



Symbiosis[©]

The newsletter of the Prairie States Mushroom Club

Volume 29:4

Fall 2012

<http://www.iowamushroom.org>

President's Report

by President Glen Schwartz

The 2012 mushroom season can be summed up in one word: dry. It was hot and dry in March when the morels started to fruit, and ended cold and dry at our last foray in early October. In between, it was hot and dry, followed by more hot and dry. The official weather designation was an extreme drought for much of the summer. These brutal conditions limited our participation at most of the club forays, and also limited the number of fungal species found.

One bright spot is that we continued our streak of finding unusual mushrooms. In July, we found a strange mushroom on a log in Wapsipinicon State Park in Anamosa. Even Rosanne failed to identify this oddball. An August 8th short-notice foray in Pinicon Ridge Park yielded a clump of *Lentinellus cochleatus* around the base of a tree. None of us had seen this one before, so Roger dried some for a voucher specimen. This one made the pages of the 2013 calendar for the month of August, and the other one is featured for December.

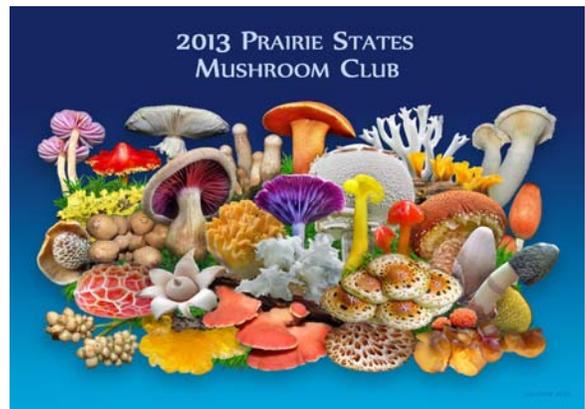
Speaking of calendars... I would like to thank all of the club members that contributed to the final product. It was a lot of work to put together, and I could not have accomplished this task without help from numerous club members. Sales of the PSMC 2013 calendar are going very well, and we have already recouped the printing cost, so all sales from now on are profit for the club. The point of making the calendar was not to make a profit; we just did not want to lose too much. Contact Roger Heidt to purchase these calendars.

We held our annual meeting after our last scheduled foray October 6th, at F. W. Kent Park near Tiffin Iowa. The great participation of many members resulted in a spirited meeting. The club bylaws remain unchanged but we did

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The 2013 PSMC calendars are here!

by Glen Schwartz



They make great gifts to friends, relatives, and co-workers. Your cost is \$8.00 each or \$7.50 each if you get more than one. Shipping cost is \$3.00 for up to four calendars, or you can pick them up from Roger or Glen to save the shipping cost. To order calendars contact:

Roger Heidt
125 Timber Lane, Robins IA 52328-9632
E-mail: rwheidt54@hotmail.com
Phone: 319-573-4795

I would like to thank everyone that helped create this calendar. Special thanks go to Jim Frink for designing the front and back covers. Jim also contributed the main photo for two of the months, and several of the smaller photos found in the calendar. Mike Krebill and Rosanne Healy edited the text, and Rosanne also checked the scientific names for proper spelling and name changes. Rosanne, Roger, Marty, and Bob and Linda Scarth all contributed photos, and I used a few of my own to complete the calendar.

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The Effect of Unusually Warm Dry Weather on Mushrooms

by Dave Layton

We had an inkling that warm dry winter weather would play a strange role in mushroom development when we saw morels by the end of March but not in the abundance hoped for. Still a bizarre clump found on April 1st made me feel very lucky. Warm sunny weather also created a drier than normal start to spring. Rains came in April but they came with a cold spell. Then it dried up and got warm again in May. In fact it got hot. A few morels were found at PSMC's first foray on April 28th in Cedar County, but they were already getting old.

May began the summer long heat wave and drought. Most late spring mushrooms such as *Marasmius oreades* were not to be found. One May rain in Clinton brought out a few shaggy manes and a smattering of *Stropharia rugosoannulata*. I also found one decent batch of chanterelles in early June and the PSMC June 2nd Amana Trail foray yielded a nice clump of sulfur mushrooms (*L. cincinnatus* – the white underneath variety.) Again they were found nearly a month early.



