

Mycena News

Mycological Society of San Francisco

March, 2002, vol 53:3

Speaker for March MSSF Meeting Martin Bidartondo Fungus Flowers & Mycorrhizal cheating



The MSSF speaker for March 2002 is Martin Bidartondo, who works at the Bruns Lab at UC Berkeley. Martin is interested in the ecology and evolution of the interactions between mycorrhizal parasitic plants and their fungal associates, and would like to talk about “fungus flowers & mycorrhizal cheating”.

His web site (<http://plantbio.berkeley.edu/~bruns/mb.html>) provides further biographical information; a brief synopsis of which:

Martin works on the evolutionary ecology of the monotropoid mycorrhizal symbiosis. The monotropes are a group of 10 genera of non-photosynthetic ericaceous plants. They are extreme specialist epiparasites of the ectomycorrhizal symbioses between various green plants and basidiomycete fungi. In other words, these are three-partite associations between two mycorrhizal plants and a mycorrhizal fungus.

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Well, Morelavores, It's Almost Time

By Norm Andresen

This year we have a number of fires to choose from, and here are some thoughts I have on the issue. Most of the location information in this article is from the National Forest Service web site. Thanks NFS.

From north to south:

Devil fire: Just outside Susanville, at about 5,500 ft. in rolling hills, mostly pine forests, it has road access through the center of the fire, with north, south, east, and west facing slopes. It's in an area that is dry but with the proper spring rain could be a great place

Stream fire: It's on the west shore of Antelope Reservoir. All over 5,000 ft. two large creeks flowing through, good road access to some of it, good tree cover, the only problem with these fires is that they are 200 miles away.

Poe fire: Near Lake Orville, I think this is too low and too dry

Gap fire: Good elevation, road access, and tree cover, but the small size and the probability of many searchers makes this a poor prospect.

Martis fire: Straddling the California-Nevada border, south of I-80, too much of a desert habitat. Without good late spring rains I can't recommend this one, but who knows.

Star fire: This, I think, may live up to its name, with elevations between 4-6,500 ft. and lots of good habitat. Near French Meadows Reservoir, but a long drive over uncertain roads could be a problem, which will be overcome I am sure.

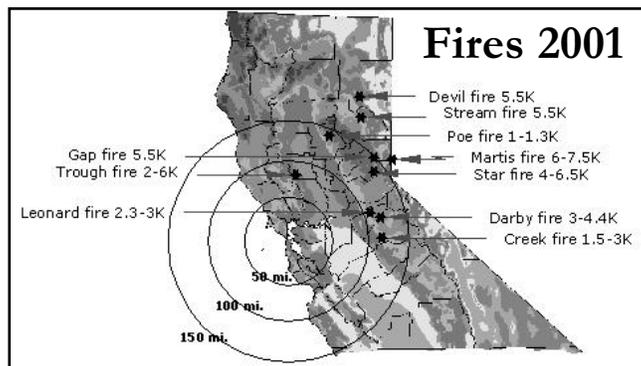
Trough fire: Steep, dry, near Snow Mountain in Mendocino NF. My thought is that it is unlikely to be worth a trip.

Leonard fire: Uphill from the town of Murphy, this fire is low elevation but in an area that can produce morels if there are good rains in early April - we'll see.

Darby fire: Just south of hwy. 4, another low elevation fire, larger and with a more diverse habitat than the Leonard but will need early April rain to produce.

Creek fire: A low elevation fire, mostly steep, manzanita habitat, near Groveland, could produce with early rain.

There are good prospects for a long and productive spring, but some rain is still required, as in most elevations snow will not have much of an effect on fruiting. Morels in California generally fruit from April fool's Day to the end of May, from 4,000ft to 10,000ft elevation, when the soil is disturbed, damp and about 50 degrees F. There are other, more detailed articles in previous year's Mycena News for further reference, if you are new to collecting morels. Your most effective tool, as always, will be an information exchange network such as the MSSF "yahoo groups mailing list". To join, members need to sign up on the MSSF web site (<http://www.mssf.org/>). Everyone, including yourself, will find more mushrooms and have more fun by contributing to an exchange of information.



President's Column

By David Rust

Newsletters are a great way for organizations to keep in touch and get vital information to members. For those who want more immediate communication, the MSSF has a lively discussion group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mssf/>. I would encourage you to sign up for this group if you want to participate in some of the lively discussions. In the next few weeks, the MSSF email distribution list will be updated. Participants who are not MSSF members will be asked to join.

We are also updating the member email list on the website. Please check your listing at www.mssf.org (sign onto members only button, then email roster) to make sure we have your email address. If you do not want your address listed, or if it is not correct, be sure to let David Bartolotta know at membership@mssf.org.

