



SOMA News

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SONOMA COUNTY MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
A NON-PROFIT 501(c)(3) EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY, DEDICATED TO THE MYSTERY AND APPRECIATION OF LOCAL FUNGI | SOMAmushrooms.org

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 7

March 2007

2007 SEASON CALENDAR

MARCH

March 15 » Meeting
Sonoma County Farm Bureau
Speaker: Tara Fulgenzi

March 17 » Potluck Foray
Salt Point State Park

March 24 » Cultivation Club Meeting
New College of California
Limited to 25 members; \$12 to cover materials. Call Jean-Pierre at:
623-0594 or
usbtopgun@yahoo.com

See Announcements for details!



SPEAKER OF THE MONTH



Tara Fulgenzi

March 15th, 7pm, at the Farm Bureau

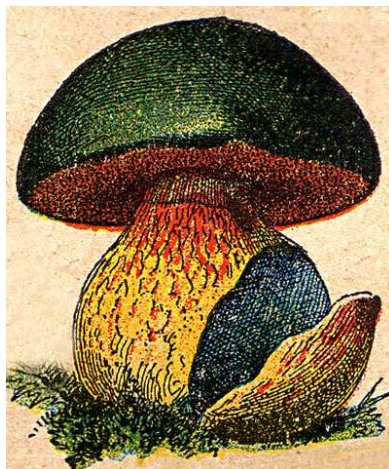
Boletaceae of Guyana



EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING IDENTIFICATION

After seeking medical attention, contact Darvin DeShazer for identification at (707) 829-0596. Email your photos to muscaria@pacbell.net. Photos should show all sides of the mushroom. Please **do not** send photos taken with cell phones—the resolution is simply too poor to allow accurate identification.

A free service for hospitals, veterinarians and concerned citizens of Sonoma County.



Originally from Oahu, Hawaii, Tara Fulgenzi is currently in her second year as a Masters student at Humboldt State University. Her thesis is being conducted on the boletes found in a remote region of the rainforests of Guyana. Mycology is both a passion and an academic pursuit, and she enjoys many aspects of the field, including taxonomy, ecology, evolution, medicinal and edible fungi, as well as ethnomycology. Other interests include reading, hiking, camping, running, and swimming.

SOMA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Bill Hanson
(707) 837-8028

VICE PRESIDENT

Vacant

SECRETARY

Bill Wolpert

TREASURER

Julie Schreiber (Interim)
SOMAtreasurer@SOMAmushrooms.org

COMMITTEES AND BOARD MEMBERS

BOOK SALES

Bill Hanson
(707) 837-8028

CULINARY QUESTIONS

Caitlin Marigold
SOMAculinary@SOMAmushrooms.org

FORAYS

Bill Wolpert
SOMAwalk@SOMAmushrooms.org

MEMBERSHIP

Jim Wheeler
SOMAmembership@SOMAmushrooms.org

MUSHROOM DYE COORDINATOR

Dorothy Beebee
SOMAmushroomdyes@SOMAmushrooms.org

MUSHROOM PAPER COORDINATOR

Catherine Wesley
(707) 887-0842

CULTIVATION CLUB CHAIR

Jean-Pierre Nunez-Gonzalez
usbtopgun@yahoo.com

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORS

Darvin DeShazer
(707) 829-0596
muscaria@pacbell.net

Chris Kjeldsen, Ph.D.

(707) 544-3091
Chris.Kjeldsen@sonoma.edu

SOMA CAMP DIRECTOR

Bill Hanson
(707) 837-8028

SOMA CAMP REGISTRAR

Linda Morris
SOMAreistrar@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA NEWS EDITOR

Tom Cruckshank 
SOMAnewseditor@SOMAmushrooms.org

SOMA WEBMASTER

Dorothy Beebee
SOMAinfo@SOMAmushrooms.org

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Julie Schreiber
julieschreiber@hotmail.com

SOMA's *Amanita muscaria* logo by Ariel Mahon

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Our February foray hit the bulls eye in terms of timing. It was the right number of days since the storms, the right number of warm/cold days and perfect weather for our own comfort. Our foray leader, Bill Wolpert, waited an extra twenty minutes for stragglers and sent folks off into the woods. There were choice edibles every few steps. Toobys, Hedge Hogs and Black Chanterelles were in harvest mode.

When folks came in for the pot luck luncheon and debrief, there were many smiles and many full baskets. The food, wine and companionship were extraordinary even by SOMA standards. Do make the next foray and get a first hand taste of the heart and soul of our great club; a beautiful setting, fun, friends, food and wine.

Our cultivation club March meeting, headed up by Jean Pierre Nunez, will be a hands-on class for the construction of a Portabella mushroom box that you can take home and grow your own. This will be a fun event in its own right and another creative outlet for your love of mushrooms. Try to make this event and do make a reservation so that Jean Pierre can plan accordingly. You might consider bringing a folding chair for your comfort. The club is asking you to help offset the cost of the kits by making a \$12 contribution. Make your check to: SOMA. If you would like to help Jean Pierre with set-up and take-down, make that offer when you make your reservation. Your help will be much appreciated; he will also need some help with transportation of material.

If this was the end of our winter storms, then morel season and spring time edibles may arrive early in the Sierras. Watch the SOMA Yahoo Groups site for updates.

