



# MCG NEWS

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## MUSHROOM CLUB OF GEORGIA MCG BOARD MEMBERS 2007

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[www.mushga.org](http://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

There will be no meetings during the months of January and February. Club meetings will resume on March 8. There will be a Board meeting in January.

## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Now that the Holiday season is past, it is time to join or 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](http://www.mushga.org).

## MORE ON MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI

Mushroom The Journal of Wild Mushrooming,  
Summer 2002

According to an article in *Nature*, April 5, 2002, research conducted by Dr. John Klironomos, at the University of Guelph in northeast Canada, revealed an interesting symbiotic relationship between the white pine and *Laccaria bicolor*.

The fungus lives within the root structure of the white pine. The relationship provides nitrogen to the pine in a unique manner. When soil insects nibble the fungus, the bruised tissue of the fungus exudes a toxin that paralyzes the little bugger. The fungus then invades the still-living insect and draws nitrogen from it that is then transmitted to the tree roots. In exchange, the tree provides the

fungus with carbohydrates. This lethal process appears to occur primarily in nutrient-poor soil.

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## WINTER MUSHROOMS

By Dan Willis

The winter in Georgia is usually mild although some cold periods do interfere with being outdoors with the squirrels and birds. The opportunities are always there for hunting the over-wintering polypore mushrooms. Don't look for mushrooms on the ground but instead look on standing wood, both dead and alive.

Become familiar with the edible Oyster Mushroom, *Pleurotus*

*ostreatus*. They are often visible from a distance. The fan-shaped or oyster shell shaped mushroom varies in color from white to cream to grayish to brown. The gills radiate from the point of attachment and are a cream at first and becoming yellowing with age. They are found throughout the year, including winter, in overlapping clusters, sometimes solitary, on living or dead standing trunks, logs, and stumps of deciduous trees. They are both parasitic and saprobic. These are choice edibles although you should discard the tough basal part. They keep well in the winter and withstand freezing.



A look alike to the Oyster Mushroom is the Bear Lentinus, *Lentinellus ursinus*. *Ursinus* means "bear-like." It is fan-shaped to kidney-shaped with a reddish-brown cap and dark brown hairs. It typically is found in overlapping clusters on decaying wood from summer to fall. It is considered not edible due to its bitter-tasting flesh.



Other edibles that you commonly find in the fall and early winter are Brick Cap, *Hypholoma sublateritium*. *Sublateritium* means "nearly brick-colored" and is descriptive of the brick red color of the cap (although the margin

becomes pale yellow and can be confused with some poisonous species). They occur in clusters on decaying stumps, logs, and standing dead trunks of broad-leaved trees, thus they are saprobic. The spore print is purple-brown. Although edible, the flesh is often insect damaged.



A look-alike to the Brick Cap is the poisonous Sulphur Tuft, *Hypholoma fasciculare*. The cap is a variable color of yellow and occurs in clusters on or around dead wood (even buried wood). It is found from spring to late fall. The spore print is purple-brown.



Another look-alike to the Brick Cap is the Deadly Galerina, *Galerina autumnalis*. The cap is yellow-brown to dark brown. It occurs in small clusters, sometimes singly, on dead wood (sometimes on the ground from buried wood) from early winter to early spring. The spore print is rusty brown. It is deadly poisonous and contains amatoxins that destroy the liver.



The common names of Velvet Foot or Winter Mushroom apply to *Flammulina velutipes*. It is cultivated in the Orient as Enokitake or Enotake. It is another edible winter mushroom. It is a small, delicate mushroom with a glistening, sticky cap that is orange-brown to yellow-red. The stalk is very distinctive, being yellow at the top and deep velvet brown at the base. They are found in clusters on deciduous trees, logs, and stumps from late fall through early spring. The spore print is white. Although edible, the sticky caps may be difficult to clean.



## THE FORMATION OF FRUITING BODIES FROM MYCORRHIZAS

By Dan Willis

Another edible is the Late Fall Oyster, *Panellus serotinus*. *Serotinus* means "late fruiting."

The convex, fan-shaped to kidney-shaped caps are variable in color from olive-yellow to olive-brown. It is usually found in overlapping clusters on dead wood and fallen tree trunks from fall to early winter. It is edible but not highly regarded.



Although not edible, the Orange Mock Oyster, *Phyllotopsis nidulans* can be found in overlapping

clusters on decaying wood both deciduous and conifer. This beautiful and distinctive mushroom is easily recognized when fresh by its brilliant orange, fan-shaped cap and unpleasant odor. The flesh has a strong odor of spoiled cabbage. The spore print is pale pink.




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## RAVENEL'S STINKHORN

Charlene Ponder sent some great photographs of Ravenel's stinkhorn (*Phallus ravenelii*), one of which is shown.

The fruiting body first appears egg-like, resembling a small puffball (they say that you can eat the egg but not I). It has a distinct head and stalk. There is a greenish slime (spore mass) covering a granular cap (head) and exudes a foul-smelling odor. The cap is free from the hollow, spongy white stalk and there is a pinkish, saclike cup at the base. These are common in urban areas from August to October and are found either as a single or clustered on wood chips or sawdust (or rotting stumps).