Morel clump found April 1st

Spring shaggies found April 25th



What wasn't found in June, July and August was really more telling of the stress on trees. The oak lovers or mycorrhizal mushrooms were missing. No common *Amanita*, *Inocybes*, *Lactarius* or *Cortinarius* were found by me or at forays, though a few small boletes and russulas were found on the July 21st Wapsipinicon foray. I

think the trees were not getting enough moisture up to the leaves to create vibrant photosynthesis and send sugars back to the roots and exchange nutrients with the mushroom mycelium. My hope is that those mushrooms stayed alive but mostly dormant. Otherwise the trees will struggle to recover from the drought long after it ends. *Laccaria ochropurpurea* was found on two fall forays. Kuo lists it as mycorrhizal on his Mushroom Expert website so that could be a hopeful sign for the trees it was found under. Still, I often wonder if *Laccaria* are really saprophytic like Blewits and many other mushrooms found this year.

Surprisingly a few summer mushrooms actually were more abundant when a little rain did finally fall. I found a fairly good harvest of meadow mushrooms (*A. campestris*.) and some small *Volvariella* in the same meadow in late July. The July 21st Wapsipinicon foray produced the unusual solitary silky *Volvaria* (*V. bombycina*.) They were found fresh again on the September 9th foray in Henry County. An unusual variety of *Lepiota* were also found at forays. I found one large silky on Willow Island for my dinner a week after that. Also, in September I found clumps of the unusual *Armillaria tabescens* ringing an old oak that has seen better days. This was a rare find for me. Unfortunately, they were too desiccated to consider eating. So far I haven't found common Honey mushrooms *A. mellea* though, and none of that species were reported from forays, which is surprising.

On the same day as my Silky *Volvaria* find, I also found several nice clumps of *Hericium coralloides* on two different logs. They provided mushrooms for several tasty meals and I even froze



Spider prowling *Hericium*

some. It was a lot of work removing all the spiders and various bugs that are usually found under leaf litter though.

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The Effect...

(cont. from pg. 2)

It appears those creatures went to the fungi for moisture that was no longer available on the forest floor.

I found insects riddling the first *Grifola* (hen-of-the-woods) that I found. But even more bizarre was the condition of that *Grifola*. Even though it was only September 1st when I found it, the clump was large and mature but soft and desiccated. Another clump was fresher but it was already almost too far-gone from all the bugs eating it. Plus it too was getting soft and brittle from the heat. By September 20th I was concerned that I might not find more. My usual trees weren't producing. Fortunately, on September 25th I found a couple good clumps of *Grifola* that were just the opposite of my first find. These clumps came out dry and never formed traditional petals so there was not much pore surface. They were heavy solid masses of mushrooms that were actually very tender, tasty and easy to clean. What seemed like a small portion of the smaller clump still produced enough for two meals. The larger clump will go a long way toward filling my freezer for winter.



Fresh, stunted but solid, Hen-of-the-Woods and Chicken-of-the-Woods

So far in October, I have found a great clump of white pored Chicken-of-the-Woods (*L. cincinnatus*), and a decent batch of *Hypsizygus ulmarius* though many were not in good shape and I found larvae in many of them. I have seldom found larvae in these before. I found a few young Blewits and I'm hoping for more after a rainy weekend. I found a huge batch of Shaggy Manes in a newly mulched roadside flowerbed, but they desiccated as soon as they were exposed to the dry air. So I had to harvest them while they were mostly buried. Still there were plenty for a meal and a couple freezer packets. Actually it turns out that I have almost as many mushrooms in my freezer as last year.

In conclusion, the weather seemed to affect saprophytic and parasitic mushrooms least but their abundance and physical characteristics were often more stunted or maturity rapidly advanced. Some genera such as *Volvaria* and *Lepiota* were actually more abundant! Bugs, larvae, etc. played unusual roles being seen more in fall mushrooms but less in summer ones. Perhaps the most important question for the forests is how well will mycorrhizal relationships rebound. Finally, this unusual season demonstrates that, no matter how the season turns out, forays will still yield many fascinating and beautiful finds, and it's always worth keeping an eye out for fungi.



5 species cooking in a large pan

Renewal Reminder

by Mike Krebill

At our annual meeting October 6, some of us took advantage of the opportunity to pay our yearly membership dues. If you weren't able to attend, please send your payment to the PSMC Treasurer:

Roger Heidt
125 Timber Lane
Robins IA 52328-9632

The price remains \$15.

Kindly let Roger know if there are any changes to your address, phone or email. You may call him at 319-573-4795, or email him if you prefer at one of his two email addresses: rwheidt54@hotmail.com or iowamushroom@gmail.com.