-Bill Hanson

FORAY OF THE MONTH

Saturday, March 17th

Meet at the southern end of Fisk Mill Cove in Salt Point State Park at 10 AM.

Bring a potluck dish to share; vegetarian dishes are always welcome! Please bring your own glasses, plates and eating utensils. Besides the positive environmental reasons and benefit to the gastronomic experience, it will help minimize the amount of trash to be hauled out. Contact foray leader Bill Wolpert at (707) 763-3101 for more information.

Members are asked to avoid hunting the club site for at least two weeks prior to a SOMA event. It's only through your cooperation that all members can enjoy a successful foray and experience the thrill of the hunt!



The Road to Salt Point...

-Bill Wolpert

10 Reasons when you know its time to join "Mushroom Dyers Anonymous"

(reprinted from SOMA News, March 2000)

10) ...when the baby cries in the middle of the night, you run to see if the *Omphalotus olivescens* drying on top of the piano is glowing in the dark, (before checking the baby)...

9) ...when you consider naming the new daughter "*Stropharia*" instead of Myra...

8) ...when, instead, you name the new bantam chickens "*Stopharia*", "*Laccaria*", and "*Gomphidius*"...

7) ...when you check last nights mushroom dye first, before making your coffee or checking your e-mail in the morning...

6) ...when you're so busy looking for *Dermocybe sanguinea* on the ground in Sweden that you don't notice the Moose and her calf standing in the path in front of you.....

5) ...when you put your mushroom dye sample notebooks in the overhead-bin on the airplane, and send your asthma medicine through in the baggage compartment below ...

4) ...when you approach perfect strangers in Norway to ask them if their sweaters are mushroom-dyed...

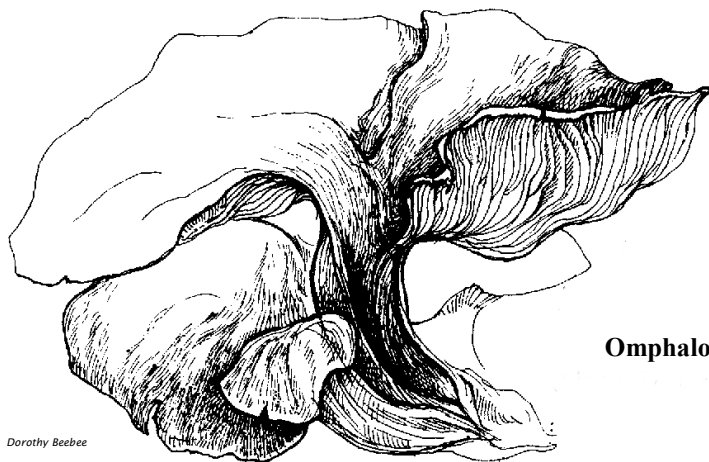
3) ...when you go in to see your orthopedist for a checkup and his wife is waiting for you at the desk with a bag of old, cold *Omphalotus olivescens*...(thank you Anne!)

2) ...when you go into see your orthopedist for a checkup, and brag about the 5 mile hike you took at Salt Point where you found *Dermocybes*, and forget to tell him about the nagging pains in your artificial left hip...

1) ... when you blame the phases of the moon for the color change of the *Omphalotus* dye from purple to green instead of trusting the pH indicators

...And you know you've REALLY gone over the edge when you keep throwing skeins of yarn into the dye pot (hoping for lavender), when its perfectly clear that the purple pigment is long gone over to murky yellows...

And then, you can't take a shower in the morning because that's where the skeins of yarn are dripping dry!



Omphalotus

So, don't laugh - these are all of my own true experiences, (over the last 25 years...) and now why I'm smiling at sunshine and taking 12 steps into the mustard fields, instead of checking the base of the Douglas fir stumps....and praying for rain, or calls from the *Dermocybe* express...

(Note from March 2007) The baby daughter is now 27 1/2, - with three babies of her own under three, the chickens are all long gone thanks to a visiting fox but I'm still blaming the moon for the quixotic colors from *Omphalotus* - sorry, Darwin...)

This Truffle's No Trifle

14 November 2006 (AP) - A Hong Kong property tycoon and his wife have reportedly paid US \$160,406 for a huge Italian white truffle, which may be the world's most expensive ever.

Gordon Wu and his wife outbid connoisseurs from France and Italy to win the 1.5-kilogram Alba white truffle from an international auction on Sunday, said a spokeswoman for the Ritz-Carlton hotel, which hosted the Hong Kong part of the auction.

"They're very unique. They're found all together and they've got a beautiful shape," said hotel cook Umberto Bombana of this year's prize truffle, made up of three palm-sized portions.

Chef Bombana will prepare the giant truffle for a five-course banquet hosted by Wu on Thursday.



Italian chef Umberto Bombana with 1.5-kg *Tuber magnatum*, the Italian white truffle

February Foray Report

Being foray leader is like being a fishing guide. A day is arranged in advance where a “guest” comes to the guide and is then taken to the best location where one expects to get what they are after. As much as I like to fish, I could never be a fishing guide because I know you really don’t have much control over catching fish any more than I can have control over finding mushrooms. Certain elements have to be present; the fish have to be there, the weather has to be somewhat cooperative, the “guest” may have to be adventurous and be willing to go the distance. Even if some things work out in your favor, usually there are trade-offs or something that must be endured for the sake of reward. Taking someone out for a day and coming back empty handed is very disappointing. I cannot imagine it not reflecting poorly on my ability as a guide. Why, then, would I sign up for such a similar activity on a monthly basis?

