



MCG NEWS

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MUSHROOM CLUB OF GEORGIA MCG BOARD MEMBERS 2007

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MUSHROOM CLUB OF GEORGIA

www.mushga.org.

GENERAL CLUB MEETINGS

Date: Second Wednesday of each month

Location: Atlanta Botanical Gardens

1345 Piedmont Avenue, NE

Atlanta, GA 30309

Time: 6:30 PM Social

7:00 PM Meeting

UPCOMING MCG MEETINGS

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

Chris Matherly, "Morels"

Chris Matherly, founder of the Morel Mushroom Hunting Club, returns once again to talk to us about hunting, finding, and eating morels. Last year's presentation was special so mark your calendars.

Wednesday, April 11, 2007

Teresa Fortenberry, "Mushrooms in Georgia"

Teresa Fortenberry, MCG's Club's Photographer, will delight you with her presentation on the mushrooms she has found and photographed here in Georgia. Y'all come.

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

Mary Woehrel, "Introduction to Mushrooms"

Mary Woehrel, 2007 MCG President, will provide us with an introduction to mushrooms that will benefit both the beginner the seasoned mushroomers.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Mary Woehrel

It's hard to believe that the Mushroom Club of Georgia is now three years old, having been started in January of 2004.

Last year was an extremely eventful year in retrospect. In 2006, we laid some great organizational groundwork, thanks to the hard work of Dan Willis, our 2006 President, and Janet Joiner our Secretary/Treasurer, who led some very productive brainstorming and planning sessions.

In April 2006, we all experienced the shock and sadness of losing Farrow Beacham, a founding member and our newsletter editor, who died suddenly from a heart attack.

The Club participated in the Southeastern Flower Show for the first time in 2006, helping to increase popular awareness with our giant "Learning Boards". Inspired by the club, the Atlanta Botanical Garden brought mushroom educator Taylor Lockwood to the Garden as an Alston Lecture speaker, who donated one of his excellent DVD's to the club.

Sadly, we had to say goodbye to Dr. Porter as he retired from UGA and moved to Maine. We started a mushroom demonstration garden at the Atlanta Botanical Garden, thanks to the inoculated logs donated by Dr. Porter when he left.

We had some great walks all over Georgia, thanks to Suzanne Rief, which were very well received, sometimes topping 30 people! Our Hospitality Chair, Rancene Cook, brought many new members and visitors to our meetings, walks and events! Teresa Fortenberry, our photographer outdid herself again with some spectacular photographs of hundreds of mushrooms that were found during the walks.

The Fall Picnic was a great success, with Dr. Porter identifying dozens of mushrooms that were collected in the woodlands surrounding the pavilion. The food was excellent with dishes contributed by members and the main dishes provided by the club.

The year ended with an awesome Christmas "mushroom" dinner at Ritter's Restaurant in Marietta. Chef Ritter Jones gave us his recipe

for the delicious mushroom soup that was served.

We are now beginning our fourth year with many new members and growing. We start off our year March 14th; talking about MORELS with Chris Matherly from the Morel Hunting Club who lives in South Georgia and leads wildly successful morel hunts each year in Georgia and surrounding states.

This summer we will have courses on beginning mushrooming and field studies, mushroom art, chanterelles, and boletes.

We have some great walks planned this year including our own morel hunt and walks in several prime areas where there is a great variety of seldom-seen mushrooms.

Our Fall Foray will be September 29th this year, so mark your calendars. Many more programs and walks are planned so stay tuned.

Winter Mushroom Walking

By Teresa Fortenberry

When the winter weather in Atlanta decides it doesn't really want to BE Winter, I always think that's a good opportunity to take Mother Nature up on her offer and hit the woods. Don't get me wrong. There are times I miss seeing the gentle fluttering of snowflakes just as much as the next person, but I'll take 70-degree weather ANY DAY. As long as I have a wooded path and my camera, I'm ok. I had enough cabin fever over the last decades.



To be sure, there are mushrooms aplenty out in the open. Most of the ones I have been finding are associated with fallen branches, decaying logs or even living trees. And I am always surprised to find some species in such beautiful

condition. With less to forage for in the forests, woodland critters don't seem to bother the mushrooms very much. At least not the ones I have been finding.

So, with this in mind, come with me and take a look at what's growing. I like to hit the paths that I have already walked. For some reason they seem safer to me. So we'll start with Stone Mountain Park. I walked the Azalea trail that some of you walked a few months back. We were in search of ... well, almost anything. There were (as of Jan. 14th) plenty of oyster mushrooms growing among the tangle of deadwood.