Identifying an Unknown Mushroom

by Mike Krebill

Recently, I had a call from Liz Clark, a friend who is a chef. Liz was excited. Mushrooms were popping up in clusters all over her yard. “What are they?” she wanted to know. If they had any culinary value, she didn’t want to miss out on the bonanza. She had dreams of drying a year’s supply and using them in a dozen different ways.

I didn’t recognize the mushrooms from her description. I knew that she couldn’t email me photos or send them from a smart phone, as Liz doesn’t own a computer, a digital camera, or a smart phone. Fortunately, she lives less than 10 miles away, so I drove over to take a look. They were still a mystery to me.

Knowing I needed help from others in our club, I took photos with my phone (as I had left my camera at home.) I traced the outline of the smallest cap and the largest cap on a notepad, wrote descriptive comments, slit open the mushroom from the top of the cap to the base of the stem and noted that it was solid and had decurrent gills. Liz gave me a paper sack into which I put two clusters to take home for further study. At home, I set a cap half on white paper and half on black paper, and covered it up with a plastic container to get a spore print. Using a ruler, I measured the diameter and length of the stems. I pulled the stems apart to see if they were brittle or fibrous. They behaved very much like string cheese. I used a magnifying lens to look at the cap, the gills, and the stem, noting my observations so

that I could share as many characteristics as possible with club members.

Before I was successful in keying out the mushroom, I had to go back over to Liz’s to check one more thing. It appeared to be growing up from the grass in her lawn. However, as I dug down with a trowel, I found that in every case the point of origin was wood (buried roots for four of the clumps and an overgrown old stump for another clump.) This clinched the identification as *Armillaria tabescens*, the Ring-less Honey Mushroom.



Chef Liz Clark’s mystery mushroom turned out to be *Armillaria tabescens*, the Ring-less Honey Mushroom.

While edible, it can cause gastric upset if not fully cooked.

- photo by Mike Krebill

The more someone can tell us about an unknown mushroom, the easier it is for us to identify it. Instead of having one picture of a mushroom, for instance, it helps to have a photo of the underside and a side view where we can discern the gill attachment, the stem, any ring around the stem, and whether or not there is a cup at the base of the stem.

To make the thousands of species of mushrooms simpler to identify, mycologists have classified them into large groups based on similarities and differences. All of the gilled mushrooms might be in one group. A separate group might contain all of the puffballs. Each main group is divided into even smaller groups. Finally, the individuals within the smallest grouping are distinguished from one another. Mushroom identification guides are based on this pattern.

Most guides begin with a dichotomous key. Through yes or no answers to questions on the characteristics of the mushroom, we are quickly led to the large group to which it belongs. That takes us to a section in our guide, where we are faced with another key. The yes or no process is repeated, leading us to the page number of a smaller group. A final key delivers us to the smallest group. Once there, we can search through the photos and detailed descriptions, hopefully finding a match. Not just 10 out of 12 characteristics, but 12 out of 12 characteristics.

(cont. on pg. 11)

FUNgi FOTography: Photography tips

by Linda Scarth

Putting the Fun in Fungi

Humor can be healthful. Fungi are sometimes funny to look at. So putting these two ideas together can be motivation for making funny photographs – good for the photographer and the viewer. This month I thought this example of a polypore that was drying and scalloped around the edge could be photographed looking like an alien creature's toes. It was fun and funny to me. Perhaps it might be for you.



The bottom of the largish (6 inches across) polypore was fairly pale. Another large, dark, dried fungus was nearby on the specimen table at the Snyder Farm foray in September. It provided a suitable background – much better than the picnic table. The contrast was useful to show the pores as they shaded from cream to chocolate along the edges. It also gave the polypore something to react to and lift its 'toes.'

The top-side of this fungus was darker with more middle shades of reddish brown and had ridges radiating out to the toe ends. The bottom was more finely textured and, to my eye, looked more like skin. I made images of both sides but think this one is funnier.

Framing a subject also affects how people respond. Turn the image 180 degrees and while still an interesting pattern, it does not seem as much that one is looking at the toes of another creature. Humor may be found in details rather than in the whole fungus. 

