



Among Fungi

Cascade Mycological Society Newsletter

February 2012 Vol. 13 Issue 1

Fantastic Fungal Feast Future

Members' Survey Results and Board Perspective By: Meredith Allen, President

You may have noticed that we are not hosting a fungal feast this month, a departure from past years. Many factors have contributed to our decision, but primarily, the problem is cost. In past years, LCC generously offered the services of Culinary Arts Program faculty (Chef Clive) and students and offered a low price on the venue—and of course, the students learned to work with our local bounty of mushrooms. The Fungal Feast unexpectedly became a source of modest funds for CMS.

Last year, due to changes in the culinary program and LCC venues, LCC considerably raised the cost to CMS and proposed other changes that would have resulted in a more “upscale” style event with fewer seats. LCC informed us that our event did not work nearly as well with the Culinary Arts curriculum. So last year, we chose to move the venue to King Estate, who were also generous and flexible to our needs (maximum people, lowest cost). For example, King Estate does not usually offer a buffet, but they did that for our event last year. The wonderful and gracious King Estate is unable to host us on the same terms this year. They were willing to host a wonderful event, but for fewer people, no buffet, and \$125 per person, although if the event were to sell out, CMS would raise a considerable amount of money.

That would have been a significant price-hike and obviously less inclusive. The Board was unsure how to proceed and wanted member input; thus the survey.

Most members prefer a lower-cost, less-formal, more-inclusive, closer-to-town event. Members prefer (but don't insist) that the feast have an educational aspect (such as providing an

opportunity for culinary students to cook with wild mushrooms). We hear you! We have a committee working on how to accomplish those goals. If you have ideas or would like to join the “Mycophagy Committee”, you can contact them at: melotti.chris@gmail.com

CMS is an extremely frugal organization. We run almost entirely on volunteer labor. Board members and active members volunteer tons of time organizing our events and generally keeping us going. Bruce Newhouse and Peg Boulay coordinate the MPA show on a volunteer basis. And the MPA show is a fundraiser for MPA. CMS makes no money there. Foray leaders are all volunteer. LCC provides our general meeting venue free of charge.

So why do we need money? So that we can continue to achieve our mission—education about mushrooms. Specifically, we need money for several things. (1) We purchase supplies for the MPA show and offer limited reimbursements to experts for travel—those things run around \$1,000 per year. (2) We host speakers most months of the year. That costs around \$1,500 per year, for honoraria and travel reimbursements. (3) We offer grants and scholarships; recipients of those must provide an educational presentation at a general meeting. We gave away two student scholarships last year, around \$1800 total. Both scholarship recipients spoke at general meetings. (Ultimately, we would like to offer more grants and scholarships to worthy applicants). (4) We have miscellaneous fees associated with maintaining the website and our nonprofit status, several hundred dollars per year, plus newsletter costs.

But we have few sources of money. We have a solid bank balance. Most of that money comes from past fundraisers—“cost-share” programs with federal agencies. But, Federal agencies no longer offer these programs; we cannot make money that

way anymore. *Each year, we spend a tiny bit more than we make. In the long run, we cannot maintain or increase our level of educational offerings if we stay on this track.*

We make very little money on membership dues. Our dues are extremely low; I'm not sure, but I don't think that we have ever raised the cost. Most dues get eaten up sending out the newsletter, although that cost has decreased now that many members accept electronic mailing (Thank you, e-receivers; No worries, snail-mailers). We sell T-shirts. We do not do this for the profit; they pay for themselves and earn us no profit. We continue to sell T-shirts to foster a sense of community and group identity. We occasionally receive donations (Thanks life members and others!!). But lately, our only real source of replacing funds spent on the MPA show, speakers, and scholarships has been the fungal feast.

These are the considerations that the Fungal Feast Committee is grappling with. Thank you members for your suggestions and input. Again, contact the committee if you have more, or even better, join the committee.



December speaker and world renowned *cordyceps* expert, Daniel Winkler went foraging on the coast the day after his presentation with some board members and friends. Chris Melotti spotted what he first thought were unopened *dermocystes*. On closer examination, they turned out to be *Elaphocordyceps ophioglossoides*. Coincidence?

Foray Format Fix

CMS success and a growing popular interest in mushrooms has brought about a need for changes in how we conduct our foray program. Recent turn outs for CMS foray events have overwhelmed foray leaders and left us unable to keep track of participants, give proper direction and guidance, and assure the safety of all participants. These concerns have also discouraged foray leaders from stepping up to lead forays. The Board is particularly concerned about assuring the safety of all participants.

As a result the Board has adopted some new rules, clarified some old ones, set some goals and instituted some new procedures for future forays. Some of these have already been adopted and some we are still refining. We hope to have everything worked out and running smoothly by next Fall.

