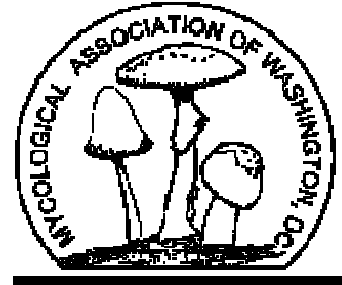


Potomac Sporophore



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MAW DUES

MAW dues are due each January.

Please send dues to:

Membership Chair

1903 Powhatan Rd., Hyattsville, MD 20782
\$20.00-individual; \$30.00-family/household

Meeting Sites March - June 2005

MAW meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month and begin at 7 p.m. During the mid-April to May Montgomery County library reservation period each year, we attempt to reserve the Chevy Chase Library, at 8005 Connecticut Avenue, for as many months as possible from July through June of the following year. We usually get 10 or 11 months at this first choice, but were only able to get seven of our meetings at Chevy Chase during the current reservation year. The other five were scheduled at Davis Library, 6400 Democracy Boulevard. Of the four meetings remaining, only the May 3 Wild Foods Tasting meeting will be at Chevy Chase; we meet at Davis on March 1, April 5, and June 7.

The Davis Library is located one long block away from the intersection of Democracy Boulevard and Old Georgetown Road, MD Route 187, at the approximate center of the triangle formed by the Capital Beltway, I-495, and the two legs of I-270. There are several ways to get there. Going northwest on Old Georgetown Road from the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway, MD Route 410, go about 2/3 mile past the Beltway and turn left onto Democracy Boulevard. After one long block, take the first left turn, onto Bells Mill Road, and then the first left turn from Bells Mill into the library parking lot, or make a U-turn on Democracy and go east a short distance and turn right into the parking lot. If you are coming west on the Beltway, bear right onto the I-270 leg. Take the first exit, Old Georgetown Road. Turn left at the light at the top of the exit ramp, go south 1/2 mile or less, turn right onto Democracy, and proceed as above. If you're coming north on the Beltway from Virginia, you can either bear right on the Beltway where the I-270 leg splits off to the left, then take the first exit, Old Georgetown Road, and go north to Democracy, or you can bear to the left on the I-270 leg, take the first exit, which is Democracy, and go east to Bells Mill Road

and the library. Coming south on I-270, you can bear left onto one I-270 leg and take the Old Georgetown Road exit and go south to Democracy, or bear right on the other I-270 leg and exit at Democracy, then go east to Bells Mill and the Library

FORAYS

Hello MAW members. Well this is my first stint at setting up a list of forays and I hope that many of you will join us. I don't know what we will find but even if we don't go home with a basketful of mushrooms we will have learned something about the little treasures we hunt.

We will plan to meet at the regular time of 10:00 AM for most of the forays. Front Royal will be one exception to the rule where we will meet at 11:00 AM to allow some time for travel. Remember, all of these are tentative dates and locations. If a site doesn't look too productive or the weather isn't cooperating the foray may be canceled or moved. No worries though, that's why we have the voicemail system and the website. If you don't have the number in your book, here you go: **(301) 907-3053, Mailbox 55**. Also, don't forget that it is against the rules to go hunting at a designated club foray site 5 days before a scheduled foray.

See you out there and Happy Hunting!

Mitch

April 16th: First morel scout at [C&O Canal Park](#), Great Falls, Maryland

April 17th: Second morel scout at [Watkins Regional Park](#), Upper Marlboro, MD

April 23rd: The hunt continues at [C&O Canal Park](#), Great Falls, Maryland

April 30th: Our first trip to the [Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center](#) in Front Royal, VA

May 7th: a day at the [Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center](#) in Front Royal, VA

May 8th: a spring hike on Skyline drive in the [Shenandoah National Park](#) near Front Royal, VA

June 25th: on the lookout for Chanterelles, [Scott's Run Nature Preserve](#), McLean, VA

July 10th: another try at [Rock Creek Regional Park](#), Derwood, MD

July 23rd: a foray in [Greenbelt State Park](#), Greenbelt, MD

If you have any questions or comments you can reach me at (301) 768-6788 and I am always open to suggestions. Look for the complete list on the website at [mawdc.org](#)

WILD FOODS TASTING

On **Tuesday, May 3rd** we will have our Wild Foods Tasting. You are encouraged to prepare a dish using wild foods i.e., any mushroom, plant, fish, game, etc. that is not bought commercially nor grown in a garden. Remember that any wild food that is part of your dish must be cooked at the tasting site, after it has been inspected. You may also prepare a dish that has no wild food.

