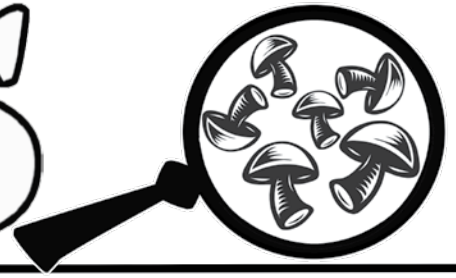


nyms



Winter 2010 New York Mycological Society Newsletter

The Longest Season

The Foul Weather Friends identification table was a hotbed of activity this fall in terms of both quantity and diversity of fungi. October 13th was a particularly auspicious meeting, playing host to the Toxic Triumvirate: *Amanita phalloides*, *Amanita bisporigera*, and *Galerina autumnalis*. Thanks to sufficient rain and some warmer than-normal-temperatures, we had plenty to discuss through the end of October, when meetings were suspended for the year.

But when the blewits finally fade, that's when the blues often arrive. Call it *seasonal affective disorder*, the winter blahs, or just plain old depression. November to March in the Northeast can feel like a prison sentence. So, I figured this was a good opportunity to survey some coping mechanisms for the itchy footed mushroom hunter.

Denial: At the end of the season, acceptance may be your best option, but it isn't your only one. Certainly I'm not the only person who takes their basket along on a "hike" in late November or December, hoping that they might stumble into a patch of frost tolerant oysters, bricktops, or blewits (and sometimes, it does pay to be prepared). But when you find yourself out prowling the dead woods of January and February, you might have a problem.

One way of denying the end of your local season would be traveling to areas where the season is still going strong. For example, this year I made plans to visit my mom in Oregon over Thanksgiving with the added joy of knowing that their fall fruiting would still be near its peak. While my NYMS cohorts were eating button mushrooms with their turkey, I was picking chanterelles and boletes in freshly fallen snow. Clubs in other regions can be great resources for scheduling a trip—they might even host you on one of their forays "on exchange".

With a little research, you might discover that in parts of Texas, morels often come up in both spring and fall. This year there were reported flushes appearing as late as

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January is renewal time for your NYMS membership for 2010. The membership coupon is on page 11. Don't wait until the last minute before morel season.

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2010 NEMF Registration—insert

👉 Upcoming Events 👈

January 30—NYMS Banquet: *Ichiumi, Manhattan--be there or be a toadstool!*

The Emil Lang Winter Lecture Series will take place on the following Monday evenings from 7 to 9 pm at the Downtown Community Center in Tribeca, 120 Warren Street between Greenwich and West Streets:

February 8, Gary LIncoff, author of *The Audobon Guide to North American Mushrooms*, among many other guides and NYMS education director

March 8, Daniel Winkler, ecologist and ethno-mycologist specializing in Tibet

March 22, NYMS Business Meeting

April 12, Tom Volk, creator of the popular website *Tom Volk's Fungi*, University of Wisconsin Professor

February 26—Umami: Food & Art Festival NYC Mushroom Identification and Dinner, James Beard House, Manhattan

February 27—Umami: Food & Art Festival Chinatown Mushroom Foray, Macao Trading Co., Manhattan



NYMS Newsletter

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All statements and opinions written in this newsletter belong solely to the individual author and in no way represent or reflect the opinions or policies of the New York Mycological Society.

Submissions for the next issue of the NYMS newsletter must reach the editor by March 7, 2010. Various formats are acceptable for manuscripts. Address questions to Jason Cortlund, editor. See above for addresses.

BREAKING NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New York Mycological Society Business

This Year's CATSKILL WEEKEND

September is the month NYMS holds its Annual Catskill Weekend. So it will be this September, just a bit bigger!

The Society is teaming up with three of our neighboring mushroom clubs, the Westchester-Connecticut Mycological Association (COMA), the Long Island Mycological Club (LIMC), and the Mid-Hudson Mycological Association (MHMA) to host the 34th Annual Foray of the Northeast Mycological Federation, the 2010 Samuel Ristich Foray. The event will be held at Soyuzivka, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Center in Kerhonkson, NY, on September 23-26.

Maria Reidelbach, who lives in the neighborhood, found us this splendid campus featuring architecture of the Carpathian Mountains of Eastern Europe. Eleven buildings will accommodate our group which we expect to number well into the 200s. The Center is situated on 400 acres of forested land where mushrooms abound!

