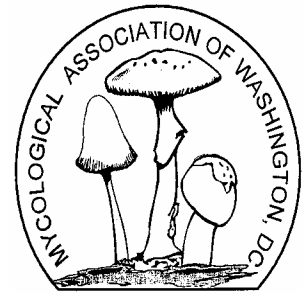


Potomac Sporophore



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MAW DUES
(Due each January)
Please send 2006 MAW dues to:

Membership Chair
1903 Powhatan Rd.
Hyattsville, MD, 20782
\$20.00 Single; \$30.00, Other.

FORAY SCHEDULE

Good day MAW members! So, this oddball winter (spring, fall? Was this winter?) is coming to a close and it is almost time to get out in the woods again. I know some of you have still been out (you know who you are!) to see what bounty the winter months can provide. I imagine with this winter being as it was you most likely were rewarded.

Being relatively new to the group, and to morel hunting as well, I don't have a wealth of background to fall back on to predict what we should expect this coming morel season. Being from Louisiana I know I never saw one there. I don't know if that has to do with mild winters or other factors such as soil conditions and plant associations. If they do prefer a nice cold winter then they may not show up in such force. On the other hand, a mild winter may give the mycelium a chance to continue growing and absorbing nutrients and therefore we may see a nice flush this season. Of course the main factor I think we should focus on is the rain we receive before and during the time they decide to show themselves.

Well, that's my two cents. Take it with a grain of salt, or some butter and cream if you prefer. So before getting to the schedule I would like to ask for any requests to be put on the foray e-mail notification list. Just send me an e-mail at forays@mawdc.org and I will add you.

THE SCHEDULE

April 4th: A foray at [Rock Creek Park](#), Washington DC, with Walt Sturgeon as our guest mycologist. Note. The foray will take place in the afternoon so be alert to the posted notice on the phone line and on your e-mail. .

April 15th: First morel scout at [C&O Canal Park](#), Great Falls, Maryland

April 23rd: Our first try at [Watkins Regional State Park](#), Upper Marlboro, MD

April 30th: The hunt continues at [C&O Canal Park](#), Great Falls, Maryland

May 6th -7th: Two days at the [Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center](#) in Front Royal, VA

May 13th: A tentative foray at **the [Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center](#)** in Front Royal, VA. (check announcement line)

May 20th: An exploration of Gambrills State Park, near Frederick, MD.

July 16th: On the lookout for Chanterelles, [Rock Creek Park](#), Washington DC.
*identification only

July 23rd: A stroll through, [Scott's Run Nature Preserve](#), McLean, VA

As usual this is a tentative schedule. Due to environmental conditions some of these dates may change. To find out if the foray is still scheduled for that date just call the announcement line at: (301) 907-3053 and then go to mailbox 55 for forays.

Thanks! See you out there! MITCH

MAW CUSTOM

Members of MAW should not foray in the area that is scheduled for a club foray during the week just prior to the date of the scheduled foray.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE FOR 2006

WILLIAM NEEDHAM

The speakers at the monthly MAW meetings are as follows:

April - Walt Sturgeon, an active member of the North American Mycological Association (NAMA) and one of the best amateur mushroom identifiers in the mid-Atlantic region will speak on the subject of the mushrooms of spring. Walt has been the guest mycologist at several MAW weekend forays at Camp Sequanota in Pennsylvania.

May - Spring tasting meeting

June - Coleman McLenahan from North Carolina will give a presentation on the Fungi of the Great Smokey Mountains.

July - A representative from the Maryland Native Plant Society will give a presentation on the identification of trees.

August - Gary Lincoff, former President of the North American Mycological Association and author of *A Guide to the Poisonous Mushrooms in the Greater New York Area* and the *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms* will give a presentation on hallucinogenic mushrooms.

WILDFOOD TASTING – Tuesday, May 2, 2006

MAW will hold its annual Wild Foods Tasting Meeting at the Chevy Library Chevy Chase Library located at 8005 Connecticut Avenue in Chevy Chase, Maryland. on Tuesday, May 2th, 2006, at 7:00PM. "Wild Foods" include mushrooms (of course), as well as other edible wild plants (ramps, fiddleheads, etc), fish and game). Since this event

occurs during morel season we hope to see some morel dishes, as well as dishes using other dried mushrooms. And, remember, if you don't find any mushrooms, you can always gather *shitake*, *porcini*, and other fresh and dried mushrooms at your local grocery store or from our own Paul Goland!