Members who bring a dish will participate free of charge, members without a dish will pay \$10.00, non-members will pay \$20.00 (\$30.00 for families/household) and will be entitled to membership in MAW for 2005.

- Waldemar

Some Major Mushroom-related Events of 2005

May 3, Tuesday MAW's Wild Foods Tasting - Chevy Chase Library

June 4, Saturday U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Field Day - Beltsville, MD (some MAW members join the USDA fungal folk, and cook up mushroom snacks for the waiting masses)

July 8-10 or Aug. 19-21 MAW's West Virginia foray weekend at Lost River

July 21-4 NAMA Foray - Univ. of Wisconsin at LaCrosse

Aug. 11-4 NEMF Foray - Mont Alto, PA

Sept. 10, Saturday Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club's annual Mid-Atlantic Foray/Mushroom Madness near Pittsburgh

Sept. 16-8 MAW's Camp Sequanota foray

weekend - Jennerstown, PA

Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 NAMA's Wildacres regional foray in North Carolina

Oct. 2, Sunday MAW's Mushroom Fair - Brookside Gardens Visitors' Center, MD

Oct. 4, Tuesday MAW's Wild Mushroom Tasting - place TBD

MAW on the Web

Derya Slivka

Since becoming MAW's Webmaster in November of 2003, I have had many discussions with members at the monthly meetings about MAW's web site. The most common question I'm asked is how to post messages or pictures to the "site", at which point, I realize that the "site" being referred to was not MAW's main web site, but rather MAW-Mail, our e-mail group.

Allow me to explain the scope of MAW's presence on the web. MAW's main web site, at [http://mawdc.org](#), is our club's billboard on the "information highway". As Webmaster, I am able to make changes to the pages within this main site; for the general public, however, it is a "read-only" site. Though I maintain the pages of the main site, by and large, the contents have been provided by fellow MAW members so contributions are always welcome. Incidentally, you do not have to type the "www" in front of [mawdc.org](#) to access this site. At [mawdc.org](#), visitors can learn more about MAW's upcoming events, read past newsletters, view a mushroom photo gallery, check out mushroom recipes and download MAW's membership application. In general, the pages within the [mawdc.org](#) web site are static. In other words, little changes, except for periodic updates to the 'Calendar', 'Gallery' and 'Recipes' pages of [mawdc.org](#).

Visitors reading the 'E-Community' page of [mawdc.org](#) ([http://mawdc.org/community.html](#)), will discover that MAW's presence on the web is also dynamic; by the way, the 'E' stands for 'Electronic'. At 'E-Community', there are links to three additional web sites which facilitate discussion between MAW members and friends of MAW. The first, as previously mentioned, is MAW's oldest e-mail group, MAW-Mail, which is hosted by a Yahoo! server at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MAW-Mail/](#). This e-mail group was created in 2001 by Henry Shaw, the original administrator of MAW-Mail. Members of MAW-Mail

discuss mushroom-related topics. Examples of topics discussed and shared include mushroom fruiting alerts, foray announcements, recipes, postings of (or links to) interesting mushroom-related news items or articles, announcements of outside events of interest to MAW members, bragging about finds, etc. In this private e-mail group (posted messages are not visible to the general public), there are currently 104 subscribed members of MAW-Mail, so when a MAW-Mail member sends an e-mail message to the [MAW-Mail@yahoogroups.com](#) e-mail address, all 104 members will receive the message.