Mushroom Day at the Randall was "wildly successful". A great display and diversity of mushrooms was identified on a central table, artfully set up by Ken Litchfield. Jared Aldrich, who works with students at Canyon School, demonstrated mushroom dyes and papermaking; Stacey Barros and Robert Esposito did a medicinals table; Earth and Fire put on a very appropriate ethnomycology display; Mark Lockaby had a busy edibles table; Enrique Sanchez had lots of interest in Beginning ID; and Ken did cultivation. Thanks to Sherry Carvajal for coordinating mushroom soups and stews, and to others who helped put it all together. We had good attendance for this first of its kind event - approximately 300-400 people attended - quite a feat for a facility with only 30 parking spaces. Along with the Randall Museum staff, we put on an interesting, educational, and professional-looking event!

What Happened to the Chanterelles this Year?

By Larry Stickney

What a fractious fungal fruiting season we have found here this winter. After several inches of warm rains early in the fall, a fairly bountiful but brief bolete emergence and a dazzling mycological exhibition in Oakland, we all had high hopes for a spectacular season in the forests and fields of central California. And then, really nothing much happened.

Why, you ask?

Here are some deliberative thoughts from one who collects on an extremely regular basis. To be honest with you, I had actually predicted that this would be a no chanterelle year based on the heavy fruiting patterns of the past two consecutive years. Both of them were very good in my regular hunting areas, which encompass most of the Santa Cruz Mountains. During the past two seasons, most of my primary and secondary chanterelle areas fruited heavily. Even drier tertiary areas under manzanita were abundant, particularly with the extraordinary "mega-trelles" so common at times.

My notes indicate that our local chanterelles do not fruit heavily every year. They tend to be like apple trees. In some years there are so many that one does not know what do with them all. In others,

there's just enough to meet the demand.

My analysis of the current year:

I have collected small quantities this year (about 10-20 lbs total for the season vs. 1/2 a ton in a heavy season), all from my very best primary areas, none in the drier secondary spots. I have seen this pattern in the past, several times. Coinciding with this anomaly is what I call the fruiting of "partner" fungi. These are different species such as *Cortinarii* that are also mycorrhizal with the same trees as these chanterelles. They do not come up in such heavy quantities in normal years. I have seen lots of these this year, in the exact same locations where the *Cantharelli* normally grow. Are these corts feeding uncontested on the nutrients that the chanterelles normally thrive upon? Do they feed when the others are taking the year off? I have talked with other members of MSSF, notably Louise Freedman, who have made similar observations, especially of the *Cortinarii*. In previous 'non-chanterelle' years, these same fungi were also up in huge numbers.

There is one particular species of *Cortinarius*, with a yellowish green cap, that has fruited ferociously this year, all in the exact location of my normal chanterelle patches. In heavy *cibarius* years there are only a few these around. How many times have you checked your patches this year only to find these rusty spore producers in abundance? Very disappointing indeed, isn't it? California's climate is quite variable, and our fruiting fungi often reflect this clearly. In areas of the world where rainfall is more dependable, chanterelle fruiting seems to be more dependable.

When I travel to Germany each summer, tiny chanterelles are always abundant, even cheap, consistently at \$3-5 a pound. I think the same could be said of the Pacific Northwest, especially in areas such as Oregon and northward into Canada. I have never seen a summer in Europe without them. In contrast, we have seen occasional chanterelle-less seasons here in California. I have heard that this pattern is even more significant in Southern California. Could rainfall be the chief variable? It does seem to be reflected in the production appearing here now. Of course, all of the above is purely speculation; though it is thoroughly grounded by lots of regular observation in the woods. This week I heard some better news. There were a few reports of some chanterelles being picked in the Oakland hills, and just last week I picked 8 lbs in one spot. So who knows, maybe Mother Nature will prove once again the old adage that "As soon as you think you have fungi figured out, she will prove you wrong again."

Larry Stickney, writer, and Steve Bowen, gather of fungi

Mexican Mushroom Tour

Dates for the Mexican Mushroom Tour described in December's Mycena News have been changed. The new dates are September 1 - 8, 2002. For more information, a detailed itinerary and comments from previous tour participants, see www.mexmush.com or e-mail/call/fax Gundi Jeffrey at: gundi@servired.com.mx; from US/Canada dial 011-52 (246) 461-8829.

