



SPORE PRINT

The Alberta Mycological Society
Newsletter

Summer
2016



Introducing Red Deer Region

Page 3



Inside This Issue

- President's Message 2
- The Pleurotus Chant 3
- Introducing the Red Deer Region 3
- Dr. Weil's Favorite Foods: Asian
Mushrooms 4
- Summer Solstice Foray & Feast 5
- Peace Region Foray Report 6
- Witch's Hat – *Hygrocybe conica* 6
- Passings..... 6
- Crescent Falls Mushroom Foray 7
- Sweating the Small Stuff 8
- Summer Mushroom EXPOs – we need
you!..... 9
- The Great Alberta Mushroom Foray
2016 10
- What is Matchmaker..... 10
- Major AMS Events for 2016..... 11

Summer Solstice Foray & Feast





President's Message

Rosemarie O'Bertos

Welcome Back Everyone,

Spring has already transitioned into Summer and time is flying by!

Our AGM was very memorable this year as some long standing members have stepped back and are mentoring replacements. I really want to thank Bill Richards, our original Foray Coordinator, who has taken Thomas Slaymaker under his wing, resulting in well-planned forays (weather not always included)! Ryan Armishaw, our former Computer Guru, deserves a big thank you for handing the reins (along with instructions) to Zdenka Hofman (our new awesome computer, webmaster and newsletter layout person). Zdenka along with Stefan Catona (our new microscopy expert and newsletter liaison) were instrumental in getting this newsletter out to all of you. Melanie Fjoser is a lot harder to replace as she wore so many hats that we have yet to even identify them all. So far she is assisting Francis Sandul in managing the Devonian Expo, that is just around the corner, and guiding a risk management team in the right direction. It is with much gratitude and appreciation that we recognize the value these members have brought to the table (and to the bush) over the years!



Can you believe our annual Summer Solstice at New Moose Hill Hall has already come and gone? There were a good number of people camping and even though the mushrooms were far from plentiful, the potluck was awesome. Our culinary team is growing and new ideas are sizzling. Liz Watts opted to prepare a 5-bird main dish (that was fantastic down to the last

morsel). I may not get it right but it was something crazy like a turkey stuffed with a de-boned duck, stuffed with a de-boned chicken, then with a de-boned pheasant and then a de-boned quail AND in addition, each bird was stuffed with a different dressing! If you weren't there, you missed it!

If cooking is a fantasy of yours, there are other opportunities for you! We require assistance with food prep and serving at the Devonian Expo. Please contact contactus@wildmushrooms.ws if you have an interest in helping the culinary team.

It is wonderful to see so many people participating; offering to help wherever they can and different faces stepping into unfamiliar roles. Thank you to all of you! You make a difference!

Your President – Rosemarie O'Bertos

2016 Executive

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Zdenka Hofman

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Peace River – Ken Dies

Calgary – Russ Green

Drayton Valley – Rose Letourneau

Central Alberta – Candice Cullum

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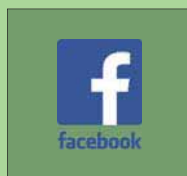
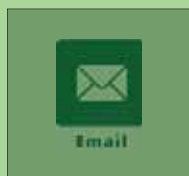


Photo Credits:
Candice Cullum, Ken Dies, Zdenka Hofman, Martin Osis, Rick Watts, and other contributors

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The Pleurotus Chant

I grew up playing goal, and, as we all know, hockey goalies are by and large a strange crop. The idiosyncrasies of goaltenders include rituals such as talking to your goalposts (Patrick Roy), vomiting before every game (Glen Hall), making snow angels (Evgeni Nabokov), pouring water over one's head exactly six and a half minutes before puck-drop (Jocelyn Thibault)—the list goes on. My superstitions were twofold: (1) I wore a cardboard rendition of Elvira, Mistress of the Dark, on a string around my neck, for no other reason than because my older brother suggested it was “good luck” (I know, so gullible), and (2) I rubbed a morsel of tungsten before each game to help me secure that “W”.



Oyster Mushroom – *Pleurotus ostreatus*

But what does all of this have to do with fungi? Well, as it turns out, the superstitious disposition I fostered as a hockey goalie has transferred unto mushroom hunting. Before every oyster mushroom foray, I close my eyes and chant:

Pleurotus ostreatus, guide me to your source;
follow you through haunted woodland upon a river horse.
Harken to the blast of four airborne spores,
catapulted thither by hygroscopic force.
Pleurotus ostreatus, call me to your log, where I find your pallid body fruiting in the fog.