You will find more information in the cover letter for the registration form that is enclosed with this newsletter. For further details visit the NEMF2010 website at: nemf.org/files/2010/2010.html

Some of you may have been shut out of last year's NEMF foray on Cape Cod. To avoid that experience, please send your registration as soon as possible. We do expect a heavy subscription this year as well.

Membership Dues 2010

Your treasurer would like to remind all members that NYMS membership fees for 2010 will be due beginning January 1. If you are renewing as an individual the fee is \$15. The family renewal is \$25. If you are a new member - joining for the first time or did not pay in 2009 - the fees are \$20 individual and \$30 family. Please fill out the membership form at the back of this newsletter or at our website. I will

not process membership fees without a signed renewal form.

ALL MEMBERSHIPS MUST BE PAID BY MARCH 31.

Please note that if you are a member of NAMA and want to renew, you must do so directly through NAMA. You should have already received a renewal form from Ann Bornstein, the NAMA membership chair. DO NOT send your NAMA renewals to me.

Thank you.

Charles Luce
NYMS Treasurer

Annual Banquet set for January 30th

By now, we hope you've all sent an RSVP for this year's New York Mycological Society Banquet.

This year's event will happen on Saturday, January 30 at Ichiumi in Midtown—an all-you-can-eat Japanese sushi and seafood buffet. Selection of the venue was based on a tip from club member Gretchen Van Matre.

Ichiumi typically serves about 200 different dinner items, including different types of sushi and sashimi, plus top-quality raw clams and oysters. They also offer several crab and shrimp dishes (including tempura), and several fish preparations. They also serve a wide array of meat dishes, salads, soups, dumplings, noodles, and desserts for anyone averse to seafood.

Their mushroom offerings include a basa fish (related to catfish) with portobellos, grilled mushroom yakitori, and cold marinated beech mushrooms with sesame seeds. The chef may even prepare some special mushroom dishes in honor of our event. To check out the menu, go to the restaurant's website (ichiumi.com).

Saturday, January 30
6pm–10pm
Ichiumi
6 East 32nd St. (off 5th Ave.)
Manhattan

deliquescence



©2010 Anne Yen

A Term Defined: Deliquescence

Etymology: Latin *deliquescere*, from *de-* + *liquescere*, inchoative of *liquēre* to be fluid

The verb “deliquesce” means to dissolve or melt away. In mycology, it’s used to describe a state of decay where fungal structures become soft or liquid with age. “Deliquescence” refers to both the process of deliquescing and the substance produced when a mushroom deliquesces.

“Inky cap” species such as *Coprinus comatus* and *Coprinus atramentarius* are very commonly associated with this term.

Coprinus artwork provided by NYMS club member and natural science illustrator Anne Yen (<http://www.anneyenillustration.com>).

Local Mushroom Supplier Stopped by State Dept. of Health

By Taryn Thompson, reporter for *The Ithaca Times*, 10/14/2009

(Editor’s note: This article is about an Ithaca-area mushroom hunter whom I met at this year’s Peck Foray. He’s been picking wild mushrooms since he was a boy and supplies only a few restaurants in his region. I thought this story might be of interest to some club members.)

Local mushroom hunter Carl Whittaker had been selling the bounty of his wild harvest to area restaurants for almost 25 years when the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets stopped him in his tracks.

According to the NYS Department of Health, wild picked mushrooms are prohibited in food service establishments. Unbeknownst to Whittaker and his happy clientele, their exchanges were not exactly illegal, but caused a frenzy in Albany.

Chapter Three of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Food Code states that mushroom species picked in the wild shall be obtained from sources where each mushroom is individually inspected and found to be safe by an approved mushroom identification expert.

And while the federal government has no specific definition of “approved mushroom identification expert,” two representatives from the state Department of Agriculture and Markets both told Whittaker he needs to be certified.

“Michael Wulf and Erin Sawyer both said you have to be licensed as a mushroom expert and all the mushrooms have to be inspected, but they don’t have any standards for certifying people,” Whittaker said.

Neither Wulf nor Sawyer was available for comment despite several calls and email communication attempts to contact them. But the NYS DOH has no licensure procedure to approve mushroom experts because most people who sell mushrooms cultivate, grow, harvest, and process the mushrooms in a regulated commercial operation.

