



Spore Print

2005 No. 1 Quarterly Newsletter of the Edmonton Mycological Society

A Confirmation of Spring ~ the Delicious Morel Mushroom by Loretta Puckrin

(*Morchellaceae - Morchella*)

Whether you call them 'morels' (Canada), *morille* (France), *speisemorchel* (Germany), *spugnoal bruna* (Italy), or *colmenilla* (Spain) you are talking about the early edible mushroom that starts the wild mushroom picking season. Being a very distinctive mushroom, the morels are picked very freely by many people who would normally stay away from wild mushrooms. It doesn't hurt that the morel family (*Morchella* to give them their proper name) tastes very good.

Morels grow in old-growth forest, abandoned orchards, gardens, along roads and on sandy stream banks. They are also known as a mushroom that loves to grow after a fire. There is an old saying about morels – '*they grow anywhere by not everywhere*'. Even though they have many areas in which to germinate, the morel can be a very shy mushroom. When they often fruit (it is the 'fruit' of the fungi that you pick) they often come up in ones and twos rather than in

large groups. An area might be covered in morels but you will still have several steps between pickings unlike many other edibles grow in clumps. In spite of this spread-out nature, morels are one of the few mushrooms that are picked commercially. Wind is very important in the spreading of morel spores, so if you find a group of morels check downwind of your current location and you will likely find more.

Morels tend to appear early in the spring, although they do have a longer growing season. With the forest floors being covered in brown dead leaves, the morel can be difficult to find. A general rule of thumb is to look for morels when the crocus flower is beginning to bloom. Remember this is just a hint – mushrooms have their own timetables! Another indicator is the opening of saskatoon blossoms.

You may have heard about a number of different morels mushrooms as the word "morel" describes a family of fungi rather than a specific mushroom. The



A morel mushroom with its distinctive cap which is attached to the stem or stipe. Notice the vertical banding and the ridges that are darker than the recessed parts.

common morel (*Morchella esculenta*) is normally found at lower elevations especially after an unusually cold winter. They are associated with elm, ash, oak and beech-maple trees. The burnsite morel (*Morchella atromentosa*) is prolific a year or two after a forest fire, especially in areas that host pines and poplar trees. The black

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The earliest morel mushroom is the *Verpa* which is currently in 'bloom'.

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President's Message



Current President of EMS, Markus Thormann, in the field wearing his special mushroom hunting outfit

Greetings!

By the time you are receiving this newsletter, we have already had our first meeting of the new year. Based on the amount of moisture we have received over the winter months and the favourable weather this spring so far, we can anticipate an excellent year for fungi.

Since early this year, the previous EMS executive has met several times to lay the foundation for this year, culminating in the election of a new executive in late March. I am honoured to be the new president of the EMS. I welcome the return of Bill Richards (Foray Coordinator), Martin Osis (Program Director), and Mike Schulz (Vice-President) as well as our new executive members Alan

Fleming (Membership Director), Gail Daniluk (Communications), Geraldine Kolacz (Newsletter Director), Loretta Puckrin (Treasurer), and Melanie Fjoser (Secretary). In addition, Pieter van der Schoot and Robert Rogers are our two Directors-at-Large. Last-but-not-least, a special thank-you goes out to Peter Arabchuk, our Past President, who has done a great job presiding over the EMS over the past years. We will all strive to make this year as enjoyable and educational as previous years.

One of the objectives of the EMS is, and always has been, to educate its members about fungi, including their identification, distribution, ecology, and significance. This objective will continue to be central to all of our activities and permeate our monthly meetings and forays. The "**Pick a Wild Mushroom, Alberta!**" campaign is not exclusive of this objective. It is currently our flagship project and will receive continuing support by the EMS. Other projects in the foreseeable future include the development of a provincial fungal database, a digital image library, easy-to-use identification keys for diverse groups of fungi, and a NAMA foray in the southern boreal and/or foothills forests. These projects will greatly enhance our visibility in the community and across the province and western Canada. Last year was a very successful year, let's continue on that path!

With that in mind, let's look forward to our spring foray, which will take us into the southern boreal forest to the northwest of Edmonton on May 14. We can expect to see (true and false) morels, verpas, and diverse spring agarics. Hope to see you all there.

Cheers and happy 'shrooming,

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Test your 'mushroom eyes'. This photo is full of morels. Can you spot them?

Morel Mushrooms continued from page 1

morel (*Morchella elata*) occurs on almost every continent in higher alpine-like meadows well into the summer under conifer and aspen trees. The head looks almost identical to a fallen pine cone and is very difficult for the novice to spot. The white morel (*Morchella deliciosa*) is probably the most tasty member of the morel family. This variety likes growing under old fruit trees especially in the Pacific Northwest. The half-free morel (*Morchella simlibera*) is often found in sandy soil along streams and lakes.

One mushroom that is often miscalled a morel, is the close cousin the *Verpa digitaliformis* and *Verpa bohemica*. One common name is the thimble mushroom because the cap resembles a thimble sitting on top of the stalk (stipe). Both the morel and the verpa are of the family *Helvellaceae*. Where the morel's cap is continuous down to the stem the verpa cap is separated with the stem freely passing up into the cone of the cap.



