

Eating Nature - Misc. Wild Plants



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GENERAL WILD PLANT SITES


 [Foraging with the "Wildman"](#). Steve Brill. Mr. Brill is a famous (or infamous depending on your viewpoint) naturalist from the New York City area who conducts tours teaching others to recognize and use edible wild plants. His site is partly commercial, but it also contains information on foraging for wild plants and mushrooms and recipes for cooking them. Be sure to check out the section on how he was arrested for collecting dandelions in Central Park.


 [By the Prophet of the Earth](#). University of Arizona Press. A very large text on the edible native plants of Arizona and how to gather and eat them.

 [Native Recipes](#). Paula Giese. This site has recipes based on native North America plants and animals. The site also has a bibliography of books on native American foods.

**You
don't
even
have
to
bring
it
back.**




 [The Forager Home Page.](#) Wes Stone. This site is a compendium of information on finding wild food including mushrooms, plants, and fish. This is a good place for finding links to other sites on edible native plants as well. The site is in Oregon and is most applicable to the Pacific Northwest.

 [Harvesting Wild Foods.](#) A good discussion on gathering wild plants as food and the precautions one should take.

 [Native Tech.](#) Native American Technology and Art. Native American recipes for native plants from the northeastern United States.

 [Rhema.](#) Techniques for gathering and cooking native plants may be found here.

 [School of Self Reliance.](#) A couple of wild food recipes and good information on collecting and preparing *Opuntia* (cactus) pads to eat.

 [Wild Greens.](#) Forest Preserve District of Cook County (Illinois). Gathering wild plant greens.

SPECIFIC PLANTS OR RECIPES

 [Yucca Blossom Salad with Goat Cheese Dressing.](#) Epicurious.



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Native Recipes



Page Navigation Buttons---



WIISINIWAN -- Food Recipes



--Frybread--Tasty Symbol of all-Indian unity



--Native cookbooks



--Nutrition info, cookbooks for kids



--Wild rice recipes



--Maple sugar/syrup recipes



--Corn, hominy, cornmeal



-- Beans and Greens



--Squash, pumpkin



--Deermeat, Meat



--Fish, birds



--Fruit and Berries



--Herbal Teas, Culinary Herbs



--Xocoatl (Chocolate), Aztecs (and south) YUM!



RECOMMENDED BOOKS -- for heavy-duty researchers and for students. About Native plants, food, cooking, health and nutrition textbooks.



Navigation Buttons



CREDITS: Page logo of bear stars constellation (big dipper and others) is probably drawn in black ink by Norval Morrisseau, Gull Lake Anishnabg artist, founder of Medicine Painting style. It was donated to Akwesasne Notes in 1974 and used only once: to put a medicine sign under an article by AIM leader John Trudell, about cleaning ourselves up physically and spiritually from alcohol and other non-Indian vices. I recovered it as part of my saving Notes Great Period art project, traced in FreeHand and colored for these pages. I drew the starmoon. Translation note: Wiisiniwan, the Anisnaabemowin word for recipes topping this page, might really be better interpreted as "Skill or talent for making food good to eat."

Webmistress --Paula Giese.Text and graphics copyright 1995, 1996.

Last Updated: Friday, July 05, 1996 - 12:55:22 AM

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**Learn About
Foraging
with Naturalist
"Wildman"
Steve Brill**



*Caricature by
[Marian Oken](#)*

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With New York's [Best-Known](#)
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"Wildman" Steve Brill



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"Wildman" puts the bite on [Japanese Knotweed](#)

THE PURPOSE of [this hands-on program](#) is to learn about the environment and get back in touch with nature. By [studying foraging and nature](#), we enjoy our renewable resources and reaffirm our commitment to preserving and rebuilding our ecological riches.

Here are all the resources you need to learn about foraging...

Check out the [tour calendar](#) to attend field walks and other events throughout the northeast.



Get information about [travel directions, meeting places and times](#).



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Find out [how to sign up and what to bring.](#)



Learn about the many common, renewable, edible and medicinal [wild plants](#) growing in your neighborhood.



Find out how you may safely identify, collect, and use our delicious, healthful [wild mushrooms.](#)



Enjoy my tasty, innovative vegetarian [wild plant recipes](#) and [mushroom recipes.](#)



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My [resumé](#) provides extensive background information.



Letters of recommendation from [teachers](#) and [kids](#) add another perspective on my background and work.



The [press clippings](#) page supplies entertaining and informative coverage by diverse journalists.



Don't miss the hilarious press and media coverage of [my arrest](#) by undercover NYC park rangers, for eating a [dandelion](#) in Central Park!



Watch [TV clips](#) of my best current and archival appearances on local, national, and international news and talk shows, plus my [public access show](#).



Listen to [radio clips](#) from news and talk show appearances, plus archives of my popular NY environmental listener-sponsored radio series.



You'll also enjoy reading excerpts and [reviews](#) from my critically acclaimed [books](#), which you may [purchase](#), autographed (along with [other](#) foraging items):



[1. Identifying and Harvesting Edible and Medicinal Plants in Wild \(and Not-So-Wild\) Places](#)



[2. Shoots and Greens of Early Spring in Northeastern North America](#)



[3. The Wild Vegetarian Cookbook](#)



[4. Stalking the Wild Dandelion](#)



[Watch excerpts](#) of both my videos series--*Foraging with the "Wildman,"* [on sale now,](#) and *The Wild Vegetarian Kitchen* , [on sale](#) soon.



If you're romantically inclined, you'll love the articles about my 2002 wild [wedding](#) to Leslie-Anne Skolnik.



"Wildman" and Leslie's first child, [Violet Elizabeth Brill](#), was born at 10:11 AM, May 25, 2004--take a look at our first baby pictures.



Like original, off-beat, all-natural music, unusual instrumentation, or jazz? Then the [Brillophone](#) page is for you!



Enjoy chess? Then check out some of the best [tournament games](#) from my pre-"Wildman" days.



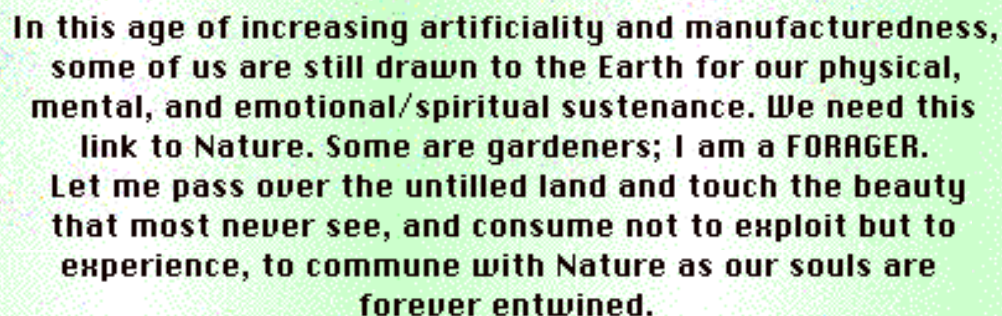
Finally, discover the best related sites on the web, on my [GreenLinks](#) page.



Happy Foraging!

"Wildman" Steve Brill
wildmansteve@bigfoot.com

phone: (914) 835-2153



In this age of increasing artificiality and manufacturedness, some of us are still drawn to the Earth for our physical, mental, and emotional/spiritual sustenance. We need this link to Nature. Some are gardeners; I am a FORAGER. Let me pass over the untilled land and touch the beauty that most never see, and consume not to exploit but to experience, to commune with Nature as our souls are forever entwined.

The Forager Home Page

by [Wes Stone](#)

Some of the foods you can find in the wilds:

MUSHROOMS: The fruiting bodies of fungi are fascinating to look at; certain species are delicious. Of course, you need to be able to identify your mushrooms before eating them!

PLANTS: Many native and introduced plants have edible parts. Being able to enjoy a "trail nibble" adds to the outdoor experience.

FISH: Fishing may be challenging or relaxing. There are types of fish, water, and equipment for anglers of all temperaments.



Columns/Features

[Featured Forage](#): Edibles for all seasons.

[Foray Reports](#): True accounts of my own adventures.

[A Short 'Shroom Primer](#): A whirlwind introduction to the world of mushrooms.

[Taste Ratings](#) and [Quick and Dirty Recipes](#) for wild mushrooms.



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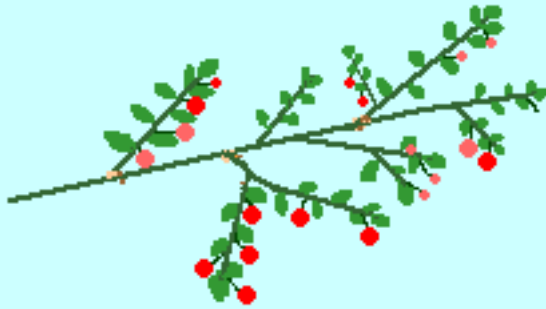
Wes's Other Web Offerings:

[Wes's Backweb Byway](#)

[Skytour](#)

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Red Huckleberry

*Vaccinium parvifolium*

Eating Plants

Fruits are actually only one of the edible parts which plants have to offer. Their leaves, stems, rhizomes, roots, and flowers may be tasty. Of course, since there are also poisonous plants out there, you have to know what you're picking. An introductory plant taxonomy course is tops for this, although an edible plants clinic through a parks and rec. department will probably do. Different times of the year offer different foraging opportunities. Spring in Oregon features the succulent leaves of plants like [Miner's Lettuce](#) (*Montia* or *Claytonia* species). In summer and early fall, plants begin to fruit. Extremely prevalent in our area are the berries of *Vaccinium* (huckleberries and blueberries) and *Rubus* (blackberries and raspberries). Other genera in the Ericaceae and Rosaceae, as well as the Liliaceae, also produce delectable fruits. There is nothing better than to have a trail nibble at your fingertips when hiking, and these species often provide that opportunity. When they are found in quantity, the berries may be taken home to brighten up those breakfast cereal blues you've been experiencing. Wild ginger and licorice fern rhizomes can be enjoyed nearly year-around.

How to get started:

Plant taxonomy and edible plants classes are a good start, but self-study is fine. One book I recommend for our area is *Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast* by Pojar and McKinnon. It actually covers the whole region from the Coast to the Cascades and a bit beyond, and so is broader in scope than the title suggests. Picking regulations on public lands are ill-defined, but generally it is OK to pick fruits and plant parts on forest lands in Oregon. Whole plants are a different matter; generally, you should try to avoid digging up or destroying the entire plant.

Web Sites

There doesn't appear to be any centralized home page. Here are some things I dug up:

A Page of [Wild Edible Plant Links](#)

[Dining on the Wilds](#). Great page, info. on available videos.

A neat page on the [Temperate Rainforests of the Pacific Northwest](#) and another on the [Pinyon-Juniper Forests of the American Southwest](#).

Browse the [Ethnobotanical and Phytochemical Databases](#).

The Detroit News: [Fields, Forests Full of Fine Food](#); a good article with some recipes.

Some weird [Survival Information](#).

A lot of [Botany-related Resources](#).

The [School of Self-Reliance](#) has a new web page.

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'Shrooming

- My [RATINGS](#) of edible wild mushrooms!
- My [favorite simple recipes](#) for wild mushrooms!
- [A SHORT 'SHROOM PRIMER](#), my intro to mushrooms!
- My personal [edibility rules](#)!
- Check out the [Featured Forage](#)!
- [Foray Reports](#)

Mushrooms are some of the most intriguing organisms around. You hardly notice them until you step on them, and if you're not looking for them you'll never know just how **ferociously abundant** they really are. Most mushrooms are LBMs (Little Brown Mushrooms) that defy identification. Even most of the larger ones are unspectacular in color and edibility. Only a few distinguish themselves by being choice edibles, toxic toadstools, or brightly colored little smurf houses. Still, come fall, there are enough of these to make taking an identification class (check with your local community college or parks and recreation department) very worthwhile. I have been hunting mushrooms (yes, this choice of terms always seems to bring a few laughs) for seven years now, and have never tired of finding fungi.

How to get started:

Warning: Do not eat ANYTHING (including but not limited to mushrooms) that you have picked, bought, or been given UNLESS YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY SURE OF ITS IDENTIFICATION!

I write the above not only as a disclaimer but as an attempt to place fungi on equal footing with other foods. There are deadly poisonous mushrooms out there. There are also deadly poisonous plants. Mushrooms which are edible may cause adverse reactions in some people. So can plants and plant parts (you don't want to hear about my experience with rutabagas), meats, and food additives which are generally derived from plants. It is always best to be educated and cautious.

[A Short 'Shroom Primer](#), my own introduction to mushrooms.

Besides taking a class or finding a knowledgeable person to forage with, the following book will be very helpful if you live in Western North America: *Mushrooms Demystified*, by David Arora (Ten Speed Press: Berkeley, 1986). It is truly the mushroom hunter's bible for our neck of the woods. Another book to check out, particularly if you are most interested in eating mushrooms, is [Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America](#), by David Fischer and Alan Bessette. Fischer and Bessette have also written a field guide to Mushrooms of Northeastern North America, which should be out soon and will be an essential guide for residents of that region. The Audubon Society's *Field Guide to North American Mushrooms* is a good companion with lots of photographs, but I wouldn't want to rely on it alone. **Before picking on public lands, it is usually best to check with the local authorities.** In Oregon, most National Forests require permits (usually at no charge for personal use) which may have additional restrictions attached, and State Parks ban picking altogether. These regulations have come about only recently, and are mostly the result of a boom in the mushroom export market. With commercial pickers bringing in thousands of dollars a week, it is not surprising that the woods in some places have turned into a war zone. Destructive picking techniques and greedy frenzies hurt the woods and make them a worse

place to be; think of it as fungal clearcutting. Recreational pickers have a duty to abide by regulations so that we can distance ourselves from these practices and possibly gain access to a wider selection of lands.

Web Sites

There are lots of mushrooms on the Web. If you're looking for a site, check out the mighty lists of links at [MykoWeb](#) and [mycoElectronica](#).

A truly awesome site for the beginning mushroomer is [Mushroom Heaven](#).

Add your name to the list of [Mushroomers Online!](#) Visit [Dave Fischer's Mushroom Page](#) while you're at it.

You can also browse my [foray reports](#) and my [list of local mushroom species](#). Although these seem Portland-specific, they should be helpful to foragers in many areas.

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FISHIN'

Fishing gets a bad rap, but I see it as a basic hunting-and-gathering instinct. There's the lure of trying to catch a fish you can see, the surprise of catching a fish you couldn't see, and always a nice day on the stream or lake bank. Most fish species taste great, and if you are careful (barbless lures or flies) you can release fish you don't want to eat.

- Check out the latest [Oregon State Fishing Reports](#).
- Check out my latest follies in my [foray reports](#)
- For wisdom on lots of Oregon waters, check out [Fishing Oregon Pacific Northwest](#).
- [The McKenzie Page](#) and [The Fly Fishing Shop](#) are good starting places for Oregon flyfishing information.

-
- [Equipment Wisdom](#)
 - [Rods](#)
 - [Reels](#)
 - [Line](#)

- [Terminal Tackle](#)
 - [My Quarry](#)
 - [Favorite Waters](#)
-

Fishing Equipment

Any store with a sporting goods section has thousands of dollars of enticing merchandise in plain sight. I'm sure I have bought my share of useless fishing junk in my life. The key to avoiding the equipment trap is to become familiar with the waters you are planning to fish. After all, angling is an attempt to get the fish to eat or at least bite your lure or bait. Ask yourself: "If I were a fish, would I eat THAT???" Huge spoons and plugs with prices to fit suddenly look less interesting. They may have a place, but it is probably in the ocean or the Great Lakes or something. I am a simple fisherman with a simple budget. I don't have a boat, and while this means I can't cover as much water, I think I spend more time fishing than people who are constantly worrying and fussing over their boats. Maybe a float tube someday...

Rods: In many cases, the rod is the least important if most bulky necessary piece of fishing equipment. This is not true of flyfishing, or some drift-fishing set-ups where you need a very sensitive rod to feel a bite. Match the size and action of the rod to the fish and the water, and you should be fine. Many of the fish I catch could be targets for the old 10 foot cane pole that got me started, suggesting that getting one's line in the water is the most important part of fishing.

For light, finesse fishing for trout and panfish, I've got a 6.5' graphite rod (built by myself from a blank) and a Shimano AX-ULS ultralight reel loaded with 2# or 4# test line. Trout in clear water can be very line-shy, so I use the lightest I can get away with.

For bigger waters and places where there are lots of snags, I've got a heavier 6' cheapie rod (actually free, since I won it as a door prize at a fishing clinic) and

matched reel with 8# test line.

I did a bit of steelhead fishing, and have a neat combo for it, but found it to be too expensive and not productive enough. I live closer to productive rivers now, so maybe I should try it again.

I also fly-fish occasionally, with a cheap 6-weight starter outfit. It's great fun, and I can catch fish on small waters and near shore, though I'm not that good at casting. I've heard that you can't get a really adequate fly rod for less than \$100. I'm not biting in the near future.

Reels: I know zip about baitcasting reels. Spinning reels seem to either last forever or die quickly. My Shimano ultralight and two Ryobis have been good to me. Two Shakespeares (including a fly reel) and an Abu Garcia/Cardinal have been grief. Spincast reels are good to start out with, especially for kids, since they are so easy to cast with. Specifics on reels don't mean much to me. If it holds enough line, casts and retrieves well, and lasts, it's fine with me.

Line: Fly anglers live and die by their line, which is priced accordingly. Spinning anglers just die by their line. If it's too heavy, it will spook fish; if it's too light, you'll lose fish. Four pound test line is plenty for most fish. Even two pound will do for the fish, but any snags in the water quickly take their toll. I've lost several large bass when they wrapped my light line around snags, and I bet 8-lb would have covered me. Then there's the time when I was shad fishing and the guy next to me hooked a 15-lb salmon on 15-lb line. He landed it despite breaking every rule in the book about playing a fish. I would have been toast if that fish had taken off with my 4-lb. Expensive line is better, but you'll land plenty of fish on the cheap stuff that comes on 1000-yard spools (and rarely run out of line).

Terminal Tackle: I always like to keep the stuff on the end of my line small and light. I usually don't use a sinker in still water. This keeps the action of my bait or lure as natural as possible. In moving water, I use as much weight as it takes and no more. Small lures catch fish more often than big lures do in most cases. And that's what I'm usually trying to do: Catch fish. Not the biggest fish, which

usually isn't there. Just fish.

It's hard to go wrong with worms. Almost any fish can be moved to hit a worm or replica thereof if presented in the right way. But bait has a stain on it, one that is unfortunately deserved. Fish will swallow bait more readily than lures or flies, so you'll kill some of them. If I'm keeping fish, I don't mind this. On catch-and-release trips, though, bait is off-limits. Cut bait and salmon eggs can be good baits, but are usually a cut below worms.

One lure has dominated my trout fishing experiences: Worden's Rooster Tail spinner. Get one in a greenish color, 1/8 oz. or smaller, and you've got a killer lure. Unfortunately, the things are getting progressively more expensive. Luhr-Jensen's Hot Tail is a little cheaper and comparably effective. Make sure to debarb the treble hooks on both of these to give released fish the best chance of survival. If you can find single-hook Rooster Tails, stock up on them. Sub-legal cutthroat trout have a particular knack for getting every point of a treble hook into them, and usually don't survive the experience.

The leadhead jig is perhaps the most versatile lure type around. Marabou crappie jigs work as well for shad or trout as they do for crappie. For panfish, I prefer really small ones (1/64 oz.) with plastic bodies. I usually stick a piece of worm on the hook and slowly jig it through the water.

While they cannot be considered a single lure type, artificial flies are even more versatile than jigs. Dry flies can be used on trout, panfish, and bass, and it is so exciting to see something come out of the water to hit your fly. Wet flies work as sort of a lure/bait hybrid. There are two approaches to fishing flies. "Matching the Hatch" implies that there is a specific type of insect at a particular life stage that the fish are feeding on, and the best way to catch fish is to imitate that insect. This approach means you have to carry many different fly patterns with you so you can have the right one ready at the right time. "Attractor Fishing" implies that there are some patterns that fish can't resist even when they're only halfway hungry, and that with just a few patterns you can catch fish almost anytime you go fishing. Attractor fishing is more attractive to me, not to mention less

expensive. My list of attractor flies includes: **Dries:** #8-#16 Elk-Hair Caddis, #12-#16 Adams variants, #12 Bivisible. **Wets:** #8 Wooly Worms in several dark colors, #12 Muskrat, and the above dry flies fished with a little weight to sink them. I find that fishing flies with spinning gear and a floating bubble is about as effective as "the pure way", and despise the "fly angling only" rules. Almost got 'em last year... I'll use a dead drift to start out with, but attractor flies usually draw more strikes when skittered or jigged.