“They don’t have any protocol because it has only come up a few times,” Whittaker said. “It has come up in New York a little bit because they both said that they’d had trouble getting people certified, and they said I’d have to get letters of recommendation from one or more professional mycologists up at Cornell University.”

Cont. p. 8

Remember!

2010 membership payment is due in January at the rates of Individuals: \$15 (\$20 for new members) and Families: \$25 (\$30 for new members). Make checks payable to the New York Mycological Society. If you wish to become a member of NAMA (the North American Mycological Association), make a separate check for \$32, payable to NAMA and mail it with the NYMS dues to Charles Luce, Treasurer, 518 Gregory Ave. #C312, Weehawken, NJ 07086. See the membership coupon in this issue.

Stay responsibly in touch with us. If your telephone number, mailing or email address changes, please contact Paul Sadowski, Secretary with your new information. An additional note for listserv users: please remember to set your spam filter to be able to receive listserv emails.

NYMS walks policy: We meet when public transportation arrives. Check the walks schedule for other transportation notes. Walks last 5-6 hours and are of moderate difficulty except where noted. Bring lunch, water, knife, and a basket for mushrooms. Leaders have discretion to cancel walks in case of rain or very dry conditions. Be sure to check your email or contact the walk leader before a walk to see if it has been canceled for some reason. Non-members’ attendance is \$5.

Warning: Many mushrooms are toxic. Neither the Society nor individual members are responsible for the identification or edibility of any fungus.

Off-Season Sightings

NYMS Website Has a New Design

www.newyorkmyc.org

You might have noticed that our own NYMS website has a new look. An update for the community software that operates the site had been available for well over a year, but we delayed the implementation of the new version because several add-on features that we use have not been updated. Security concerns have made it important to upgrade now.

Upgrading will give us the opportunity to take advantage of the increased security and additional capabilities. We're currently working on site design and in the coming weeks, we plan to tighten things up a bit, and add some newly available features. At present, the vast majority of the site should function properly and the interface has not changed much.

There are a few features which are currently missing or which are not quite as visible. We're working to fix these issues in the coming days and weeks. In the meantime, if you notice something which is broken (links that don't work, or programming which doesn't work), please don't hesitate to contact our webmaster Adam Rosenberg through the site's "Contact" page.

Just Mushroom Stuff

www.justmushroomstuff.com

Just Mushroom Stuff is the one stop shopping site for mushroom-related gifts and accessories. They offer items ranging from mass-produced utilitarian products to whimsical, one-of-a kind treasures and collectibles.

Fat of the Land

<http://fat-of-the-land.blogspot.com/>

Author and avid forager Langdon Cook keeps a regular blog at "...the intersection of food, foraging, and the outdoors." Recent posts include musings on the use of an *Amanita muscaria* tincture as a possible home remedy for sciatica.



Massive 'shrooms found growing in Battery Park City's Winter Garden. (photo courtesy of John Oakes)



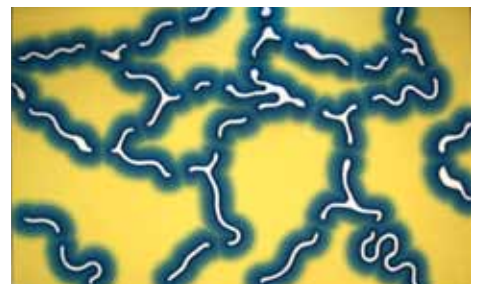
Everything's bigger in Texas, including these *Amanita muscaria* found growing in downtown Austin. (photo by Amy Brown)



Painted tile titled "Kakulsa Gatherer" (2005) by artist Don Fiorino. (courtesy of Laura Biscotto)



Cartoon by artist Kathleen White shows club member Laura Biscotto hunting giant puffballs. (courtesy Biscotto)



Back cover image by Peter Barret, a New York artist who also writes about food.

Member Profile: *Victor Weiss*

How long have you been a member of the NYMS?

Since 1991.

What brings you to mushroom hunting?

The thrill of all the various flavors, and of course the thrill of finding free food. It also adds a lot to taking a walk in the woods, which is also enjoyable.

How would you describe your relationship with fungi?

Purely platonic (sorry).

What occupies you when you aren't mushroom hunting?

I work on my music. *(Editor's note: Victor's songs includes the fabulous fungi-themed titles "Bugs Fly In My Eyes" and "Mushroom Blues". I hope Victor will perform at an upcoming NYMS event!)*

Has your interest in fungi had any influence on the rest of your life?