Matsukake: “Endangered Species or Political Football

By Steven Pencall

Previously published by *Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming*

Controversy concerning the commercial harvest of matsutake and other wild mushrooms has generally centered on real or alleged conflicts between harvesters, or whether landowners are adequately compensated for the value of mushrooms harvested from their land. Recently, the issue took a strange new twist with the publication of a notice in the Federal Register by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on June 12, 2001 that “We are soliciting additional information on the following species native to the United States and Canada that are used in the herbal medicinal market. In particular, we solicit information on the biological and trade status of these taxa, and whether or not they meet the CITES criteria for listing in Appendix II.” Among several species listed was *Tricholoma magnivelare*, the American matsutake mushroom. The notice is at: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a010612c.html, then scroll down to “Fish and Wildlife Service: NOTICES”

Contacts with a number of mycologists, both amateur and professional, have failed to turn up a single person who believes that *T. magnivelare* is actually or potentially “endangered”. Several openly scoffed at the notion. Likewise, a review of the mycological literature failed to turn up any articles documenting either a long-term decline in matsutake populations or any environmental factors that currently pose a credible threat to the species. Indeed, the proponents of listing have themselves failed to cite any data showing a decline in *T. magnivelare* populations. An investigation of this proposal took me into the nuances of international endangered species agreements and revealed the collusion of two government agencies in advancing a scientifically unsound proposal for their mutual benefit.

US Endangered Species List Is Ignored

What’s going on here? An examination of the documents filed in support of the *T. magnivelare* listing offers some important clues. First of all, there are two parallel “endangered species lists”. The US government, through the Fish and Wildlife Service, oversees a list of species occurring within the US and its territories that are considered “endangered” or “threatened”. CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, a branch of the United Nations Environment Program, administers a list of endangered or threatened species that are likely to enter into international trade. Many species are found on **both** lists. Why is matsutake being considered for the CITES list but **not** the US list?

As many Mushroom the Journal readers are aware, there is a substantial international trade in matsutake, with the bulk of the harvest going to Japan and lesser amounts to other Asian nations. As all of these nations are CITES signatories they would be obliged to regulate their imports of *T. magnivelare* pursuant to the provisions of CITES in the event it were added to Appendix II of CITES. Likewise, the US and Canada would be obliged to regulate their exports to prevent overharvesting of *T. magnivelare*. While the picture of a carefully regulated international trade in matsutake may seem almost idyllic, in practice the FWS has long assumed a very aggressive stance toward trade in any CITES listed species, so that

US trade in the overwhelming majority of species is virtually non-existent.

If *T. magnivelare* is so endangered that international trade in it must be curtailed, why then has there been no corresponding effort to have it placed on the US list of endangered and threatened species? Under American law, each species added to the US list must have a “species recovery plan” filed within a specified time after the species is listed. The species recovery plan specifies what measures must be undertaken to prevent a further decline in numbers from occurring and to rebuild species numbers to a point where the species may no longer be considered endangered or threatened. Species recovery plans often entail restrictions on land uses and other activities, leading to litigation and frequently, intense political pressure. Because of this, scientific data incorporated into the species recovery plan and the initial listing of the species is often intensely scrutinized and debated.

CITES Takes Charge

As an international body based in Switzerland, CITES is immune from US domestic political pressure and litigation. The data submitted on behalf of listing a species is examined by an international panel of scientists, many of whom have little or no knowledge of a species that may not even occur on their continent. This is by way of saying that the standards for getting a species listed in CITES are substantially lower than for the comparable US list, and this makes it an attractive alternative for an agency that knows it has a weak case for listing.

And the case for listing *T. magnivelare* IS incredibly weak. The proposal to list matsutake as published by CITES contains exactly TWO literature references supporting the application, one of which is an article from the Portland Oregonian newspaper (No, I’m not making this up!). The other is a “survey” article that contains no field data. There are also two web page citations; one of them is no longer available online. The applicants cited NO field studies and no research documenting a real or potential threat to *T. magnivelare*. You can see for yourself just how flimsy the case for this listing really is at: <http://www.cites.org/eng/cttee/plants/10/PC10-9-2.pdf> see pages 2-3 (You need Acrobat Reader for this.)

On June 1 wrote to Ger van Vliet, Senior Scientific Officer for Flora of CITES, pointing out that the scientific data submitted in support of the *T. magnivelare* petition was inadequate and that CITES should insist that proposals to list species be based on reliable data. In his reply Dr. van Vliet stated that the responsibility for providing such information rests with the government entity (FWS) submitting the petition. After review by the appropriate CITES committee the body at large votes on the proposed listing on the basis of the information submitted by the petitioner.

In other words, the integrity of the process depends on the integrity of the petitioner, in this case the US government as represented by the FWS. CITES is essentially a “gentlemen’s club” in which the accuracy of data submitted is assumed to have been reviewed before submission to the international body. An unscrupulous petitioner can easily “game the system” with erroneous or irrelevant data knowing full well that few of the reviewing scientists have the technical background to challenge it. This is especially true with fungi as the CITES committees that oversee fungi are dominated by

Cont'd on page 4

Matsukake:

Continued from page 3

botanists with vascular plant backgrounds.

