
MID HUDSON MYCO-NEWS

AN OCCASIONAL PUBLICATION OF THE MID HUDSON MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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Spring/Summer in Review

A note from David Trabajo de Prez

Well, after a pretty dry winter, the rain has blessed us through the spring and into the early summer and the fungi have responded favorably. As most of you know, with the warm temperatures in early spring, our Morel season came a couple of weeks early this year, and although it was not an enormous bonanza, morels were found everywhere. This is interesting considering how dry it was last year through the summer and early fall when the mycelia responsible for this spring's morels were developing. In any case, *Morchella esculenta* was much more prolific this year than last. There were a number of club members who found their first morels on our spring walks this year.

Our first morel walk of the season took place in Hyde Park and yielded enough that nearly everyone found a good handful. It was well attended and the ticks were minimal, thank goodness. Hopefully this will not be our last year at this location! Dryad Saddle was quite abundant as well, and George Johanson was able to spread around his wonderful knowledge of other wild edibles as well. Redbud was my favorite new taste of the day....it is evidently related to sweet pea, and actually tastes like it in an ethereally floral kind of way. There is also, of course, a giant field of nettles at

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All-Day Foray: Get Your Mushroom Groove On!

Sat., September 2nd 9am

Think of it as a **mushroom-lover's Labor Day Weekend Paradise Picnic in Greene County.**

Listen, here's the deal. It's not just going to be **prancing through the woods** with baskets, **plucking fabulous mushrooms with friends & family in prime mushroom territory** hand selected by area mushroom guru, John Boyle. Not only will this be an all-day affair with **multiple walks with multiple leaders with big mushroom ID tables** including **microscopes, spore prints, chemicals and rare mushroom keys**, but we'll also have a **firepit** for cooking **beast**, tofu, delectable expertly identified **choice mushrooms, smoker** for culinary delights later in the day, and, get this, **modern bathroom facilities**. Members are encouraged to bring friends and family and anything which will help make the day more comfortable and joyful: coolers of **cold beverages** and **tasty things to grill, favorite potluck dishes, canapés, canopies, blankets, lawn chairs, musical instruments, more cold beverages, citronella tiki torches, mushroom haikus, amazing fungal stories, marshmallows, frisbees and whatever else you can think of.** The

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Reservoir Walk a Success

MHMA Teams up with DEP to Present a "Hot" Mushroom Excursion

The mercury had already climbed into the mid 80s by mid morning and the sun was burning bright. Our meeting place at the pedestrian bridge of the Ashokan Reservoir was a busy little crossroads on a Sunday morning: joggers, kids on bigwheels, families on bikes and a big diverse crowd of folks with baskets and bugspray. When we discussed past attendance at prior DEP walks, our host and Ashokan Land Steward, Austin Schneller said that attendance usually landed around 8-12 people. By the time our gagging group was ready to walk, our number was close to 40. This

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the Hyde Park location, but with the early warm weather, they were almost verging on mature for eating

On the Rosendale walk, besides our familiar Yellow Morels, one member actually found a flush of beautiful slender Black Morels. We also found Morels this year in relationships with trees we don't often find them with in this area, including Tulip and Ash. Members also reported going back to the Binnewater location the next week to find some truly huge morels.

Our walk at the Hurley Rail Trail on June 10th was lightly attended but we ended up finding and identifying upwards of 30 species of fungi. Many thanks to John Boyle and George Johanson for their great wisdom on this walk, and thanks again to John for spending the time to compile so many IDs. Tree identification was the excuse for this walk, but was only casually discussed. *Megacollybia platyphyla* (Platterful or Broad Gill) was found in profusion, along with *Clavicornia pyxidata* (Crown Tipped Coral). Also of note was a shocking early fruiting of *Hericium americanum* (Bear's Head Tooth), which was small, but in perfect condition. We found slimes and Scarlet Cups and many Wood Ear mushrooms, too. We'll eventually list an official species list on the webpage. Anyone interested in taking on the responsibility for gathering species lists for our walks? I think it would be very valuable for us to keep track of over the years....

