop and you never know what that dog may have been eating. Once you round up a few dozen head you are ready to start the escargot preparation procedure, with purging first.

Put the live snails into a colander and rinse them several times to clean them of dirt and debris. Then put them into one of those plastic storage containers with a snap on lid punched with air holes. The container size should be a gallon of volume per 2 dozen snails. Put in a shallow dish of water. Rinse the snails and clean the container every day, toss the dead snails regularly, and change the water frequently. The snails will be purged clean after 4 days. They are now ready for blanching. Or you can fatten them up for two more weeks with three tablespoons of cornmeal per dozen snails every other day and cleaning and rinsing can be every other day. After 2 weeks they are fasted for two days and are ready for blanching.

To blanch your snails rinse 4 cups of live snails in a colander under cool running water to remove debris and pour them into 1 1/2 quarts of boiling water in a 3-4 quart pan. Bring back to boil for 2-3 minutes but not longer to keep them from becoming tough. Watch out that the foam from the slime doesn't overflow the pot. Drain the snails and rinse them well in cold water. With a wood pick pierce each snail and pull it out of its shell. Some people say to cut off the coiled section that last comes out of the shell of any snail. It's called the gall or the tortillon or the hepatopancreas. But most gourmets say this is the tastiest part of the *Petite Gris* so keep it.

Now mix 1 1/2 quarts cool water with 1/3 cup vinegar in a bowl and add the deshelled snails stirring until the liquid is cloudy. Drain and repeat this rinsing 2-3 times until the liquid is clear. The vinegar rinse removes any remaining slime from the snails. They can now be padded dry and put into plastic bags for freezing or they can be cooked fresh.

There are some herbal uses to some of this slime you collect in the boiling pots or first vinegar rinse. The slime is about 2% mucoproteins and the rest water which would be an excellent emollient for skin. A photographer friend took a bunch of simulated death photos of his girlfriend with about 50 snails crawling over her nude body. She said afterward that the slime tightened up her skin quite well as it dried. But she didn't like the several hundred little red spots scattered over her body the next day where all those radulas were tasting her. I don't know who got the negatives when they

*continued on page 9*

## Newcomers and Beginners!

Our Foray Chair, Jim Miller, has organized a series of forays especially for beginners, check these out:

**San Francisco; Lands End.** Meet at parking lot, northwest corner of Cliff House area; (end of Geary Street). Bring collecting basket. Foray is on, rain or shine. December 23rd at 9 A.M. Foray leader is Monique Carment who can be reached at (415) 474-7220.

**East Bay, Alameda County, Joaquin Miller Park.** Meet at Sequoia Arena off of Skyline Drive at 10 A.M. Rain cancels. Foray leader is Jim Miller at (510) 530-5038. The date is December 30th.

**San Mateo County; Huddart Park,** meet at main parking lot with Wade Lechsyn on January 6th at 10 A.M. You can call him at (650) 591-6616.

**Marin County; Bear Valley, Point Reyes National Seashore.** Meet at Visitor Center parking lot. Rain cancels. Call Bob Mackler for additional information, (510) 799-6756; January 20th from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M.

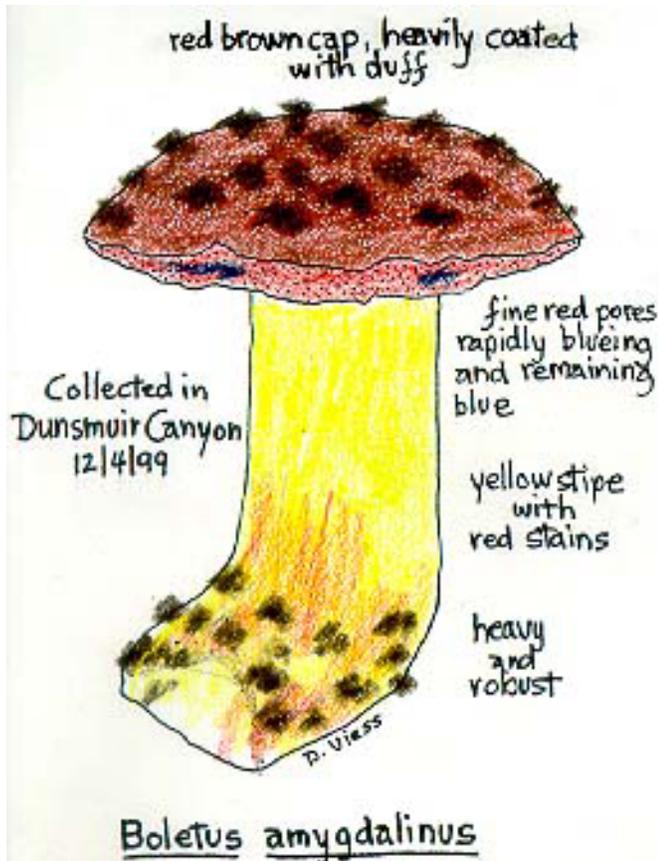
## SOMA Camp 2001 Registration Open

Attention all myconauts! SOMA, otherwise known as the SOнома county Mycological Association, is pleased to announce that Camp registration is now open. The Camp will be held on Martin Luther King weekend, January 13 - 15, 2001 (Sat/Sun/Mon), at Wellsprings Renewal Center in Philo, Mendocino Co., CA. There will be expert-led mushroom forays to numerous locations throughout the weekend. There will also be classes and workshops on mushroom dyeing & paper making, identification, cooking, medicine making, microscope work, and cultivation, along with slide shows in the evenings, and delicious mushroom dining throughout the weekend. Come enjoy and explore specimen tables, the Mykoweb website, and lots of mushroom excitement!