My Quarry

Basically, anything that swims. Bonus if I can eat it and not feel bad, although I do a lot of catch-and-release. I was raised on the trout streams of Southern Oregon--the Sprague, Wood, Klamath, and Williamson Rivers. As a result, I like trout of all species. I'm not picky about size, as an 8-incher will provide a tussle on a light rod and will fit very nicely in a frying pan. When I lived in Eugene for a few years, I learned to appreciate warmwater ponds. You can learn every nook and cranny of a place, catch a lot of bluegill and crappie (even hook and maybe land a large bass once in a while), and still want to go back. In Portland, I've also learned to catch shad, and gained a greater appreciation for yellow perch and catfish. There seem to be a lot of species purists around, but if you cast a wide net you'll have more opportunities and less disappointments. I tried steelhead fishing for awhile, but it got to be disappointing and expensive. My conclusion: If you live on the river, you can fish it when the fish are moving through and the river is in shape. If you can only go on weekends, you are going to have a lot of unproductive steelhead adventures.

My Favorite Waters

Because of the type of fishing I do, I'm not overly protective of my favorite spots. Well, actually, there are a few secret places that aren't on this list...but this is a good selection of waters across the state for the beginning angler.

- The Sprague River upstream from Chiloquin Dam. My home river has some very nice trout in it, and perch and bass during drought years.
- Delta Ponds in Eugene. This is a little urban wilderness. It's good for bass and panfish in the spring, before the weeds get thick. A similar place is Woodburn Pond just off I-5 north of Salem.
- Hills Creek Reservoir. In the winter, this is a nice place to plunk a worm off the bank for trout and drink some hot liquid while you watch your rod tip. It has fair bass fishing in spring and summer.
- Sauvie Island Waters. This wildlife area has a lot of warmwater fishing spots. Webster Pond can be good for catfish, Haldeman Pond has perch, catfish, and trout, and the Gilbert River has similar species. You could probably fish forever here and not fish all the available water. Hot spots and species change from year to year, and moving waters are affected by the tides.
- Various Small Streams. Okay, so maybe I am a bit protective. Streams I can jump across have a certain appeal to me. There are lots of them scattered across the state, but you never know whether they hold any fish until you

try.

- Various Mountain Lakes. Here I go again. Finding a mountain lake that is accessible, productive, and uncrowded is difficult, sometimes frustrating. I've found a few. Take out your map and fill up your gas tank and backpack...

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Featured Forage: As different wild foods come into season, this feature will highlight the best ones.



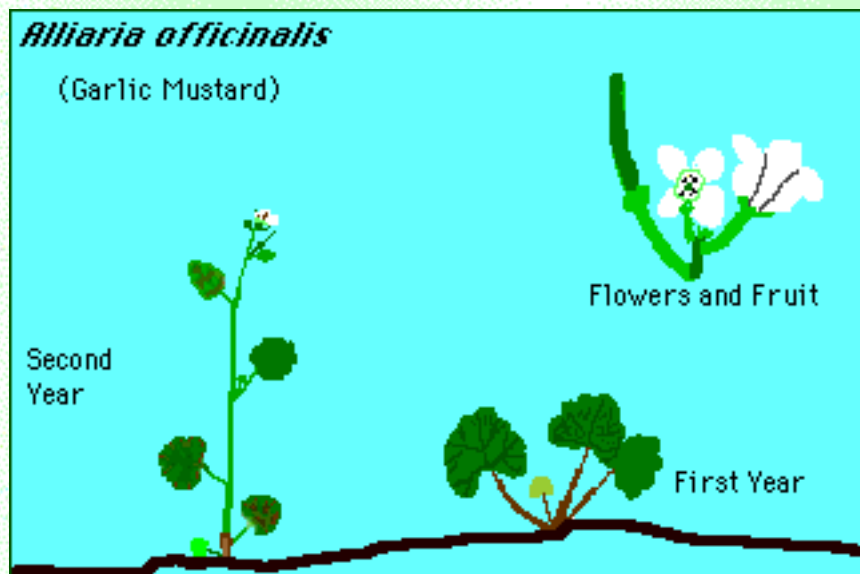
Featured Forage

- [May 5--*Alliaria officinalis*](#)
- [October 31--*Russula xerampelina*](#)
- [July 16--*Vaccinium parvifolium* \(Red Huckleberry\)](#)
- [July 3--American Shad foray report](#)
- [June 12--*Agaricus augustus* \(The Prince\)](#)
- [June 11--*Salvelinus fontinalis* \(Brook Trout\)](#)
- [April 29--*Pleurotus ostreatus* \(Oyster Mushroom\)](#)
- [March 12--*Claytonia sp.* \(Miner's Lettuce\)](#)



Alliaria officinalis

This is an introduced weed that is very common along roads and trails around Portland. Its four-petaled flowers and slender fruits (siliques) mark it as a member of the mustard family, but the plant smells like garlic, hence the common name "Garlic Mustard". Used as both a potherb and a salad green in its native Europe, *A. officinalis* is a good source of vitamins A and C. The plant is biennial, generally flowering in its second year. The heart-shaped basal leaves of first-year plants are probably the best part, although stem leaves from older plants can also be used. The boiled greens have a strong mustard flavor, almost too strong and best softened by serving with butter. Raw, the leaves are a trail nibble with zip. The siliques and flowers also have a distinctive flavor that is closer to the garlic smell.



Distinguishing characteristics

- White flowers with four petals. Four of the six stamens are long, the other two are short.
- Fruit (silique) is long and slender; linear or slightly curved.
- Entire plant is garlic-scented.
- Biennial, producing basal leaves the first year and flowering stem the second.
- Basal and lower stem leaves are broadly heart-shaped; upper stem leaves are increasingly slender and deltoid.



Russula xerampelina

Russula xerampelina is also known as the "Shrimp Russula" because of the aroma it produces when cooked. More sensitive noses may be able to discern this odor in fresh mushrooms, but I have never been able to. In any case, some of this aroma is reflected in the taste, which also is a bit nutty and sometimes rather sweet. The texture is most unmushroomlike, and very substantial.

R. xerampelina looks a lot like a bunch of other purple- to reddish-capped Russulas that may be found in our woods. The key characteristics are listed

below, accompanying the illustration. The stipe stains yellowish to brownish when bruised, and usually has a rosy flush at the bottom. Young buttons may lack the rosiness, but it is usually pronounced in age. *R. rosacea* is similar, with a pinkish cap, no shrimp odor, and a very acrid taste (when fresh) that will burn your tongue. It should not be eaten, but go ahead and taste a bit of the fresh cap and gills. It is quite an experience. Other large, purple Russulas have fragile flesh and do not smell like shrimp when cooked.



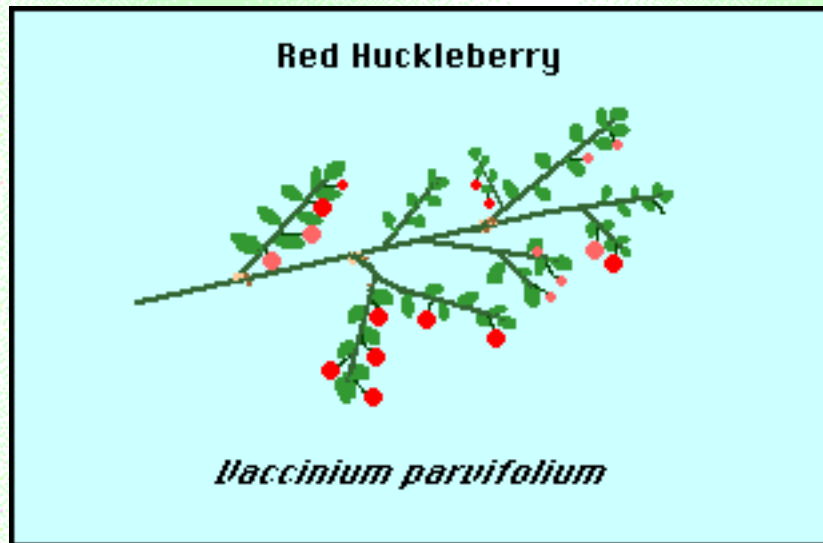
R. xerampelina's flavor makes it great for use with fish, in soups, and in place of shrimp in shrimp fajitas. I know one person who likes it on pizza!

This excellent mushroom is common in fairly disturbed woodland areas, and I have a couple of "secret" patches on campus that keep my supply up throughout the fall. One of these is just a few feet away from a regularly fruiting patch of [Agaricus augustus](#)!



Vaccinium parvifolium (Red Huckleberry)

The red huckleberry (also known as "red bilberry") was one of the first edible fruits I learned. The fruits vary in size, and can be as small as BB's and as large as commercial blueberries. The taste varies as well, but will always be quite tangy.



Red huckleberries grow in all types of coniferous forests, and are present at most elevations in the Pacific Northwest. In mature forests, they will grow out of stumps and nurse logs. They thrive equally well in young forests and clearcuts, and seem to prefer a lot of light. Some bushes in an area will usually be loaded with fruit, and if you are collecting for breakfast or future snacking you can spend a lot of time on one bush. My favorite recipe for red huckleberries is to pick a handful and pop them in my mouth as soon as possible!



Agaricus augustus

The Prince is the most delicious mushroom I have ever tasted. It is closely related to the cultivated mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*), but tastes completely different. The hallmark of both the odor and the taste is a very sweet almondy component. Whether raw, dried, or sauteed, the result is mouth-watering.



Image from [Humboldt State University's Mycology Dept.](#)

Agaricus augustus shares many features with other mushrooms in its genus:

- Chocolate-brown spores
- An annulus (ring) on the stalk
- No volva or cup at base of stalk
- Cap and stalk separate easily

Features that help to identify *Agaricus augustus*:

- Sweet, almond odor
- Cap surface usually stains yellow
- Small, tawny to dark brown scales on cap
- Shaggy scales on stalk below ring
- Annulus large and prominent

In Portland, the Prince is fairly rare, but I know of one patch that has produced two fruitings of mushrooms every year for the past four years. Other patches don't seem to be so dependable. It's usually a struggle to find the mushrooms before the maggots do, but discovering a nice, clean button of *Agaricus augustus* always makes my day!



Brook Trout

One of the best fish for the table is the Eastern Brook Trout, with very tasty white to yellow meat that usually lacks the astringent, fishy character of other trout. Brookies were introduced to Oregon, and have taken readily to many lakes and streams in the Cascades. In some places, brookies are considered a nuisance because they compete with populations of native trout. In others, brookies are a welcome addition, bringing fishing opportunity to previously barren areas.



Small mountain streams, particularly in Southern Oregon, can be teeming with brook trout. The fish eat both terrestrial and aquatic insects, and tend to hole up in beaver ponds, deflector pools behind logs, plunge pools below small waterfalls, and under cutbanks. The largest fish are usually in cutbank areas, and must be approached carefully and quietly. **Nothing** beats the good old earthworm for catching stream brookies. I sometimes thread worms onto 1/64 oz. jigheads for a little more control, and bounce them along the stream bottom. Flies, especially black ants and caddis larva imitations, will also catch fish. Stream brookies tend to be small, but numerous and scrappy. Check the regulations: Some areas let you take brook trout in excess of the normal bag limit.

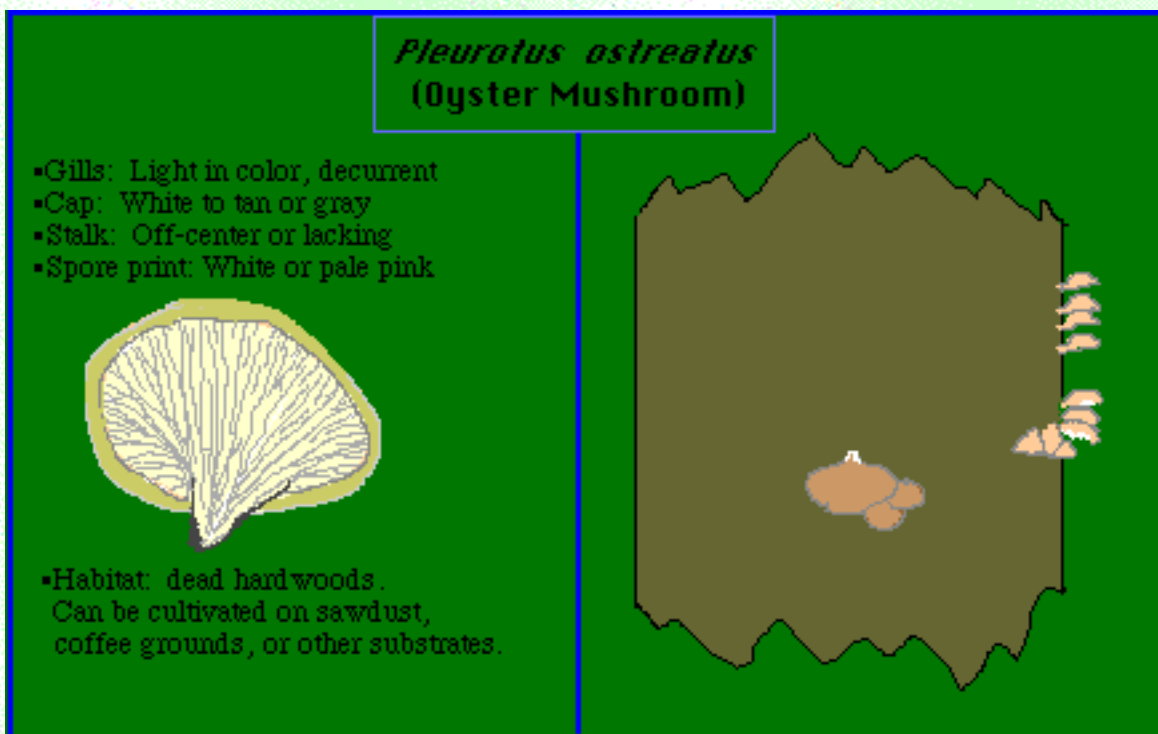
Many Cascade lakes have been stocked with brook trout, usually as fingerlings that grow up into wily, impressive fish. Lakes with inlet streams usually have some natural reproduction as well. Brookies in lakes tend to bite well in Spring or under cloudy skies. Other times, they can be very difficult to catch. Worms and flies can work in lakes, but I've caught my biggest fish on green Rooster Tails (1/8 oz).

Brookies do best in cold, pure water. In streams where grazing or logging has taken place, water temperatures soar and turbidity increases. The result is poor fishing for small and scarce trout. Streams flowing through cool meadows and woods, with clear water and lots of pools, offer better prospects.



Oyster Mushrooms

The oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus* and relatives) is one of the easiest mushrooms to recognize. The clusters of relatively large, fleshy, light-colored fungi appear on hardwood logs and stumps during both fall and spring rains.

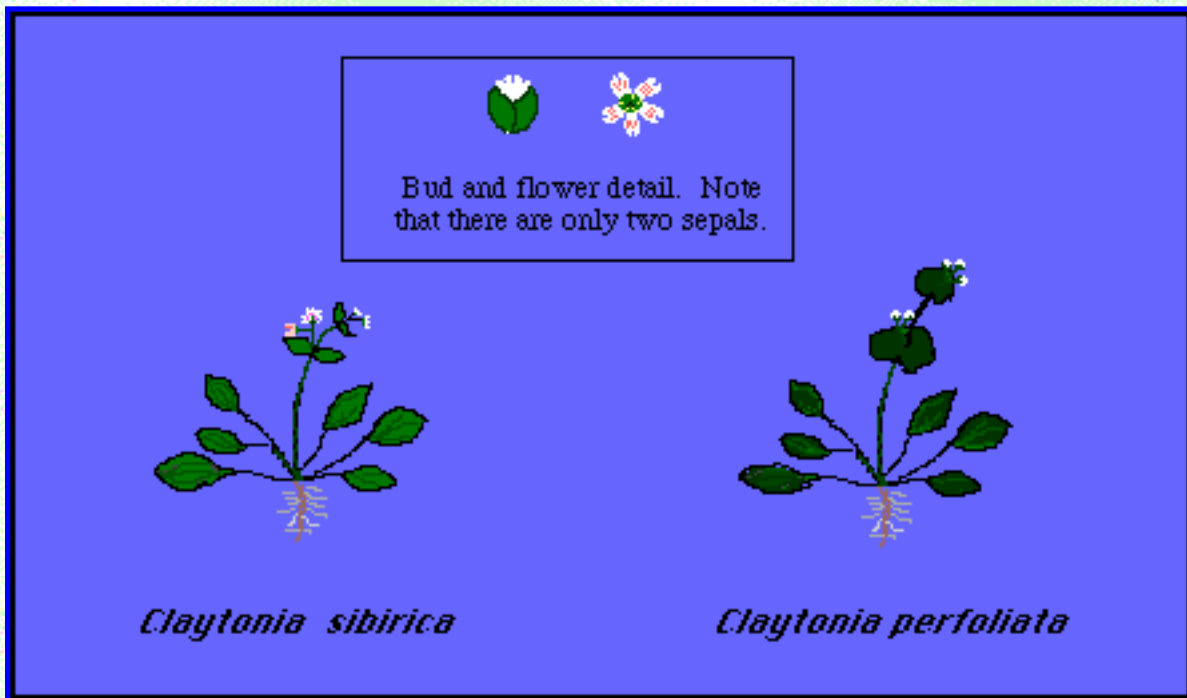


The fruiting bodies should be harvested as early as possible, since maggots and slugs love to eat them! Small, young caps are delicious when sauteed in a small amount of butter or margarine. If the caps are dry, use more butter; if they are wet, use less. To me, they taste like a richer version of the normal cultivated mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*). Small, young mushrooms are also good raw.



Miner's Lettuce

A variety of species in the genus *Claytonia* produce succulent, edible leaves. Around Portland, *C. sibirica* and *C. perfoliata* are most common. Both of these species have been placed in the genus *Montia* as well as *Claytonia*, but the latter seems to be the officially correct classification as of this writing. These species produce a whorl of basal leaves on long petioles (stalks). The basal leaves are usually lanceolate or deltoid (see drawing below). The inflorescences arise on stems. In *C. sibirica* the stem leaves are opposite and separate from each other. In *C. perfoliata*, the stem leaves are joined (connate) around the stem so that each pair of leaves looks like one leaf with the stem sticking up through the middle. The flowers of both species are white to pink with notched petals. Those of *C. perfoliata* are small, in a crowded inflorescence that may appear to be sessile on top of the uppermost stem leaf. *C. sibirica* has larger flowers in a loose inflorescence. *C. sibirica* is sometimes called "candy flower". The flowers of both species have five petals and two sepals, characteristic of the family Portulacaceae.



The stem leaves of both species are edible and a good trail nibble, but the young basal leaves are the best part of the plant. The plants are easiest to identify when in bloom, but by this time the basal leaves are usually old and tough. Once you have seen them in flower, you should be able to identify the young plants to genus.

These species prefer moist, semi-disturbed areas along trails and stream banks. They often grow in large groups, facilitating harvest. One should pick only a few leaves from each plant, leaving the rest to go about photosynthesis and provide food for the slugs and bugs.

Miner's lettuce can be eaten raw or boiled. Raw, it has a mild taste like leaf lettuce. Boiled, it is similar to Swiss Chard. The leaves are delicate, so don't overcook! It takes about 200 mid-size leaves to provide a nice single serving, but since these species are so abundant this quantity can be quickly collected. Miner's lettuce can be used in a salad along with tomatoes and other herbs. When boiled, it is best when seasoned or topped with butter. I like to sprinkle fresh, chopped wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*) rhizome over the cooked greens. Miner's lettuce is supposedly a good source of Vitamin C.

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April 2000 Forays

On April 8, I went on the Oregon Mycological Society field trip to the Sandy River Delta. There were very few mushrooms of note, principally *Verpa*

bohemica in various states of decomposition and a few *Coprinus micaceus*. On an earlier trip, I collected some stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and boiled them to eat. I found them to be of the same quality as spinach, but with a bit less substance.

Recently, I tried something new: clamming on the Oregon Coast. I went to the Old Coast Guard Pier at Garibaldi and joined other diggers at low tide. I still have a lot to learn about this, and am somewhat concerned with the effects of digging on the estuarine ecosystem, but I also see that it is an important means of foraging. I came away with numerous littlenecks and one butter clam. The littlenecks especially were scrumptious steamed and drizzled with melted butter and lemon juice, so I'm sure I will try this again!

During the past week, certain sections of Powell Butte Nature Park have been blooming with oyster mushrooms, *Pleurotus ostreatus*. It's amazing how fast they grow and decay. I've had a couple of batches as side dishes; I'm still undecided about how much I like them. *Claytonia sibirica* makes a good trail nibble and is abundant in the woods at this time of year.