In order to send and receive e-mail messages at MAW-Mail, one must be subscribed to the group. There are two ways to subscribe; basic subscription and the web-features subscription. To sign up for the basic subscription of MAW-Mail, one should send an e-mail message to [MAW-Mail-Subscribe@yahoogroups.com](#). No text in the message is required, however, most e-mail programs will not allow messages to be sent without a subject, so one should put "Subscribe" (without the quotes) in the subject line of the e-mail message. Once the subscription process is complete, the subscriber will then be able to send and receive messages. For those wishing to take advantage of the additional web features, i.e., sharing files, links and photos, viewing the calendar or talking in the chat room, a web-features subscription is recommended. To sign up for MAW-Mail's web-features subscription, go to [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MAW-Mail/join](#). On this web page, log in with a Yahoo! ID before proceeding to registration, otherwise, click on the "Sign Up Now" link if a Yahoo! ID needs to be created.

Just recently, the MAW-Board e-mail group was created for the purposes of discussing MAW business. The same subscription processes as above, applies to this e-mail group. For a basic subscription, send an e-mail message to [MAW-Board-Subscribe@yahoogroups.com](#); or, to register for the web-features subscription, go to [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MAW-Board/join](#).

This is not where it ends for interactive opportunities for our members. In addition to the two e-mail groups, I have also created a discussion forum which members and friends of MAW can join. The MAW Discussion

Forum, located at <http://mawdc.org/forum>, unlike the private e-mail groups, is not an e-mail distribution list. Rather, it is an organized repository of information and discussions visible to the entire web community, except for the designated private subforums within the Forum, which are only accessible to Forum-registered MAW members. Basically, this type of discussion forum is an updated version of the old-style BBS (Bulletin Board System). The only notification by e-mail a registered member of the Forum will receive is when someone has responded to a member's article (post). Otherwise, a registered member must visit the Forum's web page to see whether new topics or articles have been posted so it is advisable to create a bookmark for the Forum. Like the e-mail groups, only registered members can post or respond to articles. To register at MAW's Discussion Forum, go to <http://www.mawdc.org/forum/profile.php?mode=register>. To read more about the features of the Forum, read the Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.mawdc.org/forum/faq.php>. For questions not answered in the FAQ, I've created another subforum, called 'FAQ – Part 2' (<http://www.mawdc.org/forum/viewforum.php?f=8>), where I have posted answers to questions I have been asked.

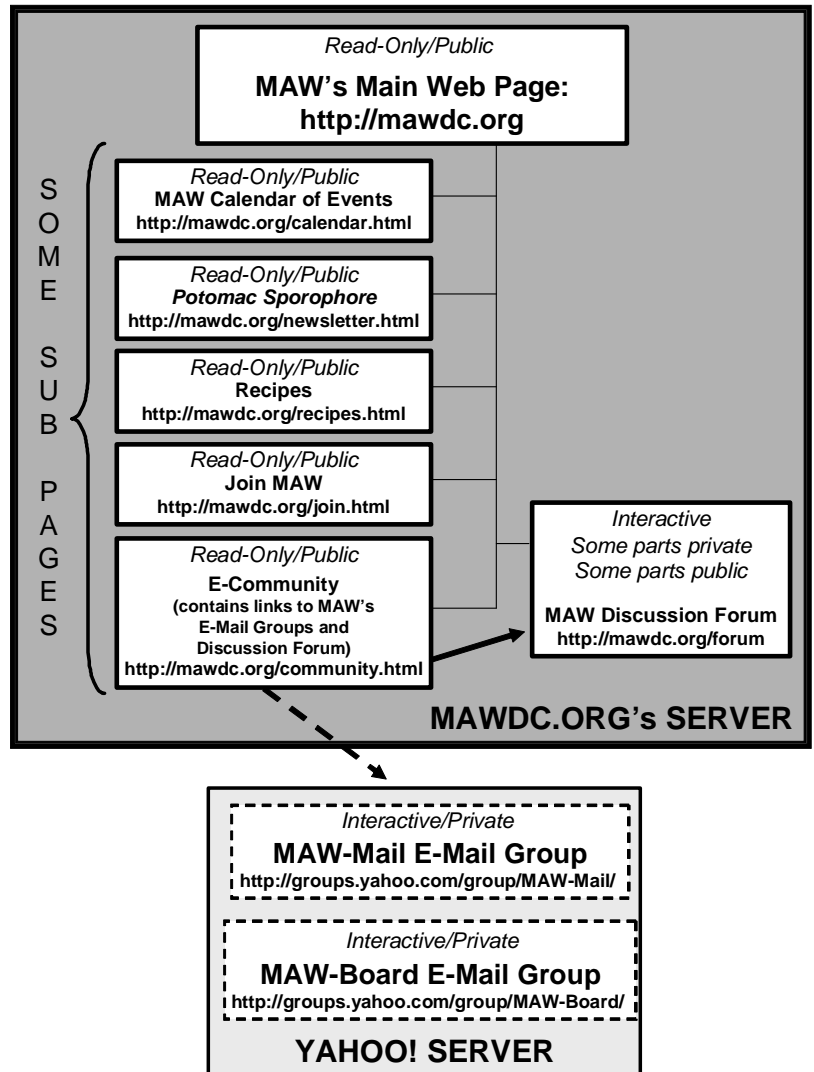
To the right is a diagram I hope will help members see how the various parts of MAW online fit together. Feel free to contact me anytime, at webmaster@mawdc.org, should you have further questions.