2012 PSMC Foray Report

by Linda Scarth

Overall, the 2012 mushroom forays for the Prairie States Mushroom club have been very disappointing. The extremely dry conditions contributed to a very low count of species at all forays this year. The one bright spot is that we continue to find some rare fungi. For such a small club, we have a significant number of unique mushroom sightings. Some of the rare fungi were found during short-notice forays. See the club SmugMug site <http://iowamushroom.smugmug.com/Sightings2012/Summer-2012/> for more details.

Our first foray this year was at Paul and Suzan's farm along the banks of the Cedar River in Cedar County. When we set up this April 28th foray, we thought it might be a bit early for morels. Turns out, it was too late. The record setting heat wave in March started the morels fruiting a full month too soon. The day of the foray, however, was cold and wet. We did find some morel mushrooms, but most of them were too old to eat. The farm's woodland was too young to support a wide variety of fungi and the dry conditions did not help.

What a difference a few days can make. Marty was the guide for our second foray, May 3rd at the Wickiup Hills Learning Center near Cedar Rapids, and the afternoon was warm and sunny. Again, we had a large crowd looking for morels, but there were none to be found. The woods had been stomped flat with all of the locals hunting morels every day for the last month, and they got them all. A late afternoon thunderstorm chased us out of the woods just as the light was fading.

On June 16th we traveled to Brushy Creek Recreation Area in Webster County. The ground was wet and slippery due to the rain the day before, but not enough time had passed since the rain for the fungi to fruit. We found more than 30 species, but this is far less than the woods could support under normal moisture conditions. After the foray, we dined on fresh Lemon Meringue pie brought by Roger's mother.

Another long road trip took us to Cardinal Marsh in Winneshiek County on June 30th. Larry Reis, the county

(cont. on pg. 10)

Species Seen in 2012

by Mike Krebill

This list compiles and alphabetizes the 116 species identified on the excursions we held this year. For additional information on which forays these species were found – which reveals the location where they were seen – go to our foray lists at <http://iowamushroom.org>.

Species	Common Name or Synonym
<i>Aleuria aurantia</i>	Orange Peel
<i>Aleurodiscus oakesii</i>	Oak Bark Eater, Oak Parchment
<i>Apiosporina morbosa</i>	Black Knot
<i>Arcyria denudata</i>	Pink Cotton Candy Slime
<i>Armillaria gallica</i>	Honey Mushroom
<i>Armillaria tabescens</i>	Ringless Honey Mushroom (Dave Layton)
<i>Artomyces pyxidatus</i>	<i>Clavicornia pyxidata</i> , Crown-tipped coral
<i>Auricularia auricula</i>	Tree Ear
<i>Bisporella citrina</i>	Lemon Drops, Yellow Fairy Cups
<i>Bjerkandera adusta</i>	Smoky Bracket Polypore
<i>Boletus pulverulentus</i>	Inkstain Bolete
<i>Calocera cornea</i>	Club-like Tuning Fork
<i>Calvatia gigantea</i>	Giant Puffball, Moon Melon
<i>Cantharellus cibarius</i>	Yellow Chanterelle, Golden Chanterelle
<i>Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa</i>	Coral Slime Mold
<i>Cerrena unicolor</i>	Moss Maze Polypore
<i>Clitocybe epichysium</i>	<i>Omphalina epichysium</i>
<i>Coprinellus micaceus</i>	Mica Cap
<i>Coprinopsis variegata</i>	<i>Coprinus quadrifidus</i>
<i>Coprinus plicatilis</i>	Japanese Umbrella Inky Cap, Pleated Inky Cap
<i>Cordyceps variabilis</i>	
<i>Crepidotus applanatus</i>	Flat Crep
<i>Crucibulum laeve</i>	White Bird's Nest Fungus
<i>Dacryopinax palmatus</i>	Small yellow fan-shaped jelly
<i>Dacryopinax spathularia</i>	Small yellow fan-shaped jelly
<i>Daedalea quercina</i>	Thick-walled Maze Polypore



Pink Cotton Candy Slime Mold
photo by Jim Frink



Crown-Tipped Coral
photo by Glen Schwartz



Lemon Drops, Yellow Fairy Cups
photo by Jim Frink



Club-like Tuning Fork
photo by Jim Frink

(cont. on pg. 7)

Species Seen in 2012

(cont. from pg. 6)