Well, it is an important part of my life as far as enjoying mushroom hunting, and the mushrooms have become a big part of my diet (maybe especially since I'm a vegetarian).

How do you decide whether or not to eat a mushroom? (identification and/or condition)

First, I have to be able to absolutely identify the mushroom. I'm also careful about the condition of the mushroom, and checking for bugs. I won't eat a mushroom with a bunch of bug holes (they may contain larvae). I don't go along with the frequently heard remark "Hey, it's just more protein."

Do you buy mushrooms? What kinds, and what sources?

I try not to buy during the mushroom season, when I can find them myself. When I do buy, it's usually cheap fresh shitakes or buna shimeji in Chinatown.

How do you like to eat mushrooms (if you do)?

I love cooking them with pasta, mashed potatoes, and rice. I've cooked them simply with some herbs, sometimes with tomato sauce, curry style, paprikash style, I'm always experimenting.

What's your favorite fungus/why?

It may be hen of the woods, because it makes for such a substantial meal, tastes wonderful, and you can find it in such abundance.

Have any fungus or fungus-hunting stories you'd like to share?

A favorite is a story a friend of mine told me once: Many years ago (before he knew anything about mushrooms), he and a girlfriend were sitting in the woods, while under the influence of a certain psychoactive substance. Upon hearing and seeing some earthstars push their way up from the ground, they wondered if these were aliens, and if it would be possible to communicate with them.

Are you secretive about the places where you've found mushrooms growing?

It depends on the type of mushroom and the type of person I'm dealing with.

What is your favorite season to mushroom hunt?

All seasons. It's fun when you can pick a lot, and it's fun when you pick a little, if there hasn't been much around.

What are you willing to endure, physically, to hunt mushrooms?

Bad weather, bad terrain, you name it. 🍄





NYMS Cookbook!

Calling all cooks, chefs, archivists and club historians. Your knowledge is needed!

NYMS Treasurer and fungal-foodie Charles Luce—with the help and oversight of Gary Lincoff, Pam Kray, Regina Ryan, Paul Sadowski and Karen Schechner—is compiling a NYMS cookbook. He can't do it without YOU. He needs:

- ⇒ **Mushroom recipes:** particularly those with cultural heritage. One of the things that will set our cookbook apart is the cultural diversity of the NYMS. Mushroom recipes from your people/village/family are of special interest.
- ⇒ **Recipes from our founders:** Not only could they find mushrooms and organize a club, they could cook pretty well too. Do you have one of their creations? Are you a founder, with recipe in hand? Could we include it?
- ⇒ **Fungal anecdotes:** Have a clever foraging or funga-phile story? We'd love a look.
- ⇒ **Club history:** We're a unique organization; as smart, inventive and wild as the city we call home. YOU have tales of our founders and origins, right? May we see them?
- ⇒ **Artwork:** Photos, illustrations, spore-print abstractions and other visual materials. No cookbook can exist without them. May we consider yours?

The plan is to produce a commercially viable cookbook of about 100 recipes with six to twelve essays and anecdotes, photos, illustrations and text that pays due respect to our history. We'd like this project to be complete by the end of calendar 2010. In addition to material, your suggestions are welcome.

For more information, please contact Charles Luce (bryanandluce@verizon.net). 🍄

Photograph of graylings (Cantharellula umbonata) by Charles Luce.

Polenta Pizza with Mushrooms

4-1/2 cups water
1-1/2 cups yellow cornmeal
2 tbs. butter
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
3 tbs. olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 lb. assorted fresh white or brown mushrooms (or any wild mushroom combination)
1 cup crushed tomatoes
1 tbs. mushroom powder (optional)
½ tsp. each salt and dried oregano and basil
Freshly ground pepper to taste
2 tbs. chopped parsley
6 to 8 ounces freshly grated Gruyere, Emmenthaler or Mozzarella cheese

Prepare the polenta base. Bring 3-1/2 cups of water to a boil in a deep saucepan. In a mixing bowl, combine one cup of cold water with the cornmeal and mix with a wooden spoon until mixture is a thick paste. Whisk the paste into the boiling water and simmer, stirring constantly for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the mixture is very thick and pulls away from the sides of the pan. Remove from heat and add the butter and Parmesan cheese.*

Pour polenta into an oiled 12-inch round pan and flatten into a circle. Cool at room temperature for at least one hour or until the top feels dry.