Growing Shitake Mushrooms

Jim Sherry

Growing shitake mushrooms on logs is exploding in popularity because it is easy to do and because the shitake is a choice mushroom with lots of nutritional and medicinal benefits for the consumer. The only hurdle to overcome is getting logs and, maybe, having a yard. The spawn plugs from which the shitake grow are inexpensive and the technology is simple.

The Chinese began the culture of shitake mushrooms (*Lentinus edodes*) over a thousand years ago but until 1972 our government did not allow the shitake to be imported because it thought that the shitake



attacked railroad ties – actually it was another species of *Lentinus* that attacked the ties. In more recent times, the Japanese have contributed to the technology of cultivating the shitake (or shiitake)..

There are many benefits to eating shitake but the medicinal one is particularly noteworthy: The shitake have antiviral and immune-boosting properties, they help lower cholesterol and they help regulate blood pressure. In addition, extracts from the shitake are used to treat cancer, AIDS, and other diseases.

Getting Started...Logs from the white oak tree are preferred in growing shitake but most hardwood logs with moderately thick barks will do. Some other trees that are found in our area and that are suitable are: hornbeam, hophornbeam, sweet gum, and maple (only sugar).

Some say that the tree should be logged

after it has lost its leaves, when there is sap in the wood, but others say that the sap is not a factor as much as the condition of the bark and, thus, the tree can be felled any time of the year. The reason some prepare the tree in the fall/winter months is that during these months the log is less likely to be successfully invaded by alien spores. .

After the log is cut from the tree, wait three weeks to allow the anti-fungus and other compounds that are in the log to degrade; otherwise, these compounds could resist the growth of the shitake's mycelium. Do not use cured logs.

Cut the logs to a 3 to 4 foot length from a tree with a diameter of between 4 and 10 inch (because the hornbeams are smaller trees, a 2" diameter will suffice). Start drilling the holes three inches from the log's end and make the holes 3 to 4 inches apart from each other until you have drilled around the log's circumference. Next, start another

row of holes that is three to four inches away from the first row and then repeat this until you come to the other end of the log. Try to stagger the holes so that they are not in a line.

The spawn, which contains the spores, comes in two popular forms: 1. the thimble spawn, which requires a 7/16" wood bit and with which you drill a hole that is one inch deep and 2. the dowel spawn, which requires a 5/16" wood bit and with which you drill holes which are 1 1/4" deep.

Put the spawn plugs into the holes. The thimble spawn comes with a styrofoam cap, which protects the spawn. If you wish to cover the dowel spawn you can melt wax over each hole, but this is not necessary. You will have to tap the dowel spawn into the hole with a hammer.