Here's what you need to know:

1. **Forays are for members only.** In the past we publicized to the general public meeting time and place and ultimate destination. As more and more people showed, we began to limit this advertising. We also began limiting forays to CMS members and one guest. But the numbers kept growing and became unmanageable. Membership is cheap. Forays are a benefit you get for being a member. If you friends want to come, tell them to join!
2. **The number of participants on each foray will be limited.** The number will be decided by the foray leader. Some are comfortable with lots of participants, some with fewer. This information will be posted for each foray on line.
3. **Preregistration will be required.** Each participant must register online separately. Only registered participants will receive information about meeting times and place. We will continue to publish dates and general destinations on our web page.
4. **No dogs.** Both foray leaders and participants have experienced problems with dogs at forays. The simplest solutions is to prohibit dogs.
5. **You must read and sign a liability waiver.** Your safety is our first concern, but we must protect ourselves too.

We have set ourselves some **goals** for future forays, to help CMS advance its mission to educate and encourage interest in mushrooms and all things fungal.

1. **We hope to increase the number of forays.** Our goal is at least one a month from Oct. to Feb. and a spring foray in Apr.
2. **Try to schedule forays the weekend before the general meetings.** That way members can bring finds to the general meetings for more identification and discussion.
3. **We will have at least one early (Oct.) foray open to non-members.** A chance for non-members to appreciate why they should join CMS.
4. **Recruit and train foray leaders.** If we are going to increase the number forays, we'll need more leaders. For interested members we will have at least one Foray Leader Training Foray.
5. **Continue to improve the online registration procedure.** We want to make the procedures more timely and easier for members and for foray leaders.

We want to be as inclusive and advance our mission to spread the pleasures of the fungus. We hope these changes will improve everyone's experiences on forays and we want our members to feel there is a benefit to belonging to CMS.



Two weeks later, Chris Melotti, working in the Coast Range found these *Cordyceps militaris*. Coincidence?

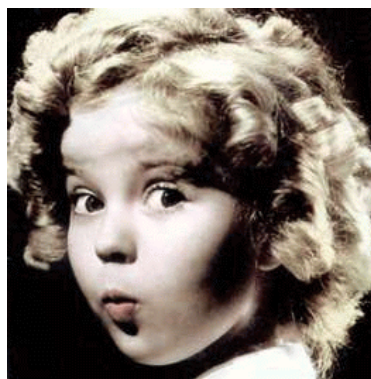
February Foray

Join us Sunday, Feb 12. for a foray with Harriet Kelly and David Hammond. This will be a low elevation, in the Cascade foothills and within 40 miles of Eugene. We will meet at 10 a.m. and plan to be back by midafternoon. Members only, no guests, no dogs.

We are hoping for hedgehogs, winter chanterelles, black trumpets, and good weather. Terrain will be moderate, no steep climbs required to get to mushrooms but the trail is narrow in spots. Projected range is under 2 miles.

Reservation required, foray is limited to twenty five people. Register at forays@cascademyco.org by Thursday Feb. 9. Please include the names of all people coming including children and a contact phone number (cell phone number is preferred, as we need it for the trip roster). Each person registering must be a member! Please bring a watch and dress for the weather and bring your trail head parking pass, if you have one. Meeting location and more information will be sent out with registration confirmation.

Mushroom permits required. The permit you got last fall is now expired. Please get your 2012 mushroom permit from the Forest Service at 3106 Pierce Parkway in Springfield. 8-4:30 Monday thru Friday or any other Forest Service office.



Mycology quiz.

Which of these two celebrities is also famous for her mushroom hunting skills?

30th Anniversary Show Rocks!

Every year, the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum Mushroom Show is a festive, colorful and fascinating celebration of autumn, community, and of course, mushrooms! Cascade Mycological Society organizes the festivals centerpiece: the mushroom display and associated educational tables. Including Lane Community College students, over 70 people make it all happen by collecting, identifying, organizing, and displaying Lane County's diverse fungi.

This year there were even more events and more volunteer work to commemorate the show's 30th anniversary. Cheshire Mayrsohn and Susie Holmes created a historical photo slideshow and picture books. It was a wonderful stroll through a fungal memory lane and how about those 70's and 80's hairstyles and fashions? Kahli Burke organized the photo contest, which received entries from other states and even other countries. Joe Spivack and Skye Weintraub networked with chefs to organize the first-ever Mushroom Madness Week. Seven restaurants and one microbrewery featured delicious dishes (and beer) in honor of Mushroom Madness. Harriet coordinated with Rogue [Public House] [Brewery?]-Track Town Ales, who crafted porcini ale. Lastly, Trudy organized the commemorative 30th anniversary CMS t-shirt. Steve Trudell, our Friday night keynote speaker, gave an engaging talk on fungal ecology.

For the second year, we had wonderful Talks on the Terrace, in which guest speakers gave short talks and demonstrations in the courtyard during the show. This year the theme was Fun and Fabulous Things to Do with Fungi. Ben Nadolny (King Estate) demonstrated mushroom cookery, Pam McElroy (Lincoln Mycological Society) taught mushroom preservation and preparation, and Cheshire Mayrsohn discussed how to create fiber dyes with lichens and mushrooms. The talks were all inspiring and well-attended, despite the need to sometimes huddle under the tent to avoid the rain showers.