You don't have to wait until you get home to treat yourself to these delicious mushrooms. They are great stuffed or just seasoned and fried.



All morel mushrooms are hollow both in the stem (stalk, stipe) and the mushroom cap itself. The stem of the verpa is more solid. Although these mushrooms are not prone to worms, the texture of the cap (wrinkled in appearance) allows for insects to hide in the folds. A quick wash with cold water tends to relieve you of these unwanted passengers. Cutting the morel in half also helps to find if there are insects in the hollow centre. The favoured way of storing morels is to dry them but they freeze as well. However you prepare them ensure that the morels are cooked before eating.

cap and stipe make stuffing very easy with delicious results. If you are interested in learning more about the morel mushrooms make sure you join the foray on May 14th in the Wabumum area. If you want more ideas on cooking your wild mushroom harvest make sure to keep an eye on the website for our first mushroom cooking class (expected to be held in August).

You can also check out some morel recipes on page 8.

There are a number of varieties of Morel mushrooms which all belong to the 'morchella' family of fungi. What many consider the 'true morel' are those where the cap is attached to the stem along the entire bottom edge. The 'false morel' or verpa has a cap that, although it looks similar, is only attached at the peak of the cap.

Morels can be added to sauces, be the base for gravies or soup and are delicious stuffed (try cream cheese). The hollow center of both

Photos for this article were taken and supplied by Bill Richards from his expedition in June of 2004.

The Last Foray....

Poplar Creek Natural Area Gets Winter Visit

by Bill Richards, Foray Director



Cluster of *Plicaturopsis crispa* on birch bark.

It wasn't as wintery as were other winter forays to Poplar Creek Natural Area (PCNA), as a matter of fact, our most recent visit on March 12 2005 was a relatively pleasant one. The weather was threatening that Saturday morning but we had ten members who took their chances and had a great day.

Not only did the weather hold but there was much bare ground and relatively easy going through this area of PCNA (NE 17 Twp 48 Rge 5 W5M). This quarter section is nestled near a dead end road and apparently gets little visitation – fortunately having been ignored by off highway vehicles users. Unfortunately it has also been ignored by the mycologist for it offers some superb habitat for edible as well as edifying fungi. Hopefully the potential of a good harvest will change its ignored status as a picking site this summer.

With the snow almost completely gone we were able to access logs which would have been snow covered. This allowed us to find several more species, we noted 22 wood inhabiting species and a large number of *Russula nigricans*, with their persistent black forms being left over from last fall (see

side bar for complete list). Thanks to Melanie and Martin for time, space, food and help with the identifications.

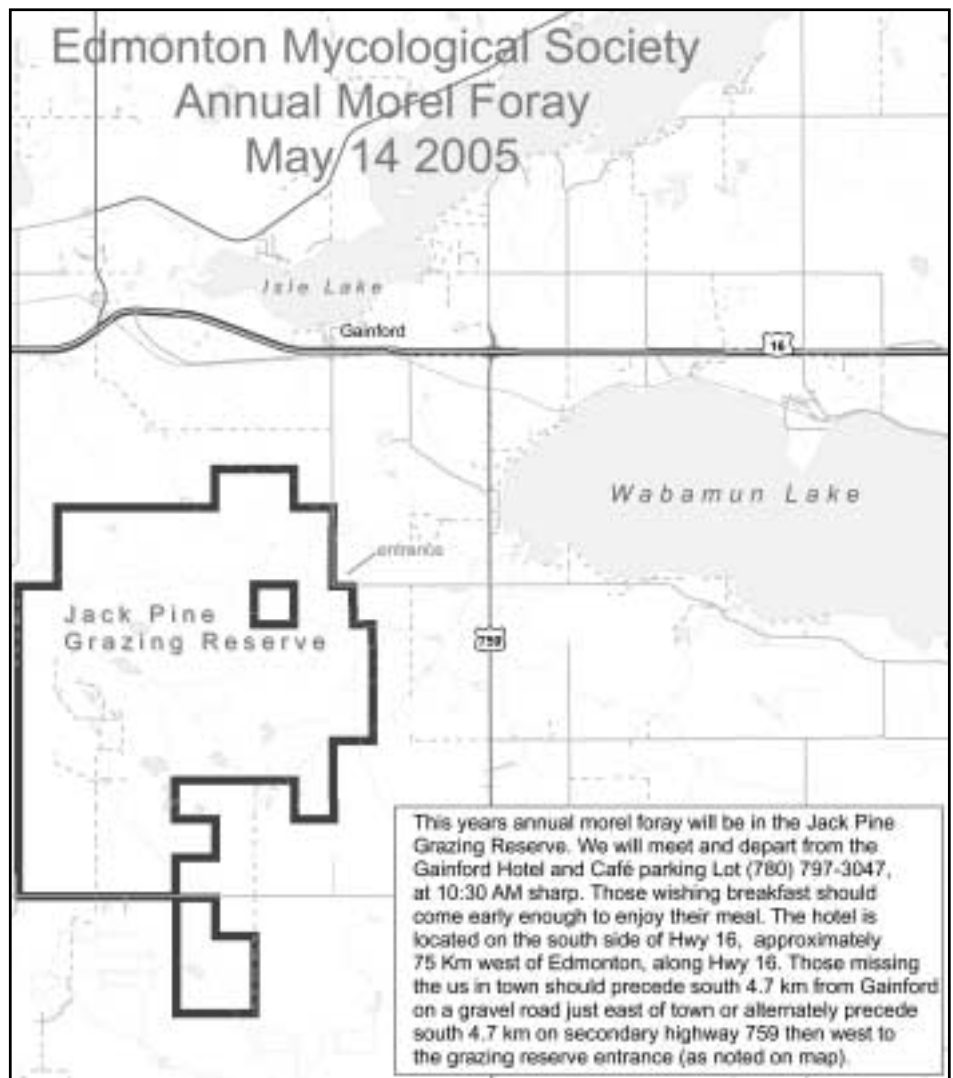
There were few birds on site but there was much mammal sightings including browse and scat from, snowshoe hare, moose, elk, deer and porcupine and abundant signs of beaver. There was even the occasion to spot the still-white hares scurrying about.

