

## Field Guides for Northwest Mushroomers

Dick Sieger for the Olympic Peninsula Mycological Society 9/14 & 9/18

Here is a selection of paperback field guides that will help hobbyists identify the mushrooms they encounter in the Pacific Northwest.

***Mushrooms Demystified: A Comprehensive Guide to the Fleshy Fungi***, David Arora, Ten Speed Press, 1986, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, ISBN 0-89815-123-4, cover price \$39.99.

With its more than 900 pages, this book is a little heavy to carry in your mushroom basket, but it will serve you well in your car and at home. It gives descriptions of more mushrooms than any other publication you are likely to find. They are accurate, thorough, and avoid jargon. Descriptions of look-alikes help prevent misidentification. Numerous well-written keys may get you to the right page, but the book is difficult to use unless you recognize most families and genera. However, it is quite useful in confirming an identification made from another book. Illustrations are few. This is the textbook used in almost all mushroom identification classes, and you'll see it at the elbow of experienced identifiers everywhere. It covers species across North America.

***The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms***, Gary H. Lincoff, Alfred A. Knopf, 1981, ISBN 0-394-51992-2, cover price \$21.95.

Here is the book for the many OPMS members who like to identify mushrooms by looking at pictures. It groups mushrooms by how they look rather than by their scientific groups. Color photos of mushrooms that have similar appearances are shown on facing and adjacent pages. Find a picture that looks like the mushroom in hand and then refer to the detailed, easy to understand text to see if your mushroom is, indeed, the one in the picture. *Read the description! Read the description! Read the description! Don't depend on the picture!*. Mr. Lincoff spent a lot of time in the Northwest while writing the book, so many pictures are of our local species. The book approaches *Mushrooms Demystified* in the number of species covered and its 900 pages printed on bible paper will slip into your pocket. It covers North American species.

***The New Savory Wild Mushroom***, Margaret McKenny & Daniel E. Stuntz: revised and enlarged by Joseph F. Ammirati, University of Washington Press, 1987, ISBN 0-295-96480-4, cover price \$19.95.

The limited number of mushrooms in this book makes it especially useful for beginners. The species described are those most frequently found in our area and include just about all the best edible mushrooms and those to avoid. If you are just collecting for the table, these are the mushrooms you most want to know about. Technical details are limited, so you can read about species in narrative form with information that gives you confidence about which mushrooms to keep and which ones to pass up. The "Mushroom Poisons" section is recommended for its simple language. The book doesn't include psychoactive mushrooms in the genus *Psilocybe*. This book is restricted to mushrooms that fruit in the Pacific Northwest.

***Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest***, Steve Trudell & Joe Ammirati, Timber Press, 2009, ISBN 13:978-0-88192-935-5, cover price \$27.95.

Lots of species are covered using recent names cross referenced with traditional older names. Dr. Trudell planned to write a field guide decades ago so he started photographing mushrooms and refining his technique. It shows. Complete descriptions aren't included, but lengthy ones separate one species from another. Along the way you will learn interesting things about a species and about the group it belongs to. Edibility information isn't always given, but one wouldn't consider eating those anyway.

Older field guides use older names. The field guides reviewed here, except *Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest*, use many names that have been retired. Mushroom names are changing rapidly these days. Quick and cheap molecular testing has given mycologists the ability to see fungi in a new way. Previously, they were classified by their form, spore print color, microscopic structures, and chemical tests. Some groupings are no longer valid, requiring new names.

Mushroom names may have changed, but the mushrooms themselves have not!

*What's in a name? that which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet*

## Other Resources

***A Field Guide to Edible Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest***, Daniel Winkler, Harbour Publishing Co., 2011, 10: 1-55017-542-4, cover price \$7.95.

This fills the need for a good pocket guide. It's a durable and waterproof pamphlet with 50 mushrooms likely to be encountered in the Northwest. Fine photos accompany concise descriptions and edibility symbols. Beginners will be comfortable using it.

***Mushrooms of Idaho and the Pacific Northwest: Volume 1: Discomycetes***, Edmund E. Tylutki, University of Idaho Press, 1993, ISBN 0-89301-062-6, cover price \$13.95.

Here's a valuable little paperback for identifying the Ascomycetes one frequently encounters in the spring—morels, false morels, cups, and others. For these, the book is easier to use than other field guides. It includes grayscale photos. See "Errata" for name changes and look on page 13 for a key.

