



# S O M M A

VOLUME 25 : 1-2

SEPT & OCT 2012



## SPEAKER OF THE MONTH – SEPTEMBER

### Todd Osmundson

September 20th at 7pm

Dr. Osmundson's research interests are in the systematics, evolution, ecology, and conservation biology of microbial organisms — current and recent research systems include ectomycorrhizal fungi, microfungi, and bacteria. Knowledge about the evolution, dispersal, and interactions of these organisms is critical for understanding ecosystem function and predicting how diversity will be impacted by threats like climate change and habitat loss and fragmentation.



## SPEAKER OF THE MONTH – OCTOBER

### Terry Henkel

October 18th at 7pm

Dr. Henkel's research has pioneered the study of macrofungal biodiversity and ecological relationships in the tropical rainforests of South America's Guiana Shield, one of the most remote, pristine, and poorly studied tropical regions of the world. Locally, Henkel and graduate students have examined the overlooked, but important roles of indigenous forest pathogenic fungi in shaping community structure of coniferous forests of the northern California Coast Range.

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## CALENDAR

September 20th ————— Speaker at Farm Bureau at 7pm  
*Todd Osmundson*

September 22nd ————— Foray at Salt Point State Park

October 18th ————— Speaker at Farm Bureau at 7pm  
*Terry Henkel*

October 20th ————— Foray at Salt Point State Park

## LIMERICKS BY CHARMOON

I once heard that boletes can giggle  
 If given just the right jiggle  
 It's a tickle that comes when  
 All the maggots in the stem  
 Cause the whole thing to wiggle

I once heard a pine tree lament  
 It could not get spores to consent  
 To germinate nearby  
 So its mycelia could try  
 To make a full compliment

## EMERGENCY MUSHROOM POISONING ID



After seeking medical attention, contact Darwin DeShazer for identification at (707) 829-0596. Photos should be emailed to: [muscaria@pacbell.net](mailto:muscaria@pacbell.net) and need to show all sides of the mushroom. Please **do not** send photos taken with cell phones – the resolution is simply too poor to allow accurate identification. NOTE: Always be 100% sure of the identification of any and all mushrooms before you eat them!

This is a free service for hospitals, veterinarians, and other concerned citizens of Sonoma County.

## FROM THE FRONT DESK

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## President's Letter

### DISPATCH FROM THE DUFF

Welcome new SOMA members and all returning members to the 2012-2013 wild mushroom collecting season in Northern California.

The SOMA Board Members for this season will be Amy BeberVanzo, Tom Campbell, Ben Garland (Newsletter Editor), Patrick Hamilton, Karen Kruppa (Treasurer), Lee McCarthy-Smith, Chris Murray, Julie Schreiber, Rachel Zierdt, Gene Zierdt (Secretary), and me. Tom is the Bookstore Keeper and Gene is the Board Secretary as of June. A goal for this year is to add two members for open Board of Director positions. I will be asking a number of people from the membership to lend a hand.

This mushroom season could be very promising. A slightly cooler and wetter winter weather pattern is expected this year. Mike Halpert, deputy director of NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, said that La Niña, the coupled ocean-atmosphere phenomena, returned this August. It is expected that it will evolve, gradually strengthen and shape the winter. From experience, this may mean colder and wetter conditions than average for 2012-2013 in Sonoma County and Northern California. Your SOMA Board got an early start and is prepared. The rain tarp, support poles and hoisting lines have been checked, cleaned, and repaired. Tarp erection training has started and SOMA is in a position to handle all weather conditions again.

The SOMA version of the contract to implement a permit system for wild mushroom collection at Salt Point State Park was sent to the State in July. It is in the hands of the legal group of the California State Park system for review. Best estimate is that we will see their response sometime this fall. As you are aware, the rollercoaster events of the spring and summer has many non-profit groups, who volunteered to take an active role in managing and maintaining a state park, a bit mystified. We spoke to the local Ranger Supervisor last week. She explained forth-rightly that nothing had changed in the Salt Point State Park plan. She assured us that folks are working to resolve all contract issues and to discuss any proposed changes in the contract as soon as possible. So, we continue to plan the best method to implement the system, and how best to educate the public and membership on the potential benefits of the system.