The Lion's Mane had also grown back inside the hollowed out, pretty well rotted log. This one is much smaller than the one my daughter and I found last year (the one that must have weighed around 3 pounds!). This one is probably about 8" by about 5". The oyster cluster is about the size of a basketball, so not too big, but enough for dinner!! (And in the Winter, no bugs!) I wish I had some of you along with me because I do not harvest mushrooms very often. Once I get enough in the freezer for me, that's all I need. No more.

There were several scatterings of Galerina on some of the deadwood here and there. There are plenty of different species of polypores. Some were just in the growing stage. Some were already rotting away getting ready for Spring and the growing season.

I believe these to be Dear/Fawn mushrooms. The gills were NOT attached to the stipe. They

had a really good smell to them. There must have been over a dozen of these mushrooms on the logs just in this one spot. This was at the entrance to the Granite Museum near the Grist Mill at Stone Mountain. One was well over 10" in diameter!



OK, so I know you are looking at me like I'm crazy. These aren't the prettiest and most interesting mushrooms of the winter. Well, yes. There are EVEN MORE interesting mushrooms hiding out in the woods. It's like an Easter Egg hunt. You gotta get out there and look. So, let's take a closer look.

In a park near my house, I've been watching a cluster of Mock Orange Oysters since November. I didn't expect them to still be there this same weekend, but they were. BEAUTIFUL. Small, but so pretty when viewed up close. See me at the meetings and I'll show you the bigger pictures, but here is something to get you going...



You must remember that these are actually only 2 or 3 inches wide, so they're kinda small. The end of this little rotting log was covered with these brilliant orange, fuzzy, tufted mushrooms. There were several other species of polypore type mushrooms also inhabiting this log, several huge old trees had fallen in years past creating a splendid environment for fungi to grow. There were also "good" oysters growing not too far from this spot.

Just up the street from my house I found this chunky beauty. I was going home earlier this week and was wondering why a road crew was digging around up the road and just happened to glance up into the church parking lot nearby when I noticed this white glob hanging off one of the trees. I didn't think too much about it till I happened to notice it again and thought I might take the camera and get a picture of what ever it was. This is the result!! This Lion's Mane is still hanging in the tree because it's about 10 or more feet up. I had to zoom up to this toothy mushroom to get the shots I wanted. I plan to get more pictures as the tendrils grow out. This "little" thing is actually quite large.... I'd say at least as big as a dinner plate.



The other trail I walked was out on the Chattahoochee River. This park is at the Johnson Ferry Road parking area. You have to cross a LONG field before getting into the woods, but here, too, were plenty of oysters and galarina. Not much else, though. I was rather disappointed with that until I got to the end of the trail. Doesn't it always happen this way. Sometimes you have walked a mile and a half, maybe two miles and you don't find anything till you get to the end. I have never seen these before (maybe I should hope I never do again!). But it was so interesting. So smelly! Have a look!

This was one HUGE patch of stinky stinkhorns. These are the larger Columned Stinkhorns and boy oh-boy were they stinky. There were about 20 or more standing specimens (most broken... I guess they don't last long) and about a dozen or more eggs. You can see one getting ready to bust out of it's egg in the lower left side of the left picture. On the right side (left picture), the whole stinkhorn closer to the top, you can see the smelly, wet, gooey spore mass (brown) hanging from the underside. These guys are attached at the top so they make kind of like a whiffle ball with 3 to 5 "fingers" all attached together forming loops....like a ball with holes in it, but elongated. When they erupt from their eggs (second picture the three white lumps are three eggs), they still have the



remains of the egg around the base. They are really interesting. The mushroom itself is very spongy. NO!! NO!! I did NOT touch any of these! The smell was quite overwhelming! But I did get some pretty nice shots. These guys are about 5 or 6 inches tall.

Now, I keep talking about galerina. Yes, I took pictures. No, I didn't harvest any. Why? I like walking around and breathing! Please don't eat any!



I did sign up for the Morel Mushroom Foray at the end of March. Hopefully the weather will allow us to gather morels and take plenty of pictures. MAYBE.... I'll learn how to FIND these elusive little devils!

Till the next walk.....Teresa

MOREL HUNTING TRADE SECRETS

KNOW YOUR TREES!