***Mushrooms of Idaho and the Pacific Northwest, Volume 2, Non-Gilled Hymenomyces***, Edmund E. Tylutki, University of Idaho Press, 1987, ISBN 0-89301-097-9, cover price \$13.95.

Easier to use than more complete field guides, it is helpful for identifying our common local non-gilled Basidiomycetes—boletes, chanterelles, polypores, corals, clubs, and more. It includes ample keys, grayscale photos, and some color plates.

### **Pacific Northwest Key Council**

***Easy Key to Common Gilled Mushrooms, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.***, [idcohenesq@gmail.com](mailto:idcohenesq@gmail.com), PNWKC, 21082 SW Meadow Way, Tualatin, OR 97062, \$3.50 + postage.

This set includes 2 heavy-weight 11 x 17 pages. A key to mushrooms is arranged in 5 rows and 8 columns. Select a row that matches the features of the mushroom in hand and follow it to the column with its spore print color. A box then gives illustrations, brief descriptions, and a genus name. Knowing a mushroom's genus is the first big step to identification! Bewildered by mycological jargon? The front of the guide to mushroom descriptions has a page with more than 200 illustrations of mushroom features with their corresponding names. The back has an index of feature names with numbers that refer to the illustrations.

<http://www.svims.ca/council/keys.htm> has keys with a series of choices that lead one to a species name and a detailed description. They are designed for inexperienced users and include many of the known species in the PNW. The keys can be used online or downloaded. A "Key to Keys" guides one to a genus where one can find species in that genus. Some pictures are included. Free.

<http://www.alpental.com/psms/PNWMushrooms/PictorialKey/index.htm> has pictorial keys for use with your web browser. It's wonderful for beginners. Read the instructions and it's much more likely you'll meet success. Free

<http://www.svims.ca/council/matchmaker.htm> provides the MatchMaker program for Windows and Mac. The program, developed by volunteers, may be downloaded without cost. MatchMaker users identify species by entering any combination of features, macroscopic and microscopic, to narrow possibilities down to one or several species. The program has complete descriptions of 4,000 species and includes 5,700 photographs. Beginners are urged to use the option "Show Common Only" for simplicity. Free

### **North American Mycological Association**

<http://www.namyco.org/> poisonings tab has a drop-down list of mushroom poisoning subjects. Free

<http://www.namyco.org/toxicology/identifiers.html> provides a table of volunteer identifiers sorted by region. Free

### **Bryce Kendrick's *The Fifth Kingdom* Online**

<http://www.mycolog.com/fifthtoc.html> will tell you anything you want to know about fungi and then some. It's written by a teacher who's the author of excellent textbooks and that shows. Free

### **Free live, real-time, sometimes friendly, tech support**

Dig up a whole fresh mushroom and put it in waxed paper, foil, or a paper bag, and refrigerate it. Call Dick Sieger (360) 452-7284 and then bring your prize to his home between Port Angeles and Sequim for identification. Free

## Beginner Mushrooms of the Olympic Peninsula

Prepared for the Olympic Peninsula Mycological Society by Dick Sieger, October 2013



Lobster Mushroom

*Hypomyces lactifluorum*, a parasite on *Russula brevipes*



Lobster Mushroom

*Hypomyces lactifluorum* on *Russula brevipes*



Host of the Lobster Mushroom

*Russula brevipes*



Cauliflower Mushroom

*Sparassis crispa*



Sulphur Shelf

*Laetiporus conifericola* (mistakenly called *L. sulphureus*)





Oyster Mushroom  
*Pleurotus ostreatus* group



Bear's Head  
*Hericium abietis*



Shaggy Mane  
*Coprinus comatus*

# "Is this mushroom edible?"

## To be edible, mushrooms must be

- **identified with certainty.** There aren't any general rules. There aren't any shortcuts. The name of the mushroom must be known.
- **tolerated by most people.** A good field guide passes on the experience of people who have eaten particular species.
- **found in a wholesome environment.** Mushrooms can absorb herbicides and heavy metals.
- **fresh.** Rotten food is never edible.
- **cooked.** Heat softens indigestible mushrooms. It may vaporize some poisons and reduce the potency of others.
- **eaten in reasonable quantities.** Some mushrooms are OK in small portions but troublesome when overeaten. And there's always the risk of a good old-fashioned bellyache.
- **eaten by healthy adults.** Children, old people, and ill people may be sickened by mushrooms that are enjoyed by others.