After the logs have been plugged you can stack them horizontally on each other or on a lattice or you can stand them up against a railing. They shouldn't have direct contact with the ground so stand them on some material, such as, sand, rocks or leaves. The logs should be placed in a mostly-shaded area. Water them periodically so that the wood remains damp but you should also allow the bark to dry out after a watering. As you can see, there are different ways of doing this, and the more you read the more differences you will find, but that only means that there is margin for error

When you see mycelium growing at the cut end of the log, perhaps in 6 to 24 months, put the logs in a barrel of water and soak them for 24 hours. In a few days you should have shitake mushrooms appearing on your logs (this soaking is said to stress or shock the mycelium into a reproductive mode).

After the first pinning and harvest let the logs (mycelia) rest for 3 or 4 weeks and then put the logs into a barrel of water again for more shitake. During the winter months let the logs rest and start over again in the spring. The logs will produce mushrooms for three or four years or until the logs have no more food for the mycelium. At this point the logs will have much less weight.

Paul Goland has both types of spawn plugs; they are also available from the internet.

I found some of this information on the internet and I have also grown shitake from a tree that I cut down. And today I called a local treeman who has agreed to sell me some oak logs at a modest price. I also have lots of hornbeam growing around here which I am eager to use.

There are other mushrooms that have

been grown on logs and some of our members have tried to grow the chicken mushroom and the lion's mane but the only mushroom that, to my knowledge, has been grown successfully by our members, aside from the shitake, is the pleurotus mushroom. The good news is that there are now about twenty mushrooms that are being cultivated and the trend is toward the cultivation of edible mushrooms, which, like the shitake, are also medicinal.

My Woods

Jim Sherry

When I was in college my professor thought that Joyce Kilmer's *TREES* was a poor poem because it was not logical. Perhaps that's so but the line "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree" reflects the fact that trees are one of nature's grandest achievements.

Perhaps some of us can recall climbing trees and spending pre-adolescent times sitting in trees while talking with friends. While doing this, the last thing that occurred to me was what the name of the tree was that I was climbing.

As a grownup, having become somewhat more obsessive about naming the phenomena of my surroundings, I have been for years, though somewhat casually, trying to identify trees by their leaves. But now, in looking for mushrooms, and knowing that the name of a tree is useful, I am more motivated than ever to know trees, and especially to know them by their barks, because the bark is with us in every season and because in the forest the leaves are often too high to see, for purposes of identification.

There are some trees whose barks are easy to know, like the beech and birch and the sycamore, though the sycamore can fool you because its bark does not always peel. And some trees, like the white oak, and the maple, have a bark that changes as it ages.

This is the story of the woods that I walk in. It's a woods that grows along a stream so some of its trees are quite large and this is because, I assume, the farmers of the past didn't find it useful to plant near a stream

My woods is down the slope from our house. It isn't wide but it's long and in some places it is hilly. I almost never see anyone else in it so I have come to think of it as my private woods-even on week-ends there are no kids playing in these woods. Deer come through regularly, but most of the time I see

them from the house, not while I am in the woods. Maria is not happy about the fact that they eat her hostas.

The main tree that grows in these woods is the tulip poplar. A ranger at Great Falls Park told me that the American chestnut was once the dominant tree of the Appalachian area before it was wiped out by a blight. According to him, the tulip poplar has replaced the chestnut as the most prevalent tree in the eastern mountains and foothills.

The tulip poplar grows very straight. The groves of its bark are also fairly straight and often have a light grey coloring. Near the bottom of the tree the bark's ridges tend to form x's. When the tree is young it has a smoother bark, almost like a beech but darker in color. Since it grows very tall you can identify its crown from a distance because it forms a shape that looks like one end of a football.

In the woods, the tulip poplar sheds its lower limbs and looks like ship's mast but out in an open field it looks like a different tree because it retains its lower limbs. Some times two, three an even four trunks of this poplar merge together to form one large, single base.

The tulip poplar is associated in my mind with two mushrooms: the morel and the pleurotus. In the spring morels are often found in tulip poplar stands, particularly if there are also mayapples growing in the area. In the fall, especially after mid-November, I find most of the pleurotus that I do find, growing on tulip poplar logs that are near streams. I find lots of pleurotus, and some morels.