The last foray (back at Salt Point) was one of those rare occurrences where all the planets have aligned and no one is left wanting. This foray really had it all. The weather was glorious, significant rain had fallen ten days prior, there had been no freezing temperatures, in fact in had been unseasonably warm. The mushrooms were definitely up. And then there was the food.... There was a black cloud that descended at the end, but I will get to that later.



Sombrero Galaxy—50,000 Light Years Across

The first people to arrive started poking around the campground, waiting for things to get underway, and found yellow-foot chanterelles right away...clearly a good sign. We ended up with a large group. I did not get a head count, but I would guess between 50 and 60 people. Most of us went up near the top of the ridge to the mixed forest of tan oak, Douglas fir, redwood and madrone. Just as we were about to fan out into the woods, I was describing what a black chanterelle looked like. Looking down, there was one by my foot at the side of the trail. Mushrooms were almost everywhere; yellow-foot, hedgehogs and black chanterelles. Several species of Russula, colorful by comparison, went untouched. Several first-timers were having no trouble finding the edibles. Everybody got some. That is what makes a guide’s heart sing.

I had to practically drag everyone out of the woods so as not to miss lunch. (You do not want to be late with this crowd expecting anyone to hold lunch for you.) Thankfully, even though it was 12:45 before we got back, the food was just coming out. It seemed everyone had a hard time leaving the mushrooms behind. Bill Hanson, who was concerned about not having to go too far because of his

injured foot, was picking through a BIG assortment of mushrooms on the hood of his car. He said he never left sight of the road. Other more unusual mushrooms were beginning to accumulate on the blue tarp for identification.

Patrick Hamilton, aka Mycochef, had snuck up to Salt Point during the week to harvest some fresh mushrooms and had prepared a soup with them. Now, Patrick, being the humble guy he is, would never talk about his soup, but he really outdid himself this time. He created a version of the classic Thai coconut soup, Tom Ka Gai. But instead of chicken, Patrick used mussels, clams and shrimp, plus the wild mushrooms. I am a huge fan of Tom Ka Gai, and this was the best I have ever had. It was fabulous. I mean FABulous with that breathy first accent. Patrick was a little embarrassed by all the attention and left early. But the crowd lingered in the afterglow.

As the food disappeared and the wine bottles emptied, fog began to drift in over the Bishop pines and the temperature dropped. Long sleeves started coming out and things began to be packed away. We started back around 2:30 and were taking it easy. Just after passing the Park Headquarters, we were passed by a State Park emergency vehicle with a paddle board on the roof. He was in a hurry. I was imagining some incident with adventurous folks in the surf. At Timber Cove, a tow truck pulled into the road in front of us with emergency lights flashing. I started to get a nervous stomach. We came upon the accident just before that sweeping right turn coming into Fort Ross. About four cars had pulled over and I could see one vehicle had obviously been involved in a serious accident. As I slowed down to stop, a man came running up the road with instructions from emergency crews to turn around and go up the Fort Ross Road. He said there had been a head-on accident. I was having flashbacks from Linda Morris’s accident last year where I was turned away, not knowing Linda had been involved, but having that “funny feeling”. This time I turned around, but pulled over. I ran back, needing to make sure it was not someone from our group. The emergency responders were running with equipment. A minivan on the left side of the road was almost unrecognizable. There were people in it; one man was obviously in shock. He was holding another person. Another car was off the road to the right. It was a black VW Passat that I did not recognize and I felt slight relief. Still, it was badly mangled. One of the emergency responders asked me what I was doing. I could only say that I was looking for anyone from our group. He asked me to leave. I was shaking.

It is hard to describe the emotions I felt. It was a horrible sight. Sunday’s paper mentioned the accident and said the driver of the Passat was charged with driving under the influence. He had drifted across the double-yellow. The woman driving the minivan died. I felt completely broken-hearted for the people involved, yet not what I would have felt had it been someone from SOMA. We drink...responsibly, I think, but we drink nonetheless. We drive this same road month after month, year after year. I want us all to not take this day we have for granted. We have a great tradition going on. With care and grace may we continue.

-Bill Wolpert SOMA Foray Leader

Book Review—*Mycelium Running* by Paul Stamets

Ten Speed Press, 2005. \$35.00

There are visionaries, and there are mycologists, but there aren't very many visionary mycologists. One of the few is Paul Stamets. Not for him the academic sport of cladistics, the apparently endless splitting of the *Collybia* genus, or the surgical operation that affixes a person permanently to a microscope. He is, as the saying goes, "out there." He has put fungi not just on the world stage, but on an even more significant stage -- the world environmental stage.

In Paul's most recent book, *Mycelium Running*, he discusses earth-friendly technologies gleaned from his discovery that mycelia can be selected and trained to break down the structure of pollutants such as, for instance, hydrocarbons. Thus the book has sections on mycorestoration (rehabilitating stripped land), mycoremediation (restoring chemically damaged habitats), and mycofiltration (cleaning water of contaminants). There are also sections on mycoforestry and mycopesticides, the last of which I found especially intriguing: it describes how various insect pests can be dispatched with mycelia as an alternative to dumping yet more toxic contaminants into our already beleaguered eco-

systems.