Do you have any mushroom superstitions? If so, and if you are not too embarrassed to share them, please submit them to newslettersubmission@wildmushrooms.ws for publication in this newsletter!

Stefan Catona



Introducing the Red Deer Region

By Candice Cullum

Introducing the Red Deer region! It's as diverse in terrain as it is in its mushrooms. Tucked up against all the farm land are some very unique areas just waiting to be explored, from rolling hills with poplar trees to a river valley with small isolated pine forests. You never know what you'll find. Many species appear yearly, like *Hericium*, *Leccinum* and *Russula*. Many others will appear when we've had a lot of rain such as *Amanita*, Shaggy Mane and Giant Puff Balls.

Rainfall here can be very sporadic. Massive storms sweep through, picking and choosing where to dump piles of rain. It's very possible to drive twenty minutes and find wetter conditions. This makes for some very interesting hikes. I'm very much looking forward to hosting some forays in the area as the summer progresses.

My interest in mushrooms began with a violent hail storm. The aftermath left my garden completely wiped out. After shedding a few tears and a couple of choice words directed at Mother



Giant Puff Ball – *Calvatia gigantea*

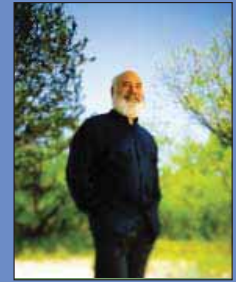
Nature, I started looking for a way to satisfy my love of harvesting and canning. Wild berry picking has long been one of our family activities. Sadly my son does not find it quite as enjoyable as I do. We were deep in a blueberry patch when I noticed he'd abandoned his berry pail. Before I could tell him to get back to picking, there was a loud cheer and a splat. Bits of mushroom came raining down on my head. After some giggling, he managed to pick the obligatory

half pail of blueberries before running off to resume playing “mush ball”. It wasn't until I was dragged in as pitcher, that the light went on in my head. Here we were surrounded by an unending forest full of mushrooms, more than I'd ever seen before. I had been harvesting blueberries and hazelnuts but not even seeing the fungi. Of course, this may be due in part to childhood punishments for playing with unknown lawn mushrooms. Once the idea was in my head, the next logical step was— Google it! Which is where I found the Alberta Mycological Society. The information I've gained through AMS has spread to my entire family. They all enjoy eating my harvests and sending me random mushroom pictures asking “what is this?” I look forward to many more forays and the chance to pay forward all the knowledge, skills, and gut feelings, that were so happily shared with me.



Dr. Weil's Favorite Foods: Asian Mushrooms

Andrew Weil, M.D.



Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*)



Maitake – *Grifola frondosa*



Shiitake – *Lentinula edodes*

This tip is courtesy of Dr. Weil on Healthy Aging – Your Online Guide to the Anti-Inflammatory Diet.

Beneath their humble exteriors, mushrooms are packed with healthy benefits. Many edible species contain polysaccharides - powerful anticancer compounds - which appear to boost both the activity and number of the body's natural-killer cells.

The fungi listed below are readily available in grocery or Asian specialty stores, and are good sources of polysaccharides. They are all delicious as well, so you can begin adding these mushrooms to your diet as ingredients in favorite recipes, or as a separate dish. In addition, if you've been diagnosed with cancer or are at high risk for it, Dr. Weil recommends supplementing with extracts from one or more of these medicinal mushrooms. Combining several species may be even more helpful.

1. Enoki (*Flammulina velutipes*). Japanese farmers who grow (and regularly eat) this mushroom have unusually low rates of cancer, perhaps because enoki contains a compound called flammulin that has significant anti-tumor properties.
2. Maitake (*Grifola frondosa*). According to Japanese research, this mushroom shows strong anti-cancer activity; it may also help fight viruses, boost immunity, and lower blood pressure and blood sugar.
3. Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*). This mushroom appears to inhibit the growth of cancerous tumors and boost immune function. Perhaps that's why the Chinese and Japanese consider it a longevity food.
4. Royal sun agaricus (*Agaricus blazei*). Oncologists in both Japan and Brazil use this mushroom in treatment protocols. It may have significant anti-tumor action.
5. Shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*). Growing in popularity, this mushroom is now found in many supermarkets. That's good news, since it appears to have the ability to fight cancerous tumors.
6. Zhu ling (*Polyporus umbellatus*). This mushroom may be particularly useful in the fight against lung cancer: There's evidence that it helps stimulate the body's immune response against lung tumors. It may also help counteract the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation.