Fall 1999 Mushroom Season Summary

Fall mushrooming in 1999 came in fits and starts. From mid-August to late October, there was very little rain in Western Oregon, and even when the rains did come they didn't bring the same variety of mushrooms as in wetter years such as 1996. Still, there were some high points. 1999 was a very good year for *Boletus edulis* and *Tricholoma flavovirens*, and there were lots of chanterelles as always.

Mid-August: Chanterelles were present in limited numbers on Kings Mountain in the Coast Range. Other mushrooms were virtually absent.

Mid-September: I found a few white chanterelles near Mt. Hood, but later in the fall the main flush of this species never came.

Early October: A foray in the Cascade foothills found more than the usual number of lobster mushrooms and a few chanterelles, but most species were absent.

Mid-October: Chanterelles were still present on Kings Mountain and other Coast Range sites. Other interesting Coast Range fungi: *Polyporus hirtus*, *Amanita smithiana*, *Clitocybe deceptiva*, *Coprinus comatus* and *Pseudohydnum gelatinosum*. Coastal forays brought huge numbers of *Chroogomphus vinicolor* and a few *Agaricus campestris* and *Suillus* sp.

Early November: Forays in suburban Portland revealed: *Lepiota rachodes*, *Agaricus subrutilescens*, *Pleurotus ostreatus*, *Boletus chrysenteron*, *Agaricus praeclaresquamosus*, *Geastrum saccatum*, *Leccinum scabrum*, *Paxillus involutus*, *Amanita pantherina* and an unidentified large “bleeding” *Lepiota* sp.

November 6: A trip to the foothills of Mt. Hood yielded: **Pine habitat:** 1 white matsutake, a bucket of *Leccinum aurantiacum*, *Tricholoma flavovirens* in good numbers, *Gomphidius subroseus* and several *Suillus* species. **Second-growth Douglas-fir:** Loads of golden chanterelles and pig’s ears (*Gomphus clavatus*), Quite a few hedgehogs (*Hydnum repandum*) and *Helvella lacunosa*.

November 12-14: Cape Perpetua area of Oregon Coast. Lots of *Agaricus subrutilescens* and golden chanterelles. A few *Agaricus smithii* and other typical coastal mushrooms.

November 23: I found a few big *Boletus edulis* near Tillamook. Preferred habitat seemed to be shore pine and beach grass without a lot of ground cover. In the past, I’ve had trouble finding this species in good condition, so I was psyched! Other esculents present in quantity: *Lactarius deliciosus* and *Russula xerampelina*. *Amanita muscaria* were everywhere; supposedly this species is a good indicator for *B. edulis*. Other colorful but inedible species: *Russula rosacea*

and *Clavaria purpurea*.

November 27-28: Florence area. *Boletus edulis* all over the place, in mixed pine/spruce woods as well as the pine/beach grass habitat. Chanterelles, hedgehogs and *Agaricus subrutilescens* were popping as well, along with a few *Tricholoma flavovirens*, *Lactarius rubrilacteus*, *Leccinum manzanitae*, *Agaricus smithii* and *Gomphus clavatus*. Not a matsutake in sight, but the *Boletus edulis* made up for it. One thing I can't complain about this fall is the coastal weather. Bad weather at the coast seems to happen only when I'm not there!

1998 November 28: Coastal Mushrooms

I often tell people that the Oregon Dunes and adjacent areas have the best mushroom picking in the state. How is it, then, that I haven't been there since [November 1995](#) and almost didn't get there this year? Well, for one thing, it's quite the drive from Portland. This year, I was crazy enough to make a one-day trip of it, getting up early and scraping the ice off my windshield, gassing up and heading out to be there at the break of dawn. The following eight hours of daylight were a hectic mix of mushroom picking and hiking, and then I got to drive home again. At least it didn't rain.

Lest anyone think differently, I am about to describe a great trip. I hiked over eight miles, saw some great familiar scenery and found many choice mushrooms. My first stop was Yachats, not for mushrooms but to view the pounding surf and the Spouting Horn and stretch my legs. After a bit of this, I hiked along the Oregon Coast Trail between Cummins Creek and the Cape Perpetua Visitor Center. The main mushroom bonanza here consisted of many young and awesomely tasty *Agaricus subrutilescens*, still in the button stage. A large, mature *Agaricus augustus* also appeared. I was disappointed in not finding any hedgehog

mushrooms, and the chanterelles and *Lactarius deliciosus* were all old and waterlogged, but in general the trail was full of fungal color from the ubiquitous Russulas to some temptingly large but disgustingly rank Clitocybes.

My big stop for the day was the Threemile Lake Trail alongside the dunes. Three miles of pure hiking delight, in almost complete solitude. Birds and squirrels and trees and wind and dunes and creeks and lakes. And mushrooms? Chanterelles and hedgehogs and matsutakes, oh my! Someone had been working my favorite matsutake patch, but there were still some for the taking. Chanterelles were everywhere, many in good condition. Hedgehogs were confined to a small area along the trail, but there were plenty. Three nice buttons of *Agaricus smithii*, a sweet-smelling and tasty mushroom, made an appearance, along with a couple *Boletus mirabilis*. And, as always, there were humongous fly agarics to look at.

The fall days are short, and when I emerged from the woods it was time to drive home. Tired and happy as hell was I.

1998 November 8 Mushroom Notes

I went up to the 3000 foot level towards Mt. Hood, and the snow was falling and over an inch deep in spots. I sought matsutakes--*Tricholoma magnivelare*--and found them in two of the three major mycelial patches I identified in 1996. One patch contained three mature mushrooms and one button, all in excellent condition. The other contained three decomposing buttons, not fit for consumption. Four was plenty for me, though! Other mushroom activity was very slow compared to 1996, with few edibles out. A few new white chanterelles made an appearance, along with a few *Boletus mirabilis* and a single hedgehog mushroom.

1998 October 31-November 1 Mushroom Notes

This weekend, I went out with two groups of Lewis and Clark students and mycologist Connie Thorne for [College Outdoors](#) mushroom hikes. We hit the Coast Range looking for chanterelles and did not come back disappointed. There were plenty of meaty, firm golden chanterelles. Other edible species included *Sparassis* (two specimens), *Lactarius rubrilacteus*, *Agaricus subrutilescens*, *Boletus zelleri*, and a few puffballs.

1998 October 24-25 Mushroom Notes

Mushrooms are slowly starting to "pop" around Portland. I went out for a few hours and found some interesting species, but very few edibles. The best of the bunch were *Agaricus albolutescens* and *Pleurotus ostreatus* but I found only a couple specimens of each. Again visiting the Mt. Hood foothills the next day, I found a slow progression of the mushroom season. The most common edibles up there were *Gomphidius subroseus* and *Lactarius rubrilacteus*, but these were almost invariably wormy. Fresh specimens of both white and yellow chanterelles could be found, as well as plenty of puffballs (*Lycoperdon pyriforme*). I visited the Old Maid Flats area and found no matsutakes, but pound upon pound of fresh, clean *Leccinum aurantiacum*.

1998 October 4: Mt. Hood Mushrooms

The rains arrived a little late for the Mt. Hood Salmon and Mushroom Festival, and pickings were slim (but it's wet now, so they won't be for long). An experienced hand can always find a few early chanterelles in the western foothills, so that's what I did after checking out the festival.

At around the 3000 foot level, there was a nice mix of white and golden chanterelles. These will all rot quickly with the moisture, but this weekend they were still in prime condition. I also picked a couple of yummy lobster mushrooms and some pig's ears (*Gomphus clavatus*), and left a few small puffballs that wouldn't have made much of a meal. Fungal diversity was still not up to par, but

should be soon.

1998 August 30: Kings Mountain Chanterelles

The late August or early September climb of Kings Mountain is the traditional beginning of fall mushroom season for me. With the hot, dry summer, would I get skunked this year? No!

I only found two mycelial patches of chanterelles, and only one of these contained fresh mushrooms. It was big enough, however, that I gathered plenty. The old standby patch at 1 mile trail length had only a few moldy fruiting bodies, but as I trudged past the summit I found a bunch of nice chanterelles amongst a salal thicket. Persistence paid off again!

The summer did take its toll on the huckleberries, which were mostly long-gone. There were plenty of ripe salal berries for a trail nibble, though. I found out just how out of shape I was; as a matter of fact, I am still finding out as I write this. The ascent is exhausting, but the descent is harrowing, especially with tired muscles and the loose gravel on the trail. I don't remember slipping quite as often in previous years. The view from the top was nice, although there was a bit of haze and the leaves haven't really changed yet. A large clearcut was visible to the south; I think it is an old one that has been enlarged recently. Boo!!!

1998 July 25: Sauvie Island Catfish and Blackberries

This was a fun trip, the best I've had in quite a while. I got to the island sometime between 5:30 and 6am, and by 6:30 I had eight brown bullhead catfish in the ice chest. I was literally getting bites on every cast for most of the time I fished, and by the time I stopped at 9am I had 21 catfish. I also caught about 10 small perch,

which I released, and a little pumpkinseed. I spent the whole time fishing in just two spots on the bank of Webster Pond, so I know there are still a lot of fish out there. Nightcrawlers fished on the bottom were the key. While waiting for bites, I picked up a large bag of trash. **Please DO NOT trash the island!** These bullheads averaged 10 inches and fought really hard, diving deep or thrashing on the surface.

After getting my fill of fishing, I picked a half-gallon of blackberries near Haldeman Pond. The berries are in their prime right now, and there are lots of them. Yummy!



August 24: Kings Mountain

On a rather wet late summer morning, I decided to go out in search of huckleberries and perhaps some early chanterelles. I found both on the trail to the summit of Kings Mountain. I found that there had actually been an earlier crop of chanterelles, probably the result of fog-drip or thunderstorms about one month ago. These were mostly moldy, but a second crop was starting due to the recent rains. With a few outliers near the base of the trail, the fresh ones were clustered between 1 and 1.5 miles into the trail, in several distinct mycelial patches. Some of the larger old crop was nearer the top, but most came from these same patches. Berries were all over. Species I noted included the ubiquitous red huckleberry, black huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*), *Vaccinium alaskense*, serviceberry, salal, and Oregon dewberry. The view over the Coast range was limited by the fog, but still very scenic.

August 17: Sauvie Island

I returned to Sauvie Island to focus on catfish. Action was not as good as I had hoped, but I caught seven between 8 and 11 inches, which was plenty for supper. I used heavy weights to cover most of Webster Pond with my casts, and also made a visit to the mouth of the Gilbert River at the end.

July 26: Fishing Cedar Island

I went out to fish Cedar Island, as I had two weeks before. I intended to arrive early in the morning, hoping the fish would be more active then. I got sidetracked for a couple of hours and wound up arriving in mid-morning, so I didn't get to test that hypothesis. The reason for getting sidetracked? My first stop was on the other side of the river at Clackamette Park. I caught two crappie and a chub, and lost several other fish.

Fishing on Cedar Island was slow to develop. Boats were plying the good structure areas, with no apparent success. After a couple of hours, my efforts had grabbed me a 9" bass, two pumpkinseed sunfish, and a 14" carp. Not that I was choosy or anything. I took a walk and did some exploring, then came back after 11 a.m. The fishing had suddenly turned on, and in the next half hour I caught 6 crappie between 8 and 10 inches, along with another pumpkinseed. The boats were doing fairly well, too. Then everything died down and I didn't get a bite. The timing of the feeding frenzy corresponded with the arrival of high tide. Hmmm...I'll have to try that again sometime. I also know another little secret about this period of activity, which I won't reveal here. By the way, don't even think about fishing Clackamette on a weekend afternoon, as I did. Jet-ski city!

July 20: Fishing, Blackberries on Sauvie Island

The ODFW was reporting good catches of catfish in the Gilbert River and on Sauvie Island in general, so I got some worms and a parking permit and headed

out there. My first stop was the fishing platform at the mouth of the Gilbert. It was occupied by several people with buckets of catfish. Apparently, this was the only hot spot around. The current was strong, and I lacked the necessary weight to keep my bait on the bottom (some of the fish these people were catching were smaller than their sinkers), so I jigged for perch in the quieter water near shore. Very few casts went without a bite, and a fair number of the fish were 8-9" long. No big ones, though. Scattered in the catch were a chub, a few sculpins, a small crappie, and a pumpkinseed. One person was catfishing in nearby Little McNary Lake; he reported that he had caught two.

I headed to Haldeman Pond, but it seemed to be overpopulated with stunted perch and sunfish. So, I took a short walk to Webster Pond where a fisherman was just leaving with a bucket of catfish and sunfish. After catching a couple of bluegills, I went to the opposite side of the pond and caught five catfish (8-9") and a small perch before my worms ran out. Back at Haldeman, I picked some blackberries. I am happy to report that both the blackberries and the fish (including the catfish) tasted excellent.

July 13: Fishing, Huckleberries in the Timothy Lake Area

After an astronomy session at Mt. Hood, I dropped over to fish Timothy Lake and the Oak Grove Fork of the Clackamas River. Not many fish were rising at Timothy, and I only caught two small cutthroat trout on a spinner. While walking the lakeshore, however, I discovered some nice bushes loaded with ripe blue huckleberries (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*). Most huckleberries in the area weren't ripe yet, but will be within the next month. I waited until after I fished the Oak Grove Fork before picking a pint or so.

There is one very nice stretch of the Oak Grove Fork below Timothy, close to the road yet not too easily accessible. I caught fish in several of the holes here, but spent most of my time fishing a single large pool at the base of a cascade. This

place produced a seemingly endless procession of 7-11 inch trout, all cutthroats except for one brookie. The best producer was a size 14 Adams, either skittered across the surface or weighted and drifted as a wet fly. I also caught fish on a spinner and an ungodly-looking bass streamer I tied years ago. The Oak Grove Fork is limited to flies and lures only, with a limit of two trout. I found an empty package of bait hooks there from someone who didn't heed the tackle regulation, which makes it even more amazing that there were 20 or more fish in this one pool.

July 12: Fishing on Cedar Island, Willamette River

This was a prospecting trip of sorts, to see if there was indeed good fishing in this slough area of the Willamette near West Linn. The *Oregonian* Outdoors section had written this place up as one of the recent improvements funded by an angling license surcharge, and noted it as a "bass- and crappie-rich lagoon". To be brief, it warn't that rich when I was there.

The island is a short walk from Mary S. Young State Park. A bridge connects the mainland to the C-shaped island, and most of the fishing is concentrated inside the "C". There are several fishing platforms on the shore, which are probably more useful in high water. Presently, the water is down, and most of the shoreline is accessible to walk around. My first fish was a 4" pumpkinseed sunfish: very pretty but very small, and a couple of others followed from casts into shoreline structure. Letting a worm sit in open, deep water produced a 12" bass and, much later, a 9" yellow perch. The perch was a pleasant surprise, but after that I went a long time without a bite (except for little sunfish striking my bait as I was reeling it in). For some reason, there were a lot of dead and dying catfish along the shore.

I had no further action until I worked my way into a rather inaccessible portion of the lagoon. There, with some structure around, I caught a bunch of small perch, a couple of small bass, and a few chub. In the end, the fishing was sort of fun, but too much time and work for the size, number, and quality of fish.

June 30: Fishing at Bonneville Dam

With a free Monday afternoon, I decided to try the shad run at Bonneville Dam on the Columbia. Extreme water conditions had limited my success on shad at Clackamette Park this spring, and I wanted a couple of fish for a shad bake and subsequent stir-fries. The daily fish counts showed tens of thousands of shad going over the fish ladders, so I knew the fish would be there. I wasn't sure of the water conditions, or whether my normal crappie jig rig would work at Bonneville, but I decided to give it a shot.

My first stop was the Bradford Island visitor center. On the bottom floor is the fish viewing area, where shad could be seen moving through the windows almost continuously, with a fair number of sockeye, steelhead, and a few chinook and lamprey. Fishing on Bradford Island appeared to be slow. I saw one angler with a couple of shad, but most appeared fishless at the time. I watched a sturgeon angler fight a large one for twenty minutes before losing it, and saw a couple of small sturgeon caught. Finally, I decided to make a go of it for shad, and rigged up with a chartruese crappie jig below a 3/8 oz. weight. My first cast was rewarded with a strike, and after a nice battle I landed an 18-inch female shad. I missed a few strikes before catching another, almost identical silver rocket. Then the fishing slowed down as the wind came up hard from the west, making casting and staying out of other anglers' lines difficult. My neighbors took one or two fish, and soon I caught another shad, a 14-inch male that I released.

Slightly upstream, one of the sturgeon fishermen was into a big one, and most of us shad anglers took a break to watch him try to bring the monstrous fish in. The fish was 100" long, well over the legal limit, and had to be released after a trophy picture.

Someone stole my spot while I was over looking at the sturgeon, and while I didn't begrudge them the spot or the couple of fish they caught there, my new standing place had some snags in bad places, and I depleted my terminal tackle. I

did catch a 10-inch rainbow trout, and much later a squawfish, but the shad bite seemed to be on the decline. I watched another sturgeon angler lose a 9-footer that had briefly smashed the surface of the water, and that other lucky fisherman get his fourth sturgeon of the afternoon, an oversized one of 87".

The rain finally came with a vengeance, and on my drive home I encountered several ferocious downpours. When cleaned, both of the shad yielded voluminous egg sacs in addition to the meat (the eggs from one of the fish weighed nearly one pound!), allowing for several fine meals.

June 28: Fishing Willamette Valley Ponds

I took an afternoon trip to Woodburn Pond, hoping to get some action from bluegill and bass. The weather turned nasty, with a little rain and lots of wind. I saw one nice bass, but couldn't get it to bite. The shoreline was full of recently hatched bass, 2-3 inches long, that constantly got in the way by grabbing my worms and lures and moving them away from where I cast them. Bluegill were in their gravel spawning beds, especially on the western shore. The fish make shallow nests about a foot across, and the eggs are guarded by male bluegill after spawning. The necessity of staying close to the nest means the fish don't get spooked easily. Sometimes, spawning bluegill will ignore bait, but these fish were very aggressive. The closest nests were just five feet from the shoreline and clearly visible with polarized glasses. I dropped my worm straight down into the nest, saw the fish open its mouth and take the bait, and pulled out a bluegill. I caught about a dozen, and kept six for dinner. These beds provided about the only action on the pond.

On the way home, I stopped by Wilsonville Pond for the first time. This pond had been crowded earlier in the afternoon, but everyone had left on account of the weather. Wilsonville is a deeper, colder pond with different aquatic vegetation. I didn't run across any actively spawning bluegills, although I saw some likely beds. I caught one large pre-spawn female, but the water will have to warm a bit

more for good bluegill action. This looked like good catfish water, and I did see a dead one in the shallows.

June 20: Fishing Cullaby Lake

On Friday, June 20, I fished Cullaby and Sunset Lakes on the Oregon Coast between Seaside and Astoria. It had been years since I last stopped by, so I figured it was time to visit again. I hoped to catch some yellow perch, small but good eating.

I arrived at Cullaby at around 10 a.m., and began hitting the weedlines around the docks. Cullaby's shores are mostly lined with lily pads, so fishing from the bank is limited to a few patches of open water. I used my traditional rigging for perch, a 1/64 ounce white mini-jig tipped with a piece of nightcrawler. My first casts were unsuccessful, but in one of the smallest pockets of water I caught and released a 10-inch bass. I kept fishing that same little pocket for about two hours, and ended up with a nice mess of perch from 6-9 inches, using both the jig and a bobber/worm set-up. Afterwards I headed around the shoreline to a place where fish were rising. I discovered that all these fish were small bass, ready to hit the worm with vigor. Larger fish splashed from time to time in the lilies, but I couldn't get them to bite even when I placed my casts well. The trail along the lake edge turned into a wilderness of sorts as I moved on, munching on some very sweet salmonberries. After fighting through the brush, I finally reached a prime pocket of water. For some reason, I wasn't getting any bites. Then, I saw a school of minnows scattering, with an ominous "V" wake behind them. A huge bass! I cast a worm out, and landed it right on top of the wake. The bass instantly broke the surface and grabbed the worm before moving into the weeds. I knew the bass was probably more than a match for my 4-lb. test line, and would use the weeds to its advantage. I fought it out of one patch, then into another. My drag croaked as the bass took out line, shooting across the open water area. Finally, it must have found a stick or something to wrap my line around, as while fighting the fish through some more weeds my line went limp and I saw that the fish had broken

off. Maybe I should bring an outfit with heavier line, just for these situations. I caught a couple of bluegill and some more perch to add to my dinner collection, and ate a few more salmonberries. Then the rain started, and with it the fish stopped biting. Utterly stopped biting. My luck was over for the day. I tried Sunset Lake across the highway, where I had caught some nice perch in the past. Alas, the only fish that I could raise were little sculpins, but because of my success at Cullaby I went home with a cooler full of delicious fish and yet another story of a big one that got away.