Wellsprings is a comfortably rustic camp with cabins and lodge rooms, located in the scenic Anderson Valley. Hedy Woods State Park (awesome redwoods), and many wineries are nearby. Fee: Split fee of \$100/\$150 includes lodging, meals, instruction, classes, etc. Some workshops may have a small materials fee. The event is a benefit for the SOMA Scholarship program. The two fee options reflect the difference in the accommodation comfort levels.

To register, please send a deposit check made to SOMA for one half of the full fee to: SOMA Camp, 490 Liberty Rd., Petaluma, CA 94952. You will receive a confirmation. For further information, or questions about the accommodation choices, please contact Charmoon Richardson, SOMA Camp coordinator, at 707-887-1888, or e-mail to: <somacamp@webtv.net>. Further information is available on the Web at the SOMA website: <http://www.metro.net/biologist>

We hope to see you at the Camp!



By Debbie Viess

Wild About Mushrooms Co. has recently released the new Fall-Winter Events Schedule. This season's schedule is chock-full of forays, classes, dinner events, weekend camps, and more, ranging from Pt. Reyes to Mendocino. For a free Events Schedule, contact W.A.M. at 707-887-1888, write to PO Box 1088, Forestville, CA 95436, or e-mail to: [waminfo@webtv.net](mailto:waminfo@webtv.net). You may also view the W.A.M. schedule on the Web. Go to: [www.wildmushrooms.qpg.com](http://www.wildmushrooms.qpg.com) and when there, take the link near the page bottom that says "For further information regarding...". Two more clicks will take you to the W.A.M. schedule. Wild About Mushrooms is led by Charmoon Richardson of SOMA, with substantial assistance from David & Jeanne Campbell of the MSSF. We hope you can join us for an exciting mushroom event!

# Mz. Myco-Manners

## There Are No Stupid Questions....

**DEAR MZ. MYCO-MANNERS:** This is my question, my query, deary: If I took some folks to someone else's secret patches, places that I'd been sworn to keep hidden from the sinfully covetous eyes and pathetically empty baskets of these others, would that be wrong, if foremost amongst these others were you?

Sincerely,  
Disoriented in Occidental

**GENTLE READER:** There are no stupid questions, only stupid people. Mz. Myco-Manners is flattered that you would take her to a secret spot in the forest for no other reason than showing her fungi. I don't believe in "secret patches" in the forest. Everyone who thinks he/she has one is only fooling him/herself. Every time Mz. Myco-Manners has had a "patch" she has met with dismay that someone else also considered it his/her patch. Divulging information to others in hopes of appearing intelligent is not a really big crime (not like roasting the neighbor's baby on and open rack in a shallow pan, fat side up at 350 degrees for 20 minutes a pound or until tender). Passing on this "secret" information may annoy your source, so you must also swear your admirers to secrecy. I'm not trying to absolve you from being a creep to your source; I just don't think it is too serious.

Mz. Myco-Manners

**DEAR MZ. MYCO-MANNERS:** My son Timmy and I have been hunting mushrooms together since he was a little tyke. He's not so little anymore...at 15, he has a moustache, weighs almost 200 #s and stands over 6 feet tall. My problem, Mz. Myco-Manners, is that Timmy no longer wants to hunt with me. He's discovered that it's much more efficient to mug other mushroomers as they return to their cars with full baskets. He has a really big mushroom knife. Let me assure you that he did NOT learn this behavior at home! Although we do appreciate

all the brimming baskets that he contributes to our table, I find it terribly embarrassing socially, since he looks just like me (facial hair runs in our family). This has caused us a certain of social isolation within the mushroom community. Can you help us?

A concerned Mother

**GENTLE BREEDER:** You possess the good, the bad, and the ugly, don't you? Good that you have had the joy of giving birth; bad that he's a thug; ugly that you both share moustaches. What a mixed blessing that he provides for your table, though by despicable ways. This is indeed a tragedy (however, not as bad a tragedy as watching the Baxter twins, conjoined at the top of their heads since birth, perfecting the co-ordination of their pogo-sticks that first week after Christmas). First of all, he MUST use that big knife only to harvest and clean great amounts of fungi that HE has found himself. Secondly, call a military academy and send him away so your social contacts will return. It is my understanding that young scamps, like your son, benefit greatly by military discipline. As well, they strike a handsome pose in those uniforms. Please follow this advice, and let me know how things turn out, because I do care (yeah, right).