Many of the most important questions don't get answered in mycology textbooks or even most articles. Did you ever encounter a professor, scientist, or "expert" admit that the answer is "I don't know."

Have you ever thought in terms of mushroom ecology and what really happens when the host tree or plant goes dormant in the fall and winter? Are the ectomycorrhizal fungi stimulated to start forming fruiting bodies around the host tree or plant when the photosynthesis process shuts down?

My limited research into this area is that ectomycorrhizal mycelium may or may not form sporocarps (mushrooms and truffles). According to Dr. Fred Rhoades, Western Washington University, it depends on many factors.

In Georgia, we usually hunt mushrooms in the early fall when two climatic conditions prevail, namely: cooler temperatures and increased rainfall.

Sporocarp fruiting is in part dependent on the ability of the host tree or plant to supply carbohydrates and other growth substances in adequate amounts and is linked to factors that regulate photosynthesis. Such host factors include amount of foliage, day length, light intensity, latitude, altitude, temperature, and season.

Another factor is the age of the host tree or plant and the age of the mycorrhizas. An established mycorrhizal fungus may wait several years before producing any fruiting bodies.

As the canopy of the forest closes, the diversity of the fruiting bodies increases. This most likely influences the timing of the fruiting.

The features of the soil also influence the size and number of fruiting bodies. The type and amount of organic matter and metallic ion concentration are two factors to be considered. Also, acid rain, fertilizers, and other human impacts play a role.

All these factors influence different ectomycorrhizas in different ways. The bottom

line is that conclusions are difficult to draw because we don't know enough. Then again, it is the reason scientists exist.

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## DEER VERSES PLATTERFUL MUSHROOMS

By John Plischke III

### \*DEER MUSHROOM / FAWN MUSHROOM



(*Pluteus cervinus*) = (*Pluteus atricapillus*)

**FAMILY:** *Pluteaceae*

**DESCRIPTION:** It is from 2 ½ to 4 ½ inches tall.

**Flesh:** White.

**Cap:** From 2 to 4 inches wide and from ½ to 1 inch thick. It's convex becoming almost flat. Tan to a gray brown. It is usually darker when the cap is not fully expanded then becomes lighter in color with age. It is smooth and slightly sticky when wet. The nipple like parts, when present, on the larger caps can be 1 ¼ wide and stick up ½ inch and can be slightly darker colored. The cap skin peels to the middle of the cap and underneath the skin it is white. When you try to break the cap off the stem the middle part of the cap will often stay on the stem. The cap has lines of slightly darker color on it.

**Gills:** They are not attached to the stalk. They are close and whitish becoming light pink with age.

**Spore Print:** Pinkish.

**Stalk:** 2 to 4 ½ inches tall and ¼ to 3/8 wide. It is whitish colored but has darker lines running from the top to bottom of the stem. It is not hollow when cut in half. It is fibrous. The bottom of the stem is often slightly darker in color than the top. It does not have a ring.

**Odor:** mild.

**Taste:** Mild.

**RANGE:** North America.

**WHERE TO LOOK:** In the woods on rotten logs and stumps, occasionally buried wood and mulch piles or woods remains. I have even found it in the cemetery on a dead maple whose bark and wood dust had fallen to a pile under the tree. It can grow on oak etc.

**HOW OFTEN THEY'RE FOUND:** somewhat common.

**HOW THEY'RE GROUPED:** It grows singly, groups and clumps.

**WHEN TO LOOK:** May to October.

**LOOK ALIKES:** Entolomas differ by having attached gills but they can on occasion become unattached with age but often there are tell tale marks left behind on the stem. Also most of them grow on the soil as opposed to wood. The edible Black Edged *Pluteus* (*Pluteus atromarginatus*) differs by having dark colored gill edges that are best viewed from a side view. (*Pluteus sp*) but the Deer Mushroom is the most common member of the group. The Big Deer or Big Fawn Mushroom (*Pluteus magnus*) has a darker colored when immature that can be wrinkled. The edible Platterful Mushroom (*Tricholomopsis platyphylla*) has a white spore print.

**EDIBILITY:** Edible. (I don't eat it)

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### \*PLATTERFUL MUSHROOM / BROAD GILL



(*Megacollybia platyphylla*)

(*Tricholomopsis platyphylla*) = (*Collybia platyphylla*)

**FAMILY:** *Tricholomataceae*

**DESCRIPTION:** It can be 7 inches tall.

**Flesh:** Its flesh is white.

**Cap:** 2 to 5 ¼ wide and about 1 inch thick. It is gray brown and flat to sunken in the middle with age. It peels back to the middle. The caps often have cracks in it that shows the flesh. The cap can have fibery lines on it that can be a slightly different color.

**Gills:** Depth is about ½ inch. Attached to stalk and adnate. There is often a notch by the stem. They are white. They are widely spaced.

**Spore Print:** White.

**Stalk:** It is from 3 to 6 inches tall and from ½ to 1 inch wide. It has ridges and is white. It is

wider near the bottom. It is stuffed to hollow with age. It is fibrous and has white thread like mycelium.