June 18: Local Foraging

[*Agaricus augustus*](#) continued its streak of fruiting on campus. I have seen this mushroom during both fall and spring every year since Fall 1992. Only two specimens were found, and both were maggot-ridden despite being young.

Stropharia rugoso-annulata, a species I first noticed on campus last spring, had a massive fruiting in several areas of campus.

Salmonberries (*Rubus spectabilis*) are turning ripe along the banks of small local streams. In areas with more sunlight, osoberries (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) and [red huckleberries](#) are also ripening.

May 31-June 1: Fishing the Cascades

I went on an overnight trip to some of my favorite lakes in the upper reaches of the North Santiam River. The weather was cloudy and often rainy, but I hoped that would mean good fishing and no crowds.

I pulled in to Fay Lake in the Big Meadows area. My plan was to hike to Fir Lake, then return and fish Fay and the North Santiam before retiring for the night.

Although I hiked a trail littered with fallen logs and patches of snow, I was not alone at Fir. Three other anglers were there, two of them in boats. The fish were very reluctant to bite; I saw one small brookie follow my lure, but got no strikes. I couldn't raise a fish at nearby Pika Lake, either.

When I got back to Fay, the rain had stopped. The water was high, and the lake looked very "fishy". After several casts, I caught an 11-inch brookie, and after several more I got a 12-incher. Very surprising, since my only previous success at Fay had been a batch of small rainbows in 1993. After this, I walked halfway around the lake without a strike. Because of brush around the edges of Fay, bank angling requires a lot of log-walking, and I got myself into a number of precarious positions. Out on one log, I got four strikes in succession in different directions, and managed to lose all four fish. Even after resting the area for a while and changing to different lures and worms, I was only able to get one fish, a 10-inch rainbow.

I then moved to the upper North Santiam, a fast-flowing meadow stream. I had great fun here two years ago with small cutthroats and brookies, but the fish were few and far between in the section I fished this year. The blooming wildflowers made up for the slow fishing, and I fell asleep at night to the rush of the water.

The next morning, I planned to hit Daly Lake, then move on to Parrish and/or Don Lakes. Daly is a very fun lake to fish, with lots of little inlet streams and enough shore access that you don't have to climb on logs if you don't want to. It is also a blue jewel with views of snow-covered ridges in the distance. Using a spinner, I caught 12 brookies and cutthroat in the 6-10 inch range.

Time flies when you're having fun, and I never made it to Don Lake, which has often been the most productive for me. I wound up going to Parrish Lake, another gem with a catch: a marshy island separates it into a deep section and a shallow section. On this occasion, I was able to walk a log to get out to that island. Plant life out there was incredible, dominated by white-flowered buckbean and insect-eating sundew. Fish were rising all over, but most were small, in the 6-8 inch range. They hit anything and everything with wild vigor. I found a few places

where slightly larger fish hid, places that most anglers wouldn't think of fishing. As I released all of my fish, I hope to have even better fishing on a future trip--perhaps when some of this year's brookies have grown a bit.

May 11-18: Local Fishing

The weather finally turned nice enough to warrant fishing expeditions. On May 11, I visited Woodburn Pond. The air temperature was over 90 degrees F, but the water was still cool and murky. Fish were generally not lurking where they usually are at this time; I did catch one 10" bass and a couple of bluegills. Look for this to be a hot fishery in the next few weeks as we get more hot weather followed by moderate temperatures.

The shad run is happening on the Willamette River at Clackamette Park. My first trip was a bust, but I caught one fish and lost several more on each of my subsequent trips. The fishing runs hot and cold here; I haven't hit a hot period yet, but it's just a matter of time. To brush up on shad basics, read [last year's report](#).

The most exciting event was when the fellow next to me hooked a salmon. The fish ripped line off, headed downstream, wrapped the line around a log, and turned up the Clackamas, as this guy stood there ignoring us when we told him to go after the fish. I went downstream and started retrieving the line hand-over-hand, and soon the still-hooked fish was free of the log. The lucky angler finally came down and after much effort was able to land and release the chinook. (Salmon season is closed on the Willamette.)

March 21: Urban Report

I went out looking for miner's lettuce, and there was plenty of it out there, but the big bonus of the trip was a patch of Mica Cap mushrooms (*Coprinus micaceus*). The clusters of mushrooms were all ages from very young to deliquescing. I picked a bunch and fried them up. Pretty good, though not one of the very best.

Also, a few oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) appeared on an alder snag that produced last year. Notable plants showing up included stinging nettles, chickweed, and wild ginger.



November 22: Portland Urban Mushroom Report

Gee, Portland got snow on November 18-19. Some places were hit harder than others with the very heavy wet stuff, but now only a few remnants remain. Campus mushrooms are still popping up. The delicious highlight was a very nice cluster of shaggy manes along a dirt path in the woods. The other 'shrooms have not been of interest as edibles, but they include *Boletus chrysenteron*, *Leucopaxillus amarus*, *Agaricus praeclaresquamosus*, *Tricholoma zelleri*, and big bad *Amanita pantherina*. A single mycelial patch of the shaggy parasol (*Lepiota rachodes*) continues to be very active, but is unfortunately on ground treated with chemicals, so no munching for me.

Oregon Coast Range Foray from Nov. 10

I forgot to include a brief note on the second mushroom hike I did with the [College Outdoors](#) program. On Nov. 10, we visited some mature forest stands in the Oregon Coast Range near McMinnville. Sharp eyes found a plethora of mushrooms, including lots of chanterelles, the biggest hedgehogs I have ever seen, and a few specimens of *Clavariadelphus truncatus*. There were many other species around as well.

November 4: Mushrooms in the Cascades

My primary focus was the 3000 ft. level below Mt. Hood, right at the snowline. It

looks like this might be my last foray in this area this year. The mushroom diversity was incredible, with edibles including *Gomphus clavatus* (Pig's Ears), *Leccinum aurantiacum*, *Gomphidius subroseus*, *Rozites caperata* (Gypsy Mushroom), and even one specimen of *Sparassis crispa* (Cauliflower Mushroom). There were also quite a few *Tricholoma magnivelare* (White Matsutake), and many white and golden chanterelles. Diversity among non-edible species was also excellent.

October 21-30: Various Forays

I have been very busy the past few weeks--busy foraging! and facilitating the first of a pair of mushroom hikes through LC's [College Outdoors](#) program. On October 21, I went to the same places I visited on my October 8-9 foray and found matsutakes in acceptable supply right below the snow line. The chanterelles were mostly waterlogged, and other edibles were in short supply. One beautiful mushroom I found was *Hydnum fuscoindicum*, the Violet Hedgehog. I found one specimen of the edible Hedgehog (*Dentinum repandum*); hopefully, more will be on their way.

Portland's shrooms took a dive for a while due to cold weather. Still, the LC parking lots have been producing some amazingly humongous specimens of *Amanita pantherina*, and the *Russula xerampelina* crop just keeps going and going...

The actual mushroom hike, on October 26, went to some timberlands in the Coast Range and came up with an incredible array of fungi. *Cantharellus cibarius* and *Russula xerampelina* were present in good quantities, and there were also a few *Agaricus subrutilescens*. We saw more than 30 species in all, a good introduction to the fungi even if most were inedible.

The following day, I made my annual pilgrimage to the Fall Mushroom Show and Festival in Eugene. Afterwards, I headed east to Hills Creek Reservoir for an overnight fishing/mushrooming expedition. I chose this place wrongly over Fall

Creek to the north. The fishing was virtually nonexistent, although I saw some other anglers catch a few small bass. The night was cold and foggy, and the next morning's mushrooming was relatively unremarkable. I found a grand total of one golden chanterelle in good condition, as well as some winter chanterelles (*Cantharellus infundibuliformis* group, see my [edibility ratings](#) for comments on their attributes). After this, I decided to spend the rest of the day at Fall Creek, and to concentrate on fishing before mushrooming. On the way, I stopped at a county park to pick up some nice *Agaricus campestris* and a few *Marasimius oreades*. Fishing at Fall Creek was fun and reliable: native rainbows and cutthroats from 6-10" on worms. I released a bunch and then took my limit. Mushrooms were considerably more common than at Hills Creek: A bag of chanterelles, some *Pleurocybella porrigens* that turned out to be a bit bitter, a few *Russula xerampelina*, and a single *Boletus mirabilis*. As I prepared to head home, it started raining. Good timing!

October 8-9: Cascades Foray

I went on an overnight trip to several areas in the Cascades near Mt. Hood. The recent rains had wet the soil, but mushroom season wasn't quite in full swing yet. (Although it certainly is as I write this, on October 13!) My first stop was at a fairly low elevation, second growth forest with a lot of downed woody debris. The fungal species were few but distinctive, with *Cantharellus subalbidus*, *Cantharellus cibarius*, *Chroogomphus tomentosus*, and *Gomphidius subroseus* the most prominent. Several specimens of *Boletus mirabilis* were found, but these were either maggotized or attacked by *Hypomyces chrysospermum*. Other notable but occasional finds were *Cortinarius* sp., *Gomphus floccosus*, and *Suillus punctatipes*. I fried and tried the *Suillus*, it had a mild flavor and pleasing puffball-like texture.

My next stop was in a higher elevation forest closer to Mt. Hood. I parked right next to a pair of young, healthy *Boletus edulis*, and jumped out of my car expecting to find more. Unfortunately, it was not to be. The fungi of this area

included *Suillus lakei*, *Russula brevipes* (all maggot-infested), more *Suillus punctatipes* and *Chroogomphus tomentosus*, and a single *Tricholoma magnivelare* button that the maggots had really enjoyed.

My last productive mushroom foray came along the Laurel Hill trail. This area had very few mushrooms, but the highlight was an incredible grouping of young *Boletus mirabilis* on several adjacent logs. Usually, I would have to hunt through a whole forest to find that many.

In addition to the mushrooms, I had a good [astronomy observing session](#), found a few berries, and caught one 8" rainbow in Trillium Lake. This was one of the few fish in the lake with the good taste to fall for a fly; the one angler who was having a lot of success was using PowerBait. Yuck!

October 6: Portland Mushrooms

Friday's rain brought out the mushrooms in droves. A walk through the LC campus and a local city park revealed hundreds of Shaggy Parasols (*Lepiota rachodes* var. *hortensis*). Most of these were old and had been claimed by maggots and slugs, but there were plenty of fresh ones as well. I also found four nice specimens of *Agaricus augustus*, two of them buttons. The oyster mushroom fall fruiting is well under way. I ran into several shaggy manes and even three golden chanterelles.

Other mushrooms that made an appearance: *Agaricus praeclaresquamosus*, *Boletus chrysenteron*, *Lepiota naucina*, *Lepiota rubrotincta*, and *Suillus caeruleus*.



September 20: Timothy Lake Area

I more or less repeated my journey of three weeks ago, except this time I searched for mushrooms instead of huckleberries and allowed more time to fish the evening rise at Timothy Lake. I was quite successful. The day started out slowly. Bushwhacking along the banks of the Oak Grove Fork of the Clackamas above Timothy Lake yielded no fish and only inedible/mediocre mushrooms such as various *Russulas*, *Gomphus floccosus*, and *Paxillus atromentosus*. The Timothy Lake trail area was essentially barren. I tried to fish the Oak Grove Fork below Timothy Dam, but the reservoir was being drawn down so the flow was extremely high. I caught a couple of small cutthroats, but most of the river was unfishable. An attempt to reach Buck Lake to see if last year's matsutake bonanza would repeat itself failed: a flood of Anvil Creek had left a gaping notch in the access road.

After these setbacks, I continued south towards Ripplebrook, aiming to reach successful foraging grounds chronicled in my [Foray Report from October 22, 1995](#). I found white and yellow chanterelles in prime condition, just coming up. No other mushrooms were present in any quantity, although hopefully *Lyophyllum decastes* and *Coprinus comatus* will show up within the next couple of weeks! There was no shortage of chanterelles; I left plenty of them out there. At one point, I saw a movement above me in the trees and came face to face with a Northern Spotted Owl! Not having a mouse handy, I threw a white chanterelle on the ground, and I'll be damned if the silly bird didn't fly down right in front of me for a closer look! The owl wasn't frightened at all by my proximity, and even insisted on following me through the forest as I picked.

It was late afternoon by this time, and I proceeded to Timothy Lake to get some fish to go with my mushrooms. The rise never really took off, with only a few fish jumping near shore. Nevertheless, I ended up with three nice brook trout. The first one fell for a spinner, and the others were taken on a topwater wet fly presentation that began as accident rather than design. I didn't have fly floatant handy, and couldn't get my elk-hair caddis to stay dry (fishing it behind a floating bubble). So, I cast near rising fish and retrieved just fast enough for the trailing fly to make a wake from below the surface. An 11" brook trout came completely out of the water and splashed down on the caddis, and I was hooked (so was the

fish!) I caught another nice brookie as well as a little guy, and missed a few more strikes. As the twilight grew deeper, I could hear the splashes of rising fish throughout the lake, all of them beyond my casting range, but exciting still as they played a symphony of varying tempos and volumes.



September 9: Portland Urban Report

Surprisingly, no mushrooms seemed to care that it rained a week ago. The only new arrival was a cluster of *Coprinus sp.*. *Agaricus augustus* should have appeared, but the only one I found was the sole specimen from an earlier fruiting following a slight sprinkle on August 26. I wasn't expecting anything from that shower, and as a result I got to the mushroom too late.

Berries are still ripening here. Salal are in prime condition, just luscious. I also had some *Smilacina racemosa*, a red berry with a burnt sugar/fruity/caramel taste. Of course, there are plenty of Himalayan blackberries (*Rubus discolor*) around as well. A very nice natural snack bar!



September 1: Kings Mountain (OR Coast Range)

I returned to Kings Mountain (see [foray report for Sep. 3, 1995](#)). Since the precipitation pattern for this year was a near-repeat of 1995, I hoped for a similar early flush of chanterelles, and was also counting on a good picking of red huckleberries. I was not disappointed on either count.

The first mile of the trail featured a lack of mushrooms, with the exception of one old clump of puffballs. After one mile, chanterelles began to appear. The ground was very dry, and most were in excellent condition. Because of the dryness, however, the cap color was very dull. This made finding them a challenge. Retracing my steps, I always seemed to find mushrooms I had almost stepped on.

From one mile to 1.5 miles along the trail (1000-1500 ft. elevation), chanterelles were pretty thick off to the sides of the trail. *Cantharellus cibarius* was the only mushroom species I found, aside from the aforementioned puffballs, some polypores, and several bedraggled Russulas. The chanterelles seemed to prefer eroded, disturbed ground. In the same area where I found most of the chanterelles, elk sign and tracks were prevalent.

After 1.5 miles, the chanterelles stopped appearing as the trail climbed through rocky and exposed areas. At the viewpoint just past the 2-mile mark, I picked a couple hundred [red huckleberries](#). Many berries were dry and shriveled here, so I continued on to the summit. After signing the register, I proceeded to the secondary summit and ate lunch among the gentians. The sky was mostly clear; I could see Mts. Hood and Adams, but the top of Mt. St. Helens was clouded out. Just a few feet from my lunch spot, the first in a long line of loaded red huckleberry bushes beckoned to me. I picked over a pint. There were a few *Vaccinium membranaceum*, but I get the feeling that this is borderline habitat for the species.

On the way down, I picked some nice, ripe salal berries. I also found more chanterelles that I had overlooked on the way up. In order to increase my chances of perception, I adopted a standard procedure. I wandered around slowly until I saw a chanterelle. I then sat down next to it and gazed out over the duff. It's amazing how many more you can see from ground level. For the uninitiated, chanterelles typically grow in loose groups, so when you find one you'll usually find at least a couple more nearby.

I ended up with a very nice haul of chanterelles, and they are now being put to use. (Killer omelette: 2 or 3 farm-fresh eggs, freshly sauteed chanterelles and onions, and pepper-jack cheese.) After descending, I fished a bit in the Wilson River but got only one bite. On the way home, I stopped by Dorman Pond at the junction of Highways 8 and 6. It appeared to contain mostly stunted bluegill and bass, although I did catch one nice crappie.



August 30: Timothy Lake Area

On Friday, I drove to the area around Timothy Lake in the upper Clackamas River drainage. I wasn't sure what to expect. There had been a little rain, but it turned out not to be enough to cause any mushrooms to fruit. With 'shrooms out, that left fish and berries. I tried Timothy Lake with no luck, and then headed down to the Oak Grove Fork of the Clackamas River for some fishing. The river in general lacks good holding water, but I was able to find a nice stretch. Access to this section involved some gut-busting bushwhacking, which is probably why it hadn't been fished out. I caught six nice, little cutthroat between eight and 10 inches. I only kept one, as the limit is two. I didn't find fishing this good at any of the other places I stopped. Most of the river is barren, fast water. There are some good holes a bit farther down, but they are so close to the road that I mostly caught sublegal trout.

Later in the afternoon, I hiked the Shellrock Lake trail and picked some huckleberries. The two main species were *Vaccinium membranaceum* and *V. ovalifolium*. Some of the berries, especially the *V. ovalifolium*, were dried up. In this condition, they tasted like very sweet blue raisins! The *V. membranaceum* varied in flavor from plant to plant; when I found a plant with lots of delicious berries, I picked on it for awhile. *Gaultheria humifusa*, the little berry with the big taste, was also around.

I was too late for the evening rise back at Timothy; the fish were jumping but I only had a few minutes of legal fishing time. Someday, I'll figure those trout out...



July 15: Urban Berry Report

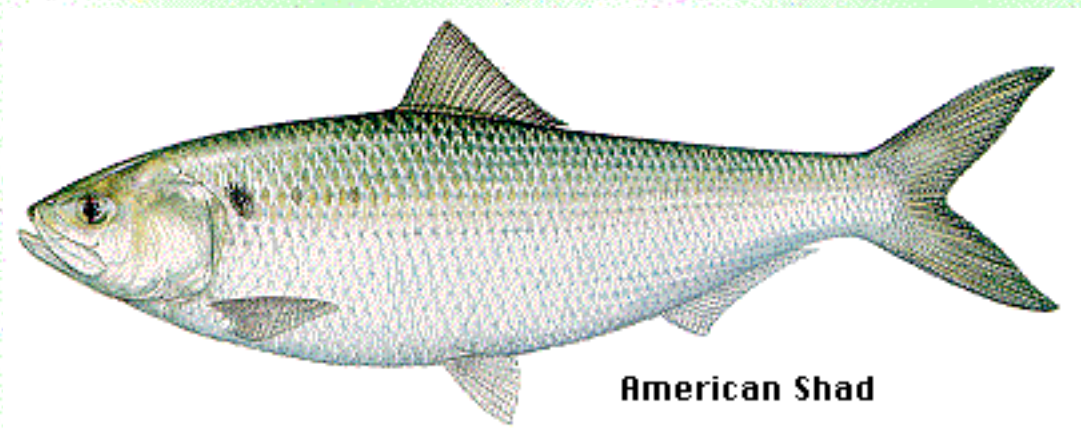
With the blistering heat of the past week, there are no mushrooms coming up in Portland right now. However, this weather is just right for ripening berries. [*Vaccinium parvifolium*](#), the red huckleberry, currently has the most ripe fruit. While size and taste vary from plant to plant, this year's crop seems to be very

large and sweet. Maybe it's just because I haven't tasted them for a while. Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) is coming on strong as well, although most plants don't have ripe berries yet. A few thimbleberries (*Rubus parviflorus*) are ripening as well. Species that haven't ripened yet are *Vaccinium ovatum*, *Rubus discolor*, and *Disporum hookeri*, among others. Also, berries at higher elevations won't be ripe for some time.



July 3: Willamette River Shad

I live just a couple of miles from Clackamette Park, acknowledged as the best bank fishery for shad on the Willamette River. In mid-June, I managed to divert myself from my daily activities and take a look at this fishery. I saw a bunch of people having a bunch of fun catching a bunch of fish. I watched their technique carefully and came back the next day with a bit of tackle and some high hopes. I left with a skunk, two days in a row. I seemed to be using similar equipment and a similar presentation to the "pros", but I wasn't having any luck. After stewing about this for a couple of weeks, I decided to give it one more try. On June 28, I caught two shad and lost several more. On July 3, I caught four and lost several. I hadn't varied my technique much, but the fish had gradually decided that my jigs were fair game.