Our next walk was the walk with the DEP at the Ashokan Reservoir. More on that in the review on page 1.

The Hemlock Ridge walk was one we'd had a long time coming. Evidently an area frequented by members in years past, our planned walks there haven't happened for the past couple of years due to planning and weather concerns. Our walk there sported some 19 folks and the area was very wet and buggy, but we found some interesting stuff, including *Lactarius hygrophoroides*, *corrugis* and *volemus*, *Cantharellus lateritius*, *Fuligo septica*, *Cyathus striatus*, and George Johanson's whooping brought everyone running when he discovered a fascinating *Dyctophora duplicate* (Netted Stinkhorn) which was completely encased in a squirming mass of Corpse Beetles. It was stinky and repulsive but I couldn't take my eyes off of it! My pictures didn't come out well, so if anyone else out there got good pix of that one, please send them along and I'll stick them on the webpage. We also found (or they found us) a nest of angry yellow jackets who viciously stung a number of folks. Luckily none were allergic!

The latest walk was up at the AgroForestry Resource Center up in Acra, NY with John Boyle. Normally a well attended and always interesting walk, John was surprised this time only to have one attendee! (C'mon folks!) He says they found some interesting stuff nonetheless including an unusual (for this area) Beefsteak Polypore, *Fistulina hepatica*, which he has frozen for later culinary explorations. Other edible finds included *Lactarius hygrophoroides & corrugis*, Chanterelles and Frost's Bolete. ❖

included our co-leaders Austin and Carl, many members, some new friends of friends, people from as far away as Port Jervis and NYC who had heard about the walk in the DEP Watershed Recreation newsletter.

The walk itself took place on the 240+ acre Acorn Hill Unit across the street from our meeting place. Standing in the shade of the Red Pines, I talked a little bit about the roles of fungi in the NYC Watershed and we got moving to see what we could find and so we could give the mosquitoes a little bit more of a challenge to obtain our blood.

There had been only a little bit of rain that week, so it was light picking. We found chanterelles, Painted Suillus, Spotted Bolete, Lobster Mushrooms, *Lactarius Hygrophoroides* and *Corrugis*, various *Russula*, LBM's and slimes. There were some pretty purple corals on the path at one point and numerous *Xylaria*, *Sarcosypha*, *Amanita*...but nothing in profusion.

The major home run we hit on this walk was scoring a collaboration with the DEP. Many thanks go out to Renee, Phil, Austin, Jennifer and Paul for helping to make this happen and thanks to everyone who came for making it a great day! I have some ideas on a next step with the DEP with the dual aim of helping them out and possibly gaining greater access to the lands. See **Anyone Interested?** on page 4 for details.... ❖

All Day Foray from page 1

base camp/picnic site will be accessible to vehicles for loading and unloading.

For those who don't think they are up to walking in the woods all day, find comfort in the fact that there will be other folk hanging around base camp for most of the day as well. You know, someone has to be around to make sure the beer stays cold...*heh heh*

Everyone is encouraged to bring dishes to share, but if you intend to bring any prepared item with wild mushrooms in it, please contact David Work first as all shared mushrooms must be positively identified before they are prepared. It is an inconvenience, but so is the alternative. The closest expert club identifier will be happy to check out what you have.

Many pre-emptive thanks go out to John for the organization and for supplying the environs for this great event, and for sharing his precious mushroom territories! Hopefully it will be a special day for all.

If there are folks who want to arrive early to help set up or to put up canopies, etc, please do so! To coordinate with John, email him at jbmushroom@surferz.net.

Who knows, if this day turns out as well as we think it will, perhaps we'll plan to do at least a couple of events like this every year! In case of torrential rain, check the webpage for schedule change or call David at 845 687 2172

See you there! ❖

Discovering Mushrooms

By Michael Asbill

I grew up in arid places – Idaho, Utah, Arizona, California. Other than the occasional Cottonwood tree or Saguaro cactus my formative years were spent with the thorny, twisted, and dry shrubs of the high plains and the desert. As you might imagine, finding a mushroom was pretty unusual. In fact, I don't remember ever finding a mushroom in the west. They must be there, right?