Preheat oven to 350 deg. Brush polenta with one tbs. oil and bake for 20 minutes. (If it puffs, prick with a fork.)

In a large skillet, sauté the onion and garlic in 2 tbs. oil until onion is translucent. Add mushrooms, raise the heat to medium-high and cook, stirring constantly until all liquid evaporates and the mushrooms begin to brown. Add the tomatoes, mushroom powder, herbs, salt and pepper. Turn the heat down to low and cook for 7 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and add parsley.

Spoon the topping onto the polenta and sprinkle with the grated Gruyere, Emmenthaler or Mozzarella cheese. Bake for five to seven minutes or until the cheese has melted and the topping bubbles. Cut into wedges and serve with grated Parmesan cheese on the side.

Yield: Four servings.

For easy microwave firm polenta

4-1/2 cups water
1-1/2 cup cornmeal
2 tsp. kosher salt
4 tbs. unsalted butter
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Combine water, cornmeal and salt in 2 qt. Soufflé dish. Cook, uncovered, at 100% for 12 minutes, stirring once.

Remove from oven, stir in 3 tbs. butter, cheese and add pepper. Let stand 3 minutes. Continue as above.

From "The Good Health Magazine" *New York Times* 9/27/87
Submitted by Alice Barner



Carl Whittaker displays some of the mushrooms he has collected around the Ithaca area. (Photo by Taryn Thompson)

Local Mushroom Supplier, cont. from p. 3

The DOH is in the process of deciding if they can allow Whittaker to reconvene business while they look over a recommendation from Kathie Hodge, an associate professor of mycology at Cornell.

"I don't think any one else is certified," Hodge said, adding that she wrote a standard reference letter for Whittaker. "The state said they had had a number of other cases in the past but didn't consider them expert enough. It's not clear - there's no procedure to do this. Tompkins County is the only county that's really cracked down on it."

She added that there has been some discussion at the state level about a testing protocol to certify experts.

"It's a daunting prospect to develop a test to ensure that no one picks poisonous mushrooms, and it would have to be a regional test because different mushrooms grow in different areas," Hodge said.

"Professional mycologists are reluctant to certify people they don't know well and take on the potential liability if somebody did make a mistake," Whittaker added. "It's difficult to figure out a good test - something that would really show that a person is knowledgeable enough and that would be administrable."

Hodge has known Whittaker for almost 20 years. He used to be the teaching assistant for Hodge's mushroom identification course at Cornell. The reason the state jumped into Whittaker's case was mostly because of federal regulations, Hodge said.

According to Annex 3 of the FDA Food Code, authorities have expressed their difficulty in determining what constitutes a "wild mushroom identification expert" and enforcing the Food Code provisions associated with it.

In 1998, the Conference for Food Protection (CFP) attempted to alleviate this problem through the formation of a committee that was charged with determining what constitutes a wild mushroom expert. However, the committee was unable to provide this information in a practical, useful manner for State and local regulators within the constraints of the Food Code.

The 2000 CFP recommended the committee's alternative solution - which was accepted by the FDA - that a brochure be developed to provide information on what constitutes a wild mushroom expert.

Until this brochure is produced, a food establishment that sells or serves mushroom species picked in the wild is required to provide: the Latin binomial name, the author of the name, and the common name of the mushroom species; verification that the mushroom was identified while in the fresh state; the name of the person who identified the mushroom; and a statement as to the qualifications and training of the identifier, specifically related to mushroom identification.

"The feds acknowledge that there is no process to becoming an approved mushroom expert," Hodge said. "So until there is, they propose this alternative where you submit your curriculum vitae with your mushrooms, which transfers the liability to the buyer, who has to judge whether you're an expert. But the states aren't comfortable with that."

The NYS DEC does allow picking on state land for private consumption, but Carol Chase of Tompkins County Health Department said that both state agencies have been working on this issue.

"Under current regulations, wild mushrooms are prohibited," Chase said. "It came up seven years ago at the state health department, but the information available at the time was not significant enough to cause a certification procedure or an attempt at a certification process to get under way."

Whittaker wrote an explanation of his experience and knowledge of mushrooms, which he sent with the recommendation. He's waiting to hear back from the state.

"Carl is a pioneer," Chase said. "The concern from our standpoint is that there's no antidote for some of the toxins the mushrooms produce. Our job is to protect the public - it's a life and death situation."

