

# MYCENA NEWS

OCT 2017  
VOL 69:02

Submissions for the November newsletter are due by October 20th



October General Meeting:  
Tuesday, October 17th, 2017  
7-10pm  
Hall of Flowers / County Fair Building

## Tom Bruns: Complexity, Simplicity, and Convergence – A Tour Through the Evolutionary History of the Basidiomycota

The Basidiomycota (i.e., the mushrooms, rusts, and smuts) provide many great examples of complex structures and behaviors that have been created through the evolutionary process. Equally impressive are the number of times these complex innovations have been simplified or reinvented by independent lineages. These latter processes lead to convergence – structures or behaviors that look similar but are not related through a common ancestor. This talk will cover a set of classic examples of these processes within each of the three main groups of the Basidiomycota.

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### President's Post

Tyler Taunton

Hello Fellow Fungis and Fungals,  
On September 12th the MSSF Culinary group held their monthly mushroom culinary dinner. Every month this group of experienced fungals and fungis prepare a delicious mushroom themed dinner. If you're interested in participating in this group and their functions please contact the MSSF Culinary group at [culinary@mssf.org](mailto:culinary@mssf.org). This is an

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excellent group to get involved in if one would like to learn and experience mushrooms from a culinary perspective.

Dr. Brian Perry kicked off this year's MSSF speaker line up for our 2017-18 mushroom season. Brian presented a travelogue-style presentation of his Vanuatu rainforest research. As usual Dr. Perry drew in a full crowd. We were also honored to have MSSF's own scientific advisor Dr. Dennis Desjardin present to give the introduction to Dr. Perry's presentation. Dr. Perry has spoken to MSSF in the past and always offered an interesting, inspiring, and engaging topic for our members. We thank him for all his hard work and dedication to the fungal scientific community. And for October we anticipate another wonderful academic talk by Tom Bruns of UC Berkeley.

Mendo camp is just around the corner. We will be holding Mendo camp this November 10th-12th. All attending will enjoy all the fungal, food, forays, and fun you can handle. Our speakers this year include author and Agaricus expert Richard Kerrigan and author and medicinal mushroom expert Robert Rogers. Mendo Camp is one of MSSF's most anticipated events and we are thankful for all who help the event carry on.

And of course we have the MSSF Fungus Fair this December 3rd at the SF county Fair Building 9th Ave. and Lincoln in Golden Gate Park. Planning for this massive Fungal event has already started. If you are interested in volunteering for the Fungus Fair this year please stay tuned and we will get those details out very soon. Getting involved with the Fungus Fair is by far the best way to truly absorb some great fungal knowledge. For all up coming MSSF events be sure to check the calendar on MSSF.org.

Hope to see y'all around this mushroom season. Happy hunting and Stay Fungal. •



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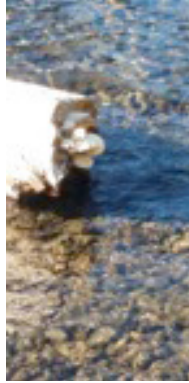
Prof. Tom Bruns received an MS in Botany from the University of Minnesota in 1982, and a PhD from the University of Michigan in Botany in 1987. He went on to a postdoctoral position at the University of California Berkeley in 1987, and he joined the faculty there in 1989. His research is focused on fungal ecology and systematics and he has published over [150 scientific papers](#) in this area.

He is a recent past president of the Mycological Society of America, and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the California Academy of Science, and the Mycological Society of America. He teaches introductory and advanced courses on fungi at Berkeley, and has won teaching awards from the College of Natural Resources and the Mycological Society of America for his efforts. •

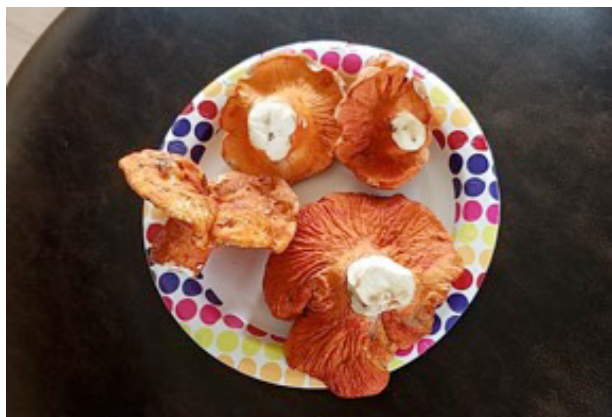
— *Culinary Corner* —  
Paul Lufkin

**On Monday**, September 11, 2017, at the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park, members of the MSSF Culinary Group (an all-volunteer committee of the MSSF) joined in joyous celebration of the onset of a new mushroom season over potluck dishes prepared and shared by members of the group.