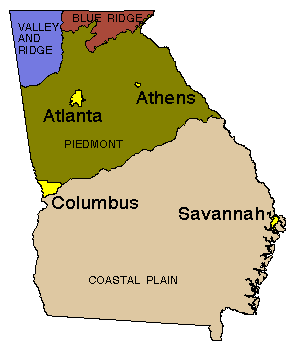
By Dan Willis

The *Morchella* ectomycorrhizal have symbiotic relationships with numerous native trees in Georgia and the South. Which trees are most important when you are hunting for the elusive morels? That is the eternal question! Be aware, however, that morels have been found where there are not or never have been any trees. So go figure!

When hunting morels, look up as much as you look down. Get into the habit of identifying the trees rather than just staring at the ground for bumps in the leaf cover. Your chances of finding morels in an oak forest are as good as finding them under a rock. Look up and identify host trees to save your eyesight as well as your time and energy.

Morels are frequently found in the South under native trees such as White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*), American Elm (*Ulmus americana*), and Yellow Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). Occasionally, they are found around Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*), Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobes*), American Sycamore (*Plantanus occidentalis*), and, reportedly, in old abandoned apple orchards (*Malus* species).

First, understand that Georgia consists of four distinct geologic regions: Valley and Ridge, The Blue Ridge, the Piedmont, and the Coastal Plain. All these regions extend into the surrounding states but only Georgia and Virginia have all four regions. This may be helpful in understanding where to find these trees.



Let's look at the soil conditions where these trees grow and their normal distribution:

1. White Ash is normally found on moist, fertile soil throughout Georgia. They are most abundant in the mountains

(Valley and Ridge & The Blue Ridge) and Piedmont region. This is one of the most important trees that you **MUST** recognize if you want to have any chance of finding both yellow and black morels in Georgia and the South. Learn to recognize the bark and other characteristics of the White Ash tree!

2. American Elm is usually found on moist, fertile soil near streams. The former range was throughout the Coastal Plain and much of the Piedmont. Sadly, many of the elms are dead or dying from Dutch elm disease. Finding an elm tree and a patch of yellow morels is a rare occurrence.
3. Yellow Poplar, sometimes called the Tulip Poplar, is found usually on deep, rich, rather moist soils and occurs throughout Georgia. It really isn't in the *Populus* family. It can be mistaken for the White Ash tree; however, the tulip poplar can be identified by looking for seedpods high up in the branches of the tree.
4. Eastern Cottonwood tree is found along streams throughout Georgia but nowhere in abundance. The Cottonwood is closely related to the Quaking Aspen and the Big-Tooth Aspen found out West. Yellow morels are sometimes found under these trees late in the spring hunting season.
5. Eastern White Pines are known to occur throughout the Blue Ridge mountain region in the northern part of Georgia, usually in the cool, moist coves and valleys. Occasionally yellow morels can be found under these trees. Finding a virgin growth of this Georgia native may be difficult since most were harvested in the 19th century for timber.
6. American Sycamore can be found typically along stream banks and lowlands throughout Georgia but not at higher elevations. Yellow morels are occasionally found under these trees. Sycamores are often found growing with Eastern Cottonwood trees.
7. Apples trees are found where they were planted (primarily to make hard

cider). There is an old wives' tale about morels growing in old, abandoned apple orchards. Truthfully, I have never found any morels in any of the hundreds of old, apple orchards that I have searched in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Ohio. That won't stop me from looking and hoping.

Remember that tree roots extend out to at least the drip line of the trees. In a mixed forest, roots of other trees may be intermingled with each other. In addition, the mycorrhizal fungi attached to the tree roots extend well past the tree drip line and can be interconnected to other trees. If you find morels close to a willow tree, look around for other tree species that may be the source of these mycorrhizal fungi.

Identifying trees in the spring is a real challenge since the leaves have yet to come out. Our only recourse is to look at the bark and the twigs. Only three trees are covered here: the American Elm, the White Ash, and the Tulip Poplar. These are your best bet when hunting for morels in the South. If you are interested in identifying other trees, go to one of the references at the end of this article.

Tree Bark:

The American Elm's bark has dark, ashy gray, flat-topped ridges separated by diamond-shaped fissures.



American Elm Bark

The White Ash's bark is ashy-gray to brown in color, with interlacing corky ridges forming not to obvious diamonds.



White Ash Bark

The Tulip Poplar's bark is light gray-green and smooth when young, later developing flat-topped ridges and conspicuous white colored furrows in diamond shaped patterns. Older trees commonly have sapsucker holes in them.



Yellow Poplar Bark

Tree Leaf:

The leaf of each tree is easily recognizable, however, they may or may not be found on the tree itself. Looking around on the ground may provide some clues but don't count on it.

