



SPORE PRINT

The Alberta Mycological Society Newsletter

Spring 2015



March Polypore Hunt with the AMS

Article and cover photo by
Wendy So (with David Arora)

Why would a mushroom enthusiast purposefully plan a trip to Edmonton in the winter? Because life is not complete until one ventures out on snowshoes, in subfreezing temperatures, in pursuit of stiff, frozen fruiting bodies.

On March 1st, the Alberta Mycological Society hosted just such a conk quest among birch, spruce and aspen woods on private lands outside Breton for those who enjoy finding their mushroom sightings without foliage obstruction and brush. The local organizer, Martin Osis, hunted in style with black leather jacket and tobacco pipe, and just in case anybody doubted he was Canadian, without gloves. His wife Melanie was also stylin' it with purple snowshoes and a matching down jacket.

Having never ridden snowshoes before, it took me about 10 minutes to mount them, during which time someone in the group spotted a tinder conk (*Fomes fomentarius*) on a birch. Just a few minutes later foray leader Bill Richards spotted the first chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*) and everyone accepted the challenge to find at least one on their own. A moment later I spotted my first one and was about to say it was much easier to find them than advertised, when I was told it was growing on an aspen, not a birch, and was therefore a "false chaga," *Rhytidiella baranyayi*. When Bill harvested his chaga with an axe, the exposed interior glittered like golden sand, whereas the false chaga was extremely

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President's Message

Rosemarie O'Bertos

Happy Spring Everyone! It feels really great to get back out and reconnect with past foray buddies as well as make new ones. Hopefully all of you are taking advantage of the beautiful weather and have a chance to get outside.

It has been very dry, but some members are reporting fantastic finds. A young member was just saying how on May 22 she picked about 10 pounds of morels in the Calgary area. About a week or so earlier someone else reported a good haul from the Natural Area around Breton. Mushrooms are not going to show-up between you and your TV...you have to go out and find them.

One of our new AMS members was one of the few to find a morel in the Twin Lakes area during our morning foray. A few other members had minor success as well, but in the afternoon, we found a mother-load of Oyster mushrooms. They were mighty tasty!

Check your calendars frequently so that you attend as many events as you can during this whirl-wind season. The "Foray in Your Neighbourhood" events have been scheduled during various days of the week to give more flexibility. One of my favorite events is fast approaching on the weekend of June 19-21. This is our Summer Solstice where we have a pot luck and cook up any edibles that we may collect. Please watch for further details on how to be a part of creating wonderful memories at this annual food-fest!

Remember, we are all volunteers. We are here to meet other like minded people, to learn and enjoy, so please feel free to join in the fun and help out where ever you can! I am looking forward to meeting many of you at a foray very soon!

Your AMS President - Rosemarie O'Bertos

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March Polypore Hunt with the AMS

Wendy So (with David Arora)

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difficult to remove, even with an axe, and looked



like wood inside, which is was. It was quite enjoyable and beautiful: no wind, no clouds, just sunshine, snow, and the motionless trees. In two hours we were able to find at least eight different conks and clinkers (listed below). We also learned the different tracks of rabbit, coyote, deer, moose, and cougar. I kept some tinder conks as a memento and took them home with me. I learned they can be used as tinder, or burned and used as smudge or soaked in canola oil and used like a candle. The chaga we collected will be processed into a tincture and sold at the Mycological Society events. I prophylaxed with some of the tincture because our hosts in Edmonton, who did not venture out with us, caught debilitating colds. I don't know of any placebo-controlled study of chaga effects but the tincture tasted pleasant and I didn't

conk out (no pun intended) or come down with anything.

I am grateful to the fine people of Edmonton and the Alberta Mycological Society for their friendliness and generosity. They even stayed up until midnight after the Society banquet and took me to Lois Hole's to see the aurora borealis light up the night sky. It was my first time, and I will always remember it! —Wendy So (with David Arora)



Our Polypore Haul

- *Fomes fomentarius*
- *Fomitopsis ochracea*
- *Fomitopsis pinicola*
- *Inonotus obliquus*
- *Phellinus igniarius*
- *Phellinus tremulae*
- *Piptoporus betulinus*
- *Rhytidiella baranyayi*

Fungi of the J.J. Collett Natural Area

Charles Bird and Lu Piening



Located south east of Morningside and NE of Lacombe, this natural area consists of 635 acres of Aspen Parkland underlain by sand dunes. It has over 18 km of maintained trails which wind through a mosaic of shrub lands, aspen groves, stands of white spruce, wetlands and grassy areas. It is part of Alberta Park's Natural Areas system and is looked after by the J.J. Collett Natural Area Foundation, a group of local volunteers who are stewards and who maintain the trails and look after the general upkeep of the area as well as encourage its use as an educational resource for school children and others.