Remember that this land is part of the Poplar Creek Natural Area and it is yours to enjoy so do not wait for an organized outing to do so.

Poplar Creek Natural Area –
(NE17- TWP. 48- R5 –W5) Foray
List from March 12, 2005.

Bisporella citrina

Bjerkandera adusta
Cerrena unicolor
Chlorociboria aeruginascens
Coriolopsis sp (?) / Oxyporus (?)
Dacrymyces palmatus
Daedaleopsis confragosa
Fomes fomentarius
Fomitopsis pinicola
Hypoxylon multiforme
Inonotus obliquus
Laetiporus sulfureus
Lenzites betulina
Lycogala epidendron
Phellinus igniarius
Phellinus tremulae
Phyllotopsis nidulans
Plicaturopsis crispa
Russula nigricans
Schizophyllum commune
Schizopora paradoxa
Stereum hirsutum
Trametes hirsuta



Oyster Mushroom Foray, Roast & Camp Out- Poplar Creek Natural Area

by Martin Osis

Location: Moose Hill Hall
 Across the road and 1/2 mile east of Poplar Creek Natural Area.

Date: June 18 & 19
 Saturday, June 18: 10 am to sunset.
 Sunday till 1 pm.

Schedule: *Saturday June 18*

9:00 - 10:00

Coffee at the Moose Hill Hall

10:00 - 1:00

Foray & site assessment on the Poplar Creek Natural Area.

1:00 - 2:00

Identification of Fungi found on foray, set up of display tables (Mike Shulz, Bill Richards).

Cook & taste edible mushrooms.

2:00 - 3:00

"Science and the recreational picking of mushrooms" -Markus Thormann.

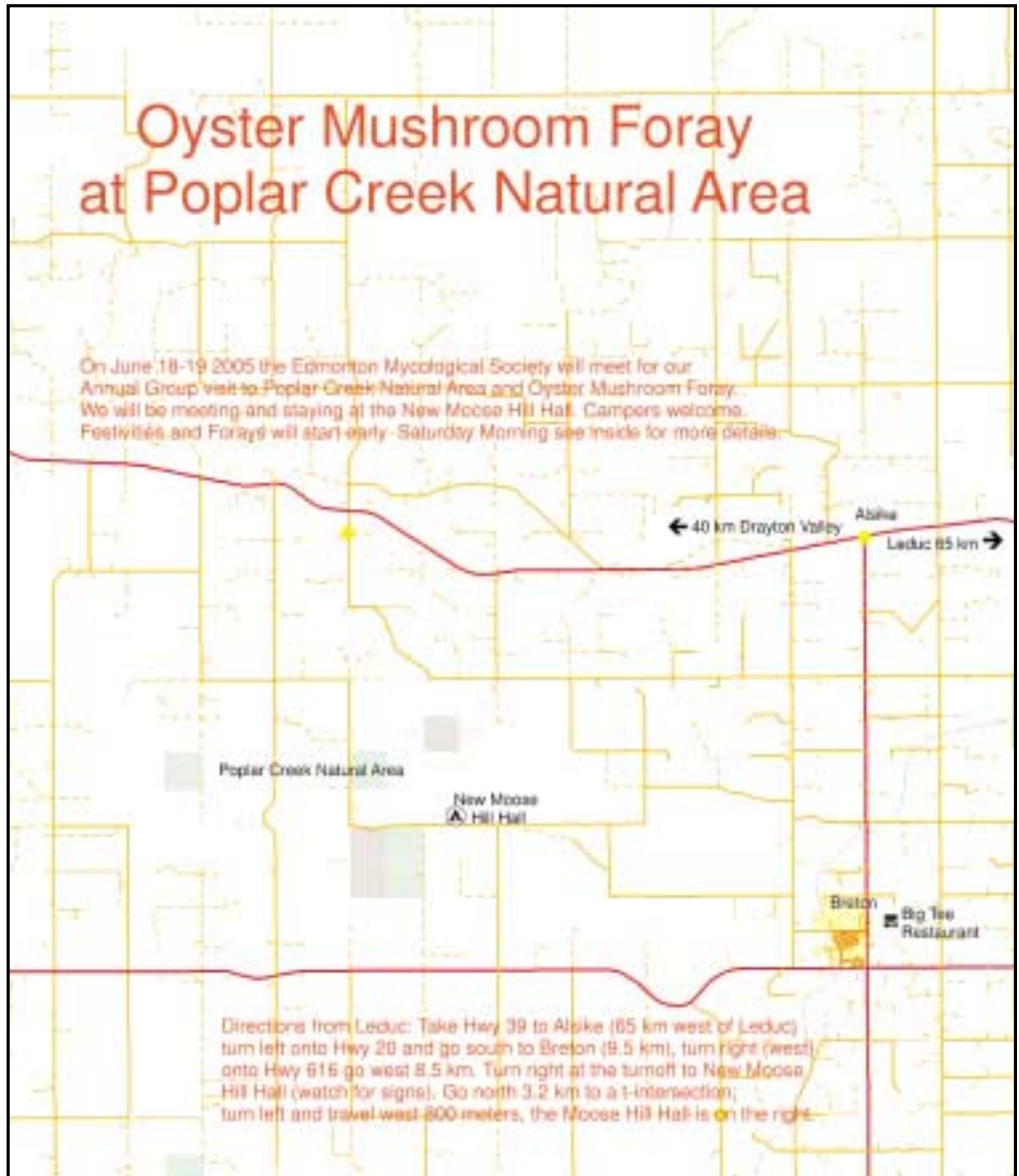
"Oyster Mushrooms: All you wanted to know but were afraid to ask." - Martin Osis.