In addition to the Permit System, the Board took on another task this summer because of changes the State Legislature made to laws and regulations that govern incorporated, non-profit groups. A number of revisions were made to improve transparency of accounting practices and reporting sales tax collections. The Board needs to be much better informed and has scheduled meetings and interviews with folks who can help us. The question does remain if there might be a member of SOMA who could also advise the Board. We must be completely aware of all legal requirements in order to carry out our duties and prepare the next Board members for their roles. Please call Jim Wheeler at 707-823-1376, if you think you can help or if you know of someone who could help.

So, as in the past, we begin this promising season with the effort at Salt Point State Park to remove all debris that is not from nature in our meeting spot, the Woodside Campground, and along nearby Highway One. Please join us for a few hours of hauling and disposing, and then another lovely walk in the forest, followed by a delicious pot-luck lunch on September 22nd.

There remain a number of items in the "Found" box I couldn't dispose of ... just yet: "Eddie Bauer" red, winter, jacket; "Keen Hiking" shoes and socks; "Great Land" backpack with "Chase Miller" written inside; Black mesh tote bag, very good quality, with other objects; "Staples" thumb drive. None of the items is probably not yours but they do belong to someone ... someone you might know.

Best regards -- Jim Wheeler

# Take The Lids Off The Dyepots!

Dorothy Beebee ©2012

**The *Pisolithus tinctorius* are coming! The *Pisolithus tinctorius* are coming!** This was my first reaction when Darwin just emailed me about the first sighting of the season... Then Susan brought down a frozen *Omphalotus olivascens* from last year's crop near Cottonwood, and the inevitability of the incoming dye season is starting to take hold...

The ubiquitous puffball *Pisolithus tinctorius*, as the name "tinctorius" implies, is a veritable treasure-trove for pigment, releasing colors in a range from the darkest brown-black to a rich gold dye on wool, silk, hemp and cotton depending on the age of the fungus and proportions used. Look for it on dry roadsides or fields, or even erupting up through an asphalt driveway!

This fungus is a real pain to use when it is fully mature, because all of the little pea-like structures within have turned to very fine dusty spores, and it becomes quite literally "hydrophobic", defying going into a solution without a fight. Best to be armed with a dust mask and heavy stones on top of a heavy plate you don't ever want to use again, to hold down those spores under water and under

control in the dyebath! That is why a fresh gooey immature is primo! However, I will take them in any condition, and confined to a plastic bag and frozen, or in a tightly lidded jar, they can be used for many a future dyebath.

*Pisolithus tinctorius* is a "substantive" dye fungus, which can be used effectively without a mordant to produce a golden yellow with good light and colorfastness. Or pre-mordant with alum for a brassy gold with a greenish highlight (dependent on mineral content of the water) or with an iron mordant for the richest darkest hues. *Pisolithus tinctorius* is a steadfast friend of the mushroom dyer, whether beginner or advanced, and richly deserves our highest praise!

And watch out for the *Phaeolus schweinitzii*! Next in the *March of the Dye Mushrooms!*