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During the business portion of the meeting, plans were made for the series of monthly first Monday dinners that will comprise the Culinary Group's 2017-2018 program. (The dinners began on October 2 with a meal on the theme: "The French Have A Word For It," which featured Coq Au Vin as the main dish.) Culinary Group members present at the September potluck also shared stories about (and some pictures of) their encounters with the first edibles of the season:



This month's recipe, for Scalloped Hedgehogs, is provided courtesy of Al Catalani, longtime correspondent/friend of the MSSF Culinary Group. Al's version serves 4 as a side dish. As Al says, "Gentle flavors of hedgehog and potato combine nicely with the smoky flavor of bacon (or porcini, in the vegetarian version) to produce a satisfying Fall repast."

### *Scalloped Hedgehogs & Potatoes*

- 4 medium red potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 1 pound hedgehog mushrooms, sliced (including stem)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh chives or green onions
- Paprika to taste
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup bacon (substitute re-constituted porcini for vegetarian version)

**Preparation:** In a buttered casserole dish, place half of the sliced potatoes and the cream. Add the sliced hedgehogs and cover with remaining potatoes. Cover and bake in a preheated 375° oven for 25 minutes. Add the chives, paprika, and milk. Sprinkle with the cheese and bacon. Return to the oven, uncovered, and bake for another 20 minutes.

The Culinary Group's dinner meetings feature conversation about where to find, and how to prepare, both cultivated and wild edible mushrooms. Membership in the MSSF Culinary Group is open to all MSSF members. Further information (including instructions for registering to attend Culinary Group dinners) is available at [mssf.org](http://mssf.org).



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## Ethnomycology Culture Cusp

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Rivkah Khanin

This summer Rivkah spent three weeks in a small village 5 hours outside of Moscow in Russia. While they've\* long been aware of the importance of mushrooms in Russian culture, they were more attune this trip to the more subtle ways in which mushrooms are integrated. One of these ways is in children's books. Mushrooms are constantly personified as characters in the same way animals and other nature motifs are in folk tales, and share lessons about themselves or about forests or seasons. The following story is translated from Russian. We encourage anyone who has similar cultural gems from other places (it can be in the U.S. too!) to send their photos and stories, anecdotes, jokes, to [mycenanews@mssf.org](mailto:mycenanews@mssf.org)



story by N. Sladkov

ФЕДОТ, ДА НЕ ТОТ!

illustrations by A.V. Kokovkin,  
T. N. Chursinova

### *Fedot, but that's not the one!*

A mushroom hunter placed his basket of mushrooms on a stump. He himself went to the stream to rest. A thrush saw the basket and started to shake:

“Oh, fathers, oh mothers, what is going on here? Poisonous mushrooms are sitting in the basket, while delicious, edible mushrooms are lying around

nearby! The noblest mushroom—A porcini! The tastiest mushroom—A champignon! What's happening here? What kind of mushroom hunter is this—A know-nothing and a klutz? Collected only toxic mushrooms, and is probably proud of it too. We have to save him from trouble!”

And here an *Amanita muscaria* poked itself up from

\*some people use neutral pronouns, singular they/them rather than he/his/she/her

under a leaf and says:

“Ey, I was or I wasn’t, I’ll call myself a Lactarius, and I’ll crawl into the basket! What, am I worse than the other poisonous mushrooms?”

“What kind of Lactarius are you,” screamed Porcini, “when you are Amanita!”

“You’re not Lactarius, why are you lying?” shouted Champignon.

“Everyone lies, and I lie.” answered Amanita. “You, Porcini, look closer, who is sitting in the basket to the right? There’s a false Honey. There’s a false Chanterelle! All are false: a liar on a liar! And to the left is even worse! There’s a poisonous Satan’s Bolete. And there, admire that, a Death Cap is poking out! And this one’s bitter, like mustard, a Bitter Bolete! Here’s the company that gathered in the basket! And I’m what- worse than they? I’m also a Poisonous one. Allow me in with my kin!”

Amanita started reaching into the basket, but the Poisonous ones wouldn’t let it in.

“Poisonous brothers!” howled Amanita. “You what, don’t recognize your own? What are you shoving me for? It’s me, Amanita! Death Cap, put a word in for your relative. You and I are friends to the grave!”

“Oh no we’re not” replied Death Cap “And I won’t think of it! All of you, look at this idiot in a red hat. And with white speckles too. Any mushroom hunter would recognize you at a glance, and would immediately understand, what kind of fruit you are! Because of you they’d toss us all out of the basket too.”

“Bitter Bolete, friend of friends,” pleaded Amanita, “at least you reach out your hand! You’re a Poisonous one, and I’m a Poisonous one. We have to help each other out!”

“If I had the will!” growled Bitter Bolete. “You though, fool, ruined all our Poisonous customs, you let down our whole Poisonous family. Well why’d you dress yourself up in a red hat? Would a real Poisonous one throw itself in everyone’s eyes and get tangled up in their legs? If you are a Poisonous one, then at least pretend to be a proper mushroom, disguise yourself as an edible. Take, dumb one, an example from us! I’m telling the truth, right Satan’s Bolete?”