The White Oak. The oak is associated with more mushrooms than any other hardwood. In the Maryland area the white oak is the most predominant oak. Perhaps that is the reason that the white oak is Maryland's state tree. Marylanders were saddened when the Wye oak fell over two years ago. It was over 400 years old and was the best known white oak in America.

The bark of the white oak is slightly whitish in color and has rectangular plaques in the lower part of its trunk. At a higher level the bark becomes more shaggy. The branches of the tree extend out horizontally from the trunk, which is typical of oaks, especially if they are growing out in the sun.

Some of the edible mushrooms that are found with oaks, though not specifically with white oaks, are: hen-of-the woods, chanterelles, boletes, the beefsteak polypore,

and the umbrella polypore. I have found most of these mushrooms in my woods but not in significant numbers.

The Scarlet Oak. The scarlet oak has a bark with shallow ridges and its groves have a red-brown coloring. All of the hens-of-the-wood that I found this past year were growing under scarlet oak. All of these trees were living, except one, which died last year. I mention this only because one very experienced mushrooms hunter has never found the hen under a living tree.

I have found morels, boletes, chicken mushrooms, edible russelas, and other edible polypores in these woods, though usually not enough to dehydrate

Well, that is some of the story of my trips to these woods. So long.



Common Name: Artist's Conk, Shelf Fungus, Tree Tongue, Kofukitake
Scientific Name: *Ganoderma applanatum*
(from Latin "flattened")

A large, flat-bottomed bracket fungus that is attached at a single lateral stipe to the trunks of broad-leaved trees. The upper surface is marked by concentric light brown rings which become crusted and darker brown as the fungus ages.

Potpourri: The name Artist's Conk refers to the fact that the white underside of the bracket turns immediately and permanently brown when it is injured. A small needle can be used to etch light and dark brown (according to the pressure used) while chiaroscuro can be achieved by lightly pressing the surface with the fingertips.

Ganoderma applanatum is a perennial polypore that can live as long as 50 years. It has been used for a variety of dietary and medicinal purposes for millennia by hominids and is considered a delicacy by modern gorillas, which have been known to fight over it, causing intragroup dissention until solved by the silverback.

The dried Artist's Conk can be cut into large chunks and burned to produce a pleasant smelling smoke that reportedly is an effective insect repellent. A bitter tea can be produced by boiling the fungus for several hours. The tea has diuretic effects and has antimicrobial properties, making it a potential medicinal treatment. It has been shown to be active against a broad range of bacteria, including *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*).

- Wm. Needham

Who Owns the Mushrooms

J.S.

In an article that appeared recently in *Mushroom: the Magazine* the author of an article entitled: "Whose Mushrooms are they Anyway" wrote about a few friends who complained that some unknown person had the temerity to harvest chicken and hen mushrooms that they had been planning to harvest themselves, after the mushrooms grew bigger.

This is an experience that some of the readers might have had or, at least, could imagine having.

The point of the article was that if one spots a mushroom in a public woods and one doesn't pick it, is it reasonable for one to get upset if it's not there when one returns for it. (I have always found it difficult to find the same tree twice, even when I have marked it).

The author stressed the point that both of her friends were members of a mushroom club that encouraged the public to join their club and they both had taken people on forays to show them where they could find mushrooms.

This may be what psychologists call: *cognitive dissonance*-a contradiction between what one says and what one does, or thinks- or it could be called hypocrisy.

The author's solution was quite drastic: shut down the clubs and keep quiet about the whereabouts of mushrooms.

The article does raise a question about how many people we want to see out there in the fields and mountains competing with us for mushrooms.

Some people say "let them come". When we were in Italy for a mushroom foray we went one day to a mountain and as we drove up the mountain road we saw people at all levels of the road with baskets on their arms. Most of them were in family groups.

Here in America we seldom encounter anyone when looking for mushrooms and if we do they are usually hiking. If they learn that we are looking for mushrooms they are sort of curious or amused

I guess we don't have to worry about Americans overloading on mushrooms but I am not talking.