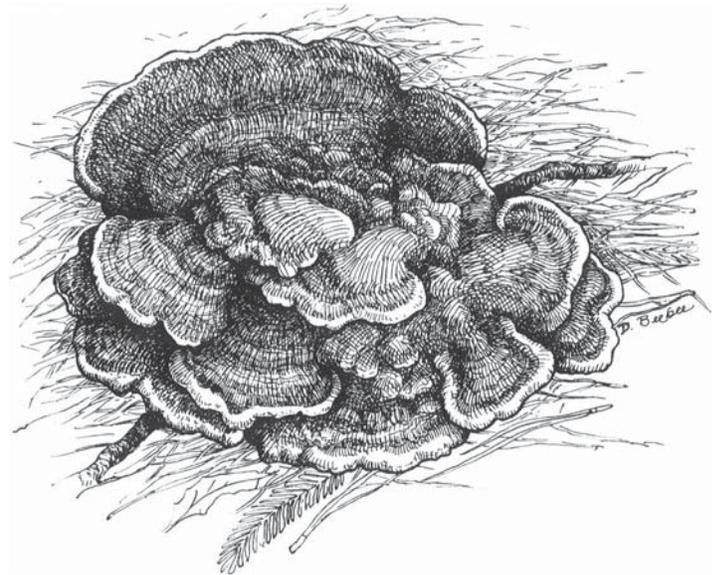
## Phaeolus On The Pharm

Dorothy Beebee ©2012

Come the first week of October, I have a "pet" *Phaeolus schweinitzii* down the backyard slope where once Douglas fir grew straight and tall, which never lets me down – the one true harbinger of Autumn whether or not we've had rain. Granted that the dye's color intensity is fuller, and brighter if there has been some moisture, but it is a true beginning of the mushroom dye calendar for me.

First it appears as a small bright yellow velvety "burble" on the ground anywhere within a 12 ft radius of an old Douglas fir stump, sometimes right on the steps down to my laundry room where there's very little natural light. Within a day or two, it slowly evolves into thick concentric rings of lovely burnt-sienna suede, each ring with a different texture and hue, and always with a brilliant yellow outermost rim. The pores underneath (for this is a polypore) are also yellowish in the beginning, then brownish-yellow with age. The spore print is rusty brown. I've promised myself to someday do a daily watercolor or colored pencil studies of the next one to appear. Maybe this year...

The dyes produced by the pigment in *P. schweinitzii* are just as spectacular as the fungus' own autumnal appearance. We use *potassium alum* as a "mordant" (A mordant is a "metallic salt" which attaches itself to the scales of the wool or silk fibers when simmered in water for an hour). The dye pigment in the mushroom then "fastens" onto the mordant on the fibers to lock in the color. Many dyes can be used without any mordant, including *Phaeolus*, but a mordant can also change the shade of the original dye thereby opening up the possibility for a wider range of hues from one dyebath. The only other mordant which Miriam sanctioned the use of is *ferrous sulfate*



(iron) which will darken the original color. Subsequent dye baths will produce lighter colors. Yet, there is nothing to equal that first *outrageous* daffodil yellow dye of *Phaeolus*, which transforms a silk scarf or woolen hat into shimmering gold! Older specimens of this fungus (when the yellow rim has darkened) will produce equally lovely, but more subdued bronze and umber hues.

Between the *Pisolithus* of September and the *Phaeolus* of October you have a spread of all the possible mushroom dye hues of Autumn! Give them a try!

# Musings and Other Amusements (and Maybe Even a Profundity)

## The Old Mushroomer

"I have often taken the road more stupidly traveled." The Old Mushroomer remarked to Good Buddy on a dumb, long, and probably too early trip to the Sierras for fall edulis.

"You sure we not doing that again? Reading the signs poorly? Not understanding what's there before us?"

"You know that dialogue box that comes up from time to time on the "On Demand" TV where it says something like "this has been formatted for your TV?" Well I always thought it was personal, just about me, my TV and them, they looking out for just me. That sort of thing. Not so. I did read that sign poorly.

"You know, songs have been recirculating on the merry-go-round that is my sometimes brain.

"I've been running down the road trying to loosen my load" is part of one of them.

"Huh? How 'bout we stop at the next gas station?"

"Nah—no need. It's just a song but making me a bit crazy, I think. Wish you could tell if I was or not, but that never was a strength of yours. But I do thank you for never letting me know, one way or the the other.