“You, Bitter Bolete,” replied Satan’s Bolete, “are right like always! You, Amanita, know us: we’re Poisonous to the core! But look at us—from our appearance would you notice it? Well then there it is! We try to dress ourselves in stranger’s clothes.







And not just in any clothes, but with discernment. Who among all mushrooms is the most exemplary and positive? Of course then, it's White mushroom—Porcini. He's the master in all dishes: in fried ones, boiled ones, and marinades. Salt him, dry him—he only gets better. Here am I, Satan's Bolete, and Bitter Bolete dressed up in his clothes. Try to tell us apart on the move then! And the jacket is the same, and the hat looks similar. Because of this the mushroom hunter picked us. And if we let you in— you'll give us away with your head!"

"Learn from me" boasted the poisonous Death Cap. "Of all Poisonous ones I'm the most poisonous, like a snake! But from my clothing— a lovely and gentle Champignon. The mushroom-hunter-know-nothing didn't recognize me, but you, idiot, he'd recognize in an inch."

Amanita reached into the basket again, and again they pushed him out.

"So this means, you won't let me in after all!" he said angrily.

"No we still won't let you in! And don't even ask!" replied the Poisonous ones.

"I'm counting to three: One, Two..." threatened Amanita.

"THREE, FOUR!.." teased the Poisonous Ones.

"Well, Poisonous Ones, hold on!" yelled Amanita.

"Blame yourselves now! I'm going to take you all to clean water! I'm going to give over all your signs and tricks to the mushroom hunters. *"We're like porcini! And we're like champignons!"* Though you are similar, you are not one and the same!"— and dumped out Bitter and Satan's Boletes, grabbed them by the hats, and placed them next to Porcini.

"Look and remember! By appearance these Poisonous ones truly do resemble Porcini. But if you break the hat of Satan's Bolete—like this!— then on the break it starts to turn a lilac color, and if you do the same to Bitter Bolete—like this!—then his hat on the break turns pink. Did you memorize this? What about you, noble Porcini?"

"Well on me the break on the hat is always white!" proudly replied Porcini. And he broke his own hat. "You see? White, clean, and not bitter!"

But Amanita doesn't calm down:

“Now, Death Cap, your turn! Stand next to Champignon. From above you rightly look like him, but from below—completely different! What kind of gills do you have under your hat? White, pale. And Champignon? On Champignon they’re pink, or else brownish. So here is my whole tale! Who else is hiding in the basket? Aha, also false Honey and false Chanterelle! Well, these tricksters aren’t scary, if you eat them—you won’t be poisoned. Scram, to the bushes!”

Amanita scattered all the Poisonous ones, seated Porcini and Champignon in the basket and said: “Well, me you wouldn’t confuse with anyone! As the saying goes—the hat doesn’t suit Senka. I’d be glad to pretend to be a lady bug, but the spots give me away!” And hid himself under a leaf anew.

The mushroom hunter returned, picked up his basket and strode home. And he didn’t notice anything. What a klutz! •

## *Mushroom Adventures Farm Tour*

Fred Stevens

11107 Hwy 70 Marysville, CA

Saturday October 14, 2017

MSSF member Don Simoni’s Mushroom Adventures is having a tour of their facilities in Marysville next to Yuba City on Hwy 70 north of Sacramento, on Saturday, October 14, (from what time to what time). The farm is about a two and a half hour drive from the SF Bay area. Don grows a variety of Button mushrooms including Portabellas, several kinds of Oyster mushrooms, Shiitake, Maitake, and Hericium (Lions Mane), as well as producing mushroom kits. If you’re interested in growing mushrooms, Don will share his knowledge of how what started out as a hobby, became a business.

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## *2017 Fungus Fair*

Madhu Kottalam

**The Fungus Fair** will be Sunday, Dec 3rd, 2017 10–5 at Strybing Arboretum/SF Botanic Gardens at 9th and Lincoln in Golden Gate Park.

Fair Forays will be on Friday and Saturday with Fair setup on Saturday. •

Fungus Fair Artwork by Fiorella Ikeue  
([www.fiorellaikeue.com](http://www.fiorellaikeue.com))

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The Mushroom Adventures farm is on Highway 70, north of Marysville: 11107 Highway 70, Marysville, CA 95901. To get there, travel north from Marysville about 10 miles on Hwy 70. Look for a white mail box next to the highway with the farm's name "Mushroom Adventures." Turn right onto a gravel road next to a large oak tree. The working portion of the farm is in the rear of the property, which is where the tour/s will be. Parking will be in the field next to the rear buildings.

If you plan on attending, a RSVP, either by phone 530-741-2437 or email: donald@mushroomadventures.com would be appreciated. Nina Lysenko, a longtime MSSF member, along with Don, will help host the event. For this first tour of the farm only bottled water, dips and chips will be provided, so participants are encouraged to bring sandwiches and other snacks. Please, no smoking due to extreme fire hazard from dry grass." •

*Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip  
Potluck BBQ*

Ken Litchfield

Sunday October 29th 12-3ish  
Moss Landing, CA

Here's the MSSF member invite for our annual Fall Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip Potluck Barbecue on Sunday October 29th, 2017 in Moss Landing near Watsonville, the kickoff event for the start of the fall mushroom foraging and gardening season and opportunity to socialize with mushroom, fermentation, rare fruit, organic gardening & farming, culinary, and permaculture folk.