The American Elm leaf is alternate, simple, ovate to oblong; 3-5 inches long, 1-3 inches wide; margin coarsely and sharply doubly serrate; base conspicuously inequilaterally; upper surface green and glabrous or slightly scabrous, paler and downy beneath.



American Elm Leaf

The White Ash leaf is opposite, pinnately compound with 7 serrated to entire leaflets that are ovate to somewhat lanceolate; 8-12 inches long, essentially hairless, green above and slightly paler below.



White Ash Leaf



Tulip Poplar Leaf

The Tulip Poplar leaf is alternate, simple, palmately veined; orbicular; 4-lobed with an entire margin; 4-8 inches long, notched to flattop; somewhat shaped like a tulip; light green to green.

Tree Forms:

The most distinctive feature of the American Elm is its graceful, vase-like shape. This photo

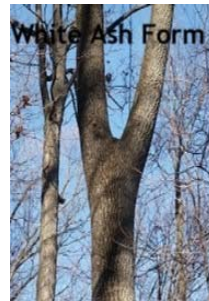


is of a young elm but mature elms have the same graceful form except with more branches.



Tulip Poplar Form

The White Ash tree grows fairly straight for about 10-20 feet and then its trunk either (1) bends slightly before the tree trunk continues its growth, (2) it splits into two trunks, or (3) the trunk is straight without any bends or splits. The branches angle upwards and then bend gracefully at the tips.



White Ash Form



White Ash Form

The tulip poplar form is usually straight and regular. The tree can be seen from a distance since soars straight up and appears to tower over the other trees.

In the spring before the leaves come out, the tulip poplar can be recognized by the remnants of the flower and fruit that remains at the tips of some of the branches.



Tree Twigs:

In the winter and spring, the twigs are very important since they may be the only key to identifying the trees.

Winter tree ID by using twigs is challenging but once mastered, it is very useful.

The American Elm twig is slender, glabrous, slightly zigzag, reddish brown; buds ovate, over ¼ inch long, reddish brown with darker edged scales, often placed a little to one side of the twig.



Elm Twig

The White Ash twig is stout, gray-olive-green, hairless, leaf scars round at the bottom, notched at the top, with lateral buds in the notch; terminal bud is large, brown, with leathery scales and flanked by two lateral buds.



Ash Twig

The Tulip Poplar twig is red-brown in color, often with a shiny appearance or a waxy bloom. Stipules are large and encircle the twig; buds are elongated and valvate, resembling a "duck bill." Twigs have a sweet, spicy odor when broken.



Poplar Twig

Like mushrooms, identification of trees requires careful observation and study. Whether one learns to recognize trees by a self-taught approach using of field manuals or by formal training, the ability to recognize trees is achieved by repeated observation and exposure to them in their natural habitats.

References:

Native Trees of Georgia, G. Norman Bishop, D. B. Warnell School of Forest Resources, 2001, Eleventh Printing.

Trees of Georgia and Adjacent States; Claud L. Brown & L. Katherine Kirkman, 1990, Timber Press.

A Guide to Field Identification of Trees of North America; C. Frank Brockman, Herbert S. Zim, & Rebecca A. Merrilees, 1968, Golden Press

Improving Sautéed Mushrooms

By Dan Willis

When we are fortunate enough to find fresh chanterelles in June, it's best to simply place them in a hot pan with some butter and garlic and enjoy their intense flavor. The same goes for shiitakes from the supermarket. Oversized Portobello mushrooms are generally reserved for the grill. But what about those common white button mushrooms (*Agaricus bisporus*) readily found in the supermarket?

Supermarket white button mushrooms for the most part are bland and tasteless. They shrink and shrivel to practically nothing resembling a mushroom when sautéed. Given their mild flavor and rubbery texture, most people never consider them except for salads, takeout pizza, or bulk in a hearty stew. When sautéed, they soak up any and all fat in the frying pan and their high water content floods the skillet and slows down browning.

The question is how do you make the abundant and affordable button mushroom a little more palatable?

The key seems to be to overload the hot skillet with the button mushrooms and in about 13-15 minutes, the skillet will dry and the mushrooms will shrink to fit the skillet in a single layer. Don't let them continue at this point in a dry skillet or they will begin to burn and end up tasting bitter. Once the mushrooms have given up their water, lower the heat and add a little fat to prevent burning. The addition of some flavorful ingredients (garlic, herbs, wine, soy sauce, or bread crumbs) completes the dish.