"Remember when we were wandering in the wilderness up in the Yukon a few years back somewhere about 100 miles north of Whitehorse, picking that big burn all crazy and such? Had a lot of fun on that scorched place but I couldn't enjoy it thoroughly because I was not moving too well after the fight with that crazed momma Grizzly. Hell—her cub was ugly anyhow and really too small to eat and its coat wouldn't have been big enough to warm my English bulldog, Pug.

"For those uninformed amongst you I was trying that Frenchie mountain man bear fighting technique where you grab the uvula and yank it straight down and then to the sides like this."

"Get your damn hand out of my throat, you old crazed coot."

"What? You're not enunciating clearly, Good Buddy. Take a few deep ones, inhale slowly and concentrate on some better pronunciation."

"You are nuts. How's this sound—clear—you old fart?"

"I am busy relating this tale and don't have the inkling to discuss your articulation any longer.

"Anyhow then you stare real mean-like into the bear's eyes. It's ain't as simple as it might sound to well—simple folk like you. I

mean if in the future you find yourself in a similar situation I'd move that darn slippery uvula from side to side first, getting a better grip all the while, and then with all your might yank that sucker down until ole Mr or Mrs Bear's eyes start popping. Yep—that' what I'd do. (And do try to avoid getting a full-on blast of stinkin' bear breath. Bad, bad, stuff.)

"Out of the corner of my good eye I recall you jumping up and down, all weird and all, and I thought you were distracting big momma while I could take my arm from down her throat and get away.

"But no you weren't interested in aiding me. You'd stepped on some kind of real nasty yellow jackets' nest and were just expressing yourself. Selfish is what I was thinking.

"But you did carry me those 5 miles back to our 1953 Chevie pick up we had then and I insisted on holding on to those sacks of morels and all you did was complain about how much it all weighed. Selfish, again, Buddy.

"And that's why I did not cut you in for a full share of the mushroom money. You deserved less and that is what you got, Friend. It was cool how we loaded that haul and the 350 pounds from the days before onto that helicopter but the \$3.50 a pound from the buyer was not."

"Just out of curiosity why do you keep calling me different names?"

"Just following the script. And let's turn in. All this is making me tired, grumpy and maybe given to even more of this drivel."

As Good Buddy made cowboy coffee in the morning after yet another awful night of having to hear The Old Mushroomer snore, spew out sleep talking a commercial picker fresh back from an R & R to Carnack wouldn't claim, plus he had had to listen to the ancient and creaky guy get up to pee every hour or so, he asked:

"Back last evening you said you were 'following the script'. What's the script?"

"It's what's written here and we got to follow it, go along with, so to speak."

"Why?"

"Better question is: 'Why not?'"

"What if we don't?"

"Well—it stops right here then."

*Read the above before the expiration date printed on the SOMA News back page. Recipe on next page.*



# SOUR CREAM MUSHROOM CHOWDER

Patrick Hamilton

Hey—it's recipe time! And The Old Mushroomer asked me to dig into one of the mushroom cookbook dwellers in our library and I came up with the following from the Mycological Society of San Francisco's Kitchen Magic With Mushrooms, printed in 1963 and

given to me by the Late Great Larry Stickney in 1998.

It will be oyster mushroom season soon and this a good use of them. Adding shrimp or clams, etc., just makes it, to me, a bit better. I also adapted it a little to more my style.