This is our 27th anniversary FWFFFTPLBBQ event, now a tradition.

Please read all the details in the below. Information is included about:

- 1 - The Farm Tour
- 2 - The Potluck Barbecue and Fermentation Tasting
- 3 - Recycle Rummage of the Farm's mushroom block recycle pile - (due to logistical situations with the farm please do not try to rummage the recycle pile before the tour)
- 4 - Carpool and Farm Directions
- 5 - Mushroom Garden Instructions - for making mushroom beds from the blocks you get from the farm, so you know what to expect from the Recycle Rummage.

This is a personal mycelial "grapevine" event - not an internet event. You may invite your real world friends personally to attend with you with their potlucks and ferments, but this invite is NOT for sending out to other lists or otherwise publicly. Folks that just want to raid the recycle pile or otherwise come to the farm without participating in this event should make a personal appointment with the farm on another day.

Admission is free for each person with a potluck and items for the barbecue and harvest ferments you have made to share with your fellow tasters.

This time, for the first time, we'll be passing the hat for a suggested donation of \$5 to help cover the costs associated with the event.

You may invite your personal friends - with their potlucks, BBQ grillables, and ferments.

You may bring your cameras for pix and vids.

You may buy fresh organically grown mushrooms at the farm.

You are welcome to bring your musical instru-



ments like didgeridoos, juice harps, drums, etc. and have a jam session during the BBQ and Recycle Rummage.

And being as this the day before Halloween you are welcome to come dressed as your scariest mushroom or politico, or both. We should be able to have some appropriate prizes.

Thanks, Ken

litchfield.ken@gmail.com

litchfield dot ken at gmail dot com

### Fall Free Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip Potluck Barbecue

Halloween Sunday

October 29th 12-3ish

Moss Landing near Watsonville

The Cultivation Committee of the Mycological Society of San Francisco is having our annual Fall Free Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip Potluck BBQ to the organic Far West Fungi Farm in Moss Landing on Sunday October 29th from noon to 3ish. The Fermentation Club will be meeting there at the same time, too.

#### Arrival

There will be a greeter at the gate welcoming arrivals and directing them to the best locations for parking.

After parking please gather at the front yard of the house with your potluck dish and/or items for the BBQ grill. In the front yard will be tables with cards and pens to label your contributions with your name and the name of your dish and any special particulars about its preparation. There will be folks transferring the potluck items to the side yard picnic area, and categorizing and arranging them for easiest access during the potluck, after the tours.

Please be sure to join one of the tours or remain in the front yard socializing area so as not to get underfoot with the food prep folks in the side yard.

#### Farm Tour

John and Toby Garrone, and their sons Ian and Kyle, who have their Far West Fungi shop at the Embarcadero Ferry Building in SF, grow white, gray, brown, pink, gold, and trumpet oysters, shiitake, nameko, pioppino, lion's mane, maitake, and reishi in several large warehouses along with some acreage of traditional crop plants that their employees grow organically for their own use. They have biologically active runoff ponds taking the overflow runoff from the farm and turning it back into frog habitat. The Garrones grow all their mushrooms certified organic on recycled materials. We will tour the farm to see the sawdust composting process, the mixing hall, autoclaves, sterile lab, growing halls, fruiting halls, etc.

Because the event has grown so popular there are usually over 200 people attending so we divide the attendees into several more manageable groups that each see the whole farm. If you arrive a little late there are usually one or more tours that you may join.

Please stay with your tour and we'll end them together at the front yard of the farm house so that all folks will be sharing the potluck in the picnic area together. If your tour finishes there before the other tours, then hang out and socialize in the front yard and, if the food coordinators need help, please make yourself useful for the duties they may need.

Please wait for the potluck serving time call after all the tours have returned before trying to enter the potluck area.

Please arrive promptly at noon or a little before. This trip we'll have several concurrent options for tours. We would expect the Beginning and Intermediate tours to be the most populous:

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### **Beginner Tour**

For those who haven't been to the farm before, or would like the general introduction tour of the farm about the growing, harvesting, distribution, and selling of Far West Fungi's organically raised farm mushrooms.

### **Intermediate Tour**

For folks who have been to the farm before or are generally familiar with the operations and would like to know more about the farm's tricks and secrets for mushroom cultivation, wild and cultivated mushroom lore, and mushroom gardening with the free mushroom spawn blocks from Far West.

### **Advanced Technical**

For specialist folks who would like the nuanced art and science details of how Far West organically grows their mushrooms for greatest efficiency and productivity and dealing with the inevitable problems that arise with such a major operation.