Just over five years ago my wife and I moved to the Hudson Valley. To say the least, coming east was a total shock. We arrived in the winter, early in 2001. Winter turned to spring and the trees started leafing out. Each day was mind-bending. I would think to myself, "How can it possibly get any greener?" Then it would. To my amazement, this continued until the leaves started changing colors - my first full fall in the East. Wow! Needless to say, I was pretty distracted that year. I spent a lot of time marveling over the trees and I was also blown-away by the diversity of insects (biting and non-biting), but I'll leave that be. Suffice it to say, I was living in a whole new world.

In 2004, after what I felt was an incredibly wet spring, I started noticing just how many mushrooms there were around. Not only that, they came in so many different colors, sizes and shapes. I resolved to start photographing them. I borrowed a mushroom identification book from the library hoping that I might find names for these fungi. For the most part, my identification efforts were a real bust. Often my mushrooms resembled several of the mushrooms in the guide and I wasn't having much luck narrowing them down based on other criteria like spore prints. In some cases the shape of my mushroom I was studying just wasn't quite right, the color was a bit off, and the gills were too far apart. There were, however, a few specimens that I felt pretty certain about. My excitement about them was compounded by the fact that they might be edible. How thrilling!

A friend of a friend was a gatherer of wild mushrooms. She agreed to look at a few of my photographs to confirm (if possible) whether or not I had identified these mushrooms correctly. My friend would take my photographs to his place of work and share them with his friend. Then he would report back to me. The anticipation was great. How was I going to get through this day?

One mushroom in the guide had been called a *Horn of Plenty*. It was reportedly tasty and quite easy to identify. There was also a photo of a beautiful orange mushroom that smelled of dried apricots that I thought might be a *Chanterelle*. I was really hoping I had this one right. I found several clusters of them and it was clear to me that they would add up to several meals. The third photo was of a small mushroom that I thought might be a *Common Puffball*. I waited eagerly for news from my friend that night. I was crushed to learn he hadn't seen his friend. I would have to wait another day. In the meantime I continued to revisit the little troops of mushrooms, thinking that I would discover some additional trait that would

absolutely confirm their identity. No such luck.

The following evening my friend came to me with a smile and little paper bag. He put my photographs down on the table and gestured to the first photograph of a dark trumpet shaped mushroom that I had labeled "*Horn of Plenty*." A new label appeared on the photograph with a little note. The note said that I was right, the mushroom was edible but it was called a *Black Trumpet*. She hadn't heard of it being called a *Horn of Plenty*. I was elated. In the paper bag was a sample of the mushroom and it truly matched the ones I had observed. There were also mushrooms that matched my other two photographs. I had properly identified the *Common Puffball*. She knew that it was edible but had never bothered eating one. I had also identified the *Chanterelle* correctly. The sample *Chanterelle* that she sent along was slightly different in shape from the one that I had photographed, but clearly the same. I went out immediately and collected the mushrooms I had been so eager eat. I ate them prepared in different ways every day for weeks. I felt enormous satisfaction with what I now knew, but I was growing very anxious, almost impatient, to know more.

Perhaps the reader of this essay will see a pattern forming – a familiar pattern. I wouldn't be a bit surprised to hear almost the exact same narrative (except for the part about growing up in the west) from any number of amateur mycologists or members of the MHMA. The truth is that I was becoming addicted to mushrooms (not necessarily the hallucinogenic ones). In many respects my life has been measured in mycological milestones over the past few years. For example, a huge event in my year was finding my first lobster mushroom. A great disappointment was having not found a *Morel* this past spring (I study the *Morels* in my guidebook constantly.) I was in a great mood for days when I realized I was capable of correctly identifying *Lactarius hygrophoroides* without any help. I suspect that I will soon be calling all familiar mushrooms by their scientific names even when nobody else knows what I'm talking about. There will be a basket and paper bags in my truck at all times. I'll probably stop referring to the passage of time in terms of months and weeks and refer to these periods based on the mushrooms that are in season. When will the insanity stop? I know, it probably won't - and I love it! But do I love it as much as my fossil collection? ❖

Cantharellus lateritius Photo by Michael Asbill



Anyone Interested?