Story Link: <http://ithaca.com/main.asp?Search=1&ArticleID=10124&SectionID=16&SubSectionID=83&S=1> 🌐



Umami Festival

Celebrates the Flavor of Fungi

NYMS's own Paul Sadowski and Gary Lincoff will participate in events this winter that celebrate the earthy richness of culinary mushrooms, as part of the 2010 Umami: Food and Art Festival.

Friday, February 26th

New York City Mushroom Identification and Dinner

(with Diane Borsato, chef Chewy Cereceres, Paul Sadowski)

Mushroom enthusiasts and the general public will have the opportunity to see a vast selection of fungus species collected from across the city of New York. Specimens from Chinese, Japanese, Eastern European, and other markets will be displayed on an ID table for observation and identification. Toronto artist and amateur mycologist Diane Borsato, along with expert mycologist Paul Sadowski from the New York Mycological Society will be available to discuss and identify the species from across the city. The public is also welcome to bring species from their own local markets to be identified by the experts. Following the ID table, mushroom-inspired cocktails prepared by the mixologists of Employees Only and hor d'oeuvres, the audience will proceed to a mushroom-centered dinner prepared by chef Chewy Cerceres of Macao Trading Co.

The James Beard House is offering its members' rate to NYMS members as well (\$100 instead of \$125). Use the code FENNEL when reserving tickets.

Saturday, February 27th

Chinatown Mushroom Foray

(with Diane Borsato, Paul Sadowski, Gary Lincoff)

A foraging event co-organized by the Toronto artist Diane Borsato and the New York Mycological Society. Interested participants will meet at 10 AM at Macao Trading Co. and go through Manhattan's Chinatown to collect various mushroom species in the shops and markets. After the foray, everyone will gather again at the restaurant to have lunch, and observe and identify the many diverse species of fungi available in the neighborhood.

To purchase advance tickets (\$20) for the Chinatown Mushroom foray, or to learn more about the Umami: Food and Art Festival, visit: <http://www.umami-festival2010.com>

Umami: Food and Art Festival is a non-profit, biennale event created in 2008. The festival works in partnership with other organizations in New York City to foster collaborations between artists and food professionals. The festival features events that are interdisciplinary and collaborative, creating an interchange of ideas and stirring debate about the role of food and art in our society, creating long-term collaborative relationships between organizations and individuals from different fields.

The word "umami" refers to the fifth taste sensed by the human tongue (in addition to sweet, salty, bitter and sour). Umami is a Japanese word meaning "savory" or "meaty" and applies to a sensation common in meats, cheese and other protein-rich foods or to "earthy" foods such as mushrooms and soy sauce. 🍄 *More page 11*



Photos above by Diane Borsato, banner left by Emilie Baltz of Fork & Design

Cortlund, cont. from p. 1

December, after heavy rains. So you might want think about visiting that long-lost cousin in San Antonio next year.

Hibernation: When the temperature drops and the woods grow barren of edibles, creatures like bears and squirrels hole in their dens in states of semi-dormant, metabolic stasis. I realize that going to bed until April 2010 probably isn't an option for many of you. But there is something to be said for sequestering oneself from the cold in a cozy apartment with a stack of DVDs or good books and a fresh batch of cookies. A little rest and recuperation might be in order to get your mind, body, and spirit ready for the competitive rigors of morel season.

Diversion: I'm a big fan of cross country skiing. My technique is pretty crummy, but I enjoy the exercise and skiing gets me out into the woods in a different context. I find that seeing and trying to identify trees when they're stripped bare helps hone skills that contribute to better mushrooming. You can also scout new territories. The Norway Spruce stand that you ski through in February might be blanketed with *Boletus edulis* come September.

Education: NYMS will be hosting another winter series of lectures in 2010, with myco-experts giving talks on various exciting topics. There might be a class you want to take (last winter's NYMS microscopy class taught by Paul Sadowski, for example, was very popular). You can also catch up on all the reading you missed over the summer and fall (such as the new book by Bessette, Harris, and Bessette—*Milk Mushrooms of North America—A Field Identification Guide to the Genus Lactarius*).