Park Service Backs Listing Proposal

At this point you are probably wondering who is responsible for this proposal. The general consensus is that the proposal is being put forward at the behest of the National Park Service (NPS), which like FWS is a branch of the Department of Interior. NPS has experienced problems with poaching of matsutake in a few NPS units, notably Crater Lake National Park in Oregon. As banning international trade in *T. magnivelare* would – in theory at least – drastically reduce demand, the poaching might be expected to diminish. The CITES document also hints at this as the poaching problem at Crater Lake is prominently mentioned. Apparently, NPS petitioned its sister agency in an effort to deal with this problem in a “creative” new way. (N.B. I filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the FWS in June in an effort to determine exactly who filed the petition to list *T. magnivelare* but the FWS has stalled in responding to my request. SP)

Drawbacks Of Listing

Some amateur mushroom collectors may be inclined to support this proposal despite its obvious scientific and procedural shortcomings in the hope that it might curb what they believe to be an unacceptable level of commercial harvesting. However, it is very unlikely that amateurs and mycological societies would be spared the repercussions of a *T. magnivelare* listing. Most federal and state agencies have adopted a “zero tolerance” attitude toward collection, possession, or sale of ANY endangered species. Also, given the difficulty of determining whether mushrooms are being gathered for personal or commercial use, a blanket prohibition on **all** matsutake collecting would be likely.

My objections to the proposed listing are summarized as follows:

1. The proponents have failed to cite ANY compelling scientific evidence that *T. magnivelare* merits listing under CITES. The failure to cite any field studies is especially troubling. Newspaper articles don't cut it in real science.
2. This is a disproportionate global response to a local problem with poaching in some National Park Service units. It is like trying to stop drivers from running red lights by banning automobiles.
3. The case for listing *T. magnivelare* is so transparently flimsy, even fraudulent, that it de-legitimizes the endangered species listing process, eroding public confidence in and support for the listing of other truly endangered species. It leaves the FWS vulnerable to charges that endangered species listings are based on biased, politically motivated “junk science”.
4. A government agency, the National Park Service, has essentially been granted a waiver from the usual requirement to furnish legitimate scientific evidence to support a petition for listing. You or I as individuals could of course petition to have *T. magnivelare* (or any other organism) listed under CITES. However, it is a virtual certainty that the petition would be summarily rejected if we presented “evidence” of the kind the NPS has cited. If a government agency is permitted to ignore the rules simply because IT IS a gov-

ernment agency the potential for harm to society is simply beyond calculation. If this does not seem objectionable to you, imagine for a moment that the FBI, the CIA and the IRS were similarly freed from any requirement to obey the same laws as the general public. Pretty scary, eh?

The final lesson to be drawn from this experience: if matsutake can be listed with no evidence of a threat to the species, what other mushrooms might follow if it were to become expedient for some public agency to do so? Are we ready for chanterelles, morels or porcini to become “endangered”, with similar prohibitions on their collection or sale?

The comment period on the proposal to consider listing *T. magnivelare* in Appendix II of CITES ended on August 13. The FWS expects to announce tentative proposals for species to be submitted to CITES by December 2001. A public meeting, probably in the Washington, DC area, will be held in January 2002 and consultation with other CITES signatories in the range of *T. magnivelare* (Canada) will be held in March 2002. We should hope that this proposal will quietly die, never to be heard from again. However, I will monitor developments in case the proposal advances through the bureaucratic pipeline.

For the insights of one mycologist familiar with *T. magnivelare* on the merits of this listing visit this web address: <http://www.matsiman.com/davepilzletter.htm>, <http://www.matsiman.com/danlo-maletter.htm>

Acknowledgements: e-mail exchanges with David Arora, Andy Moore, David Pilz, Scott Redhead, Dan Wheeler, and Nathan Wilson were helpful. However, all conclusions in this article are mine alone.

Steven Pencall forays from Riverside, California.

Will Work for Mushrooms

You may have noticed some cartoons gracing the Mycena News cover recently. Phil Frank, local mushroom hunter and professional cartoonist, encourages us to send mushroom cartoon ideas (and any extra dried morels lying around) to him at:

500 Turney Street, Sausalito, 94965

For the most current Calendar information, call the MSSF hotline at 415-759-0495 or check the MSSF web site at:

www.mssf.org

The Foragers' Report

By Patrick Hamilton

I hope that many of you have had access to the apparent prime candy cap success spots in our Bay Area; because if you don't, then what are you picking? One of your columnist's most valued reporters told of *Macrolepiota rachodes* fruitings "down the street from where we live" and others have mentioned a golden chanterelle here and there but not much other new news is here for you so let's do something else this month.