David Floats an Idea....

I mentioned this only in passing at the Ashokan walk and included mention of it in the handout I gave out that day...

Here's the deal. I've been reading Paul Stamet's newest book, [Mycelium Running: How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World](#). Paul Stamets is pretty brilliant in terms of coming up with innovative uses for fungi and although he can be a bit of a Myco-utopian, I think his latest book really pulls a lot of his prior ideas into useable perspective.

If our club members would be interested in becoming involved in such an undertaking, I would be willing to propose to the DEP a limited experimental project focused on the intentional use of fungi to improve the quality of the waters of the Ashokan watershed using the following concepts:

[Mycofiltration](#): the intentional use of fungi to filter water. The use of mycelia to filter out microorganisms, pollutants and silt. Mycelial Mycofiltration: Membranes can be installed downhill of the following types of sites: Road drainage areas, Farms, Septic Leaching areas, Stressed, damaged or malnourished forest areas.

[Mycoremediation](#): The Intentional Use of Fungi to Denature Toxic Wastes

Our area of the Northeast receives some nasty toxic pollutants originating sometimes from very far away. Some of them wash off of our roads, and others still may come from agriculture or other industries. Some of the worst of these are persistent heavy metals. The mycelia of certain species of fungi possess an elevated capacity for the absorption, and in some cases, the denaturing and decomposition of chemical pollutants.

The simplest and most direct project that I would want to first propose to them would be to identify sources of contaminated water runoff – whether that be from farm drainage, road chemicals running from culverts, pathogens coming from residential septic systems.

If they were interested in doing so, the DEP could work with upstream farms, homeowners and businesses to target toxins or pathogens flowing into the water source and encourage growth of fungal mycelia which specialize in the degradation and filtering of such chemicals and organisms. Species vary substantially in their ability to adapt to specific toxic loads.

Around areas with cow and pig populations, the flow of coliforms, nitrates and phosphorous affects the downstream watershed, esp. during rainy season. If there are cornfields nearby, the cornstalks can be used to spawn naturally occurring native fungi to form mycelial mats 6-12 inches deep along the edges of contaminated areas which will act as filters to capture the microbial outflow.

Similar mycelial beds could be constructed of wood chips spawned with our native *Stropharia rugoso annulata* or other effective wood lovers in areas where hardwood debris is more plentiful than corn stalks.

By checking contaminated areas for fruitbodies of native species during fruiting seasons, we can pinpoint local species which are already tolerant or which can thrive in the presence of these contaminants. If no local species are found, then the importation of myceliated burlap bags can be used to establish the initial mycelial mat, which can then be maintained in subsequent seasons.

We would start on a small scale, of course, with the DEP folks providing raw materials like wood chips, and we'd see what level of success we can achieve little by little...

In any case, my aim would be to make such a proposal to the NYC Watershed Authorities in exchange for greater access to NYC Watershed Lands.

It doesn't mean that they will say "yes" but it is worth a shot. If they say no, we can bring our project to another location if we're still interested. It's certainly worthwhile developing such practices and maybe we'll make contact with Paul Stamets and get some additional guidance along the way.

This is the type of project which would only get off the ground if an ample number of folks will commit to involvement in its execution, so if people are interested in this project, make yourselves known to me and we can get together and get all of the info together that we'll need for a proposal. I'd only want to make a proposal to the DEP if I know that a significant number of you are on board. Let me know what you think of this idea.

I think we can refine it and make it work!

Ah, the Benefits of Fungi...