American Shad

Shad are an anadromous member of the herring family. They were introduced to Oregon from the East Coast. Many Northwest fishermen regard them as trash, not

worth eating, but I think they're great. Asians and Eastern Europeans share my opinion, and make up a large proportion of the bank anglers at Clackamette. The standard rigging for bank fishing is a swivel and slinky-style sinker, two to three feet of leader, and a 1/32 or 1/16 oz. crappie jig or shad dart. The pros at Clackamette always remove the feathers from the jigs. I don't know why, but it seems to work. This rig is cast out perpendicular to the bank and slowly retrieved as it drifts downstream. Most or all bites seem to come when the jig is quite a bit downstream. Snags can be a problem, but are minimized by keeping the jig moving and using the slinky sinker.



Many anglers think the shad are particular about something: shallow water, a certain spot, chartreuse jigs, long leaders, etc. I'm not sure that any of these make a consistent difference, but I'll keep using what has caught fish for me: a 3/8 oz. slinky, 2.5 foot leader, and a 1/32 oz. crappie jig with a red head, yellow body, and no tail.

I've got a light spinning outfit I use with 4# test line. This can be pretty hairy with the shad, which average 15-20 inches. I've lost a couple of behemoths that completely overmatched me. To complicate matters, shad have very soft mouths, and more often than not the hook pulls out before you can land the critter. Those with heavier outfits may land a greater percentage of fish, but they still lose a lot of them. Shad make sudden, line-popping, hook-dislodging runs, usually punctuated with a jump or two. A light drag setting is advised. The initial run may be directed right at you, but shad have an extreme dislike for the shoreline and will fight their hardest just a few feet from the bank. This is usually where the hook pulls out. Just keep hanging on; there are more fish out there.

The traditional end of the shad run is July 4, but the fish were still there in numbers today. Even the pros weren't hooking them on every cast, but there was plenty of action. Anglers at Clackamette stand shoulder to shoulder, which can be unnerving for someone used to solitude. The crowd is generally very friendly, however, and the fish seem to travel in groups. If your neighbor connects with a fish, you are likely to have a bite within a couple of casts, and vice versa.

Shad for eating should be thoroughly cleaned, scaled, and skinned. I also remove the strip of oily red meat along the lateral line. Try soaking the fish in salt water for an hour immediately prior to cooking. The recommended cooking method is to slather them with butter and onions, seal in aluminum foil, and cook in a 300 degree oven for four to five hours. **Note: For your information, studies of some game fish in the Lower Columbia River Basin have shown elevated levels of carcinogens. Shad were not a part of these studies, but should be comparable to other anadromous fish. The risk is probably minimal, especially for moderate consumption, as these fish do not spend much of their life foraging in the polluted waterways.** The long cooking time is essential to break up all of the tiny bones. The bones will still be visible, but are crunchy rather than dangerous. Roe from female shad can be dipped in eggs and flour, and fried. Some people rave about it; I found it interesting in texture but lacking a distinct flavor of its own.

Shad fight just as well as trout of similar size, and light tackle really brings this out. Those who look down on shad should know that the shad runs on the East Coast were in trouble for many years due to dams and pollution, the same menaces that face Northwest salmon and steelhead today. New Englanders are probably jealous of us, as we have a virtually untapped run of millions of shad right in our backyard!



June 19: Urban Mushrooms

A little bit of rain on Monday and Tuesday, and *Agaricus augustus* is back at it. I found three new specimens. Two were mature; I salvaged parts of them. The other was a nice little button. All three campus patches that fruited last fall have now fruited this spring. I also found a single specimen of *Agaricus subrutilescens*: Add that species to the list of fall mushrooms that have fruited this spring.



June 18: Haldeman Pond Fishing

On June 18, I went to Haldeman Pond on Sauvie Island to catch some yellow perch. Using salmon eggs, I caught 11 perch (little guys, 5-7 inches, but great for breakfast!), 3 rainbow trout from 9-12 inches, and three bullhead catfish. All in all, a fun afternoon, and worth the \$3 Sauvie Island Parking Permit. Afterwards, I went to visit my friend Tuck, who works at an organic farm on the island. The farm is a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) business, and the selection of produce there is yummy to say the least! (But, I still prefer foraging! :))



June 9: Urban Report

Back in Portland after a two week absence, I checked out the progress of plants and mushrooms around LC. *Agaricus augustus*, the "Prince" of mushrooms, finally fruited here for the first time this spring. The dry weather slowed the mushrooms' development, and as a result all but one of the specimens I found was riddled with maggots. Oh, well, one mushroom is better than no mushrooms, especially when it's a Prince and you have a few Oyster Mushrooms to go with it...

The bumper crop of oyster mushrooms just keeps going and going. A tree I found early in the season broke off, and from the stump sprouted a very nice clump. I found several other fruitings, but most were old. In Tryon Creek State Park, I saw a very large tree covered with thousands of oysters. The tree was neither accessible by trail nor legal to harvest from, but definitely spectacular to look at from a distance.

Salmonberries (*Rubus spectabilis*) are coming along pretty well, though most aren't ripe yet. It will be a while before any thimbleberries (*Rubus parviflora*) or osoberries (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) are ripe. Sweet-cicely (*Osmorhiza sp.*) is all over and makes a nice trail nibble/breath freshener.



May 24-June 4: Southern Oregon Fishing

I visited my parents in Chiloquin for two weeks around Memorial Day. On my way down from Portland, I stopped at Hills Creek Reservoir near Oakridge. On my first cast with a jig-and-worm, I caught a 10" rainbow, then spent two hours catching nothing. My next stop was Salt Creek, where I caught a few 6-8" rainbows and brookies and lost a lot of tackle in the process. Salt Creek is a brushy and difficult stream, one that I'll have to try again someday. Over on the other side of the Cascades, I fished Crescent Creek. Crescent Creek is usually a nice little stream with cutbanks. Now it was full of roaring, brownish water. I lost two fish before giving up. The Little Deschutes River was neither high nor muddy, but for some reason my favorite holes were lacking in trout. I had never been skunked there before, but this time I left without a bite.

I had a much better outing on Memorial Day. Two streams flowing from the Cascades east into Upper Klamath and Agency Lakes are Threemile Creek and Sevenmile Creek. Both provide excellent small-stream fishing for small brook trout, but each has its own special character. Threemile rushes quickly down the mountain; its only holes are small waterfalls and occasional log pools. These fish-holding spots had been completely rewritten by the winter's floods, and the fish were scattered. Many holes contained no fish, and none was big enough for more than one fish. I really labored for my five fish, but it sure was fun. Incidentally, a gut check of Threemile brookies always reveals a diet consisting of terrestrial insects, mostly ants with a few beetles.

Sevenmile Creek, on the other hand, is a slow and meandering stream. The brookies here hide under cutbanks and feed on nymphs and other underwater morsels. The pools are large and can hold many fish. Sevenmile Creek was in pretty sad shape for a while, with damage from the drought and logging operations causing high water temperatures. Now that the water level is up and the banks are vegetated, the fish are starting to grow to fit the size of the holes. I caught 15 fish in less than an hour, many of them in the 8-10" range.

On June 2, I checked out the Sprague River, my "home river" in Chiloquin. It still was muddy and out of shape, but the fish were there. Nice trout jumped every now and then, but there didn't seem to be a consistent feeding pattern. I got four bites, but didn't land a fish.

I was much luckier on June 4. The Williamson is considered by many to be one of the best trout rivers in the state. True, it has a lot of big fish in it, but I always preferred the Sprague because of the easier access and uncrowded conditions. I made an unplanned stop on the Williamson near Chiloquin and wound up staying for awhile. I cast a salmonfly imitation out, and a 13" trout hammered it. I lost that fish, but another one jumped near a rock just a few feet from shore. I let the fly drift from far upstream, and a rainbow I estimated at 16" slammed it. After a few jumps, it threw the hook. I failed to connect on a couple of other bites, but then I caught an 11-incher. I moved downstream and caught a 9-incher before I suffered a fatal backlash. After eating supper and respooling, I went back. I soon caught a 10-incher, and lost another pretty large one. The fish were hitting salmonflies, but not with enough vigor to stay hooked. I debarbed a 1/8 oz. Green Roostertail, my old standby lure, and worked it near the shore. On my first cast, I connected with a large fish and was in for a good tussle. With 4-lb. line, I couldn't horse this fish, but it stayed hooked and eventually I pulled in a 17" rainbow. The fish was a bit tired, but I soon revived it and watched it swim away. I cast the lure again and was immediately doing battle with an even larger fish. This one tried to take me around rocks, and forced me to let it rest at times. After one desperate surge straight at me, it came into shallow water and under control, my largest landlocked rainbow ever at 23". I flipped the hook out and the deep-bodied, powerful fish thrust its way back into the current. I made two more casts before losing my lucky lure to a rock and calling it a day.



May 16: Urban 'Shroom Report

Portland's 1996 weather has been so weird that the mushrooms are getting mixed

up. Two species that I have previously found only in Fall (*Boletus chrysenteron* and *Lepiota rachodes*) showed up on the LC campus this week. I also found a new mushroom species on campus: *Stropharia rugoso-annulata*. It apparently was imported on some wood chips or mulch. A welcome introduction, indeed! On the other hand, the characteristic May crop of *Agaricus augustus* hasn't shown up yet. :(

The weather dried out for a few days in early May; in order to keep some immature oyster mushrooms from drying out, I gave them a few sprinkles of water. It worked splendidly, and last week I harvested a couple of nice clumps. More may be coming soon with the rain we've had this week.



April 25: Oysters, Oysters Everywhere!

At least it seems that way. A month ago, I saw a few worn-out oyster mushrooms on a snapped-off alder. Over the weeks since, I have found fruitings on a few other trees (mostly maggotized or at least past their prime). The original tree started to bear another batch last week, but I was so engrossed with this that I forgot to check the trees in the immediate vicinity. Two of them had very large clumps of mature oyster mushrooms on them, easily visible but somehow overlooked before! Luckily, most of the fruiting bodies held up to the soggy weather of the past two weeks, and were remarkably free of maggots.

Hopefully, I am sharpening my observation skills with each new walk through the woods, and will start seeing more of the mushrooms I would have missed before!



April 18: Urban Report

Spring is springing by leaps and bounds in Portland! In addition to an explosion in miner's lettuce and chickweed, oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) are

popping up on dead alders. All but one of the patches I found earlier in the year were too old, but just today I found several clumps in the very first stages of growth. I plan to monitor them every day until they are ready for harvest. There are dozens of little fruiting bodies less than 1/2 inch across. It will be interesting to see how many of these develop into full-blown mushrooms and how many stay tiny. I saw one little group of *Coprinus micaceus*. The largest members of the cluster were big enough to eat, but had already been colonized by maggots (strange how the little buggers can find a fruiting body with so short a lifespan). Wild ginger leaves are appearing in areas where they disappeared over the winter.



April 8: Fishing at Woodburn Pond

With record high temperatures, warmwater fish are stirring in Willamette Valley ponds. I visited the Woodburn Pond on Monday and came home with three nice largemouth bass from 12-15" in length. The fish were in good condition, pre-spawn, and taste excellent! The population of medium and large bass in the pond seems to have grown since last year, as evidenced by the number of other fish I spooked during my walk around the shoreline. (Another note: The 15-incher had a healed jaw mark on its back where something larger had tried to grab it!) The bass were all hanging out in the shallows near submerged brush. Much of the former shoreline is under water, and the water is a bit murky, but the fishing seems to have picked up a month earlier than last year due to the warm spring temperatures. Bluegill were in scattered pre-spawn schools, but hesitant to bite. I only caught one. With another week or two of warm weather, they should join the bass in the shallows and provide excellent fishing!



Edible Plants Report: Portland, March 12

Spring is springing upon the landscape in the Willamette Valley. I easily collected

enough [Siberian Miner's Lettuce](#) (*Claytonia sibirica*) for cooked dinner greens yesterday and as part of a salad today. Pacific Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum tenuipes*) is rapidly covering the ground in its preferred areas. Resources list the roots of this plant as edible, but I haven't tried it yet. One of the first trees to flower is the Osoberry, *Oemleria cerasiformis*. It is out in full force, although it will be a long time (three months or so) before the drupes of this species ripen.



Foray Report: 1995 Nov 19-21

This was a three-day, two night trip to the Central Oregon Coast, between Waldport and Reedsport. On the first day, I visited a stand of Sitka Spruce and found quite a few chanterelles and hedgehog mushrooms (*Dentinum repandum*). Also present were *Agaricus smithii* (a coastal version of *A. augustus*), *Agaricus subrutilescens*, *Albatrellus ovinus*, and *Ramaria araiospora*. I later hiked to Threemile Lake south of Florence, and found most of these species as well as a few others: *Amanita muscaria*, *Amanita pachycolea*, *Catathelasma imperialis*, *Lactarius deliciosus*, and *Cortinarius alboviolaceus* were the most conspicuous. Threemile Lake lies in the dunes, and as the soil became more sandy other mushrooms appeared. *Tricholoma zelleri*, *Leccinum manzanitae*, and numerous *Suillus* species were present, along with a few white matsutakes (*Tricholoma magnivelare*).

I camped overnight at Threemile, and after collecting a few mushrooms on the way out decided to do some non-mushroom activities. Evergreen huckleberries (*Vaccinium ovatum*) were quite plentiful along the Siltcoos River, so I picked some. On the third day, I went inland a bit, but stayed within the zone of Sitka Spruce. I was rewarded with more chanterelles and hedgehogs. Some interesting *Amanita* species were also sighted, as well as *Gomphus clavatus* and a peculiar *Agaricus* (= *A. lanipes* ?) which stains orange-red at the base of the stalk and on the very surface of the cap.

The Central Oregon Coast is a varied environment, with lots of opportunities for birdwatching and beachcombing. If you plan on collecting mushrooms there,

check with the Siuslaw National Forest (which also oversees the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area). They have some rather severe restrictions on personal collecting (over 0.5 gallons of mushrooms requires a paid permit), and the permit conditions specify a list of mushrooms which may be harvested. The mushroom list incomprehensibly leaves out many plentiful coastal edibles such as *Agaricus smithii* and other *Agaricus* species, *Russula xerampelina*, *Lactarius deliciosus* and *L. rubrilacteus*, *Armillaria mellea*, and *Boletus mirabilis*.



Portland Urban Mushroom Report: 1995 Nov 16

After a week of freezing temperatures followed by record rains, mushrooms are again popping up on the Lewis and Clark College campus. This fall has been at least as productive as 1992, the last year with optimally timed autumn rains.

Surprising 'shrooms: The flush of *Lepiota rachodes* seems to be over, with no new fruiting bodies being produced. *Agaricus augustus* is turning up in some new areas on campus, although I have found only seven individuals within the last week. One specimen of *Cantharellus cibarius* showed up in the woods, only the second chanterelle I have found on campus in four years of 'shrooming. *Russula xerampelina*, previously unreported from campus proper, has shown up in a couple of parking lot dividers, and the specimens have been **huge**. *Lycoperdon pyriforme*, usually uncommon here, has been found on wood chips and at the base of tree trunks.

Prolific fungi: *Amanita gemmata* and *A. pantherina* are all over campus. In Tryon Creek State Park, huge fruitings of *Armillaria mellea* have occurred. *Clitocybe nebularis* has been ubiquitous in both places.

Future fungi: With the rain, we may get a fruiting of *Boletus aereus*, which has not been seen on campus since 1992. *Pleurotus ostreatus* is also likely to make an appearance.

For more on mushrooms at Lewis and Clark, check out [Operation Fungus Among Us](#), my comprehensive list of fungus species on campus.



Foray Report: 1995 Oct 29

I went far afield this weekend, and also went home. I drove down to my former hometown of Eugene and stopped by the Fall Mushroom Show and Festival at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum. This is a regular tradition for me. The show just keeps getting better and better. There was a "humongous fungus" table, with huge chanterelles, shaggy parasols, a giant puffball, and the biggest fresh specimen of *Boletus edulis* I have ever seen. There were very few gaps in the display tables; this is obviously a good year in terms of fungal diversity.

After hanging out at the show for a couple of hours, I drove east to Fall Creek. This is another place rich in memories. I hoped for both mushrooms and fish, and I was not disappointed. *Boletus mirabilis* and *Pleurocybella porrigens* were both present in gatherable quantities, and the whole place was lousy with *Boletus zelleri* and *Amanita pachycolea*. Most of the lobster mushrooms (*Hypomyces lactifluorum*) were past their prime, but I managed to salvage a couple.

As for fishing, I just wish I had more time. I caught and kept a small cutthroat and a slightly larger rainbow, and released a beautiful 13" redbreasted rainbow. I had an even larger fish break my line when I was too cavalier about my knot. Too bad it got dark so quickly. Fall Creek is beautiful, with lots of deep pools. It may get its name from the waterfalls, but in my mind it will always be associated with the season of Fall. The fish take readily, and the creek isn't crowded with swimmers. On the last weekend of trout season, it felt good to be back.



Foray Report: 1995 Oct 22

This was an afternoon trip which resulted in some good pickings. I initially tried

an area above North Fork Reservoir on the Clackamas River, but left quickly as most of the chanterelles were old and waterlogged and there seemed to be a lot of hunters around. Next, I went eastward past the Ripplebrook Ranger Station and tried a couple of other spots. The first of these was packed with inedible mushrooms, but I also got some *Clitocybe odorata*. The next place had quite a few white chanterelles (*Cantharellus subalbidus*). Not all of them were in good condition, but because of their abundance I could pick selectively. There weren't any matsutakes around, although there were some specimens of *Armillaria zelleri*. I wandered across the road into a stand of young Douglas-fir, and entered a completely different fungal jungle. The chanterelles here were *Cantharellus cibarius*, but the most common mushroom by far was the Fried Chicken Mushroom (*Lyophyllum decastes*). Some huge but old specimens of *Lycoperdon perlatum* were also present. I started home with my haul, but soon happened upon a clump of shaggy manes. Not wanting to collect at the immediate edge of the road, I ventured into the woods and found more patches. Yummy!

While mushrooms were my main focus on this trip, I also stopped to sample some red huckleberries near the Oak Grove Fork.



Foray Report: 1995 Oct 13

As on September 3, I trekked to Kings Mountain in the Oregon Coast Range. I also planned to visit my traditional chanterelle grounds on the Wilson River. Kings Mountain was practically barren. Only a good harvest of *Lycoperdon perlatum* made the mushroom picking a success. A few chanterelles and angel wings were present, but most were too old. The red huckleberries were done for the year, but there were still some tasty salal berries ripening. The view from the top of the mountain was great. Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams, and the top of Mt. St. Helens were visible, all blanketed in snow. The view to the west was marked by golden fall leaves amongst the evergreen stands in the former Tillamook Burn.

After coming down from the mountain in the late afternoon, I drove a bit farther west to the Wilson River just below the Jones Cr. bridge. I have hunted chanterelles here for the past two years, but the place is now gone. I saw signs saying "Timber Sale Boundary", and soon saw the awful truth: **A clearcut was in progress on this land!** The area near the road had already been devastated, and trees littered the ground closer to the river. There were a few *Boletus zelleri* and *Suillus lakei* in the uncut area near the river, but the bulk of the area will not produce mycorrhizal fungi for years. I don't know what they wanted with 40-year-old trees. Pulp for paper, maybe? I guess I'll have to find another area, but this trip was ruined.

Urban Report (10/15):

In the Portland area, *Lepiota rachodes* is showing up all over! Other mushrooms of the urban woodland are poking their heads out of the duff as well. Seen in various parks around the city over the weekend: *Amanita vaginata*, *Agaricus hondensis*, *Agaricus augustus*, *Agaricus xanthodermus*, *Agaricus diminutivus*, *Boletus chrysenteron*, *Suillus lakei*, *Geastrum saccatum*, and *Lepiota naucina*.



Foray Report: 1995 Oct 01

I left for Timothy Lake late in the day, hoping to catch the evening rise and maybe some fresh mushrooms. Both mushrooms and fish were hard to come by, although eventually I did score some matsutakes.

I drove to Timothy Lake on US26, admiring snow-coated Mt. Hood against the clear blue sky. When I reached the lake, it was clear that no fish were active, so I hiked the north shore trail with mushrooms on my mind. Most of the mushrooms were left over from the previous rain a month ago, and few were in any condition to collect. I did find one tasty *Boletus mirabilis*, but there were many more which had long since been maggotized. Most of the fresher mushrooms were

unpalatable/poisonous (*Ramaria stricta* and *Amanita smithiana* for example). I also found a single specimen of *Amanita alba*, the first time I have found this species. A few old matsutakes and chanterelles were around, but all were rotten.