### **Straggler's Tour**

Please try to arrive on time but if you are late and can't catch up to one of the regular tours we do have one, or more, spur of the

We would like to keep the tours coordinated so they all begin in different locations and don't coincide at any one point into crowd convergence. We expect to have them mapped out with this in mind.

This is a biennial event and if you miss something this time we will have another trip in March.

### **Potluck Barbecue**

After the farm tour we will gather at the farm house for the big potluck BBQ. There we can socialize for a bit while each of the tours finishes and all folks can join the potluck meal together. The Garrones will have their big grill out for grilling and sampling their 12 kinds of organic farm fresh mushrooms and whatever grillables you bring.

Everything is free with admission of each attendee's pot luck item and/or slabs of something for the grill. You may invite your friends with their potlucks and ferments, too.

This is a true potluck; we don't make a list of who is bringing desserts or entrees, or salads, but it all works out. Please bring what you would like to share of your own making. It's a great place and event for mycelial networking.

Please deliver your potlucks, grillables, and ferments at the garden gate to the farm house when you arrive at the farm. If you have included a label about your dish or the recipe please bring it to the attention of the folks accepting the potlucks. There are always folks who want to know who made a particular dish and how, so please be prepared to share. It is a good idea to preslice or precut larger portions of your offerings into smaller portions so more folks can sample them. And when serving yourself during the potluck please try to sample a little of everything and then go back for more after others have also been served. There is always plenty of food.

You can sit at one of the picnic tables or on the grassy lawn. If you bring your own folding chairs or stools you'll have the type of

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moment "Stragglers Tours" so you can still see the main aspects of the farm. Gather up all the late comers and see one of the tour coordinators about that after potluck time.

seating you are most comfortable with.

Most everyone cleans up after themselves, but please do clean up your own and others areas, and please volunteer with the potluck coordinators to offer your assistance with any cleanup tasks.

### **Fermentation Club**

The Fermentation Club joins the field trip potluck for their regular fermentation meeting/ taste testing/ ferment comparisons. Ferments include, but aren't limited to, wine, beer, mead, kombucha, kimchee, sauerkraut, yeast rising bread, tempeh, yogurt, cheese, etc. If you would like to check out the club and try the brews, and contribute yours, bring them to share with your potluck or during the post tour pre potluck social period.

You may also come to the Counter Culture Labs Fermentation Station in the Omni Commons at 4799 Shattuck in Oakland most any Wednesday eve 7 til whenever for the Herbal Meadmaking class to learn all the basics and advanced fermentation techniques for any ferment. Check meetups.com for Counter Culture Labs.

For details about the Fermentation Club please check with:

“David Gardella” <dagardella@gmail.com>

(dagardella at gmail dot com)

or <david\_gardella@hotmail.com>

david\_gardella at hotmail dot com

### **Recycle Pile Rummage**

After the tour and potluck we can rummage the recycle pile for mushroom compost and bring back as many once-harvested mushroom blocks as we can carry. We try to take as big of vehicles as possible to pick up as many mushroom blocks as you like. Bring big tough plastic garbage bags to sort and carry the various types. Andor plastic trash cans. Andor cardboard boxes. The pile is huge, like usually an eighteen wheeler or two or three,

and the blocks have plenty of life left in them.

They can be used to make organic mushroom beds in your back yard, school garden, or community garden that can continue fruiting for months with no watering during the rainy winter or a little watering, misting, and TLC in your spring and summer garden. Typically they may leap off and eat into other organic matter to grow more robust, and eventually decay into compost. We describe that process to you there, and on the Cultivation Blog of the mssf.org site, and below.

For safety's sake, please be respectful of other people and vehicles while rummaging, dodging mudholes, ducking flying blocks, and similar freegan behaviors. Some folks may be able to climb the pile better than others so when you find something you heard someone else was looking for, and you can share it, please do so.

This is a sharing, educational, social event.

Periodically, we have requests from attendees, or others that just show up, that only want to rummage the recycle pile, but not participate in the other activities. If this describes you, please chose a different day to make an appointment to visit the farm and pick up as many blocks as you like then, without interfering with this event.

### **Farm Fresh Mushroom Purchases**

You may also purchase fresh-from-the-farm organically grown mushrooms from the Garrones in the packing and shipping room at the farm.

Bring your cameras for pix and vids and lots of photo ops.

We're ON - Rain or Shine

We are mushroom people, among other characteristics, and this mushroom event is ON - rain or shine - so bring your rain gear if needed to get from warehouse to warehouse. Everything else is outside if the weather is good or under shelter if

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it is wet.

CARPOOL with each other please. Generally passengers pay driver \$5 for gas

### Directions

(Please print them out to take with you - please look up the address on google maps also to see where you'll be going as there may be some road construction in the vicinity):

Far West Fungi Farm  
1186 Trafton Road  
Moss Landing, CA 95039  
(831) 728-5469

The farm is off of Highway 1 south of Watsonville (2 routes available):

1. South 280 to Hwy 85, follow to Hwy 17 (towards Santa Cruz) Hwy 1 South towards Watsonville, turn right on Jensen Road (at the old Dominic's Fruit Stand - now demolished for the widening of the road - there is much road construction in the vicinity of the Jenson Rd turnoff so be on the lookout) Right on Bluff Rd., right on Bluff, right on Trafton Rd. First driveway on the left.