Read this Before you Spray those Gypsy Moths

Back in June, Francis Groeters sent out some interesting info to the recipients of the Catskill Native Nursery email list which you gardening types might keep in mind:

On my evening dog walk in the woods I noticed that many gypsy moth caterpillars had died from natural causes - in fact most caterpillars were dead. I suspect this has been brought about by the cool wet weather we've just experienced. This weather gives a boost to a fungus, Entomophaga maimaiga, that kills gypsy moths. If you have not already sprayed insecticide to kill gypsy moths I would suggest that you refrain from doing so. This will help spare other species of butterflies and moths and other insects.

Thanks for the lowdown, Francis, and for keeping an eye out for those other beneficial creatures. Now if we can only find a selective fungus for mosquitoes and deerflies, we'll be all set! ❖

MID HUDSON MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP / RELEASE FORM

Dues (Please circle one) Family: \$20 Individual: \$15 Full time student: \$10

Name(s) _____

Address _____

e-mail (important!) _____ Phone _____

RELEASE

I (We) realize that when engaged in wild mushroom activities, that serious physical injury and personal property damage may accidentally occur. I (We) further realize that there is always the possibility of having an allergic reaction to or being poisoned by the eating of wild mushrooms and that these adverse reactions to eating wild mushrooms range from mild indigestion to fatal illness. Knowing the risks, I (we) agree to assume the risks, and agree to release, hold harmless and to indemnify the Mid-Hudson Mycological Association, and any officer or member thereof, from any and all legal responsibility for injuries or accidents incurred by myself or my family during or as a result of any mushroom identification, field trip, excursion, meeting or dining, sponsored by the club.

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please send your completed application, signed and dated, with your check to "MHMA" to:
Cynthia Fisher, MHMA Treasurer, 203 Lily Lake Road, Highland, NY 12528

As a member of MHMA you are entitled to Discounted Membership with the North American Mycological Association. If you are interested in joining or renewing NAMA membership through MHMA, please include an additional check for \$32 per person made out to "NAMA" and include it in the envelope with this form and we will forward your NAMA renewal.

MHMA Event & Regional Calendar

Thurs-Sun August 24th-27th--The 2006 Clark Rogerson Foray, sponsored by the Connecticut-Westchester Mycological Association (COMA) at the Cave Hill Resort in Moodus, CT. Take a bunch of great mycologists, mix in some high end chefs, 300 (on average) varieties of mushrooms and a beautiful location and you get a really great regional event! If you plan to attend this event, sign up early as housing is limited to around 75 people. Day-participation is not limited. More info available at the COMA Website. www.mushroomthejournal.com/coma

Fri-Mon, September 1-4, 12th Annual Samuel Ristich Foray, St. Anthony's Hermitage, Lac Bouchette, Canada-- in the unique boreal forest 250 miles north of Montreal. More info at the **CMM website** <http://www.mycomontreal.qc.ca/>

DATE CHANGED! Saturday, September 2nd, 9am The BIG MHMA All Day Foray in Greene County This will be an all-day gathering with multiple walks/leaders. There will of course be tables for IDs, a firepit available for grilling beast or tofu or our fully identified choice edible mushrooms, BYO beverages and BYO lawn chairs and canopy or whatever for resting. The smoker will be set up early for gastronomic delights later in the day. The brainchild of John Boyle, the various exact walk locations have not been determined as of yet but will be somewhere up in John's familiar nearby environs depending on where things seem to be popping that day. There will be non-foraging folks hanging out at the base camp all day for those who don't relish slogging through the trees all day. Our meeting place for this walk will be at the ARC in Acra, NY at 9am. Our proximity to the ARC building will allow those who enjoy modern toilet facilities to remain comfortable... Please note that everyone is encouraged to bring dishes to share, but if you intend to bring any prepared item with wild mushrooms in it, please contact David Work first as all shared mushrooms must be positively identified before they are prepared. It is an inconvenience, but so is the alternative. The closest expert club identifier will be happy to check out what you have.

Wednesday September 13th, 7-8:30pm David Work will give a slide presentation which will touch on the basics of mushroom identification and the beauty and endless variety of fungi. Both sponsored and hosted by the Rosendale Public Library in Rosendale, NY.