Even if everything in your life doesn't revolve around getting your next fungi fix, making productive use of the long northern winter can keep those post-blewit blues at bay. Before you know it, soil temperature will be up near 50°, the ticks will be hatching, and the morels will be popping up in all your favorite, top-secret orchards. 🍄

Seven New Luminescent Mushroom Species Discovered

ScienceDaily (Oct. 5, 2009) — Seven new glow-in-the-dark mushroom species have been discovered, increasing the number of known luminescent fungi species from 64 to 71. Reported in the journal *Mycologia*, the new finds include two new species named after movements in Mozart's Requiem. The discoveries also shed light on the evolution of luminescence, adding to the number of known lineages in the fungi 'family tree' where luminescence has been reported.

San Francisco State University Biology Professor Dennis Desjardin and colleagues discovered the fungi in Belize, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Japan, Malaysia and Puerto Rico. The discoveries include four species new to science and three new reports of luminescence in known species. Three quarters of glowing mushrooms, including the species described in the study, belong to the *Mycena* genus, a group of mushrooms that feed off and decompose organic matter as a source of nutrients to sustain their growth.

"What interests us is that within *Mycena*, the luminescent species come from 16 different lineages, which suggests that luminescence evolved at a single point and some species later lost the ability to glow," said Desjardin, lead author of the study. He believes that some fungi glow in order to attract nocturnal animals that aid in the dispersal of the mushroom's spores which are similar to seeds and are capable of growing into new organisms.

"It's pretty unusual to find this many luminescent species, typically only two to five percent of the species we collect in the field glow," Desjardin said. "I'm certain there are more out there."

The newly discovered fungi glow constantly, emitting a bright, yellowish-green light,



and are tiny, with caps smaller than one centimeter across.

Desjardin has named two of the new species *Mycena luxaeterna* (eternal light) and *Mycena luxperpetua* (perpetual light), names inspired by Mozart's Requiem and the fact that these mushrooms glow 24 hours a day. To date, Desjardin has discovered more than 200 new fungi species and together with these latest findings, has discovered nearly a quarter of all known luminescent fungi.

"Luminescent *Mycena*: new and noteworthy species" was published online in the journal *Mycologia* on Oct. 5 and will appear in the March/April 2010 print issue. Co-authors include Brian A. Perry, former graduate student at San Francisco State University and currently of the University of Hawaii, D. Jean Lodge of the U.S. Forest Service, Cassius V. Stevani of the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil and Eiji Nagasawa of the Tottori Mycological Institute, Japan.

This research was supported by the National Science Foundation and the National Geographic Society.

Story Link: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/10/091005123045.htm>

Story Source: San Francisco State University (2009, October 5). Seven New Luminescent Mushroom Species

Umami Festival Artist and Mycophile Diane Borsato

The 2010 Umami Food & Art Festival's mushroom-related events will be co-presented by NYMS and Toronto-based visual artist Diane Borsato.

Borsato works in performance, intervention, video, installation, and photography. She has exhibited in galleries and museums across Canada and internationally and is currently Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Studio at the University of Guelph.

She previously staged a similar Chinatown Foray in 2008 in collaboration with the Mycological Association of Toronto.

According to her website, "With field guides and magnifying glasses, we debated Latin species names and toured the suburban marketplace in the same manner that we would research and identify Ontario fungi in the forest or field."

To learn more about Diane Borsato's work visit: dianebersato.net

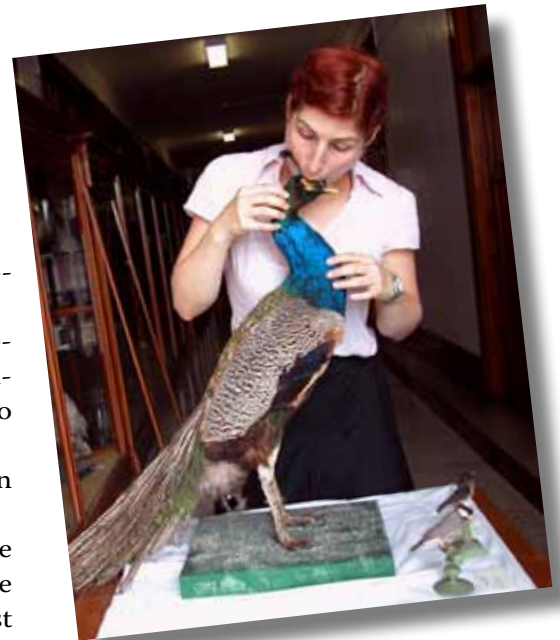


Photo courtesy Diane Borsato.