Last issue we notified you of the soon to appear first annual "Top Places To Pick Morels This Spring" but I'm wondering if you're curious that any "first annual" can be like the seemingly simple question, "Can one person standing by himself be in a line of one?" How do we know that anything (or anybody) will follow? Because we believe in, and have curiosities about, stuff. And that is why we continue to forage.

A dear friend, and past president of the MSSF, told me that he casually informed his wife, "To just shoot me if I buy a book on lichens." I can understand that because if when mushrooms are scant and we start up a new pursuit to fill that void then what do we do when both fungus and lichens are together, out there, and we need to carry whole new libraries of field guides to understand and to identify and collecting apparatuses and everything else? A bullet seems pretty serious but lichens are pretty cool and intriguing....

Ever really look at those weird things? In the early 90's I had the great pleasure of visiting Bryce Kendrick at his home on Vancouver Island and he took Kathy Faircloth and me on a wondrous hike through woods near his house. He knew all the mushrooms, which was great, but I was used to being on hikes with David Arora back then. What was really cool was that he also knew the lichens and mosses and rusts and smuts. We were amazed, but more importantly we were exposed to yet more reasons to spend time in the forests.

I've had this theory that the more we look "out there" for an understanding of the universe the more we actually need to look inside. Or vice-versa. Like focusing down the tube of a microscope but seeing the backside of mankind looking for the hole in the doughnut of life--Einstein's curvature of space--but on a crumb doughnut. Or looking down a black hole and seeing that eyeball gazing down at us from the microscope tube. What I mean is--Quantum Theory explains real well the relationship of electromagnetic waves and particles and The Theory of Relativity reveals understanding

about how stars interact; but the two theorems do not work inside a black hole's gravitational pull so what we need is a Unifying Theory to unite awareness of all the stuff, hence the doughnut. Clearly that helps explain many of our attempts to unify those interests in things around us. If mushrooms are scarce we scare up any excuse to be out in the woods and to figure out the why and what about there. Like "lichenology." I say to check it out. (Do you know that Beatrice Potter was one of the first to posit lichens place in world--a dual organism--a bit fungal and a bit alga?)

Again Bob Mackler has provided great lists of fungi seen on hikes that he has taken folks on. At Mt. Tam in the vicinity of Pan Toll on January 17: *Amanita vaginata*, *Boletus truncatus*, *Camarophyllus rus-socoriaceus*, *Caulorhiza umbonata*, *Clavulina cristata*, *Clitocybe nuda*, *Crepidotus mollis*, *Coprinus micaceus*, *Dacrymyces palmatum*, *Daldinia grandis*, *Fomitopsis cajanderi*, *Fomitopsis pinicola*, *Hygrocybe coccinea*, *Hygrocybe punicea*, *Hygrophorus eburneus*, *Hygrophorus flavescens*, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, *Inocybe geophylla* var. *lilacina*, *Laccaria amethysteo-occidentalis*, *Lactarius rubidus*, *Lactarius rubrilacteus*, *Lactarius xanthogalactus*, *Lenzites betulina*, *Leucopaxillus gentianeus*, *Mycena leptocephala*, *Omphalotus olivascens*, *Pleurotus ostreatus*, *Pluteus cervinus*, *Psathyrella hydrophila*, *Russula amoenolens*, *Russula brevipes*, *Russula silvicola*, *Stereum hirsutum*, *Suillus caeruleus*, *Trametes versicolor*, *Tricholoma myomyces*. Other mushrooms not identified to species were from the genera *Agaricus*, *Cortinarius*, *Entoloma*, *Lactarius*, *Leptonia*, *Nolanea*, *Peziza*, *Pluteus*, *Psathyrella*, *Polyporus*, *Ramaria* and *Russula*.

Bob also reports the following mushrooms found at Roy's Redwoods in San Geronimo Valley on the same day! *Agaricus xanthodermus*, *Agrocybe praecox*, *Armillaria mellea*, *Bisporella citrina*, *Bolbitis vitellinus*, *Caulorhiza umbonata*, *Clavariadelphus occidentalis*, *Crepidotus mollis*, *Dacrymyces palmatum*, *Daldinia grandis*, *Dermocybe semisanguineus*, *Exidia glandulosa*, *Galerina autumnalis*, *Ganoderma applanatum*, *Ganoderma oregonense*, *Gymnopus dryophilus*, *Hericium ramosum*, *Hygrocybe acutoconica*, *Hygrocybe conica*, *Hygrocybe flavescens*, *Hygrocybe psittacina*, *Hygrocybe punicea*, *Hygrophorus eburneus*, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, *Inocybe geophylla* var. *lilacina*, *Lactarius alnicola*, *Lactarius rubidus*, *Lactarius xanthogalactus*, *Lenzites betulina*, *Leucoagaricus albissimus*, *Lycoperdon perlatum*, *Marasmiellus candidus*, *Mycena haematopus*, *Mycena leptocephala*, *Omphalotus olivascens*, *Phylloporus rhodoxanthus*, *Pluteus cervinus*, *Psathyrella hydrophila*, *Psathyrella longipes*, *Rimbia bryophilum*, *Russula albidula*, *Stereum hirsutum*, *Suillus caeruleus*, *Xylaria hypoxylon*. In addition, we found specimens of *Cortinarius*, *Fomes*, *Hygrophorus*, *Lactarius*, *Mycena*, *Nolanea*, *Peziza*, *Pholiota*, *Polyporus*, *Poria*, *Psathyrella*, *Russula* and *Tyromyces* that were not identified to species.