Sunday September 15th-17th, Central New York Mycological Society's 53rd Annual Charles Horton Peck New York State Mushroom Foray click for more info

Saturday, September 23rd, 9am Black Rock Forest Foray, David and Barbara Plume, Leaders. Our southernmost walk location, with the exception of last year, Black Rock Forest has been heavenly in past years with the number and variety of mushrooms which thrive here.

Saturday, September 30, 9am, Annual Locust Grove Foray at the Morse Estate in Poughkeepsie, NY – Quite frequently one of our most prolific walk sites. Taking place on a beautiful large preserve which includes everything from rich mixed woodlands, fields and Hudson river shoreline, this walk is the only day in the entire year when the Morse Estate allows mushroom picking

Saturday, October 7th, 9am , Annual Educational Foray at Minnewaska State Park – A magnificent and unique landscape often yielding interesting finds. The park is a preserve which only allows very limited picking of mushrooms for identification purposes

Directions to the local events are included in a separate page in this Newsletter

The Development of a Young Epicurean Soul, by David Work

When I was a little one, I became entranced by the magic of the apple orchards surrounding my parents house in Harvard Massachusetts. The experiences related below were written as an exercise in discovering personal culinary roots I wrote while in cooking school years ago. It's not all about mushrooms, but I want to share it nonetheless. It is the background story for how I became so interested in fungi...

Orchard:

My earliest food memories can not be separated chronologically. Nor can they really be separated from catching frogs, my mother's kitchen, tired legs from walking or the countless mutinae that come rushing back to be reconstructed as I begin to recall that time. All of my memory during that time, however, was effected by my formative experiences in the orchards.

In my early childhood my family resided in an enormous farmhouse in the small apple-growing town of Harvard, Massachusetts. I'm sure that at that point in time, 1965-70, Harvard was actually succumbing to the transition from being a farming town to becoming an executive suburb of Boston. In fact, my father commuted the 32 miles to Cambridge every day to work as a combination MIT instructor and computer programmer for the space program, but in my 4-year old mind of 1969, I was sure that the world consisted of little more than my family, my dog, Daffy, the puppies, the wasps in the hot attic which kept me away from the ping pong table, Mrs. Sturdy's frog pond and, of course, the blessed apple orchards which surrounded the house on three sides. The fourth side of the property was hemmed in by the road, which I didn't cross much at that point and even if I did, the stone wall on the far side of the road was thoroughly entangled in dusty smelling Concord grape vines, poison ivy and a host of aggressive yellow jacket communities, all of which I'd learned to avoid at an even earlier age.

The orchards were my education, my place of adventure and refuge. I didn't really realize it, but my parents allowed me many freedoms that my older sisters had never enjoyed. My golden retriever, Daffy, always accompanied me wherever I went, a protective surrogate mother, enabling me to stray far from home and return safely. Hours would pass in the trees only interrupted by the special call my mother would issue to bring me running back home. At four, my dog and I (and sometimes a friend) would explore and travel the rows of trees, mostly apple but also some peach and pear, sampling the fruit, playing games, climbing the pruned trees, using clumps of undissolved herbicide to draw white images on the trunks of the trees. I would lie in the tall green grass watching the clouds, running away as the sprayers approached. I was sprayed directly a couple of times. Eyes burning, a terrible taste in my mouth, feeling sickened, I'd squeeze through the puppy door into the barn to seek refuge. The men who drove the tractors would simply wear a yellow slicker and hat to keep the pesticides from soaking their clothing. I knew that spray was bad. I

hated those sprayers.

At four or five, I had the ability to discern varieties of different things from one another and at that point, apples were my supreme favorite "thing." The timing of the season became second nature. I knew best of all the Macintosh apples. They always came into season first, though I would begin eating them when they were still very tart and green, barely red on one side, dappled by a green oval where a leaf had blocked the sun's effects. I could taste the sun in these warm apples; sweet and alive. Looking back on the flavor, I suspect that these trees were of the generation before over-hybridization leached the spirit out of this variety. Something about eating those apples fed a deeper part of me, and I felt the spirit of that orchard very intensely.