I decided to head for Buck Lake, which is about 5 miles from Timothy. The trailhead sign and many road signs had been torn down, so finding it took a little map work. I also donned a blaze orange vest for the hike, on account of the numerous hunting rigs I encountered on my way there. The short trail to the lake runs along the edge of a clearcut, providing a view of Timothy Lake. A forest fire was also in sight, as were more clearcuts. The trail then ducks into the woods, although the ground is rocky in places. Buck Lake is clear and a beautiful sapphire blue, but it was also dead as far as fish were concerned. Even with the sun up, it felt 20 degrees cooler than at Timothy, so the fish probably were ensconced in deep water. The fungi I found were not spectacular, although I salvaged pieces off a couple of matsutakes. On the way back, something made me take a detour off to the side of the trail, and I stumbled on a loose patch of about 15 matsutakes. One was a nice, firm button, two were mature but still in good shape, and the rest had been maggotized. Still, I had plenty for a stir fry plus several soups.

I drove back to Timothy Lake. The evening rise did materialize, but there weren't as many fish as two weeks ago, and these just weren't hitting. They would jump out of the water as if to laugh at me, or take a mayfly on the surface just after I pulled my fly off. Gunfire from hunters rumbled in the distance as I trudged back to the car. Oh, well. I returned via the scenic route of Highway 35 to Hood River and down the Columbia Gorge to Portland, catching skip from faraway radio stations and looking forward to future forays.



Foray Report: 1995 Sep 16

This time, I made a loop, heading from Portland on Highway 224, crossing on FS57, and returning via Highway 26. My planned destination was the Rock Lakes

area. I hiked about 2.8 miles from road 5830 to Middle and Lower Rock Lakes, and then returned. My main objective was fishing, but I was disappointed here as I only caught one 6-inch rainbow in Middle Rock. The best part of this hike was the preponderance of *Vaccinium ovalifolium* between Frazier Turnaround and the Rock Lakes. These were without a doubt the tastiest berries I have ever eaten. Mushrooms were in abundance between Shellrock Lake and Rock Lakes, although most were dried out and this isn't a picking area anyway. Middle Rock Lake does look like it could be a good fishing area, and I did see some nice fish rising but couldn't get them to take anything. Shellrock Lake also has some nice water, although I only saw small fish. Lower Rock Lake is shallow and looked dead.

After returning to my car, I did a little mushroom picking around Hideaway Lake. The only abundant edible was *Rozites caperata*. There were a *lot* of these, some in good condition. Mostly, however, the ground was overpopulated with sordid *Russulas*. There were a few *Boletus mirabilis* around, but unfortunately they all had been maggotized. This area really needs a rain to become productive for mushrooms. As for berries, *Gaultheria ovatifolia* was all over. These are delightful to pop in one's mouth, just full of sweetness!

I was still sore over the bad fishing, so I drove to Timothy Lake. Along the way, I threw a few casts into the Oak Grove Fork of the Clackamas, but didn't have a bite. I arrived at Timothy with a couple of hours of daylight left. Fish were just starting to jump. They wouldn't touch a worm or a spinner. I got a couple of bites on parachute flies (the fish were taking large mayflies), but I couldn't hook them. I finally got a 10-inch cutthroat (which fought like it was about 13 inches) on a wet fly tipped with a worm. I'm still not up to snuff as far as fishing goes. I think I need more practice. I was concentrating on fishing at Timothy, but I did notice a nice cluster of *Amanita smithiana*. These are pretty white mushrooms, but definitely not on the list of edibles!

I could see lightning painting the clouds to the south as I rolled out of Timothy and onto US 26. The Big Dipper hung in the sky to the northwest as I went over the pass. Then, I descended into the fog and rain that told me I was headed back

to Portland.



Foray Report: 1995 Sep 10

I screwed around in the area between Highways OR 224 and US26, in the Clackamas foothills. My eventual destination was the area around Pyramid Lake. This is definitely rough road country, and my car has scars to prove it.

The hike to Pyramid Lake is a little over a half mile of no-problems trail. There were salmonberries, strawberries, and several *Vaccinium* species represented near the trailhead. As the trail neared the lake, mushrooms began to appear. Most of these were nondescript *Suillus* species and *Russulas*, but I also found Gypsy mushrooms (*Rozites caperata*). Throughout my hiking, most of the fungi I found were insipid, such as:

Armillaria zelleri
Hydnum scabrosum
Suillus lakei

On the better side of the edibility scale:

Tricholoma magnivelare, only one specimen
Lactarius rubrilacteus
Armillariella mellea, a nice cluster
Dentinum repandum, a few young specimens

The big hit of the outing was the huckleberry/blueberry crop. The most common species were *Vaccinium ovalifolium*, *V. alaskense*, and *V. parvifolium*, the latter being more common along the paved roads off 224. *V. uliginosum* (which I don't particularly care for) and *V. membranaceum* were also present. A delightful little bonus was Oregon tea-berry (*Gaultheria ovatifolia*). If you haven't tried these,

then check them out. They're really flavorful!

Fishing at Pyramid Lake was less than fantastic. I ended up with one 6" cutthroat, which I released. I had a lot of strikes on flies both wet and dry, but I doubt that any of these fish were much larger. Oh, well.

Unfortunately, Pyramid Lake and the surrounding areas are not open to the picking of mushrooms under the Mt. Hood National Forest permit system. However, there are a lot of other pickable areas in the vicinity. Make sure you pick up a mushroom permit and harvest area map from a ranger station before picking in the Mt. Hood National Forest.



Foray Report: 1995 Sep 3

On September 3, I went to Kings Mountain in the Oregon Coast Range (just off Highway 6). This is a nice climb, 2.5 miles each way with an elevation change of 2600 feet. The trail encounters all types of habitats in this part of the old Tillamook Burn. In the hardwood forest near the trailhead, I found some *Agaricus subrutilescens*. These are very delicious mushrooms, but most specimens here and elsewhere on the hike had already been claimed by maggots. *Oxalis oregana* formed a lot of the ground cover; I took some home to garnish my mushroom dishes. Another edible/spicy plant found here was wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*). As reforested Douglas-fir took over, I started finding *Cantharellus cibarius*. I ended up with a lot of chanterelles, and there are still a bunch out there for the interested mycophage. Unlike most fungi, chanterelles are almost never "maggotized". Less desirable species included *Boletus chrysenteron* (usually swallowed by *Hypomyces chrysospermum*) and *Suillus lakei*. More and more *Agaricus subrutilescens* showed up; I sorted through them to find a few of good quality. After about 1.5 miles, *Lactarius rubrilacteus* started to show up in quantity. I didn't collect any, since I would have my hands full cooking the two species I was already gathering, but these mushrooms seemed to be good chanterelle-indicators. *Amanita aspera* was also present in this section. For some

distance, the eroded banks above the trail were sprinkled with dozens of chanterelles and milky caps. After this, the trail became dry and rocky.

Mushrooms gave way to berries as I reached the summit. An artificial timberline was present just below 3000', where burn reforestation had largely stopped. I picked over 1.5 pints of *Vaccinium parvifolium* (red huckleberry) from the summit area. Also present were salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) and the less-tasty maple-leaf currant (*Ribes howellii*). *Vaccinium myrtillus* was also present; I tried some but it wasn't that good.

All in all, this was a fun and successful trip. It was foggy, so there was no view from the top (it looked like one could jump off into oblivion). I started out a bit late, so I was in a rush to get back down. This was facilitated by the steep slope. Hopefully, there will be more mushroom diversity when I go back later in the fall.

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A SHORT 'SHROOM PRIMER

by Wes Stone

THE FUNGUS KINGDOM

Mushrooms are the **fruiting bodies** of **fungi**, a kingdom of heterotrophic organisms that reproduce via spores. When you see a mushroom in the forest, you are seeing the equivalent of an apple on a tree. The fungal "tree" or **mycelium** is underground or buried in the wood or other substrate to which the mushroom is attached. The mycelium consists of bundles of filamentous cells (**hyphae**) devoted to absorbing and transporting nutrients. Mycelial mats can be huge, sometimes covering acres. When conditions are right, hyphal bundles will differentiate to form mushrooms. The mushrooms contain specialized reproductive tissues critical for spore production. Fungal sex is unusual and complicated, and a subject best explored on one's own.

MUSHROOMS: THE MEAT OF THE MATTER

In the Pacific Northwest, we are blessed by the presence of the temperate coniferous rainforest. Many of our fungi show an affinity for the forests, and depend on trees to live. Fungal relationships with trees may be parasitic, saprophytic, or mutualistic. In **parasitic** relationships, the growing fungus harms the host tree while gaining nutrients from it. Many of the conks (*Ganoderma* and *Fomitopsis* species) are parasitic. More numerous are the **saprophytic** fungi, which live and feed on dead trees or tree debris. Good edibles from this group are the oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus* and *Pleurocybella* species) and *Boletus mirabilis*. Many of the fungi on the forest floor have a **mutualistic** relationship with trees. In this situation, also known as a **mycorrhizal** relationship, the fungal mycelium and tree root intergrow. The mycelium absorbs inorganic nutrients easily, and these can be passed to the tree through the mycorrhizal bond. The tree provides moisture and organic compounds to the mycelium, and keeps the mycelium anchored in the soil.

Mycorrhizal relationships can be complex, as some fungal species will form them with only a single tree species and some individual trees may have many associated fungi. The inability to recreate mycorrhizal conditions is the main reason that some commercially valuable mushrooms (morels, chanterelles, and matsutakes) are difficult to cultivate in a farm environment. Also, tree plantations that lack mycorrhizal fungi grow more slowly and are more susceptible to disease than those where the fungi are present.

FINDING MUSHROOMS

As stated above, mushrooms form only when fruiting conditions are favorable. For every

mycelial patch of every species in every habitat in every region, a different set of conditions will spur fruiting. In Western Oregon, the majority of prominent mushroom species will fruit from the first fall rains until the first extended cold spell. There are plenty of exceptions, such as fungi that fruit in the spring after snowmelt (*Morchella* and *Gyromitra* species) and fungi that fruit in *both* spring and fall (*Agaricus augustus* and *Boletus edulis*, to name two of the best edibles). Certain mushrooms will be found with certain trees, and some prefer urban habitats. Beyond this, few generalizations can be made. More information will be given in the section on specific mushrooms. The trick is to find a patch and check it regularly. In hunting mushrooms for the table, you face stiff competition from maggots and slugs as well as severe weather. The odds are not on your side...

IDENTIFYING MUSHROOMS

There are two time-tested ways to identify mushrooms if you are interested in eating them and surviving. The first is to go out into the field with experienced collectors and learn each mushroom on an individual basis until you are thoroughly familiar with its appearance and habits. The second is to get some books on mushroom identification and learn to identify mushrooms based on diagnostic features. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages, but the best course by far is to combine both. You will end up finding and eating more mushrooms by tapping books *and* people than by relying on either resource by itself.

Avid mushroom hunters learn to spot-identify mushrooms that a beginner might spend hours trying to key out. Once one has seen a species in a variety of habitats and conditions, identification becomes second-nature. Chanterelles, which can only be keyed out by noting the blunt ridges on the underside of the cap, are easily recognized from above by experienced pickers. Experience is the key, and leads to self-confidence and a greater appreciation for fungi as foods and organisms rather than just something that might be toxic.

The preferred books on mushroom identification contain **dichotomous keys**. Such a key begins with a pair of statements (**couplet**) that could describe a mushroom. For example:

1. Very base of stalk giving off an unpleasant odor when crushed;
base sometimes also staining yellow when cut or crushed 2

1. Not as above; odor not unpleasant; base of stalk typically not
staining yellow, or if staining yellow then odor sweet 7

In this key couplet (adapted from Arora 1986), one should crush the base of the stalk and smell it, watching for color changes. If the odor is unpleasant, one would proceed to couplet 2 in the key. If the odor is not unpleasant, one would proceed to couplet 7. The information on staining might be helpful if one cannot discern an odor. The next couplet may imply that another test should be performed, such as a spore print or chemical stain. Or, it may ask about the color or size of the fruiting body. Eventually, by following the key and making the right choice each time, a positive identification is made.

The key method has obvious flaws. For one, a mistake at the beginning of the key may lead one far astray, so that the final identified mushroom is not even closely related to the actual specimen. For another, keys rely on characteristics such as color and odor, which may vary with environmental influence and may be perceived differently by different individuals. The results of a mistake can be disastrous. As the old saying goes: "When in doubt, throw it out!" While keys will never be airtight, they can be improved when accompanied by full descriptions of the mushrooms. If certain tests cannot be performed, or a couplet is ambiguous, consulting a good description of the mushroom should relieve doubt in most cases. Doubt is further decreased if you consult with an experienced collector.

IDENTIFYING FEATURES

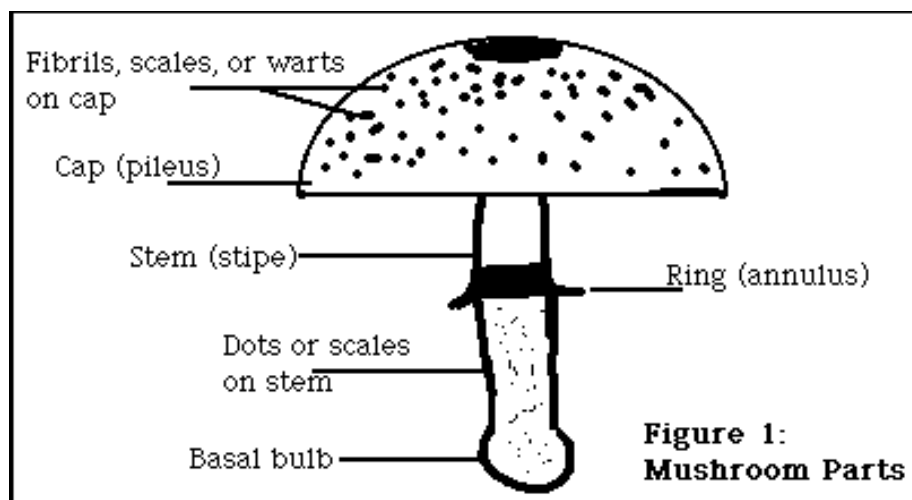


Figure 1 shows just a few of the anatomical features that mushrooms may possess. None of these features is universal in mushrooms, but typical gilled mushrooms possess a cap and usually a stalk. The **fertile surface** where spores are produced is often on the underside of the cap. It may consist of bladelike, radiating **gills**, as in the grocery store mushrooms. The gills vary between species in their point of attachment to the stipe and/or cap. Other fertile surface arrangements include **pores** (as in the boletes) and **teeth** (as in the edible hedgehog mushroom). It is preferable to have a few specimens on hand to illustrate these, although pictures may suffice. The **stipe** may be off-center or absent, especially in mushrooms growing on wood. The **cap** may be smooth, or

may have attached particles as shown here. The **annulus**, when present, is the remnant of a **partial veil** that covers the gills of young mushrooms and breaks at maturity to form a ring on the stalk. In some groups (notably the Amanitas), an additional, **universal veil** covers the entire mushroom and breaks to form a cuplike **volva** at the base of the stipe. Like the cap, the stipe may be smooth or roughened. Cap and stipe shape may sometimes be used as identifying characteristics; this mushroom has a **convex** cap and a stipe with a **basal bulb**.

Color and Staining Reactions. Many mushrooms have a distinctive color, and color features are often used in keys. Color is rarely (if ever) constant within a species, and varies with environmental conditions. Golden chanterelles (*Cantharellus cibarius*) that fruit in dry weather tend to be flesh-colored. Moisture extremes and the age of the mushroom play a big role in determining the color, so colors are usually expressed as a range (e.g., dark brown, sometimes fading to tan or even off-white). Color perception is subjective; not everyone will agree that yellow is yellow rather than creamy or orange. Obviously, color can never be used alone as an identifying characteristic, but it is always useful as one of many characteristics.

Many mushrooms undergo color changes when cut or bruised. These changes may be observed over the whole mushroom, or may be restricted to one location. The mildly poisonous *Agaricus praeclaresquamosus*, for example, stains bright yellow in the very base of the stipe. The pores of many boletes (fleshy pore mushrooms) stain blue. The intensity and speed of color changes vary, again, with environmental conditions. Some staining reactions are **latent**, in that they occur only when a drop of chemical solution is applied to the mushroom. Generally, the more common and distinctive mushrooms can be identified without resorting to laboratory techniques.

Odor and Taste. We rely on senses other than our eyesight to identify mushrooms. Odor is important in identifying some key species. Once you have become familiar with the smell of the white matsutake (*Tricholoma magnivelare*), you will be able to identify it with your eyes closed! Unfortunately, smells are harder to describe than are colors, and a lot of people seem to be "smell-blind". Occasionally, a key will ask you to taste a mushroom. Take a small piece of the cap, put it in your mouth, chew on it, and spit it out. Most mushrooms have a mild flavor when raw; they don't really taste like much. A few mushrooms are sweet, and a significant number are bitter or peppery.

Spore Prints. Spore color is used to place many mushrooms into taxonomic groups, and is often used in keys. To obtain a **spore print**, cut the cap off a mushroom and place it upright (fertile surface down) on a sheet of white paper or an index card. Let the mushroom sit overnight, then examine the paper. If the mushroom was discharging spores, a radiating deposit of spore dust should be visible on the paper. Some mushrooms have white spores; in this case, the deposit can best be seen if the paper is viewed from the side. Other colors of paper may allow for easier detection of spores, but for critical color discrimination (between white and cream or yellowish,

for example) white paper is standard. Only mature, relatively fresh mushrooms will give good results.

Textures. The different parts of a mushroom can have different textures. The stipes of *Russula* and *Lactarius* species are crisp and break cleanly, whereas *Armillaria mellea* has a **fibrous** stipe. A mushroom's cap may be **viscid** (sticky/slimy) or **dry**. The overall texture of a mushroom may be described as **fleshy**, **woody**, **gelatinous**, or **rubbery**, among other adjectives.

Gill Attachments. Gills (or pores or teeth) may be attached at different points. **Free** gills are attached only to the cap, as in *Agaricus*. **Adnate** gills attach to the stipe, and **decurrent** gills run down the stipe. The chanterelles have a decurrent fertile surface.

As evidenced by the above list (which doesn't even scratch the surface), many attributes are used to identify mushrooms, from gross anatomical features to microscopic distinctions in spore size. *No single characteristic can be used, by itself, to determine that a mushroom is edible* (although several, such as a noxious odor or excruciatingly peppery flavor, work fine for determining that a mushroom is *inedible*). Anyone venturing into the world of mushroom identification is advised to have access to a couple of good field guides. For amateur mycologists in the Western United States, the best print resource is *Mushrooms Demystified* by David Arora (Ten Speed Press, Berkeley: 1986). Most of the mushrooms likely to be encountered are keyed out, most of these are given full descriptions, and identifying features are given for each taxonomic grouping. *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms* (Lincoff, Gary, Ed., Knopf, New York: 1981) does not contain dichotomous keys, but the numerous first-rate color photos make it a good companion to Arora's book.

MAJOR GROUPS OF FUNGI

When we think of mushrooms, we generally picture them as having gills. As I alluded to above, this is not always the case. Gilled mushrooms belong to the order **Agaricales**. Gills are the distinguishing feature of this order, but fleshy mushrooms with pores (the boletes) are also included. The Agaricales are part of a larger division of fungi, the **Hymenomycetes**. Other orders in the Hymenomycetes include the **Aphylophorales** (the polypores, chanterelles (sometimes placed in their own order), coral fungi, and teeth fungi), as well as the **Tremellales** (the jelly fungi). The Hymenomycetes, in turn, are part of a larger super-division, the **Basidiomycetes**. The key feature of the Basidiomycetes is actually microscopic and involves the structure of cells on which spores are produced. Besides the Hymenomycetes, the Basidiomycetes include the puffballs and earthballs in the subdivision **Gasteromycetes**.

Some common fungi, such as the morels, cup fungi, *Hypomyces* molds, and truffles, belong not to the Basidiomycetes but to the **Ascomycetes**, which produce spores inside rather than on the

surface of specialized cells. There are several other major groups of fungi, but they mostly contain microscopic organisms that do not produce mushrooms.

EATING MUSHROOMS

Obviously, one can enjoy mushrooms without eating them. For many, however, eating mushrooms is a cultural tradition or at least an end to collecting. Mushrooms can add texture, color, and flavor to food. There are deadly mushrooms out there, but there are also deadly plants (such as water hemlock, which has been mistaken for wild parsley). The reason we aren't afraid to eat plants is because they have been domesticated. Fungi, with the exception of *Agaricus bisporus* and a few other cultivated species, are untamed. The burden of identification is on the collector. Because most fungi have not been eaten throughout the world for most of human history, there is always a possibility that some people's bodies will not be able to handle some of the unique compounds present in fungi. While most people may pronounce a given fungus edible and delicious, an unfortunate few may be unable to metabolize some chemical in that fungus. Such "allergies" are generally not serious, and usually result in a short period of nausea and vomiting. A few species seem to be implicated in comparatively many allergy cases (including such popular mushrooms as morels, *Agaricus* species, and *Boletus edulis*). This is no reason to be overly concerned; we still drink milk even though some people are lactose intolerant.