Reprinted from: <http://www.drweil.com>





Summer Solstice Foray & Feast

By Zdenka Hofman and Chuck Butler

We certainly enjoyed our first official foray with the AMS. The weather was perfect and the fields, forests and stream were at their summer solstice peak. With the mosquitoes kept at bay by our personal cloud of DEET we ambled along through the trees, guided and informed by Thomas and Pieter. The 'shrooms were somewhat scarce, but that meant that each discovery was that much more interesting and cause for discussion. The hay ride (sans hay) back to the hall was fun and, especially in a couple of places, even somewhat thrilling! Thankfully Pieter kept our speed down to about the same as a champion marathon runner might make, and we were all able to hold on with no problems.

We did manage to absorb quite a lot of good mycological information, but best of all was the chance to meet and get acquainted with such a varied and

interesting group of nice people. We spent the entire afternoon visiting and chatting with you all and we loved every minute of it.

The potluck, with Liz's magnificent turduckidgeailen as the deserving centrepiece, was a feast for the ages! We couldn't believe how lucky we are to have stumbled on such a group of incredibly competent foodies. This is the life!



Thanks so much to everyone for making us feel so welcome. We'll be back!



Field Mushroom – *Agaricus campestris*





Peace Region Foray Report

Ken Dies – Peace Region Foray Leader

The Peace Region 4th annual “Spring Verpa Foray” was held on May 7 with eight members attending. Although spring was extremely dry due to the lack of snow this winter and no spring rains, we did quite well. The group collected enough Verpa so we could all have a meal, plus a bonus of a few morels which unfortunately turned out to be wormy.

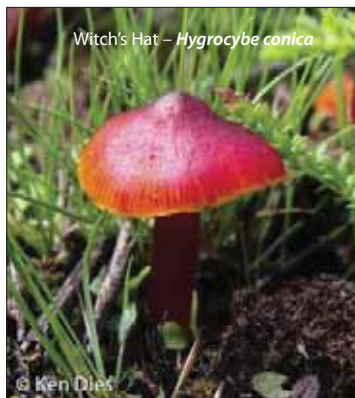
Just two weeks later we had 2 inches of rain plus 8 inches of snow and it has not really stopped yet. As

of today (June 15, 2016), we have had over 7 inches of precipitation. This means the Oyster and Meadow mushrooms are fruiting like crazy, way too many to pick and save or eat. It is reported by locals that the large forest fire that occurred 1.5 hours northwest of Fairview last summer is producing large volumes of morels as a result of the recent moisture. As the burn is located on a seasonal Canadian Forest Product logging haul road, one has to wait for the road to dry out before venturing to the location.

Witch’s Hat – *Hygrocybe conica*

Whether you are collecting spring morels or filling your basket with fall king boletes you will likely see the colorful Witch’s Hat. This small waxy cap grows to about 12 cm tall, has a moist to viscid conical cap which may be yellow, red to orange usually more orangey toward the margin. Their free to adnexed gills are usually whitish tinted with yellow soon becoming greyish to black. Its hollow stipe which may appear twisted is colored similar to the cap with a white base. This is one of the easiest mushrooms to identify as all parts turn black where handled or bruised. It is usually solitary to scattered on damp ground in numerous niches including deciduous and coniferous forests as well as lawns and grassland. A very similar waxy cap, *Hygrocybe acutoconica* also occurs in Alberta, but its cap tends to be more yellow to orange-yellow, has larger spores (for those that use a microscope) and does not bruise black when handled. Neither of these beautiful mushrooms has any culinary use as they are so small and thin and could be poisonous.

Ken Dies



Passings

Jean Johnson

July 1942 – February 16, 2016



It is with sad hearts that we announce the passing of Jean Johnson at home with her husband and children by her side. Jean will be greatly missed by her loving husband Steve; children John (Griffin), Stephanie (Kent), and Elizabeth; grandchildren Saskia, Tasha, and Avaleigh; sister Evelyn (Michael), as well as numerous friends.

Jean was an amazing woman-intelligent, disciplined, loving, adventurous, generous, courageous, and so much more. Jean taught elementary school in Surrey, BC and built a house with her then-husband Jack. In 1982, she moved to Saudi Arabia, where she worked as a Financial Analyst for the Saudi oil company. Moving back to Sidney, BC, Jean worked at the University of Victoria and then for the Ministry of Education. Jean was an active volunteer, and she and Steve travelled widely throughout the world. Jean was a person of integrity whose main passion was her love for her family. As a final gift to her family, Jean gathered a large archive of family documents starting with her great-grandparents’ immigration to Canada.