**Odor:** mild.

**Taste:** often mild.

**RANGE:** North America.

**WHERE TO LOOK:** On old stumps, roots, logs, and buried wood.

**HOW OFTEN THEY'RE FOUND:** somewhat common.

**HOW THEY'RE GROUPED:** It is found singly or in groups.

**WHEN TO LOOK:** May to October.

**LOOK ALIKES:** The edible Fawn Mushroom (*Pluteus cervinus*) spore print differs by being pink. (*Entoloma sp.*) spore print differs by being pink.

**EDIBILITY:** Edible but can cause bellyaches, especially if not well cooked. (I don't eat it)

### KEY FEATURES THAT THEY SHARE

1. They both start to appear during morel season.
2. They both can have white colored gills.
3. They both like to grow on wood.

### KEY FEATURES THAT DIFFER

1. The Platterful mushroom has white colored gills that stay white even when the mushroom matures but the Deer Mushroom has white colored gills that turns pink as the mushroom matures.
2. The Platterful Mushrooms gills glow yellow under a black light but the Deer mushrooms just show the purple cast from the black light.
3. They have different colored spore prints.
4. The Deer Mushroom has closely spaced gills but the Platterful Mushroom has widely spaced gills.

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## CHRISTMAS EVE DINNER

by Dan Willis

When Mary Woehrel sent me a copy of the Christmas Eve Mushroom Soup recipe from the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club, I was reminded of the joyous and happy Christmas dinner celebrations I experienced growing up. Many individuals are unaware that Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian customs require that no meat be served during Christmas Eve dinner. The festive meal has 12 full courses of food beginning with at least three different soups followed by three traditional fish entrees with side dishes of sauerkraut, meatless pierogies,

pickled beets, pickled mushrooms, pickled herring, and fish in tomato sauce. There is also the traditional Christmas bread and poppy-seed rolls.

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## CHRISTMAS EVE MUSHROOM SOUP

(From the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Newsletter)

2 pints fresh mushrooms  
1 large onion  
4 eggs  
Paprika  
Salt & Pepper

Cook mushrooms for ½ hour in 5 cups of water with salt and pepper to taste. Mix 1-1/2 tbsps. of flour with a little water and make a smooth paste. Add 1 egg and beat well, then add enough water to make 1 cup liquid. Pour into the mushrooms and cook slowly, stirring constantly. Beat 3 eggs and drop into soup with a fork. Sauté a large diced onion in 3 tbsps. Butter till light brown. Add paprika and brown slowly. Add onion and paprika to soup. When cooled slightly, add 1 can of condensed milk.

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## PICKLED MUSHROOMS

by Dan Willis

Marinade:

1-1/4 cups white vinegar  
10 black peppercorns  
2 bay leaves

Simmer vinegar, peppercorns and bay leaves in a small covered saucepan 0 minutes over medium-low heat. Bring to a boil over medium heat.

Pickled Mushrooms:

Marinade  
3 cups water  
2 tablespoons salt  
2 lbs. fresh mushrooms

Prepare marinade. In a large saucepan, combine water and salt; bring to a boil. Add mushrooms. Cover tightly and simmer over low heat 10 minutes. Strains mushrooms, cool, and serve.

To preserve:

Arrange equal amounts of mushrooms in 2 (1-pint) canning jars. Pour boiling marinade over mushrooms to cover. Place lids on jars; seal

tightly. Let cool to room temperature; refrigerate. Serve chilled.

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## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

The annual holiday dinner was held on December 13 at Ritter's Restaurant in Marietta with 28 members and friends in attendance. The mushroom soup was such a hit that Maria and Joe Ertavy got the list of basic ingredients. I want to express my gratitude to Maria and Joe who worked this recipe up from the basic ingredients given by Ritter's Restaurant.



## RITTER'S MUSHROOM SOUP

From the kitchen of Maria & Joe Ertavy

Makes 6-8 servings

### Ingredients:

2 Tbls. sweet butter, unsalted  
2 Tbls. olive oil  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves minced garlic  
6 oz. each of fresh portabellas, shiitakes, and white button mushrooms.  
3 oz. fresh oyster mushrooms  
1 ½ cup Madeira wine  
1-pint half-and-half  
2 Tbls corn starch  
Salt and pepper to taste

In a saucepan, sauté the onion in the butter and olive oil until transparent then add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds. Add the Madeira wine and cook uncovered at medium heat until reduced to 1 cup (about 15-20 mins.) Add the mushrooms and cook until tender (about 15 minutes). Add all but ½ cup half-and-

half and cook at low heat until simmers. Do not boil. Puree with hand blender or transfer to food processor and process on puree setting then return to pot. Combine cornstarch with the remaining half-and-half, whisk, and cook until thickened.  
Season to taste.

Although not in the original recipe, I added 2 sprigs of fresh thyme (chopped) for extra flavor.

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## 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](mailto: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

# 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 (\$200)      \_\_\_\_\_ 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