3:00 - 4:00

Medicinal preparation of mushrooms with sampling - Robert Rogers.

5:00 - 7:00

"Pig roast" dinner and "Mushroom potluck"- Bring your favourite mushroom dish to share.



7:00 to sunset
 Evening social.

Schedule: *Sunday June 19*

8:00 - 10:00

Coffee at the Moose Hill Hall and breakfast potluck - by overnight campers.

10:00 - 12:00

Foray & site assessment on the Poplar Creek Natural Area - North quarter along Poplar Creek.

12:00 - 1:00

Identification of Fungi found on morning foray, clean up.

Site must be vacated by 1:00 pm on Sunday.

Registration:

Name _____

Num. of Adults _____ X \$20.00 = _____

Num. of Children (6-16) _____ X \$10.00 = _____

Total cost \$ _____

Cheque Enclosed

First Annual EMS Mushroom Photo Contest

by Martin Osis

The goal of the contest is to create a resource library of photos for educational use by the EMS club and its members and presenters. It is important that individual photo quality be judged on projection quality images - 4 megapixels plus. All photography formats are acceptable but digital images are preferred. Slides and prints will be scanned to a final digital format and be judged on that basis.

Eligibility

The contest is open to EMS members and friends. (in other words everyone with an interest in mushrooms and/or nature photography)

Closing date

September 19, 2005. We encourage entries to be submitted throughout the summer as they become available.

Subject Matter

Any member of the fungi kingdom.

Categories

1. *Best overall mushroom photo.*
2. *Best photo of the Provincial mushroom (**Leccinum boreale**).*
3. *Best mushroom identification series*

Judges Criteria

1. Best overall mushroom photo. The objective is to find a single photo suitable for display or illustration in a book or calendar.



Criteria will include both technical (focus, depth of field, exposure, lighting, colour) and artistic appeal (composition, colour, background, lighting) aspects.

2. Best photo of the Provincial mushroom

(*Leccinum boreale*): The objective is to find a single photo suitable for use in our bookmark, poster, and calendar. Criteria will include both technical (focus, depth of field, exposure, lighting, colour) and artistic appeal (composition, colour, background, lighting) aspects.

3. Best mushroom photo series.

Photo series will include 3 to 5 photos displaying the following: Fruiting body, growth habits (i.e. in rings, on wood, under or with spruce, etc), gills or fertile surface, cut through of mushroom, important ID details (i.e. ring or veil, volva, bulbous base, etc.). The series photos will be judged based on the visual images showing critical identification

features. Emphasis is placed on key visual characteristics being present to be able to identify the mushroom at least to genus. Subjects may be shot in the field or studio. While both technical and artistic consideration will be given to the judging, the main criteria will be on the identifiability of the subject. **You don't have to personally be able to identify the mushroom!**

Judging

Judging will be done by committee. The voting committee will be a combination of professional photographers, professional and amateur mycologists. You do not have to enter a specific category. The judges will place the photos in categories as they see fit.

Awards

We are planning 1st, 2nd, 3rd, place in each category as well as a selection of Honourable Mentions. Watch for prize updates.

Most of the glory will come from the use of photos in our upcoming publications of bookmarks, posters, SporePrint and calendars. Prizes will be awarded based on 60% of the entry fees as well other prizes based on the resourcefulness of the contest committee and the generosity of donors.