**Some people get sick anyway.** Alcohol combined with certain species causes illness. A few people are sickened by allergies or unusual sensitivity. Be kind to your doctor—don't confuse him by eating several species at one sitting. Experts can help, but eating mushrooms (or any food) can never be entirely safe.

## CHANTERELLE STIR FRY

(Dick Sieger's recipe)

1 lb CHANTERELLE MUSHROOMS  
PEANUT OIL or a BLAND OIL  
1/4 cup UNSALTED NUTS: CASHEWS,  
ALMONDS, OR PEANUTS

### Stir fry

1 APPLE, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2" pieces  
1 large ONION, halved and cut into 1/8" slices  
2 BELL PEPPERS (any color) cut into 3/4" pieces  
2 Tbsp CORN STARCH mixed with 2 Tbsp WATER

### Seasoning sauce

2 Tbsp CHINESE SOY SAUCE  
1 Tbsp SHERRY  
1 /2 Tbsp RICE VINEGAR

1 Tbsp BROWN SUGAR  
1 finger-tip size knob of GINGER, grated

1. Clean the forest debris from the mushrooms by brushing, scraping with a knife, or rubbing with a damp cloth. Cut them into 3/4" pieces and reserve.
2. Combine the five seasoning sauce ingredients and reserve.
3. Add two tablespoons of oil to a wok or frying pan and heat just short of smoking. Add the apples. Stir fry until the apples are somewhat brown. Add the nuts and continue cooking for a minute.
4. Add the Chanterelles, onion, and bell peppers. Add more oil as needed. Continue stir frying until the onion is translucent but not browned.
5. Add the seasoning sauce and stir fry briefly.
6. If the mushrooms have released a lot of liquid, continue stir frying. Add some of the corn starch mixture, a little at a time until the liquid is thick and coats the mushrooms and vegetables.

*Serves 4. Enjoy with a nice bottle of Alsatian white wine and a side dish of rice or Chinese noodles.*

## MUSHROOMS WITH ROASTED TOMATOES

(Dick Sieger's recipe)

### Mushrooms

1/2 lb CHANTERELLE MUSHROOMS  
4 halves of slow-roasted ROMA TOMATOES (see recipe below)  
2 Tbsp of BUTTER if making pasta sauce, or 1/2 Tbsp for a side dish  
2 Tbsp of OLIVE OIL if making pasta sauce, or 1/2 Tbsp for a side dish  
SALT and PEPPER

1. Clean the mushrooms if necessary. Dice them and reserve.
2. Chop the slow-roasted tomatoes and reserve.
3. Combine the butter and oil in a frying pan and heat to melt the butter.
4. Add the mushrooms and cook over medium heat until the mushrooms are barely cooked.
5. Add the chopped tomatoes.

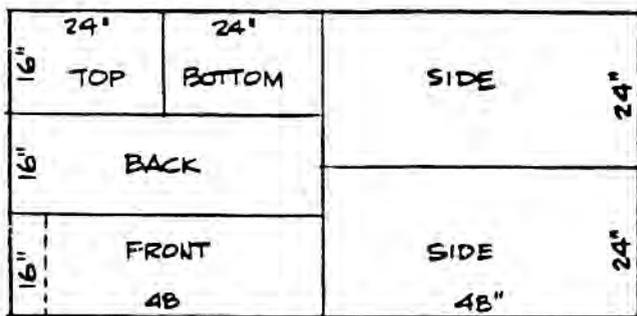
Slow-roasted tomatoes adapted from *The Herbfarm Cookbook* by Jerry Traumfeld

2 lbs (12 to 14) ROMA TOMATOES  
2 Tbsp OLIVE OIL + some for the baking sheet  
1/4 tsp SALT  
2 tsp SUGAR  
2 tsp FRESH ENGLISH THYME LEAVES

1. Cut the tomatoes in half. Scrape out and discard the seeds and pulp.
2. Toss the tomatoes with the olive oil, salt, sugar, and thyme leaves.
3. Wipe a little olive oil on a baking sheet and put the tomato halves on it, skin side down.
4. Bake the prepared tomatoes at 250° F for several hours until they are slightly brown, but still somewhat soft.

