

FUNGAL JUNGAL

"IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE"

Dear Friends,

It has been a hope of mine that we might establish a mushroom hunters group in the Missoula-Bitterroot area, so that sufferers of mycophilia might be better able to share the fruits and frustrations of their obsession. In the course of this pursuit, I've collected the addresses of several friends, students, and other mycophiles, and cranked out the first issue of this newsletter. If you aren't interested in this subject, please call or drop me a card and I'll have your name off the list in a jiffy.

Some of us are on a phone list now, and we say we'll call each other if one of us spots an area where there are just too many fungus. (If that ever happens...) This idea works and it doesn't, but if you want to be on the list, and receive a copy of the list, let me know. My phone number is 543-6630.

Pick carefully,

Larry Evans

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ADDRESS information



MUSHROOM, THE JOURNAL OF WILD MUSHROOMING
861 Harold St.
Moscow, Idaho 83843

MAY MUSHROOMS FOUND AT TELLER WILDLIFE REFUGE AND MISSOULA

Although our May 2 hunt did not compare with last year's June 2 hunt, the fact that it occurred a month earlier shows how warm our weather has been since the unusually short winter. We did not find any of the giant morels that were the highlight of last spring's hunt, but Chris Hill unearthed nearly a bushel of *M. esculentas* from their hiding places under cottonwood leaves. Other species included *Coprinus atramentarius* and *micaeous*, and even a surprise flush of *C. comatus*, perhaps due to the sudden cold snap that ended last year's autump temperatures.

Other common species that turned up included *Panaeolus campanulatus* and *semiovata*, *Flammulina velutipes*, a surprising *Agaricus campestris*, several *Cortinarius*, and some *Suillus* under the pines.

The warm weather and high humidity in the Swan Valley produced a flush of mushrooms at Holland Lake, including a big yellow *Ramaria* of the cauliflower variety, the common wood decomposer *Psathyrella* (probably *candolleana*), the stinky *Tricholoma aurantia*, a few morels, *helvellas*, and *gyromitras* (false morels), and a nice specimen of *Pleurotus elongatipes*.

I'm sure most of you saw the puffball that made the front page of the Missoulian last week. This is *Calvatia booniana*, according to OK Miller's description. The other giant puffball we collect is *C. lepidophora*, and it is covered with scales. They both prefer arid places, grasslands, and floodplains and are usually found right out in the open, away from trees.

A few people are calling up to report *Suillus* under lodgepole and ponderosa pine. These are usually fall species, but like the Shaggy manes, a sudden cold snap like we had last fall

BY THE WAY...

According to the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, the State of Montana does not permit the sale of wild mushrooms, because:

- "a. Some wild mushrooms are toxic.
- b. All wild mushrooms being sold to public establishments must be inspected by a certified mushroom expert.
- c. We do not have experts certified in Montana. Montana does not have a certification procedure.
- d. There are no approved sources of wild mushrooms in Montana."

Interesting, isn't it? Over a million dollars worth of mushrooms are bought and sold in Montana, ILLEGALLY, and the restaurants of Montana are forbidden to serve morels picked locally, because the state bureaucracy is mired in a Catch-22 of mushroom myth and misconception. The States of Michigan and Oregon both have programs for certifying the ability of mushroom pickers or buyers. Out of state corporations are once again being permitted "free rein" on one of Montana's natural resources with no obligation to build an economic infrastructure here.

THE CULTURE CORNER

This space is reserved for people wishing to obtain cultures of desirable mushroom species, and for people wishing to donate specimens or spawn for use by others. There is no fee for donating spawn, but I'm asking for a \$2 donation for requests which are printed here. Please include your address and/or phone so that people with the mushrooms you want can contact you.

GIANT PUFFBALL SPORES! a recent find of an overripe *Calvatia booniana* has left me with several pounds of spores. If you have an irrigated pasture or north/east facing slope covered in native grasses, this could be a nice addition to your local mushroom flora. Call Larry at 543-6630 to arrange pickup.

POLYPORUS SCHWEINITZII (aka PHAEOLUS SCHWEINITZII) Wanted for dyeing. Dry specimens OK. Other species: *Echinodontium tinctorum*, *Pisolithus tinctorius*. Contact Karen at Garden City Seeds, phone 961-4837.

Recipe Xchange

Marasmius Gravy

Rehydrate one package of Fairy Ring mushrooms in one cup of warm water for five minutes. In a saucepan, heat two tablespoons of butter. Add mushrooms and water, and stir in 3-4 tablespoons of flour to thicken. Spice with a little salt and pepper and serve over chicken. Serves 4.

Miso Soup

Heat four cups of water over medium heat. Add sliced onion, dried Fairy Rings, and dark miso to taste. Serves 4.

Marasmius and Chicken Stuffing

Rehydrate one package of Fairy Ring mushrooms in one cup of warm water for five minutes. Fry one medium onion in a tablespoon of butter, and add a half pound of shredded chicken and the mushroom mixture. Cook until liquid evaporates. This can be used to stuff enchiladas or for making stuffed peppers.