In memory of Jean Johnson, donations may be made to Ovarian Cancer Canada, 831 - 470 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 1V5.

Published in *The Edmonton Journal* on March 11, 2016

David Derworiz



Another bit of sad news, one of our former Presidents, David (or Dave) Derworiz passed away earlier this year. Dave was a very active member of the club and the Executive during the nineties. He was our Treasurer and hosted the Executive meetings at his home, where he would raid the fridge and feed us with Bev’s delicious butter tarts. When the club was at a particularly low spot and just about to fold he stepped up to the plate and took on the Presidency and worked hard to rescue the club and put it back on its feet. Dave is responsible for initiating several activities that are now commonplace including the President’s Dinner which were a struggle to get off the ground in those early years, and thanks to Dave we now protect our foray site locations from pre-foray raiding.

We will always remember his passion for honeys and his loud boisterous laugh coupled with the cases of wine he brought and shared with club members on forays. This made for some memorable nights up at Athabasca Tower in Hinton. We also want to thank both Bev Derworiz and Dave for their generous donation of Dave’s mushroom library to the Society. Many of these books will be auctioned off to raise money for the Society.

A private Celebration of Life will take place on Wednesday July 27 at 2:00 PM at Good Shepherd Church 18407 - 60 Ave., Edmonton.



Crescent Falls Mushroom Foray

By Suzanne Spenrath

On July 1st we had a very successful foray up at Crescent Falls, especially if you were not looking for edible mushrooms. The lack of edible mushrooms was made up by a tremendous pot luck. While Martin identified and discussed the afternoon finds, everyone prepared their pot luck items. Some of the more memorable items included Rob S. **Gigantic Puff Ball** that he found near his home. It weighed 15 pounds and had a circumference of 31 and 38 inches, with a wonderful creamy texture when fried and grilled. Martin O. shared a truffle cheese that was very delicious. Candace C. prepared a wonderful bannock, Liz W. roasted some chicken kabobs, Peter L. grilled the most delicious ground meat skewers, and of course there were the Elk steaks grilled to a perfect medium rare. A variety of salads, desserts (Saskatoon pie MMM!) and appetizers rounded out the feast.

Thomas and Rob led some of our other forays, Rick photographed the mushrooms, Ryan shared oysters and red cap gathered on his way to the Kootenay Plains. A good time was had by all!

Crescent Falls foray mushrooms included:

- *Auroscalpium vulgare*
- *Clitocybe sp.*
- *Collybia acervata*
- *Collybia dryophylla*
- *Collybia maculata*
- *Cortinarius Sp.* Four species
- *Crepidotus mollis*
- *Gymnopilus penetrans*
- *Inocybe mixitilis*
- *Marasmius palidocephallus*
- *Melanoleuca melaleuca*
- *Mycena adonis*
- *Mycena epipterygia*
- *Peziza repanda*
- *Penniophora rufa*
- *Pleurotus populinum* (Oyster mushroom)
- *Pluteus cervinus* (Fawn mushroom)
- *Polyporus badius*
- *Psathyrella pseudocoronata*
- *Psathyrella lignicola*
- *Russula queletii*
- *Sarcosphaera crassa*
- *Tremella mesenterica* (Witches' Butter mushroom)
- *Tricholoma populinum*



Witches' Butter mushroom –
Tremella mesenterica



Sweating the Small Stuff

By David Arora & Wendy So



There is a local legend here in Zambia about how the Bisa people once lived together in one village. Then during the rainy season one woman found a lot of mushrooms. Neighbors asked for some and she refused. A feud ensued that split the village. A big group of people left to become The Crocodile Clan, while those who stayed with the woman and their descendants were – and still are – called The Mushroom Clan. The mushrooms at the heart of this feud were not eye catchers and headline stealers like tente or chikalowa (giant amanitas and termite mushrooms), as you

might guess. Instead, they are specified as being samfuwe – tiny termite mushrooms smaller than enoki!