*Make plenty. Twenty pounds of tomatoes, when roasted, will fit into two one-gallon Ziploc bags. They may be used for crostini (with basil, mozzarella, etc.), salad (with mozzarella, greens, and herbs), pasta sauce (coarsely chopped), fish or seafood (with basil and balsamic vinegar).*

# PLAN FOR A BUILD-IT-YOURSELF MUSHROOM DRYER



CUTTING LAYOUT ▲

BUY OR STEAL A SHEET OF FIR PLYWOOD, 4' x 8' x 3/8" THICK. IT SHOULD BE SANDED. CUT AS SHOWN.

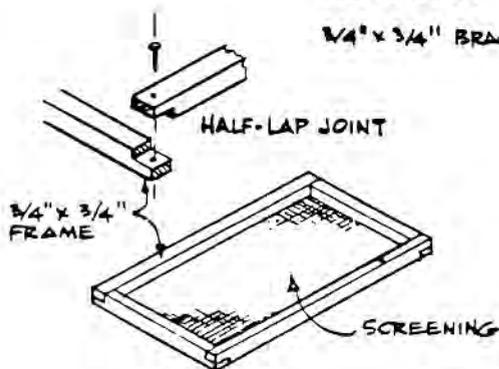
YOU WILL ALSO NEED ABOUT 60' OF 3/4" x 3/4" AND 32' OF 1/2" x 3/4" FIR; ABOUT 8' OF 24" WIDE ALUMINUM INSECT SCREEN; PLUS NAILS, STAPLES, GLUE AND MISC HARDWARE.

FINISH IS OPTIONAL. SUGGESTED METHOD IS TO SAND SMOOTH ALL EDGES AND SURFACES AND APPLY ONE COAT OF CLEAR PENETRATING SEALER SUCH AS "REZ" OR "PENELAC". THIS WILL MAKE BOX EASY TO KEEP DUST FREE.

HINGE DOOR ON EITHER SIDE, TO SUIT LOCATION OF DRYER.

1/2" x 3/4" SHELF CLEATS SPACED 4"

3/4" x 3/4" BRACE



BUILD SIX SHELVES TO FIT LOOSELY INTO BOX, RESTING ON CLEATS. HALF-LAP & GLUE CORNERS. STRETCH AND TACK OR STAPLE SCREENING TO THE FRAME.

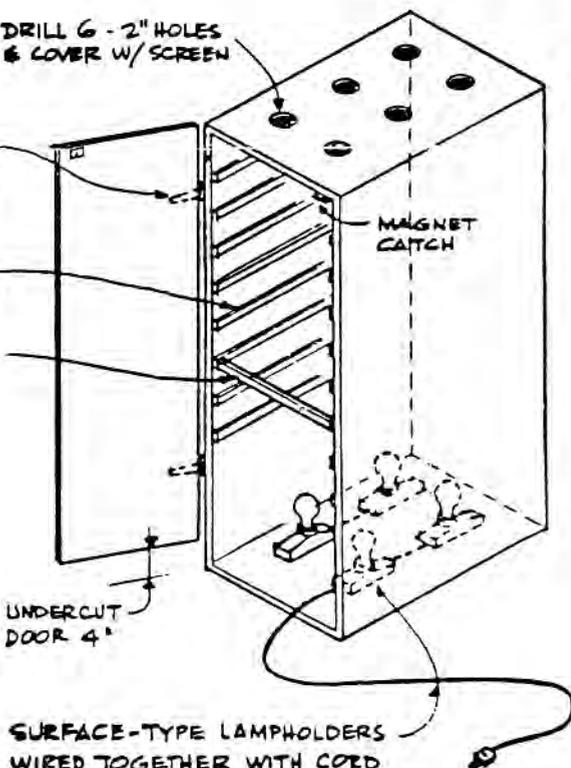
DRILL 6 - 2" HOLES & COVER W/ SCREEN

HINGE

CLEAT

BRACE

UNDERCUT DOOR 4"



SURFACE-TYPE LAMP HOLDERS WIRED TOGETHER WITH CORD AND PLUG. LAMPS MAY BE 60W TO 100W. EXPERIMENT TO FIND BEST COMBINATION FOR YOU.