In addition to dishes brought by members, we will also be procuring a variety of fresh mushrooms (shiitake, beech, portabella, and others) from Phillips Mushrooms in Kennett Square, PA. **I am looking for volunteers to cook these mushrooms at the Tasting.** Please contact me by phone at 703-243-0445 (home) or via e-mail at ITCLLC@AOL.COM to volunteer. The mushrooms will not be available until the evening of the Tasting so you will have to bring your pots and pans, ingredients, cooking and serving utensils to the meeting.

Tasting events offer members the opportunity to sample a variety of mushrooms and, in the case of the Wild Foods Tasting, other wild foods. The success of the Tasting depends on the willingness of members to share their mushrooms and other wild foods and to take the time to prepare a dish or to volunteer.

To insure the success of this event, please observe the following rules:

- Admission to the Tasting is limited to MAW members in good standing. Members who have not yet paid their 2006 dues, non-members and guests of members must renew their membership or join MAW at the Tasting. Admission to the event is FREE to persons bringing a dish (1 dish per person, please) and \$10.00 without a dish.
- Members who volunteer in advance to assist with the Tasting (set up, registration desk) need not bring a dish and will not be required to pay a fee, however, you must contact me to volunteer prior to the event.
- Those members whose dishes include hand-gathered wild

mushrooms or other wild plants must bring them uncooked to the Tasting for identification by a MAW designated inspector (Jon Ellifritz or Ray LaSala).

Alternatively, you may contact one of the inspectors and have them inspect the mushrooms prior to the event. Any hand-gathered wild mushrooms that cannot be identified as edible by the inspectors may not be served at a Tasting event.

- Members who utilize wild mushrooms purchased at a grocery or specialty store will be required to execute an affidavit at the door attesting to the purchase.
- Each dish should be divided into **tasting** portions to accommodate approximately 40 persons. Remember, this is a **tasting** event, not a dinner party.
- All dishes should be named and must be accompanied by a list of ingredients.
- All attendees (members and guests) must complete and sign a registration form and liability waiver upon entry.
- Those who intend to cook their dish at the Tasting may arrive at the library as early as 6:30 p.m. Eight gas stoves will be available on a first come, first served basis. You may bring your own gas or electric stove. As electrical outlets are limited in number, please bring an extension cord if you bring your own electric cooker. Please be prepared to start serving by 7:30PM.

As in the past, prizes will be awarded for the best dishes based on a vote of the members in attendance.

Please bring a dish or volunteer to cook mushrooms at the Tasting! Thank you!
Ilona Conolly, Culinary Chair

2006 Schedule of Major MAW and Non-Maw Mushroom Events

Tuesday, May 2 - MAW's Wild Food
Tasting, Chevy Chase
Library, Maryland (8005
Connecticut Avenue)

Date TBD (mid-July to mid-August) -
MAW's Lost River, WV
Foray Weekend (Fri. evening to
Sunday lunch)

August 17 - 20 - NAMA Foray at
Hinton Training Centre, Hinton,
Alberta, Canada, near Jasper
National Park

September 1 - 4 (Friday-Monday) -
NEMF 12th Annual Sam Ristich
Foray at St. Anthony's Hermitage,
Lac-Bouchette, Quebec, Canada

Saturday, Sept. 16 - Western
Pennsylvania Mushroom Club's
Annual
Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic
Mushroom Mania Foray - Pittsburgh

Sunday, Oct. 1 - MAW's Fifth
Annual Mushroom Fair - Brookside
Gardens Visitors' Center, Wheaton,
Maryland

Tuesday, Oct. 3 or Tues., Oct. 10 -
MAW's Wild Mushroom Tasting

Friday, Oct. 6 - Sunday, Oct. 8 -
MAW's Camp Sequanota Foray
Weekend, near Somerset, PA

**Good News: The 2007 NAMA FORAY
will take place August 16-19 in
Pipestem, WVA.**

**According to Paul Stamets, the
mushroom's mycelium can be selected
and trained to breakdown toxic waste,
reducing it to harmless metabolites.**

THE CLINKER POLYPORE

William Needham

Common Name: Clinker Polypore,
Clinker Fungus, Cinder Conk, Birch
Canker Polypore, Black Mass, Sterile
Conk Trunk Rot of Birch - A clinker is a
hard mass of fused stony material that is
formed in a furnace, usually black in
color; the fungus is so-named for its
resemblance to furnace clinkers. Black
Mass and Cinder Conk also refer to the
amorphous shape and the burnt charcoal
color of the fungus.