2. 101 South past Gilroy, 129 west to Watsonville, South on Hwy 1 Right on Jensen Road (at the old Dominic's Fruit Stand - now demolished for the widening of the road - there is much road construction in the vicinity of the Jenson Rd turnoff so be on the lookout) Right on Bluff Road, Right on Trafton Road. First driveway on the left.



Above: from left to right—Ian, Kyle, John, Toby Garrone  
Below: Yellow Oysters at the Farm



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## Cultivation Quarters

Ken Litchfield

Instructions for Mushroom Gardening—  
Using Far West Fungi Farm Mushroom Mycelium  
Sawdust Loaves

Mushroom Garden Beds for Back Yards, School  
Gardens, or Community Gardens

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If you join us on the Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip Potluck BBQ and bring back some of the mushroom sawdust blocks or loaves to use in your garden, here's some info on how to turn them into your own mushroom garden.:

There are generally 12 different kinds of mushroom blocks you will find in the Far West Fungi Farm recycle pile, their prevalence in the recycle pile based upon the types of mushrooms the farm grows the most.

The loaves with the leathery chocolate colored skin are Shiitakes. The rest that are white are most likely White, Brown, or Gray Oysters. Less commonly, Trumpet Oysters form white sheets of mycelium on the top of the block that often retain the thick cut bases of the Trumpet Oysters.

Less commonly, the loaves of Golden or Pink oysters should have some remnants of those colors on them. In addition, you may, by chance, have some of the less common Reishi, Maitake/Hen-of-the-woods, Lion's Mane/Crabalone, Pioppino, or Nameko perhaps recognizable by the remnants of fruiting bodies on the loaves.

These loaves have been harvested once at the first big flush of fruiting and then are removed from the fruiting halls to make room for more fresh blocks coming through. They are unpredictable for their next several fruitings, and not commercially useful, but they have much life left in them and are perfect for mushroom garden beds in your back yard, school garden, or community garden.

Using these blocks is similar to growing amaryllis flowers from predeveloped flower buds in the dormant amaryllis bulbs. If you know how to grow the amaryllis you can have continuing blooms in your garden or windowsill for years afterward rather than just one holiday season. Similarly, you can provide the right garden conditions and get the mushrooms to continue to grow for years. This

method is an easy way to introduce you to growing mushrooms like regular garden plants.

### **Mushroom Block Garden Instructions**

First, cut any mushroom stems remaining on the loaves down to the surface of the sawdust so they don't continue decaying.

Next, to rehydrate them soak the loaves in water, preferably rainwater or de-chloraminated water (to the water add a tea/table spoon of powdered garden clay, baked to sterilize in a cake pan at 300 degrees in the oven for 2 hours or so to deactivate the chloramine) in a wheel barrow, tub, or barrel with a weighted board on top to keep them submerged for 12-24 hours (not longer at one time as they may drown or go anaerobic). Some folks like to soak them in hydrogen peroxide water as it kills off the mold some, though this is an extra overhead step that isn't necessary. This should be no more than 0.3% (point three percent) concentration. That would be two, 1 quart bottles of 3% (three percent) H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> from the drug store poured into a 5 gallon bucket and filled with tap water. After 24 hrs the H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> decays to water and can be poured off into the garden. The water that is added to the hydrogen peroxide is pre-de-chloraminated.

In a shady, wind protected place, put the soaked loaves of sawdust bottom side down on a bed of chippy wood chips 6-12" deep and 3x3' or 4x4', or longer in length if you have more blocks. You want chippy wood chips from logs and branches as they are the better food for these wood eating mushrooms than leafy or twiggy stuff that doesn't last very long and contains more mold and bacteria. On top of the wood chips can be placed one layer of unwaxed cardboard as the bottom of the blocks may be more likely to leap off and grow into the chips if they are in contact with the layer of cellulose cardboard against the surface of the

*continued p. 14*

bottom of the loaf. The blocks should be placed side by side butted up against each other and they will often grow back together sideways, especially if they are all of one kind like shiitakes or oysters. On top of the loaves of sawdust you should place fluffed up straw, excelsior, or draped burlap as a humidity layer for the mushrooms to sprout up into and not dry out. Excelsior is the stringy, spaghetti like, aspen wood fibers sometimes used in packaging material instead of styrofoam peanuts. If you use burlap, preferably in multiple layers, you can place stakes in and around the bed to tent it above the mushrooms.

A simple way of taking care of the cardboard layer under the blocks and the humidity layer above the blocks is to place the loaves in unwaxed cardboard boxes on top of the wood chips. The blocks can be placed one layer deep in a cardboard box side by side in contact with each other filling the bottom surface of the box. The box should be the depth of the block height plus that much more to allow the mushrooms room to grow unimpeded above the loaves. The flaps on the top of the box can provide the humidity layer when the box is folded closed.