Species	Common Name or Synonym
<i>Daldinia concentrica</i>	Carbon Ball
<i>Ductifera pululahuana</i>	Exidia alba, White Jelly
<i>Entoloma abortivum</i>	Aborted Entoloma
<i>Exidia glandulosa</i>	Black Witches' Butter
<i>Exidia recisa</i>	Brown Jelly
<i>Flammulina velutipes</i>	Velvet Foot
<i>Fuligo septica</i>	Dog Vomit Slime Mold
<i>Galerina marginata</i>	<i>G. autumnalis</i>
<i>Ganoderma applanatum</i>	Artists' Conk
<i>Gloeoporus dichrous</i>	Rubber Band Polypore
<i>Grifola frondosa</i>	Hen of the Woods
<i>Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginianae</i>	Cedar Apple Rust
<i>Gyrodon merulioides</i>	Ash Bolete, Lawn Liver
<i>Hemitrichia calyculata</i>	Slime Mold
<i>Hydnochaete olivaceus</i>	Brown-tooth Crust
<i>Hypsizygus ulmarius</i>	Elm Oyster
<i>Irpex lacteus</i>	Milk Tooth
<i>Ischnoderma resinoseum</i>	Resinous Polypore
<i>Laccaria ochropurpurea</i>	Purple-gilled Laccaria
<i>Lacrymaria velutina</i>	<i>Psathyrella velutina</i>
<i>Laetiporus cincinnatus</i>	White-pored Chicken of the Woods
<i>Laetiporus sulphureus</i>	Sulphur Shelf, Chicken of the Woods
<i>Lentinellus cochleatus</i>	Aniseed Cockleshell
<i>Lentinellus ursinus</i>	Saw Tooth Gill Edge, Bear Paw, Bear
Lentinus	
<i>Lentinus tigrinus</i>	Abortive Lentinus
<i>Leucoagaricus rubrotinctus</i>	<i>Lepiota rubrotincta</i>
<i>Lycogala epidendrum</i>	Pepto Bismol Slime Mold
<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>	Pear-shaped Puffball



Carbon Balls
photo by Roger Heidt



White Jelly
photo by Jim Frink



Cedar Apple Rust
photo by Mike Krebill



Elm Oyster
photo by Jim Frink



Saw Tooth Gill Edge
photo by Roger Heidt

(cont. on pg. 8)

Species Seen in 2012

(cont. from pg. 7)

Species	Common Name or Synonym
<i>Marasmius capillaris</i>	Oak-Leaf Marasmius
<i>Marasmius delectans</i>	
<i>Marasmius foetidum</i>	<i>Micromphale foetidum</i>
<i>Marasmius rotula</i>	Pinwheel Mushroom
<i>Marasmius siccus</i>	Brick Top, Orange Pinwheel Marasmius
<i>Meripilus sumstinei</i>	<i>Meripilus giganteus</i> , Black Staining Polypore
<i>Microstoma floccosa</i>	Fairy Goblet
<i>Morchella esculenta</i>	Yellow Morel
<i>Mutinus elegans</i>	Stinkhorn
<i>Mycena haematopus</i>	Bleeding Mycena
<i>Mycena leaiana</i>	Orange Mycena, Lady Lion
<i>Mycena luteopallens</i>	Walnut Mycena
<i>Orbilbia xanthostigma</i>	Common Glasscup
<i>Panellus stipticus</i>	Luminescent Panellus, Styptic Fungus
<i>Panus conchatus</i>	Purple Conch
<i>Panus strigosus</i>	<i>Pleurotus levis</i>
<i>Parmotrema margaritatum</i>	Whiskered Ruffle Lichen
<i>Peziza badiocconfusa</i>	Spring Brown Cup
<i>Phaeocalicium polyporaem</i>	Fairy Pins
<i>Phaeolus schweinitzii</i>	Dye Maker's Polypore
<i>Phellinus gilvus</i>	Tiger Eye
<i>Phlebia incarnata</i>	<i>Merulius incarnata</i>
<i>Phlebia tremellosa</i>	<i>Merulius tremellosa</i> , Jelly-rot Mushroom
<i>Pholiota aurivella</i>	Golden Pholiota
<i>Phragmidium rosae-multiflorae</i>	Multiflora Rose Rust
<i>Pleurotus ostreatus</i>	Oyster Mushroom



Pinwheel Mushroom

photo by Jim Frink



Fairy Goblet

photo by Jim Frink



Walnut Mycena

photo by Jim Frink



Fairy Pins

photo by Glen Schwartz



Dye Maker's Polypore

photo by Roger Heidt

Species Seen in 2012

(cont. from pg. 8)