Next came the Golden Delicious shortly followed by the Red Delicious. The Red Delicious were not of the ilk that you find in stores today; the Washington state cardboard variety. I knew from experience and from my friends, the apple-pickers, that Delicious apples did not achieve their true flavor until touched by the first frost of the Autumn, after which they were useless for commercial packing, as they wouldn't hold. The fruit was cool from the latish autumn days with translucent green patches where the frost had sweetened the flesh, but the apples were still firm and crunchy, not having the time to become mealy; the skin not as thick as today's well-traveling cousins.

I had my favorite trees to climb. From the tops of the trees the wind was gentle and my eyes could follow the tops of the reaching trees to see the roof of our barn and house. On breezy spring days, the trees would release a gentle snow of fragrant blossom petals, white and pink, which would kiss my face and eyelids. Those days taught me a deep sensuality which stays with me to this day. It is the total experience of those early times which shaped my innately sensual Epicurean spirit.

I achieved a sort of harmony with the creatures and other life in the orchard. I never destroyed anything out of hand. I had a truce with the honey bees. Even in the midst of the blossom season when the orchard was loudly buzzing, I knew that as long as I kept away from the white painted hives near the base of the orchard, they would not bother me. Within the structure of all of that organized agriculture, I learned that I could forage for little things to eat that grew wild. I learned to pull the top section from the grass to nibble the tender section at the bottom; the flavor unique but quickly familiar. I found the fresh tendrils of fresh growth on the Concord grape vines, that were so lemony that eating a few of them could quench thirst in the absence of water. Someone had taught me that old Indian trick, and I knew that I was part Indian, so it all felt right; secret knowledge in my blood.

There were wild foods I could bring home to be prepared by Mom on the electric stove: wild asparagus, puffballs, wild carrots and the prickly bounty of the giant chestnut tree near our barn, not yet dead from blight. I was proud of these finds and they tasted different from other food. I had an appreciation for the things that nature had put in my path. These were very spiritual times for me, and bless her, my mother was both nurturing and protective of this natural sensibility in me.

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I probed the wooded edges of the orchard way off in the back sections, finding the beaver pond and a hedge of elderberries from which Mom made elderberry jam. I helped pick and crush the bunches of tiny berries. I still recall the smell of the paraffin which sealed the tops before canning. Another source of hidden treasure just downstream from the beaver dam was an old bottle dump from the previous century, along with the crushed remnants of an old windmill tower. I found a sense of history attached to these found items. I remember the rotten apple fights that the apple pickers would have after harvest during the pruning, and the sweet yet vinegary smell of the splatting apples and the moist, brown, tearful, stinging pain of being caught in the half-frozen crossfire.

In later years, when I was nine, my family built a house in an old abandoned orchard. During that time in my life, my parents emphasized the importance of self-sufficiency in life: building a house which was geared toward solar use, growing our own food and heating with wood. My mother was turning toward organic foods after the extreme toxicity of the commercial orchard. I continued to forage: milkweed, pigweed, **morels**, sassafras, dandelion, **puffballs** and of course, we had a fantastic variety of old, thick-skinned apples which were no longer popular commercially. They were a bit wormy but had all of the spirit and flavor that I craved: the early Northern Spy, Franklins, Baldwins, Cortlands and a number of others which I don't think we ever identified. We had an old hand-press for cider; battling the yellow jackets to make a few gallons each day in season.