We became friends with a local farmer named Luke who grows coffee but also has his own samfuwe farm – inside his house! Once a year, samfuwe spring by the thousands from the floors and walls, and also from the outside walls of the house, and in the lawn and garden. As Californians we are conditioned to associating termites with house decay and worried calls to the exterminator. But here, the termites are viewed as providers, not pests. The houses here are made of brick,

mud or stucco, so the termites pose no threat to Luke's house. They feed on woody material from the garden and bring it, partially digested, to the samfuwe mycelium growing



inside their colonies. This particular kind of termite does not build mounds. Instead, they spread. Their mud casings can be seen inside Luke's house, under the lawn and in the garden. Luke did not introduce them intentionally – they appeared on their own outside his house, and then spread inside. Four of Luke's photos are posted showing the termite mud casings inside his house, then some of our own photos of outdoor colonies.

Luke says, "Our family looks forward to harvesting them every year as they are delicious." Luke carefully watches for the pin heads on the creeping mud

casings that the termites make in his house. When he sees the pin heads, he enforces mushroom protection from dogs and people until they mature (1-2 days). Once the mushrooms are ready for harvest, everyone in the house helps collect them. Cleaning them is labor-intensive, involving pinching off the ball of dirt at the base of each stem for thousands of mushrooms, then rinsing them. They do this while chatting together, cook some with onions and eggs, and then chill the rest for later use.

We also found samfuwe in the garden where we are staying, growing, as usual, in "cities." In southern China, this species is known as "ji zong hua" or "termite mushroom flower" because of its purity and daintiness. You can sometimes see heaps of them for sale in roadside markets. We had a craving for Chinese food so we decided to have them prepared in a traditional Chinese style, i.e., in soup. We emphasized that the tiny whole mushrooms must dominate in quantity. The chef had never prepared them this way but did a spectacular job, using only a cube of vegetable bouillon and bits of onion plus the mushrooms. The sweetness and delicate beauty of the samfuwe really shone this way. They had the consistency of bean sprouts but with a burst of sweet mushroom flavor far superior to enoki. With sides of whole tilapia and tente stew it was one of the most memorable meals of our trip.



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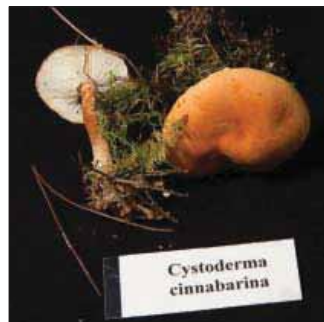


Summer Mushroom EXPOs – we need you!

By Melanie Fjoser

Each year we have two major **Alberta Wild Mushroom EXPOs** for the public – and these are great opportunities for our members to learn, grow, volunteer and to make AMS shine! These are always 2-day events, pickin' on the Saturday, showin' off on the Sunday.

contactus@wildmushrooms.ws



Calgary and area members

On Saturday, **July 16**, AMS members will have forays to provide specimens to display at tomorrow's EXPO. Watch your email for foray details in the days leading up to this event.

Our AMS Mushroom EXPO is part of **Canada Parks Day** – we will be one of many small booth displays put on for the enjoyment of visitors to **Fish Creek Provincial Park on Sunday, July 17** (11:00 – 16:00). Volunteers will be needed early (don't be shy!) to put up our displays, help label specimens, schmooze about the fascinating world of fungi to guests, and promote AMS in general.



Edmonton and area members

On Saturday, **August 13**, AMS members will foray on their own or within an AMS foray to scour the landscape to produce the most interesting and diverse collection of fungi possible for a 1-day pick to display at Sunday's EXPO.

This EXPO, **August 14**, has been an annual event for years – we are fortunate that the Devonian Botanic Garden looks at fungi as the amazing organisms they are, and supports us to put on **The Most Amazing Show** from Earth for our display **"City of Champignons"**.

This display in the Pine Pavilion truly is a small city – hundreds of fresh, wild mushrooms picked only the day before, popular mushroom lectures, our fabulous **"Wild Mushroom Café"** where chefs and/or volunteers prepare and serve fungal delicacies. We also invite visitors on a **Mushroom Walk in the Garden**, and have AMS folks ready to help with **book, membership and poster sales**. This event requires lots of volunteers – we really need you to step up for this one – doesn't matter if you know very little about mushrooms, all hands are welcome and needed. Please watch your email calling for volunteers, and go for it. You will learn so much at this event – you won't regret it!