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Family—30.00 new, 25.00 renewal

NAMA—32.00

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Charles Luce, Treasurer
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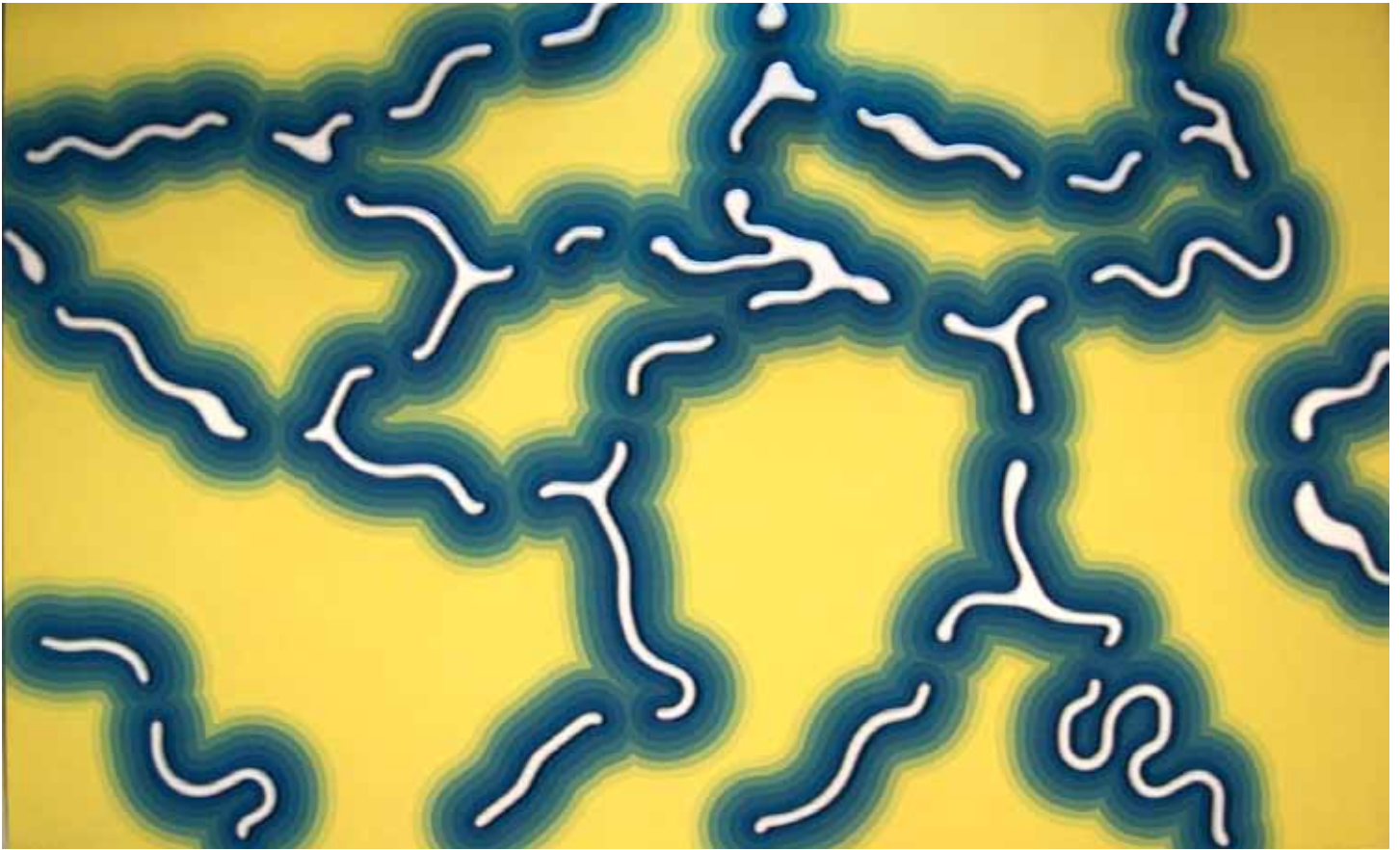
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Release

I hereby release the New York Mycological Society, any officer or member thereof, from any legal responsibility for injuries or accidents incurred during or as result of any mushroom identification, field trip, excursion, meeting, or dining, sponsored by the Society.

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Peter Barrett, Mycelium, 2009, oil on MDF, latex on wall, installation at Dorsch gallery, Miami, FL, see page 4.