



Symbiosis[®]

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Chanterelle Abundance

I love mushrooms for two reasons. Sooner or later I see a wonderful new fungus and sooner or later I have a wonderful new fungi eating experience. On July 25, 2009 I was provided with a wonderful new fungi eating experience – Chanterelle abundance!



Every year I find a few of the golden yellow trumpet-shaped *Cantharellus cibarius* along forest paths and under brush. Their bright color and ruffled gill-like ridges underneath make them one of the easiest mushrooms to spot and identify. Even so they are usually rather small in both number and size. Still I occasionally find enough to flavor a meal with their unique, almost fruity golden flavor. In 35

years of mushroom hunting I've never found them in a real abundance. That is, until this year, when hundreds of all sizes were growing near an old pine tree on a mowed city park lawn!

For the first time, I was able to choose only the firmest most worm-free specimens and still have plenty in my sack for multiple meals, plus some to freeze and share at an upcoming cooking class at New Pioneer Coop in Coralville on September 22nd at 6 pm. Most fun of all, I had enough to experiment with.

After a couple experiments and some web research, I've learned that Chanterelles' flavor is great sautéed slowly with a little fresh garlic and onion, chive or shallot in extra-virgin olive oil. (The frozen packet that I'll use at the cooking class was sautéed in this manner.) An internet article said this is the best way to freeze them. We'll find out. From there they can go well in a wide variety of meals with their strong yellow color holding its own nicely. We enjoyed them in an omelet with some delicious Bonnet Caps (*Marasmius oreades*).

Some people need lots of money and stuff to find life rewarding. I'm much luckier. My life's biggest rewards can come in a nice patch of yellow mushrooms or something even more amazing that I know sooner or later will just pop up. 

In Loving Memory of Lois Tiffany



It is with much sorrow that we must report the passing of founding PSMC member Dr. Lois Tiffany. She was a gentle soul who will be remembered with much fondness. She will always be in our memory when we delight in the wonders of nature, as she did for many good years. It was a blessing that she joined us at the Ledges this June. The Winter issue of Symbiosis will be dedicated to her accomplishments and good works.

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Mushroom Photography Featured in this Issue of Symbiosis

Hi PSMC members!

I've been amazed at the quality of photographs that PSMC members take. Hundreds of great mushroom photos can now be viewed at the PSMC website

www.iowamushroom.org (note the new PSMC web address). Several can also be viewed in Mike Krebill's article *Fall Mushroom Harvest* in the September/October issue of *Iowa Outdoors*. Because of the great photos our members produce, I've decided to make mushroom photography a focus of this issue. I hope all you "shutterbugs" get some great tips from these articles. I know if you're like me, a lot of these pictures show mushrooms that get your appetite and desire to get out in the woods going.

See you in the woods!

Dave Layton
PSMC President



Mushroom Photography Tips I learned from Jim Frink

by Mike Stewart



Photos left to right *Boletus frostii*, *Cortinarius iodes*, *Unknown* by Mike Stewart
More photos can be found at his website <http://homepage.mac.com/perronestewart/mushrooms/>

Mike Stewart is an amateur Mushroom photographer in New York. He saw Jim Frink's photos and asked me to have Jim contact him. Here he shares what he learned from Jim. - DL

You don't have to have a high-end DSLR camera and interchangeable lenses to take professional-quality photographs. In fact, there are some very good digital cameras with fixed lenses that take outstanding close-up photos because they happen to have a short minimum focus distance (meaning the minimum distance between the lens and the subject to be in focus), or they happen to have a good "macro" setting to bring close subjects into sharp focus. Sometimes, these cameras can produce photographs where more of the mushroom is in better focus than photographs taken with DSLRs that use special macro lenses. The reason is that high-end macro lenses typically have a shallow depth of field to begin with (meaning the portion of the subject or photo that appears in focus). While this can add a nice artistic "blurred" background, it's not as useful for mushroom photographs where clarity and crisp focus of the entire mushroom is desired.

A macro lens's shallow depth of field can be exacerbated when photographing mushrooms in shady forests because in order to let enough light into the lens to take the photo, the aperture may have to be widened to a low f/stop (such 2.8), which makes the photo's depth of field even more shallow. However, this can be an issue with any type of camera and lens, not just DSLRs. Whereas some photographers (like me) sometimes use special round flash units (known as macro flash rings) attached to the end of their lens when there is not enough natural light to take a photo, Jim has discovered a much simpler and far less expensive solution in the form of a battery-powered light unit available from a chain of hardware stores in his area. 

Mushroom Photography Tips

by Glen Schwartz



The photos above were taken by Glen at the Pinnicon Ridge Foray on August 9th. More photos and reports from this summers forays can be found at www.iowamushroom.org (Note: the new PSMC website address.) Click on the SmugMug link for lots of great foray pics.