Ownership of images

All copyrights will remain with the photographer. The entrants consent to allow the EMS to use the photos as they see fit, both in EMS publications as well as part of our digital image library and educational programming.

Entry Fee

All entrants must fill out the entry form and submit it with the fee of \$5.00. This is for the first image. An entrant can submit as many entries as they wish for an additional cost of \$1.00 per image. Remember, the more the entries the larger the prizes.



Welcome to Another Season of Fabulous Fungi

by Martin Osis, Program Director

I want to say a special hello to all of our new members. For them we have a special program this year. As you start to learn about fungi you will soon find yourself challenged by many new things. New terminology, new ways to look at living things and especially in an information overload. For these new members as well as long standing members I want to point out that the science of mycology will overwhelm you. But don't panic. Use all the resources you have around you. Books, lectures, courses and experienced members. Gather up as much knowledge as you can and then let it sink in over the off-season. Sometimes you will astound yourself as information slowly sorts itself out over time.

There are two strategies I would like to share. **The first one is to use field notes.** One of the things with field notes is that it disciplines you to look at all aspects of the fungus from the very large things such as where it grows to the smallest details of gill formations, shapes or attachments. Look for and write down as many clues as you can. One of the best tips is to make a picture of the mushroom. If you are talented enough you can draw it, but for most of us it is easier to photograph it. One of the program items this year will be on photography with a follow-up field walk to help you out. We are also sponsoring a photography contest to encourage members to hone their photography habits and skills.

Write down lists of mushrooms you have seen or had others identify for you. These lists can be looked over in the off-season or be referred to when something seems faintly familiar. A mushroom found at a July foray usually will be stumbled across the following July in similar habitats. You then have another resource to check up on.

The second strategy is to try and lump mushrooms together into either their families or into genera. Even very experienced mycologists refer to their resources regularly. They find what they are looking for because their experience teaches them how to narrow down the search.

To help newer members out we will have a couple of lecture and field workshops on edible mushrooms. From this you should learn to identify a dozen mushrooms or so. This information should at least give you a start to get picking while you slowly digest the rest of the information you have picked up.

EMS Entry Form Annual Mushroom Photo Contest

Closing Date: September 19, 2005

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Competition Categories

1. Best overall mushroom photo.
2. Best photo of the Provincial mushroom (Leccinum boreale).
3. Best mushroom identification series

Every entry should have a photo number, or name (if you are submitting more than one) and the date taken.

Entry Fees:

Registration fee –covers the 1st photo \$ 5.00

Additional entries ___ X \$1.00 \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Submit entry fee by mail to
**Edmonton Mycological Society,
1921 - 10405 Jasper Avenue ,
Standard Life Building,
Edmonton, AB, T5J 3S2.**

Payment should accompany entries. Any entry not paid in full by September 19th is disqualified for the competition.

Entries may be submitted by mail to address above or email to photocontest@wildmushrooms.ws.

"Pick a Wild Mushroom, Alberta!"

By Melanie Fjoser, Chair, "Pick a Wild Mushroom, Alberta!" Committee

Our committee's campaign to have a mushroom join the provincial emblems of Alberta is one of The Edmonton Mycological Society's major projects. Just to recap, the winner of the vote was *Leccinum boreale* (a.k.a. "red top" "red cap" "northern roughstem", etc.). We feel that Albertans made a great choice with their votes, as this fungus:

- is widespread in Alberta
- is easy to identify
- is a good edible
- has a beneficial relationship with poplar and aspen trees
- has a long growing season in Alberta
- has cultural significance
- will be an attractive emblem for Alberta

Tony Abbott, MLA, will represent our cause with a Private Members Bill to the Alberta Legislature. He is excited about our project and believes that it has great validity. Mr. Abbott was chosen because of his interest in forestry issues as well as that Poplar Creek Natural Area is in his riding. You may recall that EMS acts as Volunteer Steward to this area, where we Observe, Record, and Report critical information. It is unlikely that our Bill will be presented this year, but will be on the table next Spring.

This initiative fits in with our focus on education, in that it draws attention to the importance of fungi with visuals, followed up with informative text. We will be producing educational items to be distributed to schools, libraries, museums, and groups with a



strong interest in nature and environmental issues. Instructive CDs, posters, and bookmarks are currently under design to illustrate our message.

We have been fortunate to obtain educational funding from Alberta Sport and Recreation as well as from the Alberta Conservation Association. This is in addition to the financial and moral support from our Society. What we still need from EMS members, are great photographs of *Leccinum boreale* suitable for our posters and bookmarks. If you have digital, prints, or slides of *Leccinum boreale* (or will take them this season), please enter them in our Photo Contest (details Page 6 & 7). You may be famous!