Getting the identification right is the most important thing to do before eating a mushroom. If possible, get an experienced collector's confirmation or view a type specimen before eating a new mushroom species. Try only a few bites the first time you eat a species, then wait at least a day before consuming any more. Always cook mushrooms the first time you try them; most wild mushrooms are more digestible when cooked. There are many other cautions and hints about eating mushrooms; these can be found by consulting the reference materials at the end of this primer.

MUSHROOMS, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND YOU

Mushroom collecting for food and as a hobby is increasing in popularity. While the American view of the world has traditionally lumped fungi in with plants, or disregarded this group of organisms altogether, fungi have recently achieved a greater prominence in our culture. Resurgent interest in mushrooms as medicinal sources has had some effect, but the most attention seems to be centered on mushrooms as a profit-making, commercial resource. Mushrooms have always been picked for the market, but the market in the past was relatively small and mostly limited to ethnic constituencies such as Japanese-Americans and Italian-Americans. Within the past five years, an export market for mushrooms has developed and made mushroom-picking a big business. One mushroom in particular has been responsible. Between 1989 and 1990, the reported commercial harvest of matsutake mushrooms (*Tricholoma*

magnivelare) increased by over 4000% in the state of Washington (Molina et al, 1993).

The increasing use of federal lands for commercial activities has led to increased regulation of both commercial and recreational mushroom picking. In Oregon, a variety of areas including most Wilderness Areas and all State Parks are now closed to any mushroom harvesting. Recreational regulations differ between National Forests within Oregon: Some allow limited "incidental" harvest of mushrooms without a permit, and others require a free use permit for any picking. Because of the value of matsutake mushrooms (which collectors sold for an average price of \$13.99 per pound in 1989, according to Molina et al, 1993) special regulations are under effect for these mushrooms. The Willamette, Umpqua, Winema, and Deschutes National Forests require a commercial permit with a minimum cost of \$50 to harvest *any* matsutakes, although the regulations have recently changed to allow limited incidental harvest with a special permit in designated areas. The Mt. Hood National Forest allows free-use collection of matsutakes, with the stipulation that collected mushrooms will be cut in half to prevent their commercial resale. The Siuslaw National Forest allows for the harvest of up to six matsutakes per day as part of the incidental harvest limit, as long as the mushrooms are scored to prevent resale. Permit conditions are continually changing as new regulations are adopted.

With the growth of the commercial industry, there has been an increase in concern about protecting the mushroom resource. Both overharvesting of mushrooms and incompatibility with forest practices such as timber harvesting could potentially impact the availability of this resource. Forest ecologists and soil biologists have long known the importance of mycorrhizal fungi to the forest ecosystem. This knowledge is just now becoming widespread, and will surely be used in future debates over forest practices.

Despite the regulations, amateur mycology and mushroom collecting are still fun activities. The collection presented here shows that interesting mushrooms are within walking distance. Mycological organizations abound, and many community colleges and recreation departments offer classes in mushroom identification. With a little effort, anyone can begin discovering the overlooked world of fungi.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

IDENTIFICATION AND FIELD GUIDES

Arora, David. *Mushrooms Demystified*. Ten Speed Press, Berkeley: 1986.

This is the most comprehensive field guide to species of the Western United States. I recommend that you include it in your library. Arora has also authored a more compact field guide, but the price difference isn't that much. If you own only one book about mushrooms, this should be it.

Fischer, David and Alan Bessette. [*Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America: A Field to Kitchen Guide*](#). University of Texas Press, Austin: 1992.

Designed for the mushroom hunter whose main question is: "Can I eat it?", this guide contains descriptions of edible mushrooms and their poisonous look-alikes, along with preserving and cooking ideas.

Lincoff, Gary H. and Carol Nehring. *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms*. Knopf, New York: 1981.

If you're serious about mushrooming, you should own more than one book. This is a good picture reference guide, with a visual rather than dichotomous key. It also contains species from throughout North America.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Molina, Randy, with Thomas O'Dell, Daniel Luoma, Michael Amaranthus, Michael Castellano, and Kenelm Russell. *Biology, Ecology, and Social Aspects of Wild Edible Mushrooms in the Forests of the Pacific Northwest: A Preface to Managing Commercial Harvest*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Portland, Oregon: 1993. PNW-GTR-309.

This is an eye-opening little publication that shows just how far-reaching commercial and recreational harvesting of wild mushrooms could become. Ten mushroom species with commercial potential are profiled, and the history and future of mushrooms in forest management are outlined.

Pilz, David and Randy Molina, ed. *Managing Forest Ecosystems to Conserve Fungus Diversity and Sustain Wild Mushroom Harvests*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Portland, Oregon: 1996. PNW-GTR-371.

A progress report on research into the effects of timber and mushroom harvesting on the sustainability of the mushroom resource.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Dhabolt, John. [mycoElectronica](#)

Mushroom information ranging from toxicology to philately (stamp collecting).

Fischer, David. [Dave Fischer's Mushroom Page](#)

Harrison, Wayne. [Mycelium](#) **NOTE: NO LONGER AVAILABLE**

Mycelium is a Web page devoted to amateur mycology. Mycological society journals and foray reports are archived, and there are mushroom recipes, book reviews and links to other mycological URLs. A list of mycophiles (people who like mushrooms) on the Internet is maintained here.

Stone, Wesley H. [The Forager Home Page](#)

This is a shameless plug for my own page. Archived here is a list of all the mushroom species I have identified on the Lewis and Clark College Campus, information on other wild foods, and recent personal foray reports.

Wood, Michael. [Myko Web](#)

Loads of mushroom stuff from a past president of the Mycological Society of San Francisco.

Wood, Michael and Fred Stevens. [Common Fungi of the Bay Area](#)

Good photos and descriptions of a bunch of suburban mushrooms; many of these same species can be found around Lewis and Clark!

PERMIT SYNOPSES

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. *Mushroom Permit Synopsis* for Deschutes, Winema, Willamette, and Umpqua National Forests, July 1 thru December 31, 1996.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. *Free Use Mushrooms Forest Products Removal Permit*. (Mt. Hood National Forest, Zigzag Ranger District). Form Adopted January 1996.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. *Permit Conditions: 1995 Mushroom Picking on the Siuslaw National Forest*. Form Adopted June 1995.

For more information, please contact the agency in charge of the land from which you wish to collect. Regulations change frequently.

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Wes's Ratings of Edible Wild Mushrooms



This list is by no means complete. I have sampled quite a number of Oregon's edible mushrooms, but there are others out there that I have not yet found or tasted. People's tastes differ, and what is Ambrosia to one may be insipid to another. Individual collections of mushrooms will differ as well, based on the condition the mushrooms are in and the substrate the mushrooms were growing on. As always, use good judgment when eating any food (mushrooms included). See my [Edibility Rules](#) for more help.

Except where obviously inappropriate, I have sauteed the mushrooms in a small amount of butter or margarine. Perhaps different techniques may be better for some mushrooms, but I have found this to be quick and easy. It also allows excess quantities of mushrooms to be easily preserved by freezing. See my [mushroom recipes](#) for more.

Rating Scale

**** - Excellent in both flavor and texture; I stop whatever else I'm doing to collect these.

*** - Very good, with distinctive flavor and texture.

** - Worth collecting; may be lacking in flavor or texture, but not both.

* - Novelty mushrooms that I haven't found a good use for yet.

0 - Should be regarded as inedible.

X - I will monitor any future ingestions of these mushrooms, as I experienced minor abdominal discomfort at least once after eating them.

Agaricus augustus (The Prince): **** The familiar mushroom texture combined with a robust taste and sweet aroma. The Prince is good with almost anything, and can be enjoyed at all stages of fruiting body development (provided the maggots don't get there first). Also, *A. smithii*, a coastal version with different coloration and stature but the same degree of edibility.

Agaricus campestris (Meadow Mushroom): *** Unmistakably mushroomy.

Agaricus subrutilescens : **** The first wild mushroom I collected and ate. More mushroomy than *A. campestris*; really stands out in soups or on pizza.

Aleuria aurantia (Orange Peel Fungus): * I tried it raw. It had no taste, and the texture didn't really drive me to candy it as some do.

Armillaria mellea (Honey Mushroom): *** I have only tried it a couple of times, but it tastes like a good all-purpose mushroom.

Boletus edulis (King Bolete): **** Excellent dried or sauteed, with a meaty texture. Some collections have a delectably sweet flavor, but a few are bland. Also, *B. aereus*, very similar in most aspects.

Boletus mirabilis : *** Beautifully colored, with a subtle lemony flavor. Can be a bit slimy when wet, but usually is pleasantly crunchy. I like to eat it with fish.

Cantharellus cibarius (Chanterelle): *** Without a doubt, the most *available* edible mushroom in Oregon. It has a pleasant, fruity-peppery taste and a texture that is a bit more delicate than *Agaricus* species. Can be slimy when wet, and flavor is easily overwhelmed (but stands out in some spicy dishes like pizza). Also, *C. subalbidus*, the White Chanterelle. Some people proclaim it superior to *C. cibarius*, but to my tastes this depends on how fresh and chunky the individual mushrooms are.

Cantharellus infundibuliformis group (Winter Chanterelle): ** Small and thin, with only a slight chanterelle flavor. Its most interesting attribute is its texture, which is very similar to egg noodles and could be a good substitute for same!

Catathelasma imperialis : ** Beefy in size and texture, with a sharp flavor that some people don't like. I cover it with soy sauce and use it like a matsutake (once I run out of real matsutakes)!

Chroogomphus tomentosus : * I have dried it. It tasted like soft cardboard. I don't know if I'll try it again.

Clitocybe odora : ** Worth collecting just for its licorice smell. I haven't yet found a way to integrate it into dishes, but it is very interesting raw.

Coprinus comatus (Shaggy Mane): *** Excellent texture when breaded and sauteed, or just sauteed. The flavor is subtle but distinctive. Good as an appetizer or in soups.

Dentinum repandum (Hedgehog Mushroom): *** Along with the matsutake, my favorite mushroom to use in MOS (Mushrooms-on-a-Shingle). Specimens that have taken on water give off a liquid when sauteed; I drank some and it tasted like beef broth with an attitude!

Gomphidius subroseus: ** Nothing special, but definitely not "of very poor quality", as some describe it.

Gomphus clavatus (Pig's Ears): *** Essentially like its cousins the chanterelles, with a bit firmer texture and slightly different flavor. The dark color is the main distinction!

Hypomyces lactifluorum (Lobster Mushroom): *** I rarely find these in anything close to edible condition. When I have eaten it (large specimens, probably parasitizing *Russula brevipes*), the texture was like *R. xerampelina*; the flavor is unique and probably will not appeal to all, but I like it. The color is an added bonus

Lactarius fragilis (Candy Cap): *** Specimens I found in the Coast Range had a burnt-sugar aftertaste when raw, and a slight maple odor when cooked. The flavor when cooked wasn't very sweet, but was more pleasant than that typical of *L. deliciosus* or *L. rubrilacteus*. I guess I should have dried them; the bag I collected them subsequently developed a strong maple odor that is still very evident after two years!

Lactarius rubrilacteus : ** Inconsistent in taste (sometimes bitter, and sometimes tasteless). I really like the crunchy texture. Also *L. deliciosus*, essentially identical except for the color of the latex.

Leccinum aurantiacum : ***X Dried slices weren't very tasty, but reconstituted well when put into a soup. The only problem is that the first two times I tried this species I got a stomach-ache soon afterward. Coincidence or reaction? This year, I sauteed some without drying, topped a hamburger with them, and they were delicious! Perhaps different collections have different characteristics; more likely, cooking renders them more digestible than does drying.

Leccinum scabrum : *** A good choice for "mushroom chips"; has a nutty flavor when dried.

Lepiota rachodes (Shaggy Parasol): *** Taste a bit more astringent than *Agaricus subrutilescens*, but also a bit more nutty. Cooks down quite a bit.

Lycoperdon perlatum (Gemma Puffball): ** Subtle but interesting taste; marshmallow texture. Good with scrambled eggs, which have a similar texture. Also *L. foetens* and probably *L. pyriforme* .

Lyophyllum decastes (Fried Chicken Mushroom): *** Not much taste, but a very nice crunch that adds to almost every type of food.

Marasimius oreades (Fairy Ring Mushroom): *** Dry the caps whole, salt them a little, and you have mushroom chips! I haven't yet tried it in soups, which are also supposed to be a strong point of this species.

Pleurocybella porrigens (Angel Wings): ** Tastes good when well-buttered (but what doesn't?) Texture

a bit thin for my taste. One collection I tried had an unpleasant aftertaste of fir needles.

Pleurotus ostreatus (Oyster Mushroom): *** A good all-purpose mushroom; meatier than *Pleurocybella porrigens*.

Pseudohydnum gelatinosum : * Tasteless, but the texture might be good for homebrew gumdrops.

Rozites caperata (Gypsy Mushroom): *** A very strong, unique flavor that lends itself to being added to vegetable mixes.

Russula xerampelina (Shrimp Russula): **** Great texture, aroma, and flavor! The seafood smell isn't apparent to me until I begin cooking the mushrooms. There is always a bit of nuttiness to the flavor, and one collection had a sweet component as well!

Sparassis crispa (Cauliflower Mushroom): ** I have only tried it once, and the specimen wasn't in great condition. The "leaves" were thin and pretty bland.

Stropharia rugoso-annulata : **** I have only tried it twice, but hope to try it again! The flavor was strong, and unlike any other I've ever encountered. I suspect it would go very well with meat and potatoes.

Suillus granulatus group: ** Almost identical to *Lycoperdon perlatum*, in both texture and flavor.

Tricholoma magnivelare (White Matsutake): **** Some people don't like the flavor, the texture, or the aroma. I appreciate all three, maybe to extremes. I prefer to soften the texture by cooking it covered for a minute or so during the saute. A most un-mushroomlike mushroom! I have heard that it clashes with tomatoes, so you might want to stick with *Agaricus campestris* in that spaghetti sauce and save your matsutakes for MOS, stir fry, chicken mushroom soup, quiche, or any of the many other dishes it does go well with.

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Cooking Mushrooms



I am not much of a cook. I want to find an inexpensive, quick, nutritious, and tasty way to satisfy my appetite. Many elaborate recipes have been created to use with wild mushrooms; when I have tasted the results, the mushrooms hardly ever peeked out from the megadoses of exotic ingredients. Why go to the trouble of picking mushrooms if you can't even taste them? With this in mind, I offer my two cents on preparing mushrooms for the mouth...

- [First Things First](#)
 - [The Basic Method](#)
 - [Mushrooms on a Shingle](#)
 - [Killer Mushroom Omelette](#)
 - [Mushrooms on Pizza](#)
 - [Frozen Mushrooms](#) (preserving)
 - [Dried Mushrooms](#) (preserving)
-

First things First

So, you picked some mushrooms. Do you know what kind they are? If not, hold everything until you find out. It should go without saying, but for the record **DO NOT EAT ANYTHING UNLESS YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY SURE OF ITS IDENTITY**. Don't put blind trust in what you buy at the supermarket, either. For other suggested "edibility rules", click [here](#).

Anyway, getting the mushrooms ready to be cooked is one of the most time consuming processes. Discard moldy mushrooms, and ones with lots of maggots in them. Small bruised areas, or areas with a few worm-holes, may be cut away and the rest of the mushroom retained for use. Mushrooms should **not** generally be soaked in water or washed to remove dirt. A brush or damp towel will remove most of the dirt. I'm not a clean freak when it comes to food; a little dirt and a few conifer needles add authenticity to the experience.

The Basic Method

Most mushrooms can be cooked using a very easy method: Cut the mushrooms into fairly large thin slices, and throw them into a fry pan with a little butter over low-medium heat. Saute for a few minutes until the mushrooms are of a desirable consistency. Options include adding vegetables such as green peppers or onions at the beginning of the saute. Mushrooms with a high water content should be cooked uncovered, while those that tend to be drier and harder (such as matsutakes) may be covered for a minute or so to make them more tender. Sauteed mushrooms may be used in the dishes below.

Mushrooms on a Shingle

Sauteed wild mushrooms, to taste

1 can condensed cream-of-something soup

Splash of milk

Cooked turkey or hamburger (optional)

Sliced bread Empty contents of soup can into a saucepan, adding only a small amount of milk rather than a full can. Stir in mushrooms and meat (if desired), and bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring often. Lightly toast slices of bread. Pour soup mixture over bread and serve as a hot, open-faced sandwich.

Favorite mushrooms: Hedgehogs, matsutakes, and chanterelles.

Killer Mushroom Omelette

Fresh or sauteed chanterelles

Chopped onion and/or green peppers, to taste

Margarine for saute

Grated pepper-jack cheese, to taste

2-3 fresh eggs Saute chanterelles along with onion and green peppers. Beat eggs and add to hot skillet. Fold in sauteed ingredients and cheese to make a killer omelette. Serve hot.

Mushrooms On Pizza

Pizza

Enough mushrooms to be well-represented on said pizza Prepare pizza as you normally would, and add sauteed mushrooms when done. Or, add frozen mushrooms (see below) before cooking the pizza. Delicious mushrooms: chanterelles, *Agaricus* species, and according to one person *Russula xerampelina*.

Frozen Mushrooms

How do you preserve mushrooms when you pick more than you can use right away? Freeze them! Saute the mushrooms as above, then spread separately on a cookie sheet and put in freezer for one hour. Remove from cookie sheet into freezer bag, then put back in freezer. Frozen mushrooms may be kept for up to a year. To use, simply warm up in microwave or skillet, or throw into a dish before cooking. Works well with almost any mushroom species!

Dried Mushrooms

Drying mushrooms is very popular, but I have had mixed results. Only certain species seem to dry well. If you have a variable-temp food dehydrator, you are probably home free. I have been reduced to laying mushroom slices on a heater grate for a few hours, turning once, until the mushrooms are brittle and dry. Store in an airtight container, and use in a soup or other "wet" dish.

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Wes's Backweb Byway



Welcome to my new home page. Please excuse the dust while I fix links and transfer files.

Wes's Web Offerings:

[Astronomy for the People](#) (up and running!)

[The Forager Page](#) (in progress; a bit stale)

[Birding](#) (in progress; coming along)

[Essays](#) (functional!)

[Personal Info.](#)

Questions? Comments? E-mail wes_stone@lycos.com

Visual Astronomy is often the art and science of seeing gray on black. Not that there isn't color, but the first step is to learn how to see...

Wes's Astronomy Offerings

[SKYTOUR Astronomy Hypertext](#) (mostly functional)

[Online Observing Log](#) (More Adventures with 10" Dob!)

[Sketch Gallery](#) organized by object type

NEW! **[Major Meteor Showers in 2004](#)**

NEW! **[Accessory Mini-Reviews](#)**

NEW! **[Pictures of my 10" Dob](#)**

NEW! I'm now hosting and maintaining the **[Discovery-Dob-Users FAQ](#)**.

Essays on Amateur Astronomy

[Oregon Star Party 2004](#) (NEW)

[Indian Trail Spring 2003](#) (NEW)

[Oregon Star Party 2003](#) (NEW!)

[Quest for the Horsehead](#)

[Oregon Star Party 2002](#)

[Complex Atmospheric Halo Display of June 3](#) (with PHOTOS!)

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Astronomy for The People

A Website by Wes Stone

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Dr. Duke's Phytochemical and Ethnobotanical Databases has moved

The new address for this site is:

www.ars-grin.gov/duke/

Send comments or suggestions on the content of these pages and
USDA, ARS, Genetic Resources Web Server to:

The GRIN Web Master: grin@ars-grin.gov

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School of Self-reliance



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The School of Self-reliance operates from Los Angeles, in the L.A. County area of southern California. We research, test, teach / guide, and publish in all aspects of self-reliance. We also sell useful [products](#).

Outdoor skills include wild food foraging, primitive tools, and orienteering. Home skills include recycling, conserving, sustenance-making, and gardening.



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Counter restarted February 2002

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Edibility Rules



When you are eating wild mushrooms, and especially when you are trying a species for the first time, here are some guidelines to follow. Different publications list different "rules"; as you become more experienced you will develop your own. Just remember that it is better to be too safe than not safe enough. By all means, don't let these rules scare you. They technically should be followed with all foods, but for some reason we generally don't pay much attention to them in our normal diets.