I am not a great mushroom photographer. See Jim Frink or the Scarths for great photos. I am, however, an adequate mushroom photographer. I used a film camera for 30 years or so, and was pretty good with it. Two years ago, I got a digital camera for a Christmas present, and that is all I use now. The digital cameras have so many advantages, I don't know why I didn't switch sooner.

The first thing you should do is to get to know your camera. With my old film camera, I learned every feature by heart before I ever put film in it. It is nearly impossible to learn every feature of most digital cameras because there are so many. You will need to learn all about the features needed to take mushroom photos to avoid disappointment.

Most mushrooms are small and on the ground in the deep, dark woods. This makes mushroom photography difficult because of the



very challenging set of conditions typically encountered. Let's tackle these problems one-at-a-time. Most cameras have a macro setting for close-up photography. My camera, a Cannon Power Shot S3, even has a "super macro" mode. This allows me to focus as close as the front lens, great for even the smallest mushrooms. The best mushroom photos are those where the camera is down at the ground level. This can present a problem seeing the screen unless you also get down on the ground. My digital camera has a swivel screen that I can view from any angle, so I don't have to lay in the poison ivy to get the shot.

Deep in the woods, it can be amazingly dark. Your eyes automatically adjust to the low-light conditions so most people don't notice how dark it really is, but your camera knows. To use the ambient light, it is important to keep your camera from moving. I use a "gorilla" tripod that can steady the camera from an inch above the ground up to 8 inches above the ground. It works well on uneven ground, slopes, or even logs. With your camera set to macro mode, the depth of field is very

narrow, so set your f-stop to the highest number available. The low light and high f-stop means the shutter speed will be as slow as one second. Now you can see why you need the tripod. To reduce the jitter even more, use the timer built into the camera to add a few seconds of delay from when you press the shutter until the photo is taken. If you don't want to carry a tripod into the woods, use your flash. A wax bag placed over the flash will disperse the light, resulting in softer edges and a better photo. You may have to back away from your subject a bit when using the flash or you can get a shadow from the lens.

Sometimes it is helpful to take a larger view photo then crop later on your computer to cut out the extraneous subject matter. If fact, the best pictures that I have taken are all cropped images from much larger photos. My camera has 6 megapixels, enough that I can throw away 80% of the bits and still have a great shot. Remember when you were a kid and
(cont. on pg. 7)



Interviews with Expert Mushroom Photographers Bob and Linda Scarth and Jim Frink

Some of the work of these master photographers is prominently featured in the August/September issue of Iowa Outdoors as part of Mike Krebil's article, "On the Hunt for Fall Mushrooms." They've generously shared a few thoughts on photographing fungi with me in short interviews. Here are their answers to three questions. - DL



Trametes versicolor, Bob and Linda Scarth



Pleurotus Ostreatus, Jim Frink

1. What started you photographing mushrooms and/or why do you like to photograph them?

Bob and Linda: "We have long photographed fungi because it can be very beautiful as well as otherworldly. Sometimes fungi are the best finds of a day in the woods. Also mushrooms are cooperative subjects that are unlikely to fly away or blow in the wind. We think fungi are the coral reefs of the woods."

Jim: "I've been interested in mushrooms since I was kid. I guess my interest in photographing mushrooms came out of that general interest. I also like photographing insects. Many years ago I saw a slideshow of mushrooms by Frank Zelman and I thought that was really neat. I saw that same show again more recently and wasn't that impressed. I realized that I've gone beyond that level."

2. What types of equipment and technique do you use in those great photos in Outdoor Life?

Bob and Linda: "We use mostly macro lenses on digital SLR cameras. Sometimes we use flash, especially a ring flash. However, we prefer to use reflectors to add a bit of light to an image. We always use tripods. That sometimes limits what we can photograph if there are too many things interfering with where the legs can be placed. That is when we wish we had a macro lens with image stabilization so we could attempt to handhold."

Jim: "I like to go light so I can get where the mushrooms are. I often use a beanbag and a forked stick in lieu of a tripod. I'll bring a mirror to direct diffused light – not direct light though. LED work lights are great for cutting exposure time down. I bring a spray bottle of water to make mushrooms look moist and fresh."

Jim answered more technical camera questions in a discussion with Mike Stewart on page 3. - DL

3. What are some tips for others who might want to explore mushroom photography deeper.

Bob and Linda: "If it is a sunny day and the light in the woods is splotchy, use a diffuser of some kind. We use a white umbrella. If you are with someone wearing a white shirt, ask the person to take off the shirt and hold it between the mushroom and the sun. Foliage is among the most reflective subjects. Human eyes adjust for it. Cameras do not, so a diffuser will help avoid hot spots in photos."