Recipes

Stuffed Morels

- 1 doz. medium size morels
- 1 can (8oz) flaked crabmeat
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/4 cup salad oil
- 2 tbl mayonaise
- 2 tbl chopped sweet onions
- 2 teas fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 1/2 cup of seasoned bread crumbs
- 2 tbl melted butter or margarine

In a bowl combine crabmeat, egg, salad oil, mayonaise, onions, lemon juice and 1/4 of bread crumbs. Wash morels under running water. Fill morel "shells" with mixture. Combine remaining 1/4 cup of breadcrumbs with melted butter and sprinkle over mixture. Place the stuff stuffed Morels in a pan. Bake in oven for approx 15 minutes at 375 deg F. Serve Hot.

*Courtesy of Richard Progovitz
With permission from "The Great Morel
Website:thegreatmorel.com*

Cream of Morel Soup

- 3/4 LB fresh morels (more or less to taste and your hunting success) chopped
- 1 large leek (use everything below the green leaves)
- 3 medium to small russet potatoes
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 2 TBS butter or mild vegetable oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cups water

1) Chop off dark green leek leaves and roots. Slice the stem lengthwise and rinse under cold water making sure to remove all grit trapped between layers. Peel and halve potatoes. Add both to soup pot with the water. Boil moderately until quite tender. 20-30 min.

2) Heat medium pan over a medium flame. Add butter, morels and a few dashes of salt. Cook morels gently for ~ 15 minutes, making sure they do not dry out. Add a few dashes of wine at a time to keep moist. When nearly done add wine, turn up flame and continue cooking until liquid is almost gone. Add chicken stock and stir until blended.

3) When potatoes and leeks are tender, remove from heat and blend until smooth. Return to pot.

4) Add morel mix to potato/leek mixture and simmer very gently, stirring occasionally to avoid scorching. After about 5-10 minutes, add cream and salt and pepper to taste.

*Courtesy of David H. located in Petoskey, Michigan
With permission from "The Great Morel
Website:thegreatmorel.com*



Urban 'shrooming

by Loretta Puckrin

With the hectic quality of today's lifestyles, some mushroom lovers are taking to areas in urban settings to find their edibles. Even though they may feel safe picking in familiar territory there are important considerations when picking mushrooms, especially in urban areas.

Do You Have the Right?

Unless the mushrooms you find are on your own property you have to consider whether you have the right to pick those delicious specimens. If they are on a neighbour's property you need to get permission. "They don't like the mushrooms anyway," is not permission. If they do like mushroom but don't know how and what to pick, you might consider sharing the harvest in exchange for your knowledge.

Various levels of government have different rules about picking on their property. For example, you are not allowed to pick anything in a Federal park (eg. Jasper National Park, Elk Island, Kootneys etc). Other areas restrict the number of pickers and the amount they can take to keep the environment stable. There are still many areas that have no restrictions except for common sense.

What Contaminants are There?

Especially in urban areas, you have to be aware of any pesticides or herbicides that are being used in your potential mushroom area. Mushrooms have the ability to distil the chemicals in their environment - this includes the toxins. If the county or city has been spraying for mosquitoes or has a weed control program in the area you would be well advised not to pick and eat any mushrooms from that area.



This is also a concern in farm areas. Last year there was an area that sprouted a variety of edible mushrooms. It was hard not to pick them. The problem was that the farmer had not only burnt the area to get rid of the weeds but had used a powerful herbicide to kill the roots. Although the treatment was done the year before it was safest not to pick in that spot for a couple of years. When you haven't found enough mushrooms this is a very hard thing to do - leave them where you see them.

Is it a New Mushroom for You?

Making sure that the variety is considered edible is only the first step. The second step is to ensure that your body agrees.

Everyone reacts to various foods differently. Some cannot tolerate dairy products, others have reactions to corn. Is it any wonder that some people can eat a large variety of mushrooms while others can't?

If you are learning new mushrooms that are considered edible try eating just a few or a small serving the first time. Wait a couple of days before trying more. In this manner you will find out whether that particular type of mushroom and your system get along.

One example of a common edible that can cause problems is the

Alcohol Inky Cap. Aside from not having alcohol within 24 hours of ingesting this mushroom, people with hiatis hernias tend to react with a type of indigestion. This does not mean that the mushrooms are not edible - it just means that your particular digestive system has some issues with the chemical composition of that type of mushroom or of where that variety has grown. The people reacting to the Alcohol Inky Cap also react to caffeine - a very common substance in acceptable 'safe' foods.

Pick for the Future

When picking a mushroom in any environment, make sure you only pick the fruiting body and don't disturb the 'root system.' Think in terms of picking an apple from the tree. If you just pick the apple the tree continues to fruit in future years. If you tear off the branches as you pick the apples there will be less fruit every year until you kill the tree.

Picking mushrooms by tearing the entire plant from its growing medium will have the same effect - no mushrooms in future years.

Pick wisely and enjoy!

EMS has scheduled an urban mushroom walk on July 13, Wednesday evening, at Mill Creek (meet at the swimming pool parking lot). See what can be found within the city.

EMS Calendar of Events for 2005

Please Join Us!

All forays are undertaken at your own transportation, accommodation and risk.