Servings: 4 Bowls Preparation Time: 00:30

Amount	Unit	Ingredient	Preparation
½	pound	oyster mushrooms	coarsely chopped
½	cup	onion, yellow	finely chopped
¼	cup	butter, unsalted	
1	cup	Yukon Gold potatoes S & P	3/8" dice
1	dash	mace, powdered	
1	dash	cloves, ground	
1	dash	Tabasco	
¼	teaspoon	thyme, dried	
2	cups	whole milk	scalded
2	each	egg yolks	
¼	cup	Sherry, dry	
2	cups	sour cream	
¼	cup	croutons	½" cubes, butter browned
2	tablespoons	Italian parsley	finely chopped

1. Sauté the mushrooms and onions over medium heat until the mushrooms are tender—about 10-12 minutes.
2. Stir in the potatoes and cook 12-15 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
3. Add the seasonings and slowly stir in the milk. Boil. Remove from the heat. Slowly add egg yolks, well beaten with the Sherry. Add the sour cream and return to the heat. Allow the chowder to almost come to a boil. Adjust the seasonings.
4. Pour over the croutons and garnish with the parsley.

## JOIN SOMA!

Membership in the Sonoma County Mycological Association (SOMA) is a great way to meet and interact with other mushroom enthusiasts, learn more about identifying fungi, and share interests such as cooking and cultivating mushrooms. Sure, most of what SOMA does is open to the public, but wouldn't you rather join SOMA and get all the goodies?

Check out our membership page on the web...

<http://somamushrooms.org/membership/membership.html>

# SOMA Scholarship Update

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Rachel Zierdt

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The SOMA Board is proud to announce our latest scholarship recipient. His name is Alija Bajro Mujic who is a PhD candidate at Oregon State University. His studies include how plants and fungi work symbiotically. In his career he hopes to join a university faculty where he plans to focus upon integrating principals of fungal and plant ecology into agriculture, habitat conservation, and environmental restoration.

He first became interested in fungi while growing up in Sonoma. It was there that family friends first taught him how to harvest wild edible mushrooms. While attending the University of California at Santa Cruz his interest in mycology deepened as he learned more about mushroom taxonomy as a member of Santa Cruz Fungus Federation. In 2004 he graduated UCSC with honors in two majors: a BA in Environmental Studies and a BS in Computer Science.

Upon graduation, Alija was employed by Central Coast Wilds (CCW) an environmental consulting firm. The primary goals of

his studies at work were, "To seek low technology, low-cost, and low-retention time pollution control systems accessible to the farming community." At CCW, he was also responsible for design and implementation of native plant revegetation projects.

Combining his undergraduate studies and his work experience, Alija knew that his life path was, "To pursue knowledge of fungal/plant symbioses and their roles in terrestrial ecosystems in order to better inform our stewardship of the natural world."

We are hopeful that our \$1500 scholarship award will help him to achieve this endeavor. We are expecting that Alija will be speaking at one of our upcoming Thursday night meetings at the Farm Bureau.

Thank you also to all who attended camp this past year. It is through our Wild Mushroom Camp in January that we are able to raise funds to offer scholarships. In addition to this graduate scholarship, in 2012 SOMA has awarded four high schoolers and their teachers \$150 each for their entries at science fairs. In our efforts to encourage science learning in the lower grades we also awarded two smaller amounts to a first and third grader for their science projects.

## Oregon Coast Report

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Anna Moore

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After a second La Niña winter with very cool temps and lots of rain through June, the mushroom season was a little slow to get started. Several kinds of non-chlorophyll plants always show up in the late spring, like the Indian Pipe. By August every year the coastal woods are warming and the fungi are emerging. There was an early flush of matsutake in July that now has slowed - September/October/November are the most productive times in the pine filled sand dunes that line the ocean for 50 miles from Coos Bay to Florence.

Tiny chanterelle buttons can usually be seen in June with decent sized ones showing up in August and they continue to fruit in large numbers through December. There are at least three species of chanterelles that can be found along the coast in a variety of habitats. Lobster mushrooms started to break the ground in August as they emerged fully "transformed" from the parasitized *Russula brevipes*.