As I've matured and traveled to and lived in other places in the world, there is part of me that is primally unfulfilled by the tastes, smells and feeling of foreign surroundings. That is not to say that the new experiences are not intriguing, amazing, titillating. It is simply that because "here" (home) is where I grew up, the inner core of my childhood within resonates with "here" (home) now: the quality of the light, the air, the water, the birds, the smells, the rocks, the stone walls, the way that the land has been shaped by the generations before; all of it. There is something supremely satisfying to me in existing here, in the Northeast, in having the opportunity to recognize the confirmation of the cycles by tasting the strawberries in the summer, foraging mushrooms, the new crop of Cortlands or McCouns with local handmade cheddar, to taste the granite in the water, to smell the sharp cold of the late fall air loaded with the richness of freshly split wood and rotting maple leaves and to taste the spring's hot new maple syrup straight out of the tank. It feeds me on a cellular level. These are the things that I strive to include or retain in my adult life to share with my friends, customers, my wife and my sweet son, so that they can understand this place as I understand it and so that I, too, can be understood through this context.

I think that I will plant some old variety apple trees in our field, this fall.

Maybe this will help folks understand how and what I feel when we walk in the woods together... D ❖

Explore, Learn, Participate.

Participants Needed to Help President from Going Completely Insane

Contributors needed for newsletter. Have you noticed that most of what is written here in the newsletter comes from David Work? Think it would be more interesting if more voices were heard in this club communication? Write something and send it in! We promise not to bite.

Our club still needs a Club Secretary since Chris Dunne stepped down. This is an essential office of the club to help things moving smoothly. Anyone interested?

Webmaster or Co-master needed to help with building and upkeep of the club webpage. It's a nice webpage, but we need to keep it current and fresh. Any web-savvy folk out there with a few extra minutes per week?

Scout new walk areas. Do you have property or know of a great looking walk site that needs checking out? Do you live in an area where we don't usually have walks? Here is your chance to develop a walk site close to you!

Mushrooms Found List Curator. One of the great things we can do as informed amateur mycologists is to keep track of the species we find. Would someone like to keep track of this information in an organized fashion? You wouldn't necessarily need to be the person gathering the information.

President's plea: I am normally not a complainer, but I need help. This is not MY club, it is OUR club. Currently I write the newsletter, print it, fold it, label it stamp it. I put together the winter lecture series, I maintain the website, I build the schedule, arrange walks, call all the people who don't have email, produce, print and send all of the notices and letters, and maintain the membership list, design, produce and market fundraising materials. Although I love this club dearly, I am also developing a new career, I have a family and my health is not great at the moment. Unfortunately, if I do not have help, some of this will have to fall by the wayside. I'm open to ideas.

MHMA OFFICER CONTACT INFO

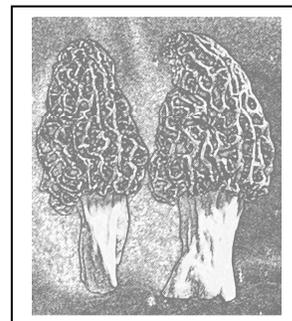
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Mushroom of the Moment

Abortiporus biennis – *Ceratomyces terrestris*



This Finger-shaped form of *Ceratomyces terrestris* or *Abortiporus biennis* looks as though it might be more at home in an ocean sponge bed than in a grassy area by an Elm tree, but that is just where member and photographer Walter Earl found this one. Michael Kuo of MushroomExpert.com says, “The edibility of *Abortiporus biennis* is unknown, but its flesh is so tough that only a mastodon would be interested.”

What David Arora terms as “...unimposing, profoundly forgettable, pitiful excuse for a polypore,” may just be that! It stains brown and exudes red juice. It causes white trunk rot in living trees and is *saprobic*, causing white rot in dead trees. It comes in at least three forms, a finger-shaped form, a knarled form and a vaguely cap and stem shape. Its most common form, the gnarled form is referred to as *Abortiporus biennis*. It grows singly or gregariously around the bases and stumps of trees. Some distinctive microscopic features are variously shaped Gloecystidia and the presence of both spores and Chlamydo spores (roundish, thick-walled, asexual spores).

Thanks to Michael Kuo for much of this description. Visit his website at www.mushroomexpert.com ❖

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WWW.MUSHROOMTHEJOURNAL.COM/MHMA

Gomphus floccosus



Nolanea murrainii



Boletus bicolor



From:

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TO:

Perishable Mushroom-Related Information Enclosed!