May

14 Saturday - A day Foray in the Aspen Parkland/Boreal Forest Area

Mushroom: Morel, Verpa, Spring Agarics

Location: Jack Pine Grazing Reserve, Wabamun area

25 MEETING - Natural Photography and the use of digital cameras followed by an evening foray June 8th.

June

8 A Wednesday Summer Evening Foray and photo workshop

Mushroom: various

Location: Sherwood Park Area

Time: 7:00 pm

11 EMS Member Only - Introduction to Mushrooms Details Page 11.

18/19 A weekend (Sat-Sun) Special Foray Event

Mushroom: various

Location: Poplar Creek Natural Area near Breton (see page 5 for details)

22 MEETING - How to use a KEY to identify Mushrooms - Martin Osis

29 A Summer Wednesday Evening Foray

Mushrooms: various

Location: North Cooking Lake Natural Area

Time: 7:00 pm

July

9/10 A weekend (Sat-Sun) foray New Member Field Orientation, KEY workshop

Mushroom: The king Bolete

Location: Ashland

Dam site, Camp out

13 Mid-Summer Wednesday Evening Foray

Mushroom: various

Location: Mill Creek Ravine (meet at the swimming pool parking lot)

25 MEETING - Obscure Edible Mushrooms of Alberta - Mike Schulz

August

6 Saturday Foray collecting for Mushroom Exposition 2005

Mushroom: All groups from all habitats

Location: Your choice

7 City of Champignons Exposition at Devonian Gardens, Sunday. Members volunteers are needed!

17 Late-Summer Wednesday Evening foray

Mushrooms: various

Location: Edmonton River Valley (Mill Creek or Whitemud Creek)

24 MEETING - Preparing your favourite mushrooms. Location TBA

27/28

Weekend Foray to the Foothills Area

Mushroom: Gypsy, Men-on-horseback, Hedgehogs

Location: Robb area

September

3/5 Long Weekend Foray - First Annual Alberta wide Foray

Mushroom: Leccinum, Russula, Lactarius and other agarics

Location: Sundre Area

Weekend Foothills Campout

10/11

Mushroom: Honey and Hedgehog

Location: Foothills TBA

28 MEETING Photography Contest Finalists

October

26 MEETING AGM

November

President's Dinner TBA



General Member Meetings

Fourth Wednesday of every month

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Riverbend Library



Mushrooming Courses!

Here's your chance to learn or refresh your mushroom basics!

Mike Schulz will be offering mushrooming courses through the EMS, the Devonian Botanic Gardens, and the John Janzen Nature Centre. Most courses will be quite similar, although the mushrooms found and discussed will vary throughout the season. Contact Mike at 930-2102 for more information. See which one(s) fit your schedule!

Devonian Botanic Gardens Spring Mushrooms

The edible morel, oyster and verpa mushrooms are often present in the spring. After a presentation, we will find and identify all the mushrooms we can during a foray in the Garden grounds. Bring in your own mushrooms for identification!

May 14 (Sat.), 10 am - 4 pm
Fee \$42.00

Register with the Gardens at 987-2064

EMS - Introduction to Mushrooms

This will be an introduction to mushrooms and mushroom picking. We will cover the basics of identifying and the major mushroom groups, although the most common edible mushrooms will be discussed. This will be followed by a field trip to put our skills to the test! *EMS members only!*

June 11 (Sat) 10 am - 4 pm
Fee: \$35.00

Location TBA: to register contact Mike at 930-2102

John Janzen Nature Centre - Mushroom Identification & Foray

Are you wild about mushrooms? We are. Come, join us for two evenings of fungus fun! First we'll learn how to identify the most common edible mushrooms as well as the poisonous ones and how to best pick them (or not!). Then we'll head out on a mushroom foray to put our new-found knowledge to the test.

Mondays, July 11 & 18, 6:30 - 9:30 pm

Cost: \$40

Register with the John Janzen Nature Centre at 496-1024

Devonian Botanic Gardens - Hunting for Edible Summer Mushrooms

This is a practical course distinguishing local poisonous and edible mushrooms. After a presentation, we will find, examine, and identify mushrooms during a collection foray in the Garden's woods and meadows. Some of the more desirable edible mushrooms will be sampled.

July 23 (Sat.), 10 am - 4 pm
Fee \$46.00

Register with the Gardens at 987-2064

Devonian Botanic Gardens - Fall Mushroom Foray

Join Mike for a walk through the Devonian Botanic Gardens and its woods to discover some of the wonderfully delicious, poisonous, and other mushrooms fruiting in the fall. A sampling of edibles will follow. Date, time, and fee TBA.

Alberta Water Quality Awareness Day

June 5, 2005 is the day to celebrate Alberta's streams, lakes and wetlands.

The Edmonton Mycological Society has registered to do water testing, which must be done from June 5 to 18th. We will focus on testing the water bodies of Poplar Creek Natural Area, where we are Volunteer Stewards. A Special Foray Event will be held on June 18-19 (see details pg 5 & 10), during which time we will do our testing.

For more information on AWQA, visit www.awqa.ca

Don't miss any of this year's exciting events!

Renew today

Membership forms are available on our web site www.wildmushrooms.ws or use page 13 to fill out the information for renewal. Not sure if you have renewed? The members paid for 2005 are listed.