Also beginning in July/August were the young buttons of the

*Hydnum repandum* (hedgehogs). Besides edibles, there are always *Amanitas*, *Russulas* and *Cortinarius* genera. The Dye Hydrellums are one of the first mushrooms I notice along the trails and they continue to fruit for many months. The boletes are more sensitive to the later summer and early fall rains and can't be predicted as to when they will start to show up, but by late September some can always be found. October is the big month for the king bolete and is a sure bet by mid to late October. Besides great mushroom picking, the coast has an amazing huckleberry harvest usually beginning in August and lasting through December. There are great parks for camping all along the OR coast. If you are 62 or older the Golden Age Pass gets you free parking and half price camping at all the Forest Service sites.

Along with the great edible mushrooms you'll be cooking, you can buy fresh tuna and salmon at the docks right off the fishing boats. The best weather along the Coast is usually September, but October gets my vote for the best month of the year to visit Oregon.



# SOMA Camp 2013

Jill Nussinow

It's not too soon to mark your calendar for 2013 SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp, held from Saturday January 19th to Monday January 21st. This year, you can expect another great camp with changes that might make more aspects of camp accessible to you.

SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp offers many activity options over the three-day weekend, with new offerings every year. For 2013, the new "track" approach to scheduling will give campers the option to focus on areas of special interest if they wish. Tracks will include beginning identification & collection; fiber arts; cultivation; mushrooms in cooking; medicinal use of mushrooms; and current technologies in ID & classification. All activities are open to all campers, though some class sizes are limited, and some may require pre-registration (in fiber arts, and in some cultivation and cooking courses).

Stay tuned because you will hear more as camp shapes up. Looking forward to seeing you there. Mark your calendars NOW.



Photo credit: Anna Moore

## SOMA Camp 2013 – Volunteering

Lee McCarthy-Smith

We are already busy planning for the January 2013 SOMA Camp and will be accepting applications for work exchange/volunteers on our website through the end of October. Volunteering at SOMA Camp is fun and a great way to meet people with similar mycological interests. As this is a very popular and well attended event, we only have a limited number of work volunteer/exchange positions each year. So in order to secure your position, please fill out the application as soon as possible. Please note that every volunteer MUST be a registered SOMA member, valid through January 2013.

All work exchange/volunteers are required to work a minimum of 10 hours in exchange for attending the 3-Day SOMA Camp on Martin Luther King weekend for free and volunteers must be prepared to

work when needed (anytime during the camp). There will be a fee of \$65 for each volunteer who requires on-site accommodation.

Returning SOMA Camp volunteers will be given a priority as it reduces the training required and makes for a smoother more cohesive camp to have individuals who know what needs to be done, know how to do it, and have proven their reliability. For the new or non-returning SOMA camp volunteers the process will be primarily FIFO (first in, first out) though we do give priority to student volunteers (five positions reserved for students only) and this year we will also be giving a higher priority to applicants with more availability and applicants who can perform multiple volunteer tasks.

Hope to see you at camp!



Photo credit: Anna Moore



Photo credit: Anna Moore

# SOMA

PO Box 7147  
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## Issue 25:1-2 SEPT & OCT 2012

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**SOMA usually meets on the third Thursday of the month throughout the year (September through May), at 7 PM, at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, 970 Piner Road, Santa Rosa, California. Fungi are displayed at 7 PM, and speakers begin around 7:30 PM. Bring in your baffling fungi to be identified!**

### Directions to the Sonoma County Farm Bureau

From the south:

- Go north on Hwy 101
- Pass the Steel Lane exit then take the Bicentennial Way exit
- Go over Hwy 101 (heading west) and then right on Range Ave
- Turn left on Piner Rd and go about 1/4 mile
- Turn left into Farm Bureau parking lot at 970 Piner Rd

From the north:

- Go south on Hwy 101
- Take the first Santa Rosa exit for Hopper Ave/Mendocino Ave
- Stay left on the frontage road (it becomes Cleveland Ave)
- Turn right on Piner Rd and go about 1/4 mile
- Turn left into Farm Bureau parking lot at 970 Piner Rd