Actually, the book just as readily could be called "Running Mycelium," since it shows how mycelia can be made to "run" virtually everywhere, from the digestive tracts of insects to one's own garden, and from toxic waste sites to human medicinals. Since his stage is so large, Paul mingles mycology with chemistry, biology, and even philosophy, not to mention autobiography. After a while, you realize that the book's subtext is the abolition of what he refers to as "biological racism" -- i.e., the prejudices that tend to make fungi second-class citizens in the public mind as well as rather a number of scientific minds.

Admittedly, some of Paul's ideas are still works-in-progress, musings that have not yet coalesced in his own mind. Thus *Mycelium Running* is peppered with phrases like "I think," "I believe," and "I suspect." But this isn't really a distraction. After all, Paul Stamets is a visionary thinker. And if there were a Nobel Prize in Mycology (a grievous oversight, in my opinion!), he doubtless would receive it. Need I add that *Mycelium Running* is urgently recommended?

-Lawrence Millman

First Hand Account of Mushroom Poisoning

I had a very big surprise this past Saturday. As I was coming upstairs from my shop, I saw a strange truck pull into the driveway. A man, somewhat familiar, walked up to me and said, "Remember early September?"

"Oh, my god, you came by after eating Amanita phalloides!" , I exclaimed.

"Yes, and one of the things I recall vividly is that you said I might need a new liver. Well, I've got one!"

I asked him if he'd mind if I got his full story since I did not get any details at the time of the incident. It is always really difficult for me to grill people about their names and the circumstances of how they managed to poison themselves on deadly Amanitas, especially when it is clear that they are really, really sick. He did tell me in September that he'd let me know how things came out with his experience. It turned out to be an incredibly horrific story.

When he (Timm Boerge) and his wife showed up at my house on 9 Sept. 2006, it was clear that he was in bad shape. They had examples of the mushrooms and even though it was long before any rain had fallen and the examples were small and quite pale in color, it was clear that they were death caps. I was somewhat puzzled because they had their copy of "Mushrooms Demystified" along but had deduced that the spore print they had taken was pink and not white [an effect of the damp paper that they used, not the true color of the spores].

At that time, I told them to delay no longer and go immediately to the closest hospital, in this case Watsonville. Saturday, I found out that it was only AFTER he had eaten them that he checked the reference. He said he went by memory back to a nice tasting mushroom he'd picked 15 years previously that he thought the current Amanitas looked like.

He said that he spent a delirious 30 hours at the hospital in Watsonville where he was on IVs for dehydration and lots of

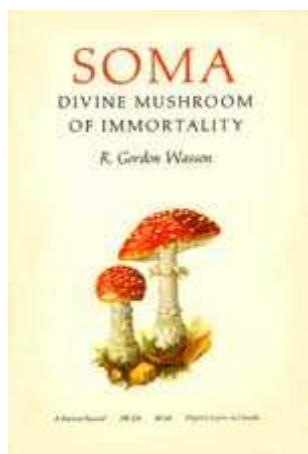
oral charcoal. He was then transported up to the medical center at UCSF where he spent another awful 3-4 days before he had his liver transplant. He recalled being in absolute misery and pain and felt sure that he would die. He even dictated a will to his family. After the liver transplant, major complications set in with predominantly kidney problems. He said he spent 3 full weeks after the surgery in incredible pain with only IV feedings and heavy medication the full time. During that time he said he could not eat anything and he could barely function.

He says he still has tightness in his stomach muscles, numbness at the point of the incision and a lot of numbness in his right arm, an remnant of either the IV or some other issue with the hospital stay. He said that his body is just now starting to produce red blood cells again. As a consequence his energy level is extremely low. The good news is that his liver is in great shape although he is still on anti-rejection meds, something he said may go on the rest of his life.

He related that the major impact of the meal he ate, besides a very painful near-death experience has been the cost. The medication cost at this point is running him \$1500 per month. The stay at the hospital in Watsonville was over \$150,000, the ambulance ride up to San Francisco was \$34,000 and the total to date is over \$800,000! And the clincher: NO INSURANCE!

What amazed me was Timm appeared to be a very happy man. He joked around a lot and seemed to be in excellent spirits. He told his story as if it were some kind of pleasant book he read or something. I didn't ask how he was possibly going to pay for his expenses and he didn't volunteer. At least he is still alive but what a story!!!

-Phil Carpenter



Soma

*The divine mushroom of
immortality*

Robert Gordon Wasson

"One of the key enigmas of cultural history has been the identity of a sacred plant called *Soma* in the ancient Rig Veda of India. Mr. Wasson has aroused considerable attention

in learned circles and beyond by advancing and documenting the thesis that *Soma* was a hallucinogenic mushroom -- none other than *Amanita muscaria*, the fly-agaric that until recent times was the center of shamanic rites among the Siberian and Uralic tribesmen. In his presentation he throws fascinating light on the role of mushrooms in religious ritual. A section on the post-Vedic history of *Soma* is contributed by the Sanskrit scholar Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty.

This edition faithfully reproduces the text and all but two of the many color and black-and-white illustrations of the original, lavishly printed, deluxe edition.