We'd like to thank the many people involved. It is difficult to acknowledge everyone's contributions, but we appreciate your support and assistance! Here are just a few highlights of the great work that people did:

Tom LoCasio, Brad van Appel, Peg Douhit-Jackson, Ryan Heidt and others from the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum put on an amazing event and organized everything from scarecrows to mushroom soup.

Skye Weintraub and Grace Pugh worked with Bruce to add new fungus names and ecological information to our fungal database. They then created the mushroom labels for the show. We have over 1100 species in the database, which requires lots of updating and organizing. But it is worth it: our informative labels serve CMS's educational mission and set us apart from most mushroom shows.

Cheshire, Kahli and Trudy Earls organized special forays for CMS members to collect specimens for the show. Marcia Peeters donated mushrooms collected during her Hemlock Ridge Excursions workshops. And many of you reading this article made your own collecting trips.

Susie Holmes (instructor) and the LCC students helped collect and set up the display. And they took down the display after the show!

We would never reach such high species counts without our expert identifiers! Ron Hamill, Freeman Rowe, Joe Spivak, Steve Trudell, Marcia Peeters and drop-ins Noah and Erin helped at show set up and/or identified mushrooms for the public during the show. Steve took several unidentified *Cortinarius* to Joe Ammirati (University of Washington) for expert ID after the show. Molly Widmer and Ron spent many hours doing advance identification, which increased the efficiency of the triage sorting and identification.

Chris Melotti, Bitty Roy, Aryana Ferguson, Bart Johnson, Dean Johnston, Bob Blanchard, Jim Mitchell, Cathy Irwin, Michelle Pak, Jared Pruch, and many, many more helped with setup. Thanks for setting up identification triage, moving tables, hanging signs, organizing labels, placing mushrooms by labels, moving mushrooms to tidy the display, and decorating with flowers, leaves, and fern fronds.

Cheshire Mayrsohn and her colleagues from Northwest Lichenologists staffed an expansive and wonderful display of lichens, as well as yarns dyed from lichens. Chris, Matthew Johnson, Jared Pruch, Sue Dockstaeder, and others staffed the popular edible-poisonous display. Charlie Lefevre and Leslie

Scott from the Oregon Truffle Festival enticed festival-goers with their aromatic truffle gems, and the North American Truffling Society provided additional information about truffle hunting.

And last, but not least, the CMS Board provided funding, concepts, ideas and inspiration.

We would like to give a special thanks to those who helped on Sunday morning for last minute setup and straightening. It is always a little bit frantic as we do last minute cleaning and preparations before opening the doors to the public.

And thanks to all of you who helped but whose names we didn't squeeze in above (you know who you are): you all rock the Fungal Kingdom, and we couldn't do it without you!

Planning for the 2012 show will begin in August, and there are many ways to be involved. It is fun and festive. And you are guaranteed to learn something new about our fungal friends. Next year, we would like summer volunteers to help improve our educational displays and re-design our signs. We will also be looking for a coordinator for the Talks on the Terrace. And, of course, there will be lots of opportunity to collect mushrooms and help set up the display.

Until next year,
Peg Boulay (with Bruce Newhouse)
Co-Coordination of the annual Mt. Pisgah Mushroom Display for the Cascade Mycological Society



CMS General Meeting

Thursday February 9th, 2012

The Cascade Mycological Society February meeting speaker is Chris Melotti. He will be giving a presentation on beginning mushrooming, with a focus on edible species. The meeting will be February 9th, 2012. Meet at 7:00 pm, room 115, Science Building (Building 16) at Lane Community College in Eugene. The talk is free and open to the public.



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Website: www.cascademyco.org

Among Fungi is the newsletter of Cascade Mycological Society. It is published four or five times a year, on a mycologically oriented schedule, so expect them in late summer, fall, winter and spring.

CMS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed under the law.

Public meetings are held in the evenings, on the second Thursday of the month generally from September thru April. We have speakers on mushroom related topics geared for both beginners and advanced fungiphiles. Board meetings are the first Thursday of the month at various Board member's homes. If you would like to attend a Board meeting, contact us, we'd love to see you at a meeting.

If you haven't seen our website, you must check it out. Get onto the Forum and find out where the mushrooms are! See you there.

MEMBERSHIP

If you have any questions about your membership, contact Grace Pugh at: membership@cascademyco.org.

Cascade Mycological Society
P.O. Box 110
Eugene, Oregon 97440

Membership Renewal Form
(or just go to our website)

Mail completed form and check/money order to:

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P. O. Box 110
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Is this a renewal?_____ (thanks) New membership?_____ (welcome!)

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' I would prefer to receive my newsletter by snail mail.