The area has an excellent website, <http://www.jjcollett.com/>, maintained by Kelly Bell, that contains a wealth of information, including Checklists of many of the species present in the area as well as numerous photographs. From a mycological standpoint, under the Fungi/Mushroom Checklist, we have listed 2 slime molds (Myxomycota), 17 species of Ascomycota and 117 species of Basidiomycota which we have found to be present in the area. These are based on research carried out by both authors and most species have been backed up with photographs.

Under Education, then under Dr. Lu Piening, there is an article titled "Mushrooms of the J.J. Collett Natural Area". Under Galleries, subtitled Fungi Gallery, there are 63 images taken mainly by the first author. Both of us plan to continue work on the fungi of the area and, when new discoveries are made, they will be added to the website.

As the area is a short distance east of Highway 2 and 2A, all are encouraged to visit. From the south, drive east on Milton Road until you see a J.J. Collett Natural Area sign on your left, then drive 2 miles north to the "T" intersection, then ½ mile east to the parking lot on your left. From Morningside, follow the signs, drive 2 miles south and then ½ mile west to the parking lot.

If you happen to notice additional species, or if you question an identification, please inform the authors. As this is a Natural Area, collecting of plant material is not allowed unless a person has a special permit. Of course, photography is allowed, and encouraged.

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Enokidake

Paul Sinclair



Flammulina velutipes is a common, cold-loving mushroom found in temperate zones in the northern hemisphere. The mushroom sometimes even gets its photo taken with snow! It is known for its sticky, rubbery orange cap and it is named for its dark velvety stem. Just don't expect it to look like that in the grocery store. The cultivated form of *velutipes*, enoki to food lovers, is a long stringy white mushroom with a tiny underdeveloped cap.

There are good practical reasons to eat enoki: There are relatively low cancer rates in Nagano, Japan where enoki is cultivated and widely consumed. Enoki is also delicious! Just *how* enoki is delicious is hard to say: it has a distinctly crunchy texture and a distinctive odor and taste.

The key to the enoki might be *umami*, the "fifth flavor" identified by Japanese scientists trying to figure out the subtle tastes in Japanese food. There is relatively little guanylic acid, the said source of

umami, in raw enoki. However, this flavor comes out with cooking, making the mushroom a favorite in Japanese soup pots, or *nabe*.

Make your own enoki!

Ingredients:

- One package of enoki (100 grams)
- 3/4 tablespoon of soya sauce
- One tablespoon of *mirin* (find it at T&T)

Directions:

Cut off the base of the mushroom and cut the mushroom into lengths of 2-3 cm.

Cook over medium heat stirring with a big pair of cooking chopsticks.

Enoki can store in the fridge for 3-4 days. Try enoki cold, too.

Be it ever so humble...

Ken Dies, Peace Foray Coordinator



***Panaeolus papilionaceus* gills**

© Ken Dies

Herbivore feces contain millions of spores which can be turned into beautiful mushroom gardens with a little rain. Mushroom spores are ingested while the animal is grazing and pass through their digestive track, undamaged, and germinate when adequate moisture is available.

One of the most colorful mushrooms which makes its home primarily in horse and cow dung is the "Yellow Dung Mushroom" *Bolbitius titubans* (syn. *vitellinus*) (lower right). Although fragile, these bright yellow mushrooms with viscid or slimy caps can grow up to 12 cm. in height with a cap 7 cm. wide. As they mature, their gills turn rusty ochre to cinnamon brown which produces rusty orange to rusty brown spore prints. Quite often their weak stalk collapses leaving the remaining caps lying flat.

Volvopluteus gloiocephalus, (upper left on page 8) commonly known as the "Big Sheath Mushroom" is a species of mushroom in the family Pluteaceae. For most of the 20th century it has been known under the names *Volvariella gloiocephala*

or *Volvariella speciosa*, but recent molecular studies have placed it in the newly created genus *Volvopluteus*. The cap of this mushroom is about 5–15 cm. in diameter, varies from white to grey or grey-brown, and sticky when fresh.



Panaeolus titubans

...there is no place like dung.