Species	Common Name or Synonym
<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>	Deer mushroom
<i>Pluteus longistriatus</i>	Pleated Pluteus
<i>Polyporus alveolaris</i>	Hickory Stick Polypore
<i>Polyporus arcularius</i>	Spring Polypore
<i>Polyporus badius</i>	Big Black Foot
<i>Polyporus brumalis</i>	
<i>Polyporus radicans</i>	Rooting Polypore
<i>Polyporus squamosus</i>	Dryad's Saddle, Pheasant's Back
<i>Polyporus varius</i>	Little Black Foot, <i>Polyporus elegans</i>
<i>Porodiscus pendulus</i>	<i>Polyporus pocula</i> , Pendulous Polypore
<i>Poronidulus conchifer</i>	<i>Trametes conchifer</i> , Bird Nest Polypore
<i>Puccinia podophylli</i>	May Apple Rust
<i>Pycnoporus cinnabarinus</i>	Cinnabar-red Polypore, Red Polypore
<i>Sarcoscypha occidentalis</i>	Stalked Scarlet Cup
<i>Schizophyllum commune</i>	Split Gill
<i>Scleroderma areolatum</i>	Leopard Earthball
<i>Scleroderma cepa</i>	Smooth Earthball
<i>Scutellinia setosa</i>	Eyelash Cup
<i>Stemonitis axifera</i>	Chocolate Tube Slime Mold
<i>Stereum complicatum</i>	Crowded Parchment
<i>Stereum ostrea</i>	False turkey tail
<i>Trametes hirsuta</i>	Hairy Turkey Tail
<i>Trametes pubescens</i>	White-rot Fungus
<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Turkey Tail
<i>Tremella mesenterica</i>	Yellow Witches' Butter
<i>Trichaptum biforme</i>	Purple Tooth, False Charcoal
<i>Tyromyces caesius</i>	<i>Oligoporus caesius</i>
<i>Urnula craterium</i>	Devil's Urn
<i>Ustulina deusta</i>	Carbon Cushion
<i>Volvariella bombycina</i>	Silky Volvariella, Silky Rosegill



Deer Mushroom
photo by Jim Frink



Big Black Foot
photo by Jim Frink



Cinnabar-red Polypore
photo by Jim Frink



Stalked Scarlet Cup
photo by Jim Frink



Leopard Earthball interior
photo by Roger Heidt

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2012 PSMC Foray Report

(cont. from pg. 5)

naturalist, was our host. Again, the extremely hot and dry conditions limited our haul. We found some fresh mushrooms, including *Xerulas*, and the biggest Dead Man's Fingers ever. So big, it made me wonder if these might not be *Xylaria polymorpha*, but instead, a related species. Just 30 species of fungi were found, again, far less than we had hoped for.

Alright, this is starting to sound like a broken record. Our July 21st foray at Wapsipinicon State Park, near Anamosa, was not very productive because the weather had been too hot and dry. The day was pleasant enough, but the ground was bone dry. This park has the potential to host a huge number of fungi, but not this year. The more we looked, the more we found, ending the day with about 34 species. We did, however, find an unusual mushroom growing on a log on the forest floor. We sent this to Rosanne, and even she was stumped! A picture of this small mushroom is in the club calendar for the month of December.

Still hot and dry for the August 18th foray at Hunt Woods in Des Moines County. Again, just over 30 species were collected. Katherine, the county naturalist, led the way through the thick understory of Hunt Woods. The big find of the day was a large fruiting of *Pleurotus levis*.

Finally, a foray to write home about. On September 9th we traveled to Mt. Pleasant for a foray at Oakland Mills Park. The extreme heat has broken and we have had some rain. Not enough, but at least some. The woods responded with mushrooms everywhere you looked. Cari, the Henry County naturalist, had done a great amount of promotion for the event, and we had 36 people out looking for fungi. We found four or five different species of *Lepiota*, some fresh Chicken-of-the-Woods, beautiful Turkey Tail, and a log with some Silky *Volvariella*. After the foray, we dined on fresh snacks made by Cari and her daughter, while Glen presented a PowerPoint slide show about edible mushrooms.

September 15th found us at the Snyder Heritage Farm near Des Moines. This location was mostly

prairie as it was a farm not that long ago. Most of the woods was an oak savanna, with brambles in the understory. Around two sides of the property was a creek with steep gullies from the oaks above. Most of the fungi were found near the dry creek and the north-facing gullies. Yes, once again, it was way too dry to find much of interest.