Calgary EXPO

July 16 – Foray

July 17 – Canada Parks Day EXPO
Fish Creek Park

Edmonton EXPO

August 13 – Foray

August 14 – City of Champignons Wild
Mushroom EXPO
Devonian Botanic Garden



The Great Alberta Mushroom Foray 2016

By Martin Osis

July 29 – August 1, 2016 • Portage College, Lac La Biche, Alberta

*Pick and learn about Alberta wild mushrooms.
Which ones are edible, poisonous, or medicinal?
Talk to and learn from the experts. Immerse
yourself in the Kingdom of Fungi!*

**This event is by pre-registration only,
AMS paid members will receive an
email soon with full details.**

This year we have something special for those of you really want to advance your skills. On Friday July 29, we will hold a full day **Microscopy Workshop**. Learn the ins and outs of using a microscope to identify your mushrooms. Topics include basic use of microscopes, preparing slides and what features you need to look at for identification. While the class is on Friday, you will have access and hands on help all weekend to practice your skills.



From a real science perspective you help make a significant contribution as a "Citizen Scientist" to our **Alberta Fungal Database project** – where we all collect, identify with the help of our expert mycologists, we photograph, gather DNA samples and then enter our specimens into our database for this work-in-progress to add to our ever-expanding list of what fungi grow in Alberta.

Long Weekend Activities:

- Daily forays in varied habitats.
- Evening lectures from local, national, and international experts.
- Mushroom workshops focusing on recognizing and sorting out some different genera.
- Gain hands-on identification skills.
- Beginner's "Introduction to Mushrooms" course included.
- **OPEN HOUSE** to the community from **Noon to 1:00** on Monday, Sept 1, for local folks to come in and look at lots of wild mushrooms or bring their own in for identification



www.wildmushrooms.ws



Don't miss the best mushroom learning opportunity of the year. The **Great Alberta Mushroom Foray** is the perfect learning venue whether you are just starting out or wanting to hone your skills. We offer a **Beginner's Mushroom Identification Course** for those starting and lots of opportunity for more experienced pickers to focus in on learning about any group of mushrooms that you are struggling to identify. Whatever your interest is this is the place to pursue it. Whether you want to enhance photography skills, experience tasting some different mushrooms or just absorb information in a fun atmosphere with like-minded individuals. Forays to 12 or more sites provide ample opportunity to pick and look at a variety of mushrooms in different habitats.

This year we will revisit the Lac La Biche area in the north eastern part of the province. This area has a diversity of habitats and moisture profiles which is typical of the Boreal Forest. Our mycologists this year include:

- **Danny Miller** is one of the authors of the **Matchmaker** mushroom ID programs. Active in the Puget sound Mycological Society is an expert identifier and member of the PNW Key Council, a group of amateur and professional mycologists writing mushroom keys. He has a big interest in taxonomy and figuring out where all of the mushrooms fit into the fungal tree of life.
- **Mike Schulz**, mycologist, ecologist and instructor at Portage College has been teaching mycology courses will be leading our **Microscopy Course**. He regularly identifies mushrooms for people doing biodiversity studies and teaches several mushroom ID courses every year.
- **Paul Kroeger** is one of the finest taxonomists in western North America. Paul comes from an amateur background so can easily relate to the rest of us amateurs especially with his special sense of humour. Paul has just had the great honour of having a mushroom named in his honour for his work in the field. You don't get to meet these type of people very often.



What is Matchmaker

Matchmaker: Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest is an aid to identifying mushrooms. A simple entry form allows you to enter information about a mushroom (its characteristics), and get a list of the mushrooms that fit the information. Written descriptions of the matched mushrooms can be used

to narrow the list further. This does not take the effort out of identification, which is always challenging and not always successful, but it does provide another useful tool.

MMPNW is a non-profit project with the support of the [Pacific Northwest Key Council](#).



Major AMS Events for 2016

1.	July 15 – 17 2016	Waskahigan Foray weekend hosted by Peace River Region	Waskahigan River PRA Campground
2.	July 16 & 17 2016	Canada Parks Day EXPO	Bow Valley/Fish Creek Park, Calgary
3.	July 29 – August 1 2016	Great Alberta Foray	Lac La Biche, Alberta
4.	August 13 & 14 2016	City of Champignons Wild Mushroom EXPO	Devonian Botanic Garden, Devon, Alberta
5.	September 2 – 5 2016	Weald Weekend Foray	Weald PRA, Alberta



There will be many more AMS events to come. Paid-up members receive detailed info on AMS activities by email. “Foray in Your Neighbourhood”—weekly evening forays—will be held on varying weekday evenings from May to September. Members, watch your email for locations. Events are subject to change during the season. Check our website regularly for updates.



www.wildmushrooms.ws