MORELS, VERPAS, BOLETES & CLAVARIAS DRY WELL. DON'T WASH! SPREAD IN SINGLE LAYER ON SHELVES. SPLIT LARGE MORELS. SLICE LARGE MUSHROOMS INTO 1/4" SLICES. ALLOW 24 TO 48 HOURS FOR DRYING. STORE IN JARS OR CANS WITH TIGHT LIDS.

## Guidelines for Field Trips

New members (and some old members, too) may wonder what is expected of them and of the leaders on field trips. It is important for everyone to remember that each individual is responsible for himself or herself. The field trip leader is primarily there to coordinate the collection and identification efforts of the individual members.

Members attending field trips should review the following guidelines:

1. Use common sense in the woods. This includes:
  - Wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. Raingear and a warm sweater should be included, regardless of the weather in town.
  - Always hunt with someone. This means hunting within sight of your hunting buddies or maintaining contact through the use of whistles. This also means not leaving the area without your buddies!
  - Staying within sight of a road or trail or use a compass (and map, if possible) to keep yourself oriented.
  - During hunting season, stay out of areas where you know people are hunting (pickups with gun racks are a good clue) and wear bright clothing and make a lot of noise.

2. Bring appropriate equipment
3. Offer to help/take a beginner along.

You get the satisfaction of passing on your knowledge, and you may even find a new friend.

Whistle  
Compass  
Hand lens  
(10-15x)

Watch  
on  
correct  
time

Sturdy shoes  
with soles  
for slick grass  
or hillsides



4. Return to the meeting place at the appointed time. If you have not checked in with the leader and decide not to return, tell someone else to let the leader know so no search parties are organized.

5. Attempt to identify some of your mushrooms at least to genus. Even the best identifier is a bit overwhelmed when confronted with 200 or more unidentified mushrooms. The field trip leader and others are eager to help you identify your finds, but the only way you will learn is to try to start the identification process yourself. A key or a good field guide is essential.

The field trip leader is responsible for the following:

1. Setting the place and time to meet after the hunt.
2. Suggesting areas for members to hunt. The lucky (and/or conscientious) field trip leader may have been able to preview the area or have pried information from others who have been hunting in the area.
3. Taking beginners with them or finding someone to take them. No one should be forced to hunt alone because they don't know anyone.
4. Assisting participants in identification of mushrooms. The expert has a chance to make quick and confident identifications; the not-so-expert has a chance to enlist the aid of field guides and more expert participants.
5. Seeking assistance from local authorities in the event of an injury or lost participant.

Wool scarf & mittens for cold hills and soggy woods

Cap and/or rainproof hood

Sturdy knife with bright-colored handle (YOU know why)

Flat-bottomed sturdy basket to cushion falls and hold specimens both large and small, also containing:

Waxed paper roll or sandwich bags

Flattened can attached to basket to hold knife

(Goetz patent #1949)

Wool sweater(s) for crisp weather

Jacket with large pockets, especially for those who eschew carrying a knapsack

Rain slicker & pants to stave off wind and rain buffetings

KNAPSACK FOR:

1. Lunch, liquids, and toilet paper
2. Field guide/Kit Scates Easy Key
3. Map of area & field trip guide
4. Pen & pencil, tablet or journal for taking notes
5. Black/white papers for spore prints
6. Camera, film, tripod, light meter
7. Matches, first aid kit, big plastic garbage bag for emergency warmth
8. If hunting on public or private land, have current permit with you

### ETHICS FOR THE FIELD TRIP OR FORAY

1. Do your homework ahead of time: take a class or read up on the mushrooms of your choice.
2. Review the purpose of the trip, review directions for getting there.
3. Be there on time.
4. Get your last-minute instructions from the trip leader.
5. Respect your partners' areas as you foray

(think like a fisherman) and don't over pick.

6. Return to the study tables on time, bearing carefully wrapped, spore printed specimens.
7. Take notes at time of specimen gathering, and at study table discussion.
8. Make sketches or photographs with intent to learn from them again and again.
9. Contribute to your own journal - con

tribute to *MushRumors* newsletter.

### SUGGESTED FIELD GUIDES/IDENTIFICATION AIDS:

Kit Scates *Easy Key to Common Gilled Mushrooms*, (1982)

David Arora *All That The Rain Promises and More*, (1992) & *Mushrooms Demystified*

Margaret McKenny and Daniel Stuntz *The New Savory Wild Mushroom*, revised and enlarged by Joseph F. Ammirati, (1987)