Next month we will get serious about where to go look for morels this spring but for now, that's all folks!

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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 2002. 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.

Culinary Corner

By Al Carvajal

This month, the theme of the Culinary Group's monthly meeting was a celebration of the Lunar New Year. More than one half of the world's population follows the lunar calendar. Specifically the cultures of China, Japan and the rest of the Southeastern Asian countries follow the Chinese calendar, which is based on a combination of lunar and solar movements. The lunar cycle is about 29.5 days. In order to "catch up" with the solar calendar the Chinese insert an extra month once every few years (seven years out of a 19-year cycle). This is the same as adding an extra day on leap year. This is why, according to the solar calendar, the Chinese New Year falls on a different date each year.



In these cultures, the biggest holiday of the year is the New Year Celebration, a celebration that starts with the first New Moon of the New Year and ends on the Full Moon 15 days later. On the 15th day of the New Year is the Lantern Festival, which is celebrated at night with lantern displays and children carrying lanterns in a parade.

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are celebrated as a family affair, a time of reunion and thanksgiving. The celebra-

tion is traditionally highlighted with a religious ceremony given in honor of Heaven and Earth, the gods of the household and the family ancestors. The presence of the ancestors is acknowledged on New Year's Eve with a dinner arranged for them at the family table. The spirits of the ancestors, together with the living, celebrate the onset of the New Year as one great community. The communal feast is called "surrounding the stove" or weilu.

From the mycological point of view, oriental cooking uses a great variety of mushrooms. A trip to a good Oriental market yields fresh, canned and dry specimens of shitaki (*Lentinus edodes*), enoki-take (*Flammulina velutipes*), straw mushrooms (*Volvariella volvacea*), wood ear (*Auricularia auricula*), white beard or monkey (*Hericium erinaceus*), oyster (*Pleurotus ostreatus*), plus several packages simply labeled as "dried mushrooms" that you can't identify and the store clerks can't tell you what they are. All this gives the cook a great deal of freedom in the use of mushrooms in almost any Oriental dish.

There were a record 66 people at the dinner and they were certainly ambitious when it came to the appetizers. As usual the appetizers were varied and plentiful. Unfortunately, I was involved in cooking and did not take detailed notes of the dishes. The two I got to taste were Julie Swazo's minced pork and ginger over Belgian endive and Jeanne Campbell's black chanterelle and hedgehog wontons. They were kind enough to FEED me in the kitchen. I washed them down with Carol Hellum's oriental punch.



We started the dinner with a delicious sweet and sour soup with shi-

take, straw and enoki mushrooms from Monique Carment and refreshing Chinese chicken salad by David Eichorn. I could have eaten just this for dinner and been very satisfied.

The main attraction of the dinner was the whole piglet roasted Chinese style (Bill Hellums). Presented as an entire pig it was a sight to remember! It tasted great too. To accompany the pig, we served curried sea scallops, prawns and straw mushrooms in a bed of white cabbage and scallions (Alvaro Carvajal), a very tasty baked broccoli and black mushrooms with beef topped with oyster sauce (Fred Kron) and steamed rice by Tom Sasaki.

We closed with a wonderful ice cream from Mitchell's, the best ice cream store on the planet (Lucia Paulazzo), strong decaf coffee or green tea (Remo Arancio). That completed the whole evening. In sum, we had all the parts of a great New Year's banquet! My only regret was that my ancestors were not there to enjoy the meal.

The theme for the next meeting will be a Latin-American dinner. Please come and join us.



Oakland Fair Wrapped Up

The final species lists from the 2001 Oakland fair - lists from individual forays in addition to the complete list - have been posted as an Acrobat document on the Members Only section of our web site (www.mssf.org). Minor corrections have been made to the list that appeared in the January Mycena News, but there is much new information. The document runs to 26 pages! The introduction summarizes the history of the fairs since the first one in 1970 and explains what records the society has kept of the collections. Besides lists, you can also find overall statistics from Oakland, tables of common names and synonyms, field labels you can use for your own forays and more. Most collections brought to Oakland were identified and recorded but a few were unprocessed when the exhausted identifiers went home on Friday night. If one of your own collections is missing from the list, this could explain why.