"Mr. R. C. Wasson advances a revolutionary hypothesis on the nature of *Soma*, the implications of which are 50 wide-spread that ethnologists cannot leave the task of communicating it to Indian specialists only. Wasson's work establishes, in our opinion convincingly, that among all the candidatures put forward for representing *Soma*, *Amanita muscaria* is by far the most plausible."

- CLAUDE LÉVI-STRAUSS, *L'Homme*

"The argument of Wasson's *Soma* is as lucid as unanswerable; the illustrations are wonderful, the quotations are numerous and telling. I congratulate him on his feat."

- ROBERT GRAVES, *Atlantic Monthly*

"The careful scholarship of the dedicated amateur mycophile R. Gordon Wasson reads like an exciting scientific detective story. Moreover, his willingness to pursue the quest through the wide range of linguistics, archeology, folklore, philology, ethnobotany, plant ecology, human physiology, and prehistory constitutes an object lesson to all holistic professional students of man."

- WESTON LA BARRE, *American Anthropologist* "

Mushroom Madness on Sonoma Mountain

This outing was organized by Landpaths, the group that administers land bought by the Sonoma County Open Space District but not yet open to the public. It was led by Autumn Summers with guest host Dr. Chris Kjeldsen. The Madness refers to the people crazy enough to go tramping around the Jacobs Ranch in the first rain after weeks of dry cold in the vain hope that some early achiever fungi might decide to join us. Add to the weather the fact that we were mostly under redwood and bay, you may be surprised at the list of fungi found (even if most were solo representatives).

Despite returning empty handed (empty basketed?) we had an interesting foray. Chris Kjeldsen's deep knowledge of the fungal world, Autumn's discourses on lichens and mosses, and a talk on Sudden Oak death by Frederique made for a good learning experience (now if I could only remember it all). A few items I do remember (correctly I hope):

- ◆ Bay trees are a vector for SOD, but don't die from it, ditto redwoods
 - ◆ Salt Point is still SOD free, so please clean your boots before each visit
 - ◆ The fungal kingdom is closer genetically to the animal kingdom than to the plant kingdom, hence the difficulty of curing fungal infections
 - ◆ Lichens are a symbiotic pairing of plant and fungus
 - ◆ Fossils of very early plants show fossil fungi present too
- Jacobs Ranch will be the trail head for a planned link to Jack London State Park. It promises spectacular views when the weather allows. Landpaths: www.landpaths.org

Sudden Oak Death: <http://nature.berkeley.edu/comft/>

-Chris Murray

Species List:

Mushrooms:
Cantharellus cibarius
Caulorhiza umbonata
(Collybia umbonata)
Collybia butyracea
Coprinus micaceus
Coprinus sp.
Exidia glandulosa
Galerina sp.
Ganoderma applanatum
Hygrophorus eburneus
Hypoholoma fasciculare
(Naematoloma fasciculare)
Lactarius sp.
Lentinus lepideus
Marasmius sp.
Mycena capillariopes
Mycena sp.
Phytophthora ramosa
SOD on Bay
Pleurotus ostreatus
Poria ssp.
Psathyrella ssp
Russula sp.
Stereum hirsutum
Trametes versicolor
Tremella mesenterica
Xeromphalina sp.
Xylaria hypoxylon

Lichens:

Evernia prunastri
Flavoapamelia caperata
Flavopunctelia flaventior
Parmotrema chinese
Pertusaria armaria
Ramalina farinacea
Ramalina menziesii
Teloschistes chrysophthalmus
Usnea arizonica

Mosses:

Dendroalsia abietina
Scleropodium touretei

-Autumn Summers



**The Foragers' Culinary Report
or
The Culinary Foragers' Report**

Because there has been recent pressure on your reporter to change the name of this column (I mean like how many such aptly-named reports have I done for the MSSF, "Mushroom the Journal", and/or SOMA?). Really! The nerve of some.

But it is okay. We grow weary of old stuff. That erstwhile title had become sloganism almost. Too much this and not enough that. I understand and I agree.

But to what, exactly? Is it only a name change? A titular transformation without a substance exchange? Nah—don't think so. We are going to go to places some may end up regretting. Others might end up in just fretting. But I am betting that most of you (my loyal, paying, readers) will not simply acknowledge the changes herein, but will applaud, stand up cheering, the newness of it all. Kinda like a baby's bottom—but different.

Huh? Exactly.

Like this new column our mushroom season has taken some liberties with what we had thought was "normal." "Regular," like, as in, "Blacks are fruiting in abundance in all the usual places. Hedgehog heaven has been experienced on an almost daily basis by our SOMA hunters. Spring Agaricus? They are everywhere."

Or not.

Up in Willits, where the commercial pickers ply their (to some) provocative professions, not a whole bunch is being brought in. But when you can get \$15 a pound it might make sense to quit your career and join them. (A bus will be leaving from the Flamingo Hotel parking lot spot this Saturday morning. All newbies to this occupation need to first view [and purchase] the 45 minute video on: *How to act accordingly living on the edge...*)

Truth is this season *has* been a humbling one. Formerly cocky types (you've seen them with their smarmy smiles and know-it-all wiles) are skulking about in their dark places too ashamed to admit that maybe, just maybe, they don't know squat. They thought they knew everything 'bout dem shrooms. Yeah? It's easy, in the woods to know about squat. And what else does that get you this season?