1. **Don't eat anything if you aren't sure of its identification.** Before you eat a new species that you have keyed out, try to compare it with a confirmed specimen of that species, or get your identification confirmed by an experienced mushroomer. Likewise, if someone tells you a mushroom is edible, make sure it fits book descriptions of that species.
2. **When trying a species for the first time, eat only a small amount.** The safest method for most mushrooms is to saute a few small pieces and eat them by themselves or with a bit of a staple such as bread or rice. Wait a day before trying more. Like all foods, mushrooms should generally be eaten in moderation.
3. **When trying a species for the first time, always cook it.** Most species of mushrooms are more digestible when cooked or dried.
4. **Never mix two species that you haven't eaten before.** If you have an allergic reaction, you won't know which species caused it.

5. **Don't eat rotten mushrooms.** Most "mushroom poisoning" cases are actually food poisoning.

 6. **If you have any doubt that a mushroom is edible, don't eat it!** If you think you're going to get sick, you probably will convince your body that it should get sick.
-
-



Dave's
Marvelous
Mushroom
Web Links



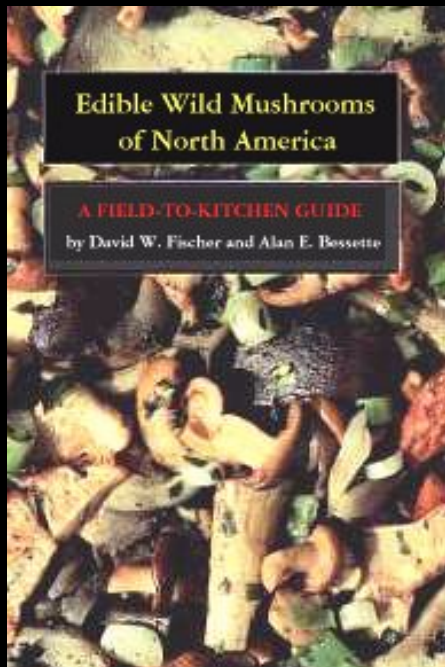
Dave Fischer's
**Marvelous
Mushroom
Homepage**

Edible Wild
Mushrooms of
North America
*A Field-to-Kitchen
Guide*

Mushrooms of
Northeastern
North America

Dave Fischer's
**North American
Mushroom Basics**
*(Real Answers
About Mushrooms)*

Newly Revised!
**Death Cap
Webpage**



Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America:

A Field-to-Kitchen Guide

by David W. Fischer and Alan E. Bessette

1992, University of Texas Press, Austin

35,000 copies in print!

ORDER YOUR AUTOGRAPHED COPY NOW!

WITH AMATEUR MUSHROOM HUNTERS especially in mind, Alan Bessette and I have prepared *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America*. This field guide presents more than 100 species* of the most delicious mushrooms, along with detailed information on how to find, gather, store, and prepare them for the table. More than 70 savory recipes, ranging from soups to salads to casseroles, canapes, quiches, and even a dessert are included.

* -- *A large majority of the edible mushrooms included can be found throughout North America, excepting areas such as the desert regions of the Southwest, southern parts of Florida, and Hawaii; the book will certainly be more useful to those who have access to forested areas, though many of the species can be found on lawns and in other grassy areas.*

Each species is described in detailed, non-technical language, accompanied by a list of key identifying characteristics that reliably rule out all but the target species. Superb color photographs also aid in identification. Poisonous "look-alikes" are described and illustrated.

With this wealth of information novice hunters will be able to identify edible mushrooms quickly and confidently, while experienced mycologists may discover new species for their hunting and eating enjoyment.

183 COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS -- 254 PP.



(NOTE: MYKOWEB includes a directory of North American mushroom clubs)



[ORDER YOUR AUTOGRAPHED COPY NOW!](#)



Cornish Game Hens with Chanterelle Stuffing and Apricot Glaze
Photograph by Alan E. Bessette.

[ORDER YOUR AUTOGRAPHED COPY NOW!](#)

Look what experienced mushroomers are saying about **Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America**

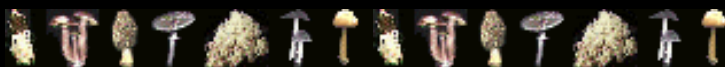
"...all the library [you] need to harvest and enjoy wild mushrooms for the table." -- "MUSHROOM, The Journal of Wild Mushrooming"

"This is not simply another mushroom field guide... People hesitant in mycophagy [mushroom gathering and eating] will find confidence in their abilities by using this book... it should become the most popular field guide on the market---a fixture in everyone's basket." --Professional mycologist Barry L. Wulff, Professor Emeritus of Biology, Eastern Connecticut State University

"This is an especially helpful book for new members of our mushroom clubs... For our intermediate members, it is a tool to increase the number of edible species they know and to expand their knowledge on techniques for using edible mushrooms... The photos are clear and the description of each species includes a discussion of edibility and cooking and storing suggestions... This book will enable you to enjoy a great variety of edible wild mushrooms." --Sandy Sheine, President, Connecticut-Westchester Mycological Association

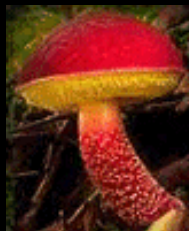
"It is a gorgeous book. The photography, layout and printing are all excellent, and the information is authoritative. I highly recommend it to pot-hunters everywhere." -- James Worrall, Mycologist, U.S. Forest Service

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[Take a look inside the pages of Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America](#)

Wes Stone's "A Short 'Shroom Primer"



Taylor
Lockwood's
fantastic
Mushroom
Photography

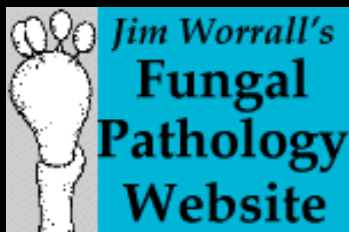


A Popular Edible: The Morel

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Mycologists Online



Something really fun:
[Morchella ultima... A New
Species of Morel!](#)



Credit-Card Orders

Autographed copies of *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America: A Field-to-Kitchen Guide* are available for \$35.00* from IxNY GRAPHICS (NOTE: I'll pay for U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail shipping) thanks to PayPal, the internet leader in secure online payment brokerage.

* - softcover; clothbound are no longer in print

NOTE: Advise via email to ixnygraphics@aol.com if you would like the book inscribed by the author, e.g. "to Mary and John." Otherwise, the book will be simply autographed and dated by the author.

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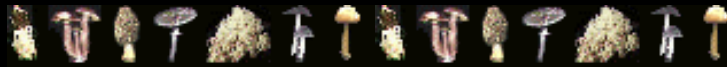
Mail Order Information

Autographed copies of *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America: A Field-to-Kitchen Guide* are available for \$35.00 (softcover) directly from me. First, [send me an e-mail](#) letting me know that your order will be forthcoming; second, send a check for \$35 per copy, payable to David W. Fischer (I'll pay for U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail shipping) to:

DAVID W FISCHER
9 NEWTON ST
BINGHAMTON NY 13901-2020

Advise via a note with the check if you would like the book autographed and/or inscribed (e.g. "to John"). Allow 2--4 weeks for delivery.

The book is also available at better bookstores, or directly from the [Univ. of Texas Press](#).



Photographs by Sharon A. Fisher,
Timothy J. Baroni.

About Myself...

I am a nationally known expert on the ecology and identification of wild mushrooms. I served for nearly ten years as president of the Central New York Mycological Society (CNYMS)



and am past president of the Northeast Mycological Federation, Inc. (NEMF). I serve as a mushroom identification consultant for the New York State Poison Control Center and for numerous colleges and other institutions and organizations, as well as for the general public. I have served as faculty/program chairperson for the annual Northeast Mycological Foray (the Samuel Ristich Foray) and the annual North American Mycological Association Foray. I especially enjoy serving as scientific advisor to the [Susquehanna Valley Mycological Society \(SVMS\)](#).

When I am not collecting, studying, eating, teaching or writing about mushrooms or spending time with my three wonderful children and my partner Sharon, I keep busy doing [electronic publishing, editing, graphic design, and webpage design](#) for businesses and organizations.

I am available to teach mushroom identification courses and provide slide-illustrated lectures for museums, colleges, environmental organizations, and the general public. I am especially interested in doing "Gourmet Mushroom Dinners" in cooperation with fine restaurants.



About My Co-author...

Alan Bessette, Ph.D., is a professional mycologist and professor of biology at Utica College of Syracuse University. He is the author or coauthor of numerous works on mushrooms and other aspects of natural history, including:



- *Taming the Wild Mushroom*
- *The Macmillan Field Guide Mushrooms*
- *Mushrooms of the Adirondacks*
- *Mushrooms of Northeastern North America* (due in 1997 from Syracuse Univ. Press)
- *Mushrooms of North America in Color: A Field Guide Companion to*

Seldom-Illustrated Fungi

- *Trees and Shrubs of the Adirondacks*
- *Birds of the Adirondacks*



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This site maintained by David W. Fischer, whose e-mail address is

basidium@aol.com



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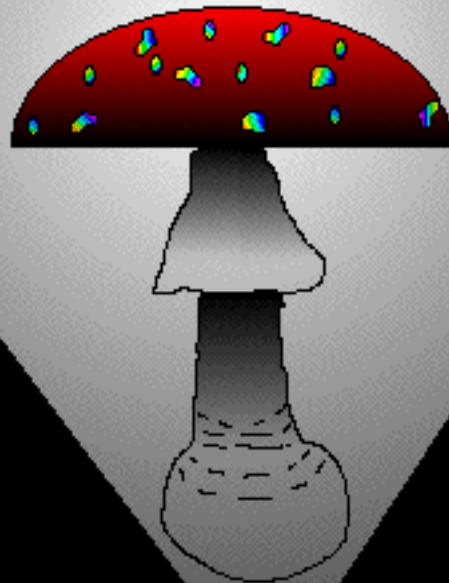


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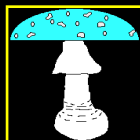


mycoElectronica



Introduction

An introduction to my meager contribution to the mycological community.



The Puffball

These are back issues of the Puffball newsletter.

The Mushrooms

Detailed descriptions of various mushrooms.



Mushroom Links

Top general mushroom sites.

mycoElectronica

Coming soon to a WWW browser near you...

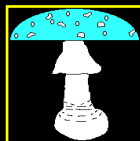


Mycological Database

Coming soon to a WWW browser near you...

Mushrooms on Stamps

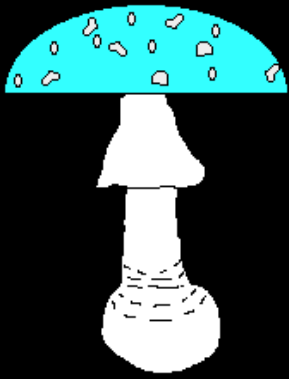
Originally an article in the Puffball newsletter. Now a regularly updated feature.



Mushroom Poisons

Another article turned regularly updated feature. Hopefully you will find important, timely information on mushroom poisons.

Introduction



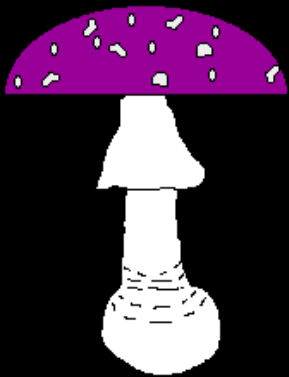
The purpose of this WWW site is to give back to the mycological community some of what I've gained from it over the course of the past twenty years. Although mushrooms have been an interesting side-track for quite a long time, I really haven't been able to devote the kind of dedicated time that I would really like to. However, I have been able to develop a database that contains references to over 23,000 articles, 8500+ species names, and 600 books (not to mention magazines, etc.).

Since I play the role of a software developer with an emphasis in database publishing in my real job at Natural Intelligence, Inc., I have had the unique opportunity to take two of my passions, information technology and mushrooms, and merge them into a data file that is currently over 20Mb in size (this is without pictures, or special search indexing added).

I plan on publishing part (or perhaps all) of this resource for the mycological community to use at some point in the future, pending finding the appropriate machine resources, etc. Until then, a mushroom or two will appear [here](#) from time to time to give an idea of the type of information that has been collected.

I have also published my ramblings on mushrooms, as both current ramblings (probably very sparse for now), and past ramblings in the form of a newsletter, The Puffball, that I was editor of for several months.

The Puffball



The Puffball (hey, I didn't name it... I would have shot for something like "The Avenging Angel" or perhaps "The Stinkhorn") is the official newsletter of the Willamette Valley Mushroom Society located in Salem, Oregon. I was the editor of the newsletter for a year starting from November of 1993 until I started my preparation to leave Oregon and jump to the equally beautiful state of New Hampshire. The following issues are currently available on-line:

[December 92/January 93](#)

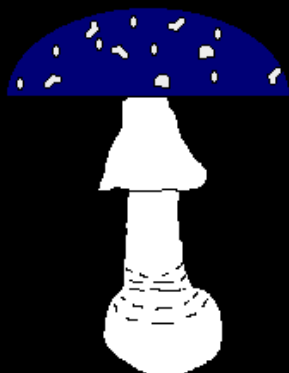
[February 93/March 93](#)

[April 93/May 93](#)

[June 93/July 93](#)

August 93/September 93

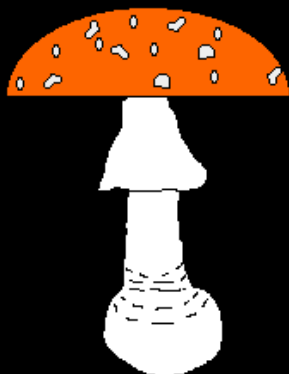
mycoElectronica



Coming soon to a World Wide Web browser near you...

Volume 1, January 1996

The Mushrooms



Well, it's a meager start, but it's a start. The database that I'd been maintaining on a sporadic basis up to about two years ago is by no means even close to being a complete resource on any single genus, let alone all of the macrofungal that are currently known. As time allows the database will be added to, and perhaps at some point I can collect a significant percentage of the mushrooms into a single resource. Until then...

This resource will at some point be a user searchable database. Until that happens, I will only be able to allow access to a small portion of the current data. The web pages that are referenced below were completely created from the database affectionately known as "**mycoPro**(tm)". They can just as easily be output directly to a user on request via the available WWW CGI interface. In order to do this I would need access to a Macintosh or Windows computer running the appropriate web server software.

The first page is a listing of the genus's currently referenced within **mycoPro**(tm). After the genus name is the number of species references available. For example purposes three of the genus's have links that take you to listings of the available species.

[Genus listing](#)

[Amanita listing](#)

- o [Amanita muscaria](#)

Lactarius

- [*Lactarius indigo indigo*](#)

[Boletus listing](#)

- [*Boletus edulis edulis*](#)

[Clitocybe listing](#)

- [*Clitocybe nuda*](#)

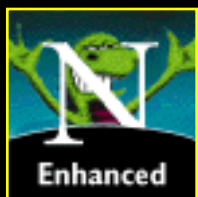
The items on the list of things to publish are: regions around the world that reported on the listed mushrooms, references to the books, references to the people, sound files for pronunciation, glossary links to mycological terms, original latin descriptions (where available), and more. All of these items are currently in the database, but I didn't have time during the week-end that I worked on this project to include them. They should be added soon.

Mycological Database

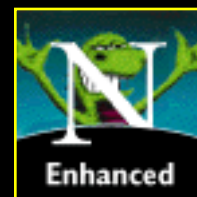


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Netscape 1.1 Enhanced



This page maintained by [John Dhabolt](#) - gabbo@dhabolt.mv.com



725 Concord Avenue

[Cambridge, MA](#) 02138

Phone: (617) 876-7680 x1213

Fax: (617) 492-7425

eMail: dhabolt@natural.com

Last updated November 24, 1995

The "Mushroomers Online!" directory has been discontinued.

The explosive growth of the Internet and the World-Wide Web have made the "Mushroomers Online!" directory impractical.

Click [HERE](#) to go to "David Fischer's Marvelous Mushroom Homepage."



Dave Fischer's Marvelous Mushroom Homepage



Dave Fischer's
**Marvelous
Mushroom
Homepage**

Edible Wild
Mushrooms of
North America
*A Field-to-Kitchen
Guide*

Mushrooms of
Northeastern
North America

Dave Fischer's
**North American
Mushroom Basics
(Real Answers
About Mushrooms)**

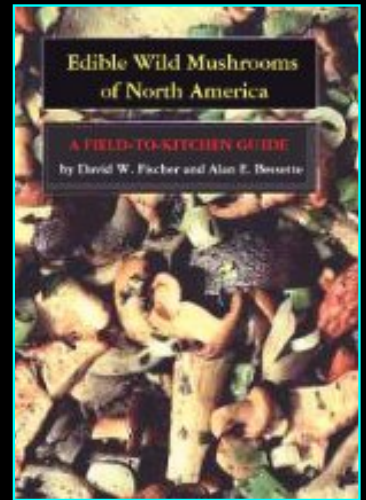
Hello! I'm Dave Fischer, co-author of two mushroom books.

EDIBLE WILD MUSHROOMS OF NORTH AMERICA

by David W. Fischer and Alan E. Bessette
(1992, Univ. of Texas Press)

The Definitive Book on the Subject---35,000 copies in print! Read what experienced mushroomers are saying about *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America*:

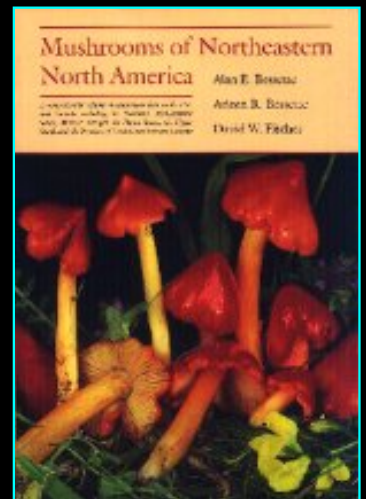
"This is not simply another mushroom field guide... People hesitant in mycophagy [mushroom gathering and eating] will find confidence in their abilities by using this book... it should become the most popular field guide on the market---a fixture in everyone's basket." --Barry L. Wulff, Professor Emeritus of Biology, Eastern Connecticut State University
"This is an especially helpful book for new members of our mushroom clubs... For our intermediate members, it is a tool to increase the number of edible species they know and to expand their knowledge on techniques for using edible mushrooms... The photos are clear and the description of each species includes a discussion of edibility and cooking and storing suggestions... This book will enable you to enjoy a great variety of edible wild mushrooms." --Sandy Sheine, President, Connecticut-Westchester Mycological Association



MUSHROOMS OF NORTHEASTERN NORTH AMERICA

by Alan E. Bessette, Arleen R. Bessette, and David W. Fischer
(1997, Syracuse Univ. Press)

This encyclopedic new volume, including nearly 1500 species and 650 color photographs, illustrates the diversity of mycoflora throughout Northeastern North America. Professional and advanced mycologists will welcome the inclusion of microscopic features, chemical reagent data, information on classification, and author citations. The user-friendly keys and nontechnical language will appeal to the novice mushroom collector,





(NOTE: MYKOWEB includes a directory of [North American mushroom clubs](#))

as will the introductory information on fungal anatomy, collecting techniques, and mushroom cooking and preservation.

Whatever the reason for your interest in mushrooms---whether it be for scientific study, the search for edible species, or for the sheer appreciation of their beauty---this book will serve as a trustworthy and inspiring guide to mushrooms of northeastern North America.



About Dave Fischer...

I am a nationally known expert on the ecology and identification of wild mushrooms. I served for nine years as president of the Central New York Mycological Society (CNYMS) and am past president of the Northeast Mycological Federation, Inc. (NEMF).

I serve as a mushroom identification consultant for the New York State Poison Control Center and for several mycological organizations. I have served on the faculty of the annual Northeast Mycological Foray (NEMF -- the Samuel Ristich Foray) and the annual North American Mycological Association (NAMA) Foray, and have served as program/faculty chair for both.

When I am not collecting, studying, eating, teaching or writing about mushrooms, I divide my time between spending time with my three wonderful children, and writing.

I am available to teach mushroom identification courses and provide slide-illustrated lectures for museums, colleges, environmental organizations, and the general public.



One of my favorite mushrooms is...



...the **Hygrophorus Milky** (*Lactarius hygrophoroides*).

Note the white liquid called 'latex' oozing from the gills---a hallmark of the genus *Lactarius*. This is a fairly common gilled mushroom, usually found under oak trees. It happens to be a delicious edible---IF it is properly identified!

Photo Copyright ©1993, 1997 by David W. Fischer



This site maintained by David W. Fischer, whose e-mail address is basidium@aol.com

Wes Stone's
"A Short
'Shroom
Primer"



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Something really fun:
[Morchella ultima... A New
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