A paper copy of the document is in the society's library and additional paper copies may be ordered for \$2, postage included, by contacting me at 510-525-1623.

John Lennie

Cultivation Corner

By Ken Litchfield, © 2001

The San Francisco Flower and Garden Show is this month, Wednesday March 20th to Sunday March 24th. It runs from 9am to 6:30pm each day, except Friday and Saturday are open late in the evening till 9pm. Approximately 60,000 people visited last year. Once again we will be having an educational booth and a demonstration garden display. The educational booth is 10' x 10' and displays information about mushrooms and the MSSF and its events and activities for members and the public. If you would like to help with the setup, takedown and staffing of the booth contact Lorrie Gallagher at 415-467-1868 or lorriegallagher@hotmail.com. We also have an 8'x16' "Mushrooms in Your Garden" exhibit that will be setup on Monday and Tuesday, maintained during the week, and taken down on the following Sunday and Monday. If you would like to participate in the garden display contact me at 415-863-7618 or klitchfield@randallmuseum.org. We will need fresh mushrooms in big or interesting specimens, impressive clumps, fruiting or mossy logs, etc. for both the booth and the garden display. If you would like to bring any mushrooms, contact me.

The weekend before the Garden Show we will be having a "Mushrooms in Your Garden" class on Saturday March 16th from 1-4pm at the San Francisco League of Urban Gardener's Garden for the Environment at 7th Avenue and Lawton just southwest of UCSF in San Francisco. It is \$10 for members of MSSF or SLUG and \$15 for the public. To sign up with SLUG call Carrie Craddock at 415-285-7584.

And the weekend before that we are planning a big workday at the Mushroom Garden in the Presidio on Sunday, March 10th from noon to 5ish. It is a quiet secluded place with lots of hummingbirds and songbirds and an occasional hawk or owl. There are all kinds of activities from the strenuous to the easy and plenty of mushroom species to get to work with in situ. We have garden tools but if you have your own, especially a chain saw for logs, bring them with you along with friends and snacking foods and drinks. Please contact me to get specific directions.

We have had several smaller workdays with the community garden folks. A nice one with some of the MSSFers was on Feb 10th. Enrique Sanchez, Mark Lockaby, Debbie Collins, Brian Everett, and Jeff Ackerby redid the herb patch, planted the fencerow with bulbs and herbs, placed plugged logs along the herb patch, and put hardwood chips into the emptied planter boxes for mushrooms to grow on. We have spread around the bedding chips from the museum and where we inoculated them a few weeks ago they have already grown out. Soon we'll have lots of material for ramping up the big compost area where we have been inoculating the stable stuff pile. We've got more stuff to plant and areas to fix up.

We have gotten enough new equipment donated and moved in to the lab space at the Presidio Nursery to remodel the place. We have three new metal cabinets to be used for mushroom herbarium specimens and other valuables, metal shelved rolling carts, white boards and bulletin boards, a bunch of heavy duty metal shelving and bookcases for equipment and spawn storage, split level lab tables, and computers, monitors, printers and accessories. It took over 5 truck loads, and thanks go to Linda Bradford, Debbie Collins, Tom Chester, Jim Miller, and Enrique Sanchez for their strong backs and big vehicles and Terri Beausejour for getting all the stuff donated from Autodesk. Norm Andresen is working on a heavyduty cooker for pasturizing mass quantities of substrate. Because we are still getting the lab set up and organized and because

there are so many MSSF activities during the rainy season we expect to have most of our lab oriented activities in the warmer summer months when the mycelium will be growing out faster anyway. However, we expect to announce at least a few lab activities for members soon, including a grand opening event.

Ken Litchfield
415-863-7618
klitchfield@randallmuseum.org

New Mushroom Website

Nathan Wilson's installation of a new LAMS (Los Angeles Mycological Society - <http://www.nhm.org/lams/>) Website is welcome news to all California fungophiles who can and ought to widen their local foraging and mycological friendships by going to some of our neighbor's outings and exhibitions, either as a viewer or participant. His links provide quick access to all other California mycological society's home pages. I'm sure the superb Mykoweb of Mike Wood does so as well, but I happened to look for first time at the San Diego site (<http://members.cts.com/sd/m/markbkls/index.html>) from the LA Link. The wonderful wallpapers appearing with almost every choice therein are simply delightful, aesthetically beautiful, a joy in themselves aside from the information appearing over them.