Understanding Mushroom Environments

by Loretta Puckrin



Understanding when mushrooms grow as well as where they grow is essential to having successful forays.

“My usually productive favourite spots yielded nothing, while areas that I had never found Morels before, started yielding late season mushrooms,” explained Martin Osis in his article (*May 2004 SporePrint*).

Water

Although all mushrooms need adequate water, some grow close to water systems (streams, lakes, low lying areas) while others have greater tolerance to dryer conditions and can be found in non-water based forested areas.

Temperature

The serious mushroom hunter will check the temperature of the soil - not the air - in determining the potential of a particular mushroom fruiting. When it comes to Morels Martin Osis and Bill Richard agree that a ground temperature of 50° F or 10°C needs to be reached.

Because of the concentration of people and buildings in an urban area you will generally find that the mushroom varieties grow first in the urban wilderness (when they grow there at all) and then later in the rural settings. Even if your urban patch is too small to pick, use it as an indicator of when the

more robust rural patches might be ready.

Noting the weather, not only during that day but in the week previous to the find, also helps you develop a database which will increase your success in future years.

Rooting Compound

Different mushrooms grow on different types of vegetation. Some are found on the ground, such as the morchella family, while others are based on trees, such as the oyster mushroom and still others prefer the grassy areas - an example being the field mushroom. Of those found on the ground some are growing on recently downed trees, others on old deadwood, humus, or feces. Just because the mushroom is found near your feet does not mean it is growing in the earth. Oyster mushroom can be found on upright deadwood as well as felled deadwood. The importance is more what is encouraging growth rather simply the elevation of the growth.

Knowing the areas which are most likely to host your favourite edibles is an important step to finding them. There is no guarantee when it comes to hunting mushrooms but everything you know about where and how to look increases your chances.

The environment is also of importance in identifying a mushroom. Although some people can easily identify mushrooms from samples, noting the conditions under which the mushroom was found makes a big difference when closely aligned species must be differentiated.

Vegetation

Some varieties of fungi only grow in the vicinity of certain trees or vegetation. For example, the oyster mushroom has a definite preference for the black poplar trees.

With others the state of the vegetation is another clue to the chances of finding a fruiting body. As you learned in the article about the morchellas, noting when a certain flower is in bloom, or even if it is growing in that area, will help you to both identify the species and locate other patches for picking.

Destructive Elements

Insects are a part of the environment. Some mushrooms tend to be relatively free of insects, such as the morchellas, while others are known for the high incidence of infestations, such as the bolete family. When you are picking a mushroom type that is prone to being eaten it is important to clean them immediately after picking.

Never assume that when you find a mushroom which has been eaten by animals that is safe for humans. Squirrels can tolerate some elements to which people react negatively. Urban legends such as ‘if the bugs don’t want it neither do you’ will not only make you miss some wonderful meals but encourage you to pick non-edible species.

Have you renewed your membership for 2005?

If your name is not on the list please send your cheque (\$25.00 - individual, \$35.00 - family members) to:

Membership

Edmonton Mycological Society
1921 - 10405 Jasper Avenue
Standard Life Building
Edmonton AB T5J 3S2

The following are members who have renewed for 2005.

Arabchuk, Peter	Holzbauer, Otto / Rita	Murch, Jeanine / Mervin
Aung, Dr. Steven K.H.	Homeniuk, Emily	Osis, Martin / Fjoser, Melanie
Bens, Ian	Hutchings, Janet	Podtepa, Georg
Blizzard, Emily	Ipema, C. Robert	Puckrin, Loretta
Boluk, Yaman	Jack, Andrew / Rebecca	Richards, Bill / Murray, Dianne
Bradley, Vic	Jaroni, Andrew / alicja	Rogers, Robert
Cegielnny, Gerlinde Mrs	Jacob, Virginia	Rowe, David / Van Der Klaauw, Agnes
Chipeniuk, Ken / Graham, Debbie	Kolacz, Geraldine	Schalkwyk, Helene (Leni)
Crawford, Chris	Koziak, Zenon	Schlogel, Henry
Currah, Randolph	Koziel, Rosemary	Schulz, Mike
Derworiz, David / Beverly	Lasinski, Judy/ Burnett, Micheal	Skoropad, Edi
Descheneau, Jon	Litven, George / Anne	Simpson, Robert
Fjoser, Melanie / Martin, Osis	Loven, Larry	Stobee, Jon Dr.
Fleming, Alan / Rae	Luarrrd, Garnham / Hand, Bernice	Sutton, Gerald C
Gasser, Jeannette	Malenczak, Jim /	Tabaka, Bob
Glanz, Ralph / Christine	Mannweiler, Christy	Thompson, John P.
Glowach, Larry	Medwid, Henk / Bouman, Dr.	Viana, Andy / Mary
Grobel, Doug / Isaac, Jan	Helen	Wilson, Brad
Hayward, Audrey	Merlo, Werner O.	Xenos, Elaine / Tassi
Hohol, Dr Harry / Sandra	Mozdzenski, Danek	

Membership Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Individual... \$25.00 per year

Family... \$35.00 per year