When the loaves are installed in your mushroom beds in a shady, non windy part of the garden, the rains will keep the blocks and humidity layer damp all winter long during the November to May rainy season with very little work on your part, except to harvest mushrooms. If the weather goes through a dry spell, or during summer, you may have to water periodically.

Ideally, the mushroom loaves will send out mycelial tentacles down into and through the cardboard to the wood chips to pick up more nutrients to add to the blocks. If they don't "leap off" they will at least continue producing mushrooms out of the sawdust remaining in the loaves until they are used up in a few months to a year,

perhaps longer.

Your success may vary depending upon how fresh the blocks are and the type of mushroom and how regular the rains are in the season as extra watering maybe needed. Check through the straw/excelsior/burlap once a week or so for fruiting mushrooms and keep the humidity layer damp and fluffed so it doesn't get compacted down on the blocks.

Besides using them to make mushroom garden beds, you can break up the blocks fresh from the recycle pile and roll up the spawn sawdust into damp cardboard and burlap and tie them with twine to grow into hanging mushroom pinatas.

Or break them up and add them to bags of damp straw that has been pasteurized with 0.3% hydrogen peroxide solution. Or break them up and add them to soaked wood chips in burlap bags or cardboard boxes to grow into larger quantities of mushroom spawn that can be fruited in greater amounts or used to inoculate even large quantities of substrate.

All these mushrooms that Far West grows on oak heartwood sawdust blocks normally grow in the wild in the dead heartwood of hardwood trees. That is the raw cellulose that they are accustomed to devouring. Other typical organic garden materials that they particularly could feed upon and work well for mushrooms-in-your-garden-mulch are straw bale straw, burlap, unwaxed cardboard, wood chips, egg cartons, animal bedding, etc.

Agaricus button mushrooms typically are grown on manure compost, essentially broken down raw cellulose from the feeding of heartwood mushrooms. Shaggies and buttons can grow under your raw cellulose garden mulch materials at the bottom of the mulch where it is breaking down and being incorporated into the soil. •



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# Bay Area Applied Mycology Events

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Seth Columbia

*We hope you all had a groovy summer vacation full of rest, play, and the good kind of work. Hopefully you're all rejuvenated and ready to BAAM out. Here is an update of what we have coming up this season, including some important information and opportunities to get involved.*

## General BAAM Meetings

General meetings during the season will be taking place regularly the last Monday of each month with the next meeting set for Monday October 30. Location, date, and time can be found on the BAAM webpage or Facebook page.

## Lab Meetings at the OMNI Commons

This year we will be holding Lab Meetings once a month in order to come together and share what we've been working on, touch base about group projects, etc. You are all welcome and encouraged to check out the space during these meetings. Contact Seth at columbiasw1@gmail.com if you have any questions.

## Weekly Mushroom Church

We are developing an optional, self-organizing weekly lab gathering where folks can get together and cook & inoculate mushroom blocks! It will require a few elements to be effective. The goal is to get more people in the lab getting hands on with mycology

while simultaneously empowering more active members to facilitate events the BAAM Lab space.

## "Demystifying Mushrooms Demystified" Workshop at OMNI Commons

First class was Saturday Sept. 23rd at 10:30am-12:30 and the series has continuing dates.

Seth and Mario are leading an Introduction to Mushroom Identification workshop at the lab space. The objective is to empower people to better utilize Internet/social media and written guides as resources for identification. Cost is \$10/per person.

Contact Seth at columbiasw1@gmail.com if you have any questions.

If anyone is interested in recording the event, please contact us. Email if interested.

## Bioneers Conference

Thursday October 19th - Monday October 23rd

BAAM is teaming up with the Guatemala-based collective Fungi Academy to table at the

Bioneers Conference in Marin next month. We will be fungus ambassadors tabling and getting the good word of fungi out to the people! We will also be selling T-shirts & memberships.

How you can help: More info about numbers of volunteers, etc. TBA

## Energize the BAAM Wiki

[https://wiki.counterculturelabs.org/Bay\\_Area\\_Applied\\_Mycology](https://wiki.counterculturelabs.org/Bay_Area_Applied_Mycology)

It is our job to create a useful and interactive wiki page so that everyone entering the lab can have some sense of creative potential and a sense of ownership. We also want to add QR codes (possible & easy thanks to Sudo Room) linking lab equipment to descriptions & info on the Wiki. Are you empowered to help? Reply email us and let us know!

## Community Culture Library

It is BAAM's intention to hold a community fungal culture library. The way in which we do that can take many forms, the "best" way will require research and dedication, perhaps a shared responsibility among a small team. We do have all the resources to create this.