Larry Stickney

Dear MSSF Members and Scholarship Committee:

Thank you for awarding me the Esther Colton Whited & Dr. Harry D. Thiers Scholarship. These funds will greatly facilitate me in my pursuit of Clitocybes throughout this huge state of ours.

Please don't hesitate to call or email me regarding sightings!

Gratefully,
Denise C. Gregory
(650) 583-6764
dgregory@sfsu.edu

Mushroom Magazine

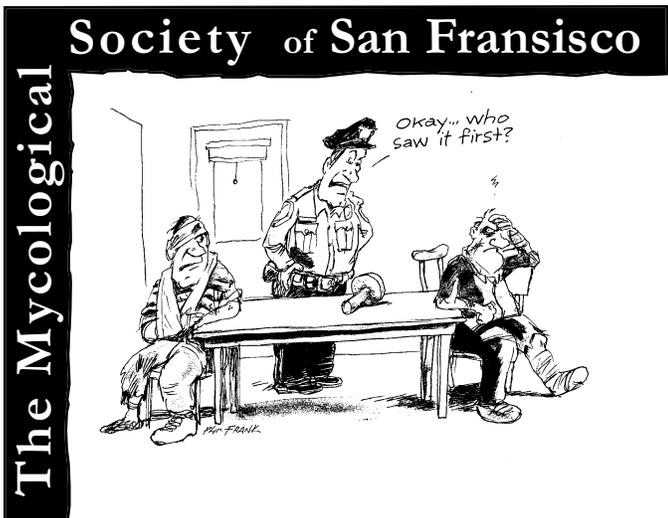
There are a few articles in this issue of Mycena News that were first published in Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming. Many members of the MSSF are familiar with this great publication, but if you're not, we've included subscription information. As our MycoChef Patrick Hamilton says: "any of you who do not subscribe to this best place for international news on what we find dear should."

Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming is a quarterly periodical that primarily contains information on foraging with some information on cultivation. Available for \$16/year from Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming, 861 Harold St., Moscow, ID 83843



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MSSF Calendar, March 2002

Tuesday, March 5, Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner: This month's theme is a Latin- American fiesta. At the Slavonic Cultural Center, located at 60 Onondaga Avenue in San Francisco. For reservations, please contact Zoe Caldwell at (510) 569-1554 or e-mail Karin Roos at karo@sprintmail.com.

Sunday, March 10, Mushroom Garden in the Presidio: A Mushroom Garden Workday in the SF Presidio, 12-5pm. Contact Ken Litchfield at 415-863-7618 or klitchfield@randallmuseum.org.

Saturday, March 16, Mushrooms in Your Garden Class: At the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners Garden for the Environment, at 7th and Lawton in San Francisco, 1-4pm. \$10 for MSSF and SLUG members and \$15 for public. To sign up with SLUG call Carrie Craddock at 415-285-7584.

Tuesday, March 19, MSSF General Meeting: Randall Museum, doors open at 7, lecture starts at 8pm. Our speaker is Martin Bidartondo, who works at the Bruns Lab at UC Berkeley. Martin is interested in "fungus flowers & mycorrhizal cheating".

Wednesday-Sunday, March 20 -March 24, SF Flower and Garden Show: At the SF Cow Palace - Wed, Th., Su. 9am-6:30pm, Fri & Sa 9am-9pm. To volunteer, contact Lorrie Gallagher at 415-467-1868 or lorriegallagher@hotmail.com.

Tuesday, April 2, Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner: At the Slavonic Cultural Center, located at 60 Onondaga Avenue in San

Francisco. For reservations, please contact Zoe Caldwell at (510) 569-1554 or e-mail Karin Roos at karo@sprintmail.com

Saturday-Sunday, April 20-21, Calaveras Morel Foray: Car Camping at Calaveras Big Trees State Park for forays to last year's burn areas. Make your own camping reservation with the Park. No need to make foray reservations. Just meet leaders at 9:00 am at location in note to be posted on camp bulletin board at park entrance. For all other information, call David and Jeanne Campbell (415-457-7662) and Norm Andresen and Terri Beausejour (510-278-8998)

Saturday-Sunday, April 27-28, Evergreen Morel Foray: Foray to areas around Evergreen Road and Highway 120. This area has always been a surprise. Call Mark Lockaby (510-412-9964) and Tina and Thomas Keller (408-879-0939) for information on camping spot and meeting time.

Friday-Sunday, May 3-5, San Jose Camp Foray: Annual San Jose Camp Foray, two nights in tent cabins. Meals provided from Friday night to Sunday lunch. Cost to be determined and announced in April Mycena News but estimated to be about \$95. Foray Coordinator: Tom Sasaki (415-776-0791)