Early-bird morel thinkers have already been tinkering with their calendars to try and shake things up. Make May come earlier. Heck—you've heard of an "early spring" so how come we can't have an earlier May? Say right after March. That could be cool.

Last weekend (February 23-24) a friend and I felt that a drive in and amongst the Sierra snow storms to Reno and then a detour up to look at the Bassetts burn on Yuba Pass could be a good time. It was dicey on Friday dodging the snow and then we realized ("whoopee!") that The Who was playing at the Reno Events Center (which was why the town was just about sold out). We managed two tickets and I saw them for the first time since the Isle of Wight Concert of 1970—but now many fewer attending mushrooms.

We headed up towards Sierraville and then up and over the Yuba Pass. (For folks who do not know that area, San Francisco State University has a field station there with courses given several times a year and the MSSF holds its annual Yuba Pass foray near there at Chapman CG.) Lots of snow, icy road, but darn pretty.

We stopped at the store ("Bassetts") and were shown a map of last September's fire. Perfect! Very accessible, good habitat. See you there in early May—the one after April.

BTW—it is a long and sometimes slow drive from there to here. Be prepared to do it several times before hitting the morels (if then).

CLIP & SAVE 

At our last SPSP foray a Thai style coconut milk wild mushroom and mussel stew was prepared and served to about 35 hungry people. The comments dictated that the recipe be included here.

Thai Style Wild Mushroom and Mussel Stew

Serving Size: 6 Preparation Time: 1:00

- 1 1/3 oz—black chanterelles, dried, or 1 lb fresh—chopped—(can use any other mushrooms)
 - 2 ea— carrots, medium, peeled—sliced into rounds
 - 2 ea—celery sticks—sliced 1/4" thick
 - 1 ea— onion, medium— chopped small
 - 2 ea—shallots, large—minced
 - 2 tsp—vegetable oil for frying
 - 4 tbsp—galangal, fresh—sliced 1/4" thick
 - 4 tbsp—basil, (Opal best)—chopped small
 - 1 1/4 tbsp—ginger root, peeled—minced
 - 3 cans—coconut milk, thick style, unsweetened
 - 2 c—vegetable or chicken stock
 - 1/2 tsp—black pepper, freshly ground
 - 1 3/4 tbsp—cilantro stems and roots—chopped small
 - 2 ea—limes—zested
 - 1 tsp—kosher salt
 - 3 ea—lemon grass, outer layer peeled—sliced 1" pieces
 - 2 lbs—mussels
 - 1 tbsp—fish sauce (Nuoc Mm)
 - 2 ea—lemons, juiced
 - 2 ea—limes—cut in wedges
 - 1/2 c—cilantro leaves—chopped large
1. Sauté the black chanterelles, carrots, onions and celery together in oil about 10 minutes. Set aside.
 2. Put the mushroom and veggie mix, coconut milk, the galangal, ginger, basil, water (to thin if desired), pepper, cilantro stems and roots, lime zest, salt and kaffir leaves (if available, use 4) into a pot. Bring slowly to boil and simmer 20 minutes or so, stirring occasionally, until flavors are blended.
 3. Add the mussels (shrimp too, if desired), cook until all mussels are open (about 6 minutes). Discard any that stay closed.
 4. Remove from the heat and add the fish sauce and lemon juice. Adjust seasonings.
- Serve with variety of spicy condiments like chopped chiles, pastes, etc.
Garnish with cilantro leaves—serve some more in a bowl.
Serve the lime pieces in a bowl alongside. Have extra chiles minced in a bowl.

One dose of this drug has life-changing powers, Dude!

Seattle P.I., July 11, 2006 NEW YORK -by Malcolm Ritter

People who took an illegal drug made from mushrooms reported profound mystical experiences that led to behavior changes lasting for weeks—all part of an experiment that recalls the psychedelic '60s. Many of the 36 volunteers rated their reaction to a single dose of the drug, called psilocybin, as one of the most meaningful or spiritually significant experiences of their lives. Some compared it to the birth of a child or the death of a parent. Such comments “Just seemed unbelievable,” said Roland Griffiths of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, the study’s lead author.

But don’t try this at home, he warned. “Absolutely don’t.” Almost a third of the research participants found the drug experience frightening, even in the very controlled setting. That suggests people experimenting with the illicit drug on their own could be harmed, Griffiths said.

The study is one of the few rigorous looks in the past 40 years at a hallucinogen’s effects. The researchers suggest the drug someday may help drug addicts kick their habit or aid terminally ill patients struggling with anxiety and depression. It also may provide a way to study what happens in the brain during intense spiritual experiences, the scientists said.

Funded in part by the federal government, the research was published online today by the journal *Psychopharmacology*.

Psilocybin, like LSD or mescaline, is one of a class of drugs called hallucinogens or psychedelics. Psilocybin has been used for centuries in religious practices, and its ability to produce a mystical experience is no surprise. But the new

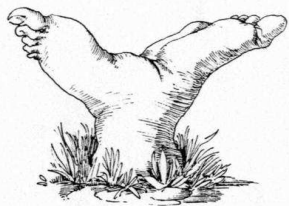
work demonstrates it more clearly than before, Griffiths said.