Our last scheduled foray of 2012 was held October 6th at F. W. Kent Park in Johnson County. We had a great turnout despite the record setting cold and dry conditions. We first searched near the park headquarters, but this area was a south-facing slope and bone dry. We drove to another part of the park and looked for another hour or so. This area was more productive and we found more than 40 species. We had a great potluck lunch followed by our annual meeting. 

Huge Morel Spotted in Aledo, Illinois

by Vicki Coutant

On a recent weekend my neighbor removed a dead tree in his yard. The next day I spotted the morel. When I talked with Mike about his creation he said he had never carved anything like this before. I think it is pretty good for a first timer. 



President's Report

(cont. from cover)

have one change in leadership. Barbara Ching was voted in as the at-large board member replacing Marty Augustine. We thank Marty for his service to the club and welcome Barbara to the board. Barbara has agreed to help plan forays and Dean has agreed to help update the SmugMug photo site. We will be asking for your permission to distribute your email and phone number to other club members to increase communication among members.

As always, the future looks bright for the PSMC. Our membership remains constant and we have many talented members. Also, 2013 *has* to be a better year for finding fungi.

See you in the woods! 

The 2013 PSMC calendars ...

(cont. from cover)

From selecting the printer and photos to selecting the font, everything took much longer than I expected. It was also a lot of fun going through pictures, trying to tie them together and write a short paragraph for each month. One problem I encountered was that in the first several photos I selected, all of the mushrooms were either white or tan. I needed some variety, so I had to stop looking at anything with predominately light colors. This made the photo selection much harder. I also had trouble with my photo processing tools. I was not familiar with many of the functions required to produce the final design, so I had to learn on the job. The final product looks good, so it was worth all the effort. I really hope you enjoy your calendar, and

if you need any advice about creating your own, contact me and I will be happy to share my experiences with you. 



Identifying... (cont. from pg. 4)

A match doesn't always happen. One of the reasons is that no book holds all of the thousands of species that may be found in our region. If that is the reason, then we may have to search several books before we arrive at our destination. Another possibility is that in going through a key, we may have guessed at the answer to a question. Being absolutely sure of the characteristic, such as the spore color of the mushroom, or whether it grows on wood, is truly important when we try to identify an unknown. If we don't know, then we need to find out.

Identifying an unknown mushroom can be a tedious challenge, but there is a reward. The reward, because you have inspected the mushroom and its characteristics so closely, is that you will quickly recognize the mushroom whenever you encounter it again. 

Species Seen in 2012

(cont. from pg. 9)

Species	Common Name or Synonym
<i>Volvariella speciosa</i>	Common Rosegill
<i>Xerula furfuracea</i>	<i>Collybia radicata</i> var.
<i>Xerula megalospora</i>	<i>Collybia radicata</i>
<i>Xylaria hypoxylon</i>	Carbon Antlers
<i>Xylaria polymorpha</i>	Dead Man's Fingers
<i>Xylobolus frustulatus</i>	Ceramic Parchment



Chocolate Tube Slime Mold
photo by Jim Frink
(listed on page 9)



Carbon Antlers
photo by Jim Frink



Annual Meeting October 6, 2012

by Dean Abel, Secretary

The PSMC annual meeting was held at Johnson County's Kent Park 3 miles west of Tiffin. Due to a conflict with the Scout Cub-O-Ree involving 350 young boys, Brad Freidhof, naturalist for the Johnson County Conservation Board, arranged for our club to use the park headquarters building that had all the amenities we could wish for.

After a photo opportunity in the parking lot we headed into the woods looking for mushrooms. Later the tally would show that we identified over 40 species of fungi, admittedly many of them old and dried up. Returning to the headquarters for a potluck meal we were treated with a cornucopia of mushrooms and other surprises.

Mike Krebill presented a cauldron of lamb and beef stew spiked with Wood Ears, Buttons, and Shiitake Mushrooms. Glen Schwartz prepared a skillet of Hen-of-the-Woods cooked in a blend of olive oil and butter.

Jeni Reeves brought lavender and cardamom coffee cake. Barbara and Michael Ching offered apple brownies. Roger Heidt provided wheat bran chipotle brownies (not too hot). Fruit salad and a mushroom-shaped container of mixed nuts from Linda and Bob Scarth were tasty additions. Glen Schwartz shared his garden surplus of hot and sweet peppers, basil and tomatoes with eager takers.