Mz. Myco-Manners

Mz. Myco-Manners is an exciting new feature of Mycena News! Have Mz. Myco-Manners address your pressing myco-etiquette questions too! Get ready for that next big foray with the courteous yet competitive advise only Mz. Myco-Manners can give. She shuns publicity and therefore cannot let her real identity be known, but you can write to Mz. Myco-Manners c/o your friendly newsletter editor. Your questions will be dutifully passed along. Please send your questions to:

Mz. Myco-Manners,  
c/o Beth Sampson  
1227 Masonic St. apt#8  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
Or email questions to Mz. Myco-Manners: y49@slip.net

*Cultivation, continued from page 7*

broke up. The boiled slime as an emollient also makes a good gargle for sore throat. If you think about it, the slime would probably make an excellent emetic...especially when you think about it.

The cooked snail is low in calories and rich in protein, vitamins A and C, calcium, magnesium, zinc, copper, and iodine.

Traditionally there is one more preliminary step that can be performed before freezing or cooking in the finished recipe. Simmer the snails for 1 1/2 hours in a Court-Bouillon of 1/2 liter of white wine per 1 liter of water to which is added onion, shallots, garlic, celery, carrot, thyme, dill, bay leaf, parsley, salt, pepper, and any other herbs and spices of personal preference. Now the drained snails can be added to other recipes or frozen for later use and the rest of the Court-Bouillon can be used as stock for other dishes or

eaten as a soup.

Escargot goes particularly well with mushrooms.

You will find lots of recipes for various escargot dishes on the internet, particularly at: [www.jdsnails.com/templates/index.cfm?pagecontents=recipes](http://www.jdsnails.com/templates/index.cfm?pagecontents=recipes)

Keep those questions rolling in.

Ken Litchfield  
199 Museum Way  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
415-863-7618  
klitchfield@randall.mus.ca.us

Mycological Society of San Francisco  
P.O. Box 882163  
San Francisco, CA 94188-2163

First Class Mail  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Jackson, CA  
Permit No 29



**December, 2000 vol 50:12**

## Calendar

No MSSF General Meeting for the Month of December.

**Monday December 4: MSSF Annual December dinner.** Reservations: Sherry Carvajal (415) 695-0466. Food prep: Bennie Cottone (415) 731-8798 or Bill Hellums (415) 255-4950. See page 5 for details.

### FRIDAY DECEMBER 8 PRE-FAIR FORAYS:

**San Mateo County, Memorial/Sam McDonald Park foray.** Fred Stevens: (650) 994-1374 or Mike Wood: (510) 357-7696. Meet at the Memorial Park Ranger station.

**Woodside, San Mateo County, Huddart Park foray.** Wade Leschyn: wade@moggies.org or (650) 591-6616.

**Salt Point, Mendocino County foray.** Anna Moore: (510) 710-2020. Meet at Stump Beach Parking lot 10AM.

**San Carlos, San Mateo County, Crystal Springs Watershed foray.** Meet at Pulgas Temple on Cañada Road. Bill Freedman: (650) 344-7774.

**Willits, Mendocino County, Rock-n-Ridge Ranch foray.** Near Willits, CA. Foray will be held at a property owned by MSSF member Jan Donaghy. The property contains mixed woods — mostly Tanoak and Madrone. Contact Jan Donaghy: (510) 339-1569 or janman955@aol.com or Mark Lockaby at (510) 412-9964, or pozer900ss@aol.com.

**\*NEW\* Marin County foray.** The foray will take place at Roy's Redwood's, part of Marin County Open Space. This is a unique opportunity to foray in an area that is normally off limits. The number of participants for this foray will be limited, so call Bob Mackler at (510) 779-6756 to sign up and get more information.

**Friday-Sunday December 8-10: Systematics and Ecology of California Mushrooms.** Albion Field Station. For more information please call Staci Markos or Betsy Ringrose at (510) 643-7008 or e-mail smarkos@socrates.berkeley.edu

**Saturday and Sunday, December 9-10: 31st Annual MSSF Fungus Fair.** Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Park. See page 4 of this issue for details.

### December 10: Application Deadline MSSF Scholarship

The Mycological Society of San Francisco offers scholarships to full time graduate students majoring in mycology, who are attending colleges and universities in northern California. Send inquiries/materials to Robert Mackler, 157 Mesa Ct., Hercules, CA 94547.

**Saturday Jan. 13th Mills Canyon, San Mateo County;** Special foray on at 10 A.M. with Fred Stevens at (650) 994-1374. Off of highway 280, south from Trousdale exit to Skyline Blvd., to Hillsdale Drive, to Adeline in Burlingame. Adeline abuts on the South end of Mills Canyon. If you are confused give Fred a call.

**Sunday January 21, 2001 SOMA - Sonoma County Mycological Association Wild Mushroom Fair.** Coddington Mall, Santa Rosa, CA. Free admission. More details and photos can be found at: <http://www.metro.net/biologist>