“MUSHROOM of Superior Reason,” *Psilocybe caeruleascens* Murrill var. *nigripes* Heim, grows near Juquila. *LIFE Magazine*—June 10, 1957

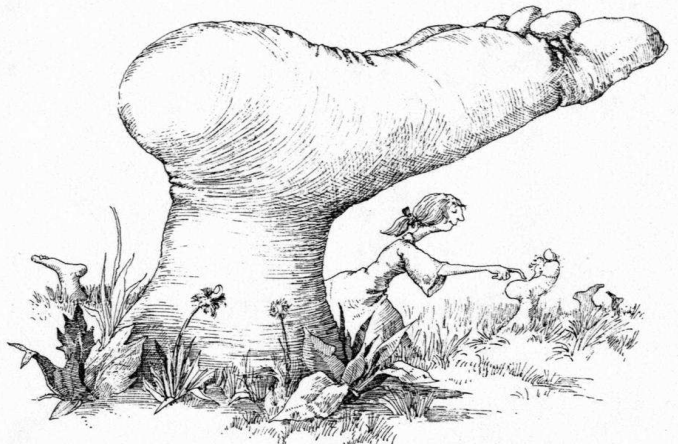
Even two months after taking the drug, most of the volunteers said the experience had changed them in beneficial ways, such as making them more compassionate, loving, optimistic, and patient. Family members and friends said they noticed a difference, too.

In Search of the Lost Toe...



Foot-fetish Fungus
boletus noli me titillare

Crops up in the foothills of Solensk. A delicate comestible, the handling of which poses an exceedingly sensitive problem for importers. The slightest touch can throw this fungus into convulsions, ruining its subtle flavor forever.



Halbritter's Plant-and-Animal World

Volunteer Corner

I have observed that those who get involved the most are the ones that gain most from membership. I encourage you to consider what you can do to get more involved. We have monthly meetings, monthly forays, the culinary group, the bookstore, the cultivation group, the Winter Mushroom Camp, and more. If there are things that you would like to

see SOMA get involved in please let someone on the board know and we will work towards making it happen.

-Julie Schreiber
Home: 707-473-9766
Cell: 530-867-1865

SOMA Membership Application and Renewal Form

THE SOMA PLEDGE

Regardless of what others may think of me, I wish to become a member of the **Sonoma County Mycological Association**; a non-profit 501(c)(3), educational society, dedicated to the mystery and appreciation of local fungi.

NAME

DATE

STREET or P.O. BOX

APARTMENT #

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

HOME

WORK

EMAIL

- New member
- Please change my mailing label and membership roster info
- Please do not release my information outside of the club

Please indicate below, any particular areas of interest or committee functions you may like to serve:

Membership dues are \$20 per household, and run a full fiscal year from time of application or from the date of expiration if renewing early. Please make checks payable to SOMA.

Return this form with your check to:

Check out the **SOMA website** for fabulous member benefits!

SOMA

P.O. BOX 73
Cotati, CA 94931-0073

SOMAmushrooms.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cultivation Club Meeting March 24th

The Portabella, one of the most commonly available "specialty" mushrooms, is really just a fully mature specimen of its smaller brethren the Crimini. The Portabella is prized for its versatility in the kitchen and on the grill. This high demand keeps it well stocked on the shelves of our local super markets for roughly twice as many \$ as the Crimini. While this might seem like an unjust price increase, it is well justified on the production end when we consider how much more time is required for the specimens to fully mature and the fact that you are only able to produce about half as many Portabella per bed vs. Crimini in order for the mushrooms to reach a marketable size. Plus we must also consider the fact that the picker has to be slightly more attentive for commercial harvesting being as he/she has to pick it just before the veil breaks as opposed to Crimini harvesting which can be a little more forgiving. So all that makes for a mushroom that waited 48 hours longer (or twice as long). Time is money, unless we grow our own; then all that complicated decision making as whether to be patient and have Portabellas or impatient and have Crimini (or believed you were going to be patient and wait for your Portabellas but thought otherwise as those large Crimini became "crimibellas" and you couldn't hold your self back!) can be left up to—that's right, you!

So, whether you want Crimini "crimibellas" or Portabella, you will surely never again look at these mushrooms that you find in the supermarket in the same way once you taste a super-fresh mushroom that was lovingly cared for and tended to by you!

We will be making Portabella--Agaricus Bisporus kits on

March 24th at New College of California North Bay campus, which is located at 99 6th street Santa Rosa. People should start showing up at 2:30pm and we will begin making the kits at 3:00.