Dave McDowell cooked up a batch of hot peppers stuffed with beef, pork, garlic, Sulfur Shelf powder and Knothole Oysters. Dave was accompanied at the foray by Daisy, his animal companion, whom he plans to train to sniff out morels next spring.

After we had eaten our fill, Glen called the annual meeting to order. With 14 members present, he recognized that we had more than enough for a quorum. He expressed our common dismay about the dry year. He held this responsible for the generally low attendance at forays but he noted that with the aid of the local naturalist we had a turnout of 36 at Oakland Mills Park north of Salem. This should encourage us to continue working with county and park naturalists.

Glen said he had appointed Barbara to work with Roger on the Foray Planning Committee. He passed around the August *National Geographic* magazine, which had an article on gathering *Cordyceps* fungi. He brought us up to date on our 2013 calendar effort. We had 100 copies printed for \$600 and will sell them at \$8 each. Glen has already sold 40, so get in line soon if you want one. It features photographs by club members and will display properly as a calendar.

Dean Abel, looking up from taking the minutes, offered a very brief statement. He will pass on to members the URL for a YouTube video that shows dinosaurs eating

“those kind of” mushrooms. Roger Heidt provided a detailed Treasurer's report. In summary we have about \$1,500 in the bank with income from calendar sales yet to be figured in. Roger collects our dues, pays our bills and maintains our club finances in a transparent and responsible manner.

Mike, VP and newsletter editor, reminded us of the “upon us already” deadline for the next publication. The current newsletter is sent to members and past issues are posted on our website. Mike gave notice that he needs to phase out his newsletter duties, as his retirement gets busier and busier. He recognized the volunteer help of Vicki Coutant who puts the newsletter package together.

Brainstorming about mushroom outreach, Linda said she could contact newspapers for publicity this spring. Mike said we should investigate sponsoring a regional NAMA foray and suggested that we invite Michael Kuo or other mycologists to join us for a foray and program. Along these lines Dave suggested looking into renting cabins at state parks to house a guest. Glen brought up the idea of having winter activities like a mushroom banquet but problems would have to be overcome such as winter travel conditions.

Linda pointed out that mushrooming is a natural fit with the current interest in regional foods. Mike informed us that next year's September meeting of the Midwest Environmental Education Conference will be in Coralville. He

(cont. on pg. 13)

Annual Meeting...

(cont. from pg. 12)

was asked to convey our interest in participating perhaps by leading a foray to hunt for edible mushrooms.

Glen proposed presenting a free copy of the calendar to all those who contributed and also to Vicki Coutant, who helps us produce our newsletter, and Don Huffman, a club founder and life member. We will ask permission of members to publish their contact information (name, home town, email) to promote mushroom club fellowship.

We would like to continue the calendar project next year. Glen explained some of the production details and received feedback and advice from several members. Dave suggested putting together a welcome packet of information for new members.

Harry Graves, executive director of the Johnson County Conservation Board, stepped in to say hello. We

approved making a \$50 donation to the JCCB as a small thank you for letting us use their facilities.

Lastly the slate of officers for next year was approved by acclamation. Re-elected were President Glen Schwartz, Vice-President Mike Krebill, Treasurer Roger Heidt, and Secretary Dean Abel. Barbara Ching was elected as our at-large board member. 🍄

A Close-up Look at Fairy Pins

by Mike Krebill

To reduce the length of this newsletter, we went with small photos in the “Species Found in 2012” section. Glen’s photo of the Fairy Pins lichen (second from the bottom on page 8) was done a disservice, however. FPs are so tiny and pin-like that they vanish in a reduced photo size. With room here for a larger photo, we want to remedy that. This tiny lichen, *Phaeocalicium polyporaenum*, is found on the ubiquitous Violet Tooth Mushroom, *Trichaptum biforme*. Violet Tooth is a small, whitish, leathery shelf fungus that has a violet-colored margin, and teeth instead of pores or gills beneath. It is easily found on logs and stumps, and in dry years like those we have had, it is perhaps the most common mushroom encountered. Fairy Pins are so dinky that they are easily overlooked. Glen discovered and pointed them out to us, and we all look for them now. 🍄



Fairy Pins, *Phaeocalicium polyporaenum*, is a tiny, whisker-like, black pin-shaped lichen that grows on the Violet Tooth Mushroom, *Trichaptum biforme*.

Photo by
Glen Schwartz

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Glen Schwartz
photographing
Fair Pins.

*Photo by
Mike Krebill*