Sponsorship/Library p. 16

## Crossover

As a 501c3 we can receive cultures from large and small businesses alike. I believe the way this works is that the tax deductible dollar amount can be a comparison to market value. There are several companies such as Aloha Medicinals that charge around \$350 per culture. So if we wanted to form symbiotic relationships with small businesses, then we could receive culture donations and suggest a deduction of somewhere around that cost. This requires a bit more research.... so if you are empowered to help, reply and let us know!

## Offsite Fruiting Chamber

We are seeking a nearby location to build a fruiting chamber so that BAAM can actually start fruiting mushrooms! A few folks have mentioned they might have or know of a place. If you are one of these people, please reply to this email and let us know! •

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## Calendar

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*Monday October 2, 2017*

7pm Culinary Groups Dinner

*Tuesday October 17, 2017*

MSSF General Meeting

*Saturday October 14, 2017*

Mushroom Adventures Tour

*Thursday October 19th, 2017*

6-7:30 SF Main Public Library, SF Civic Center  
Mushroom Cultivation Talks by Ken Litchfield-MSSF  
Cultivation Chair,  
John Garrone-Far West Fungi,  
and Phil Ross-Mycoworks  
Promo tabling by Bay Area Applied Mycology  
and Fungi Academy

*Thursday October 19-Monday October 23, 2017*

Bioneers Conference, Marin Civic Center

*Sunday October 29, 2017*

Far West Fungi Farm Field Trip Pot Luck BBQ

*Monday October 30, 2017*

BAAM General Meeting

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## Mycena News Submissions

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Please do send in your submissions for the November Mycena News pronto. The new monthly official deadline is now midnight the 20th of each month. (Any month that the 20th falls before or on the general meeting the deadline will be the Wednesday after the general meeting, ie Nov 22 2017, Feb 21 and Mar 21 2018)

This does not mean to wait until the 20th of each month to turn in your stuff; it means that is the deadline and you should shoot for getting it in starting by the first of the month.

If you have something that is dependent on the general meeting like photos of the mushroom ID

*continued p. 17*

table or the hospitality preparations, etc. you now can get that in before the deadline.

Please email your submissions to:  
mycenanews@mssf.org

Please use this MN email address as, if you send it to newsletter individuals, it can get lost when we try to search down all the submissions if they aren't submitted to the official email address. Best format is to "save as" a Microsoft Word Document, 97-2003, with a minimum of formatting in the doc. You may also use a "notepad" style document with only "plain text."

We ask that you please follow these conditions:

- Please DON'T use any ALL CAPS.
- Please DON'T use any indents, tabs, or bullets.
- Please DON'T use any bolding, underlining, or any other italics besides:
- Please DO include italics for scientific names or foreign words.
- Please DO use single spaces between words and ends of sentences.
- Please DO use ONLY left justification for all paragraphs, titles, signoffs, etc.
- Please DO use 11pt New Times Roman font if you have it, but NOT multiple fonts or unusual fonts or multiple sizes.

For bibliographies that often have special formatting included in your submitted doc, if you have lifted them from other docs, you may just leave all the original formatting, and we can see better what was intended and make modifications for the masterdoc, if needed.

Please follow these above conditions for your official submissions, however if you would like for us to see how you envision the formatting of your submission, you can also submit a second version formatted in that manner and we may be able to make use of that.

As we get submissions they are each incorporated into a MN masterdoc with certain in-house MN master formatting for the final design layout. The design layout software removes all previous formatting from the masterdoc, so any extra formatting you insert, beyond the above parameters, only complicates the prepping of the masterdoc, so please DON'T do that, and DO follow the above submission conditions.

If you have pictures that are part of an article please don't insert them into the text but instead put a place holder with a couple line spaces to set off the file name and caption in the location where the picture will belong. Please attach the pictures to your email with the article.

If you have pictures for the newsletter but not as part of an article please attach them to an email that contains the proper caption associated with the filename of the picture.





*Ganoderma tsugae*

## Mushroom Sightings (Donner Pass, CA)

Pascal Pelous



*Amanita muscaria*



*Fuligo septica*



*Hydnellum peckii*



Mycological Society of San Francisco  
The Randall Museum - 199 Museum  
Way, SF, CA 94114

## MYCENA NEWS

OCT 2017 VOL 69:02

Mycena News is the members' newsletter of the Mycological Society of San Francisco, published monthly September–May.

Please e-mail photos, comments, corrections, and correspondence to [mycenanews@mssf.org](mailto:mycenanews@mssf.org)

To subscribe, renew, or make address changes, please contact Stephanie Wright:  
[membership@mssf.org](mailto:membership@mssf.org)

Past issues of Mycena News can be read online at <http://mssf.org/mycena-news/issues.html>

### MSSF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Join the Council leadership, learn the inner workings of the MSSF and help make decisions that shape the future of the society. Do your part by contributing your time to this 100% volunteer organization!

To learn more about all council and committee positions, go to: [www.mssf.org](http://www.mssf.org) members-only area, file archives, council member position descriptions. Or email [president@mssf.org](mailto:president@mssf.org).

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