Attendance will be **\$12 (to cover materials)**; there is room for **only 25 members**, so don't snooze and end up on the waiting list! If interested please send me an Email in advance at:

usbtopgun@yahoo.com

Feel free to contact me with any questions:

-Jean-Pierre Nunez
(707) 623-0594

2007 Mycology Seminars at the Humboldt Institute on the coast of Maine!

Advanced Mycology: Integrating Field and Lab Observations—August 26—September 1
Donald H. Pfister (dpfister@oeb.harvard.edu)

Crustose Lichens of Coastal Maine—July 1—7
Irwin M. Brodo (ibrodo@mus-nature.ca)

Natural Science Illustration in Graphite—July 1—7
Dolores R. Santolouquido (SkylineStudio@sbcglobal.net)

Descriptions of seminars may be found at <http://www.eaglehill.us/mssemdes.html>

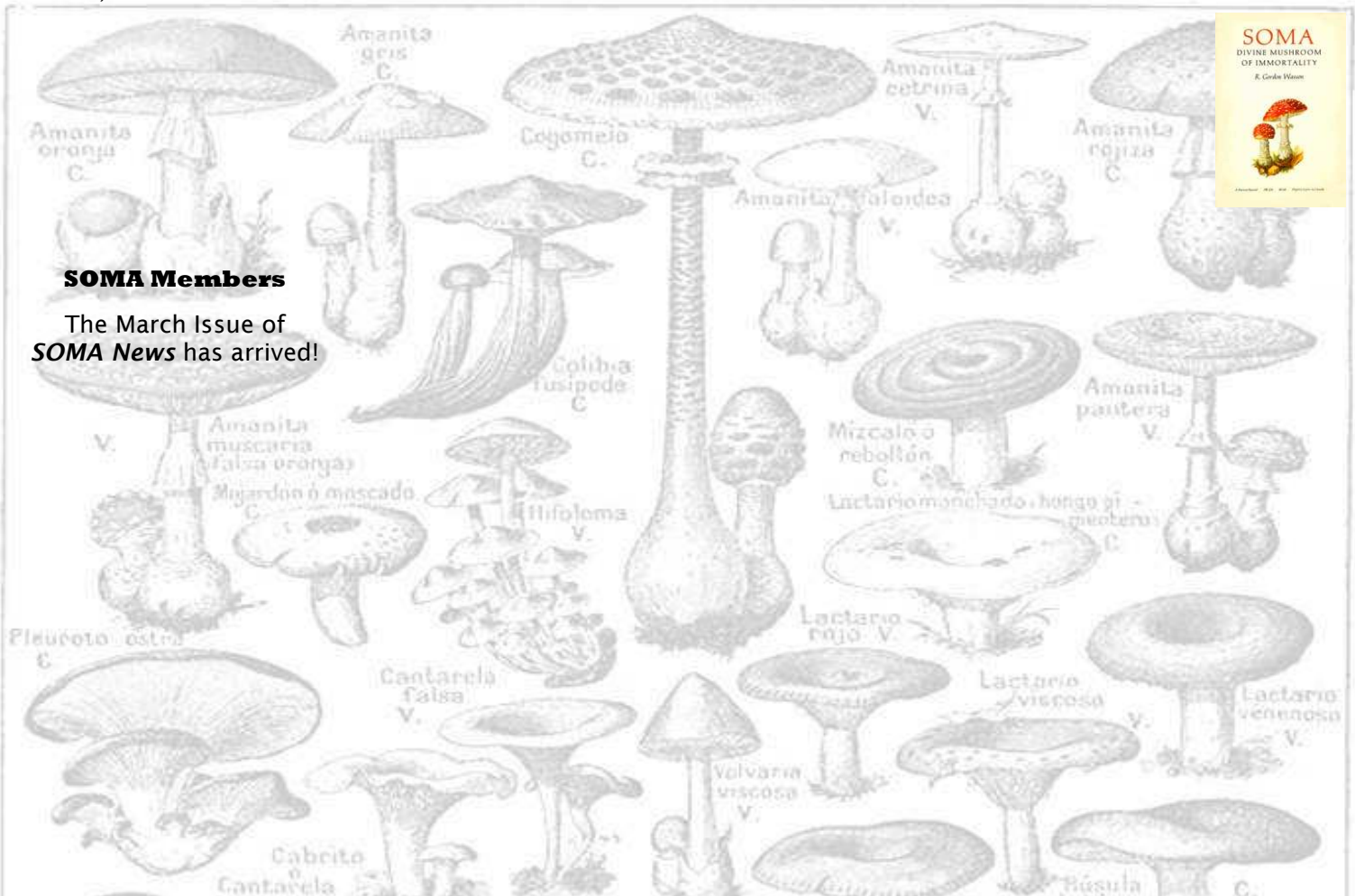
Information on lodging options, meals, and costs may be found at <http://www.eaglehill.us/mapinfo.html>

Mt. Tamalpais State Park now allows mushrooming !



SOMA Members

The March Issue of *SOMA News* has arrived!



SOMA usually meets on the third Thursday of the month throughout the year (September through May), at 7 PM, at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, 970 Piner Road, Santa Rosa, California.

Fungi are displayed at 7 PM, and speakers begin at 7:45 PM. Bring in your baffling fungi to be identified!

Directions to the Sonoma County Farm Bureau

Coming from the south

- Go north on **Highway 101**.
- Past Steele Lane, take the **Bicentennial Way** exit.
- Go over **Highway 101**.
- Turn right on **Range Avenue**.
- Turn left on **Piner Road**.
- At about 1/4 mile, turn left into parking lot at **970 Piner Road**.

Coming from the north

- Go south on **Highway 101**.
- Take the first Santa Rosa exit, **Mendocino Avenue**.
- Stay on the frontage road, (it becomes **Cleveland Avenue** after you cross Industrial Drive).
- Turn right on **Piner Road**.
- At about 1/4 mile, turn left into parking lot at **970 Piner Road**.

970 Piner Road is marked by a star on the map at right.