If the mushroom is in soft light but the background is bright, find a way to shade the background. A person holding his/her jacket or shirt out spread to both sides will do nicely.

(cont. on pg. 7)

Rare and Colorful Bolete Found in Iowa

Reported by Sibylla Brown



Here are two photos of *Boletus dupainii* that I collected on my property today. Apparently Timberhill, my managed oak savanna, is the only site in the continental U.S. where this species is regularly collected. (Specimens have been identified by an expert. DNA also confirmed I.D.) I find it hard to believe that this is the only place where *B. dupainii* fruits regularly and hope that our fellow PSMC members will be on the look out for it. I find it in open (50-60% canopy) oak woodlands that are burned annually.

B. dupainii is very distinctive. It has a viscid red cap which looks lacquered when dry, bright red pore surface which fades to yellow-orange and instantly turns bright blue on contact. (This combination of slimy-viscid cap and reddish pore surface is very unusual.) The yellow stalk thickens toward base and is coated with fine reddish punctae. Spore print is olive brown, spores 10-17 x 3.5-6 fusiform-ellipsoid to elliptic.

The following is the abstract and introduction of the scholarly article *The Second Record of the European Species, Boletus dupainii, in North America* by Ernst E. Both (Buffalo

Museum of Science); Beatriz Ortiz-Santana and myself.

ABSTRACT – *Boletus dupainii* Boud is reported for the second time from North America, inhabiting an oak-hickory savanna in Iowa.

INTRODUCTION

Boletus dupainii Boud was described in 1902 from central France. In the ensuing one hundred years it was gradually reported from nearly all regions of central and southern Europe (Engel *et al.* 1983). Le Gal published a type study in 1950. The first record outside of Europe was based on a collection from North Carolina (McConnell & Both, 2002). It was next found in Belize (Ortiz-Santana *et al.*, 2007) and we now report on a second location record for North America from an oak-hickory savanna in Iowa. *Boletus dupainii* has been observed at this site nearly continuously from 2000 until 2008 by one of us (SB). A full description is provided to facilitate identification of this rare bolete from additional localities in North America.

[Regarding our article,] Ernst told me that it is being published in a Festschrift by the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences. I don't know the publication date.

This year, I have collected 20 specimens of *B. dupainii* on my property. Nine specimens were collected on August 21st, two on August 25th and 5 more on August 28th. Several were under hickory sprouts, annual growth that has sprouted from roots that were burned over last winter. There is always a white oak nearby.

The *B. dupainii* has fruited in two new sites this year. I've seen twenty specimens. Fascinating how a rare species will colonize new sites distant from where I previously collected it. The same thing happened with *Gastroboletus turbinatus* which popped up all over the property. Now it's declined and I haven't seen a single specimen this year. Last year I found only one. It was most abundant in 2006 when I collected it in each of our units. One cluster contained 16 specimens. We know the plant is still here but why did it stop fruiting?

(cont. on pg. 7)

Preparing a “Nice Mess of Chanterelles”

by Sibylla Brown



This is a lot more than a nice mess. I can't remember when this photo was taken, but it must have been another good chanterelle year.

We're having a terrific chanterelle season here. I have been collecting fresh specimens since June 20th. Every day we look there are more. Amazing!

Jane Grigson's *Girolles a la Forestiere* is a terrific chanterelle recipe. The original version is in Jane Grigson's [The Mushroom Feast](#) originally published in 1975. There is a May, 2008 edition (hardcover) of [The Mushroom Feast](#) available at Amazon.com for \$16.59.

The recipe I have uses 3 pounds chanterelles, 4 oz. butter, 4 oz. bacon, cut in strips, 6 oz. new potatoes. I never use that many chanterelles. Even if I had three pounds it would seem wasteful. Instead I increase the potatoes and use fewer chanterelles. As long as we have a “nice mess” for the recipe we're satisfied.

You need to watch the bacon-chanterelle simmer carefully so that the chanterelles don't get brown and lose their golden radiance.

Girolles à la Forestière

Source - Jane Grigson in *Wild Food* by Roger Philips

1500g Clean Chanterelles
100g Butter
100g Smoked bacon
150g New potatoes
Fresh flat-leafed parsley - chopped
Salt and Black Pepper

Sauté mushrooms in 25g of the butter for 5 minutes. Remove from pan and drain off the liquid (this can be used for a stock). Cut the bacon into strips and fry in the remaining butter until just starts to brown. Replace the mushroom and simmer for 20 minutes. In another pan boil the new potatoes. When potatoes are cooked, mix them into the pan of mushrooms and cook for another 5 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and parsley. 