Ken Dies, Peace Foray Coordinator



Panaeolus papilionaceus gills

The gills start out as white but they soon turn pink, producing pink spores. The stipe is white and has a sack-like volva at the base. The mushroom is not recommended as edible due to the similarity to the sac-like volva of the poisonous *Amanitas*. Plus, *gloiocephalus* soon becomes flaccid and waterlogged. It loves heavily manured pastures but is also common in cultivated fields, compost, fallow and planted fields.

Many species of *Panaeolus* can be found growing in dung and well-manured soil. The gills of these mushrooms are black or grey and have a spotty, speckled or cloudy appearance, caused by the way that the dark spores ripen together in tiny patches on the gill surface. The word *Panaeolus* is Greek for "all variegated", alluding to these spotted gills. *Panaeolus papilionaceus* ("Bell Shaped *Panaeolus*"; found as *P. campanulatus* in older texts) is one of the most common species found growing in dung around here. Aside from the habitat, other identifying features include the black spore print and the tiny white partial veil fragments that hang

like little teeth from the edge of the cap and the absence of a ring.

Horse dung is the favorite medium for the "Shiny Mottlegil", *Panaeolus semiovatus* (below). Its off white to tan cap is shaped like half an egg, sticky when wet and shiny when dry. Its white stalk with an enlarged base contains a thin ring close to the cap. This ring is often covered with black spores but may disappear with age.



Panaeolus semiovatus

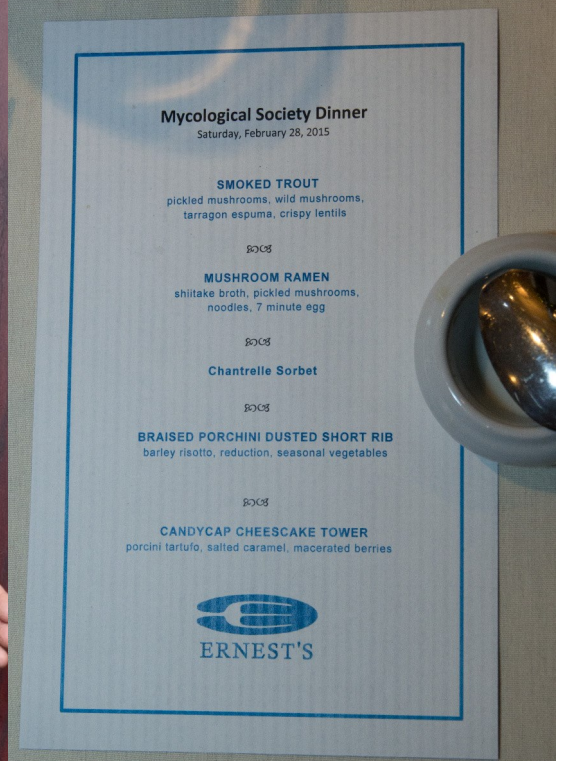
2015 AGM and President's Dinner



David Arora and his Wheel of Fungi!



2015 AGM and President's Dinner



Major AMS Events for 2015

May	24 Morel Verpa, and Spring Agarics Porcupine Hills (Calgary)	27 Indoor Meeting Riverbend Library, Edmonton 7—9 pm	30 Morel, Verpa, and Spring Agarics Twin Lakes, Breton
June	2 Foray in Your Neighborhood River Valley, Edm. 7—9 pm	13 Burn Site Morels 10 am—2 pm, Nordegg Area	19—21 Midsummer's Night Foray Moose Hill Hall
July	3—5 Ram River Falls Foray Ram River Falls Campground 19 Kananaskis Parks Day Bow Valley EXPO 10 am—	7 Foray in Your Neighborhood River Valley, Edm. 7—9 pm 22 Foray in Your Neighborhood 7—9 pm	16 Foray in Your Neighborhood Sherwood Park 7—9 pm 24 Mycological Soci- ety of America Foray, Elk Island 10 am— 31 (to Aug. 3) Great Alberta Mushroom Foray Grande Prairie
August	15 Pre-EXPO Forays Your favourite spot!	16 WILD Mushroom EXPO - "City of Champignons" at Devonian Botanic Garden , Devon	
Sept.	4—7 Fort Assiniboine Sandhills Park 10 am—		

*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 in Edmonton, and Thursday evenings in Calgary, from May to September. Members, watch your email for locations. Events are subject to change during the season. Check our website regularly for updates.