Sautéed Mushrooms with Shallots and Thyme

1 Tbsp. vegetable oil

1-1/2 lbs. white button mushrooms, cleaned, stems trimmed, quartered if medium or halved if small

1 Tbsp. unsalted butter

1 medium shallot, minced

1 Tbsp. minced fresh thyme leaves

¼ cup dry Marsala wine

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until mushrooms release liquid, about 5 minutes. Increase heat to high and cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid has completely evaporated, about 8 minutes longer. Add butter, reduce heat to medium, and continue to cook, stirring once every minute, until mushrooms are dark brown, about 8 minutes longer.

2. Add shallot and thyme and cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Add wine and cook until liquid has evaporated, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.

Sautéed Mushrooms with Garlic, Parmesan, and Bread Crumbs

Pulse 2 slices of fresh white bread (torn into quarters) in food processor until coarsely ground. Heat 2 tablespoons of butter in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat until foaming. When foaming subsides, add breadcrumbs and cook, stirring frequently, until dark brown, about 3 minutes. Transfer crumbs to a small bowl and set aside. Using the now-empty skillet, follow the recipe for Sautéed Mushrooms with Shallots and Thyme through Step 1.

Add 2 teaspoons minced garlic (instead of the shallot, thyme, and wine given in Step 2) and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds, then season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a medium bowl. Toss the hot mushrooms with ½ cup shredded Parmesan until the cheese melts. Toss with breadcrumbs and 2 tablespoons minced fresh parley. Serve.

MUSHROOM CALENDAR

By Dan Willis

Spring isn't only for morels! You can find all sorts of other mushrooms while in the forests and fields of Georgia.



Rumor has it from some of the locals that *Coprinus comatus* (Shaggy Manes) can be found in the spring (as well as the fall) in the

mountain pastures of North Georgia. I'll have to take a trip up north to verify this.



Some of the following are rather small so you may have to strain your eyes to see them. Also note that some species have been reclassified.

March:

Collybia (=Flammulina) *velutipes* - Velvet Foot, *Panus stypticus* - a bioluminescence mushroom, *Schizophyllum commune*.

April:

Collybia velutipes, *Coprinus comatus* - Shaggy Mane, *Coprinus micaceus* - Glistening Bark Cup, *Naucoria* (=Agrocybe) *semiorbicularis*, *Omphalia* (=Xeromphalina) *campanella* - Fuzzy Foot, *Panus stypticus*, *Schizophyllum commune*.

May:

Collybia (=Gymnopus) *dryophila*, *Collybia* (=Tricholomopsis) *platyphylla*, *Collybia velutipes*, *Coprinus atramentarius*, *Coprinus atramentarius*, *Coprinus comatus*, *Coprinus micaceus*, *Hypholoma incertum*, *Laccaria laccata*, *Marasmius oreades* - Fairy Ring, *Naucoria* (=Agrocybe) *semiorbicularis*, *Omphalia campanella*, *Panaeolus papilionaceus*, *Panus stypticus*, *Pholiota* (=Agrocybe) *praecox*, *Pluteus cervinus* - Deer Mushroom, *Psathyrella disseminata*, *Psilocybe* (=Panaeolina) *foenicicii*, *Schizophyllum commune*, *Stropharia semiglobata*.

EDITORIAL COPY DEADLINES

If you are interested in contributing an article for inclusion in the "MCG News," please submit it to Dan Willis at willis31@bellsouth.net in accord with the following copy deadlines:

Winter Issue (Dec.-Jan.-Feb.) _____ November 1
Spring Issue (Mar.-Apr.-May) _____ February 1
Summer Issue (Jun.-July_Aug.) _____ May 1
Fall Issue (Sep.-Oct.-Nov.) _____ August 1

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Now is time to renew your membership. Joining or renewing is easy. Use the form at the end of the newsletter or print one from our website, www.mushga.org.

MUSHROOM CLUB OF GEORGIA

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

Applications are effective for one calendar year, beginning January 1st

Check membership level: _____ Individual (\$10) _____ Family (\$15)
 _____ Individual Lifetime (\$100) _____ Supporting (\$50)

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____ Cash Check # _____

(Please Print)

Today's Date _____ Circle one: New or Renewal

Name _____

Additional Name _____

Street _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone_(_____) _____ Alternate Phone_(_____) _____

Email _____

Liability and Release Form

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 Mushroom Club of Georgia, 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, walk, foray, field trip, excursion, meeting or dining, sponsored by the club.

Member's Name (please print clearly) _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Additional Member's Name (please print clearly) _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Please return completed, signed and dated form with check payable to "Mushroom Club of Georgia"

Please mail to:

Janet Joiner, Treasurer, P.O. Box 420255, Atlanta, Georgia 30342