Mushroom Photography Tips

(cont. from pg. 3)

all the family pictures showed the people, the ground in front of them, and the sky above? Wouldn't it be nice to blow up the image of the faces and throw away the rest? That's a fair description of my best mushroom photos. The *Mycena leaiana* picture was taken at Pinicon Ridge Park. I thought it was an OK picture, but when I cropped away everything but the caps and a bit of stem, wow. It

really popped. Same with the picture of the honey mushrooms from Wickiup Hills Park. When I took that picture, I was trying to show both the *Armillaria* and the *Entoloma* mushrooms. Ok, but boring. By careful cropping, you only see the *Armillaria* and your mind projects that it is part of giant wall of honey mushrooms. Sometimes, less is more.



Interviews

(cont. from pg 4)

Take images from several angles. Try a variety of compositions. Keep the interest point off center or if the mushroom needs to be centered, try to have a diagonal line so it appears to be off center. The classic rule of thirds is a starting place."

Jim: "Half the job is taking pictures. The other half is what you do with them. How you crop them is important as well as editing the lighting. I always try to find pristine mushrooms, but sometimes I'll edit out a bug bite.

I guess the main thing is to get a camera and go out and do it!



Rare and Colorful

(cont. from pg. 5)

Plants growing near *B. dupainii* collection sites are: *Quercus alba*, *Quercus velutina*, *Schizachyrium scoparium*, *Solidago ulmifolia*, *Koeleria macrantha*, *Andropogon gerardii*, *Pycnanthemum virginianum*, *Carex pensylvanica*, *Galium circaezans*, *Galium concinnum*, *Taenidia integerrima*, *Liparis liliifolia*, *Solidago speciosa*, *Coreopsis palmata*, *Aster laevis*, *Aster azureus*, *Rosa arkansana* var. *suffulta* rose, *Pedicularis canadensis*, *Liatris aspera*, *Liatris squarrosa*, *Agalinis gattingeri*, *Lespedeza virginica*, *Carya ovata*, *Comandra umbellata*, *Aureolaria grandiflora* var. *pulchra*, *Baptisia bracteata* var. *glabrescens*. I usually find one or more twayblade orchids, *Liparis liliifolia* plants near *B. dupainii* sites. Although *L. liliifolia* is not a very conservative plant and can be found in degraded habitat, in our restored oak savanna it indicates high quality habitat.



PSMC Fall 2009 Forays

Right now only two forays are scheduled following publication of this issue of *Symbiosis*

**Saturday, September 26th,
9:00 a.m.** Wickiup Learning Center near Cedar Rapids Iowa

Directions: From Cedar Rapids, exit I380 at Exit 24. Go West 5.5 miles on Blairs Ferry Road to Co. Hwy 34 (Feather Ridge Road). Turn right and go North 1 mile to Morris Hills Road. Turn left and go West 1.5 miles to the Learning Center on the right. Marty Augustine will lead this foray.

Saturday, October 3rd, 10:00 a.m. Cedar Bluff Park near Oskaloosa, Iowa

This will be our annual meeting, so attend if you can!

Directions: Cedar Bluff park is located about 5 miles North of Oskaloosa Iowa. Meeting spot is still TBD.



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www.iowamushroom.org



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PSMC Happenings

PSMC Gets a New Web address.

Changes at Yahoo have made it necessary to get a new web address. The good news is the new address is easier to remember.

www.iowamushroom.org

PSMC Annual meeting Saturday, October 3rd, Cedar Bluff Park near Oskaloosa, Iowa

Our annual meeting will follow a 10:00 a.m. foray, so attend if you can! Directions: Cedar Bluff park is located about 5 miles North of Oskaloosa Iowa. Meeting spot is still TBD.

Bob and Linda Scarth Announce Publication of *Deep Nature: Photographs from Iowa*

The University of Iowa Press is releasing “Deep Nature: Photographs from Iowa”. We are thrilled, as is John Pearson, whose essay “Small Places, Unbounded Spaces” appears along with 80 of our mostly close-up images of plants, birds (not so close), insects and fungi.

To celebrate and augment the book, we have a page of thumbnails (<http://www.scarthphoto.com/bookimages.htm>) on our web site with two linked pages - a web page of short descriptions and comments about each image (<http://www.scarthphoto.com/booknotes.htm>), and a downloadable PDF (<http://www.scarthphoto.com/booknotes.pdf>) of the information from that webpage that can be cropped to fit with the book.

PSMC Members Featured in Fall Mushroom article by PSMC Member Mike Krebil in the August/September issue of Iowa Outdoors

The article *Fall Mushroom Harvest* has generated much interest in PSMC as well as in mushroom hunting. We have been contacted by a number of people whose interest in mushrooms was sparked by this article. Thanks again to Mike Krebil for this great article as well as all the PSMC members who contributed. 