Scientific Name: *Inonotus obliquus* -
The generic name refers to the fibrous,
hairy surface of the fungus; *obliquus* is
Latin for slanting, sideways or on one
side and refers to the oblique orientation
of the pores on the fruiting body; also
known as *Polyporus obliquus* and *Poria
obliqua*



The *Inonotus obliquus* is a prolific
and well known fungus in Eastern and
Northern Europe, particularly in Russia.
This is in part because of the prevalence
of birch trees in these areas, the normal
host of the parasitic clinker polypore. In
Russia, it is called **Chaga** (anglicized
from Czaga), which is purportedly
derived from the word for mushroom in
the Komi-Permyak language of the native
peoples in the Kama River Basin just
west of the Ural Mountains. In
Norwegian, it is called *kreftkjuka*, which
literally translates as "cancer polypore,"
referring either to the alleged medicinal
properties of the fungus or to the fact that
it looks like a cancerous growth.

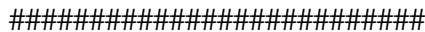
The *Inonotus obliquus* is also widely
distributed in Western Europe and in
North America. The English and
Canadians know it as the Sterile Conk
Trunk Rot of Birch whereas the French
call it *Carie Blanche Spongieuse de*

Bouleau (spongy white birch tree rot). In
Germany, it is called *Schiefer
Schillerporling*. These more prosaic
names characterize the knobby,
blackened appearance of the fungus and
its effect on birch trees. The fungus has
two stages, a sterile hardened perennial
conk that produces no spores and an
annual, fertile fruiting body that appears
after the host birch tree is dead. The
growth of the sterile conk on the bark of
a birch tree results in severe damage to
the heartwood and death of the tree in 5
to 7 years. Once the tree is dead, the
fertile fruiting bodies grow under the
outer layers of wood surrounding the
sterile conk and spread spores for
propagation. The name Sterile Conk
Trunk Rot of Birch is therefore apt, if
labored.

The Chaga has been used as a folk
medicine in the Northern reaches of
Eurasia for millennia. It is highly prized
in Siberia as a cleansing and disinfecting
substance, particularly in the treatment of
stomach disorders. It has been used to
treat a wide range of ailments, including
digestive and liver cancers, tuberculosis
or consumption, ulcers and as an
analgesic with anti-inflammatory
properties for the treatment of gastritis.
The sterile conk was knocked off a tree
with an ax, the black outer skin removed,
and the yellowish internal mycelia mixed
with water and boiled to produce tea. The
mass that remained in the pot was used as
a poultice to prevent the spread of
infection on wounds.

Chaga gained notoriety in the West
with the publication of Alexandr
Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* in 1968. In
the novel, a country doctor named Sergei
Maslennikov notes that his muzhik
(peasant) patients never contracted
cancer. Further investigation reveals that
they are too poor to buy tea; using a
fungus that grows on birch trees called
chaga instead. With syllogistic logic, he
concludes that if they drink chaga and
have no cancers, then chaga must prevent
cancer. As the novel is for the most part
autobiographical, Solzhenitsyn was
treated for what was supposedly terminal
cancer in a ward, it is likely that he used
it to treat himself. Chaga has been an
approved anti-cancer drug in Russia since
1955. Chaga is also a good fire-starter,
like *Fomes fomentarius*, the Tinder
Fungus.

Research over the last twenty years has confirmed that *Inonotus obliquus* is a viable medicine for numerous diseases, particularly uterine, breast, lung, cervical and gastric cancers. Scientific experiments have been conducted to demonstrate that extracts of the Chaga fungus inhibit the growth of cervical cancer cells in vitro and possess anti-viral properties that act against HIV and influenza. The most recent and definitive work has been carried out by Dr. Kahlos at the University of Finland, isolating an anti-tumor triterpene called inotodiol (from *Inonotus*). Thus, Chaga is a viable medicine, and is sold as an herbal remedy. The instructions written in Cyrillic on the side of the box (right) are: "Use for chronic gastritis, atonic intestines (constipation), gastric ulcer, duodenal ulcer, and for controlling symptoms of oncological problems of the gastrointestinal tract. Use 50 grams of raw material in 500 milliliters of warm distilled water."



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AN EXCITING EVENING

MAW members sure like to attend those monthly meetings which discuss food. They were not disappointed at our February meeting when Brian Patterson, Executive Chef of the Washington Office of the American Medical Association, demonstrated how he cooks wild mushrooms.

Chef Patterson spoke showed great verve and fun as he interacted with the MAW members. He challenged some of the treasured notions of his audience when he said that dried mushrooms that are reconstituted with water were not tasty and that cooking mushrooms with wine was not a good idea because both contain oxalic acid. He was very forceful in his views but he was also quite charming in his manner.

Chef Patterson demonstrated how delicious a roasted head of garlic cooked with olive oil and rosemary is and he cooked and we sampled a number of his mushroom dishes, which were very tasty. J.S.
