



Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Newsletter

Fungi, Fun & Friends!

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 2

MAY / JUNE 2026



President's Message

Barbora Batokova

AS I WRITE this in mid-April, morels are just beginning to appear across Western Pennsylvania, and this season brought a personal milestone for me: I finally photographed my first black morels (*Morchella angusticeps*)! After years of searching, it

was one of those moments that felt both long overdue and yet completely unexpected. It's a good reminder that no matter how long you've been doing this, there are always new discoveries waiting.

Spring has already been full of memorable experiences. One highlight was our pre-lecture walk ahead of the Merlin Sheldrake lecture on April 13—an incredible opportunity not only to explore the woods together, but also to meet Merlin in person. His work has shaped how many of us think about fungi, and having that connection between field experience and big-picture fungal thinking felt especially meaningful.

And we're just getting started. We have a full calendar of events ahead, along with a growing number of walks being added every week. From early spring outings to larger group forays, there are more opportunities than ever to get outside, learn, and connect with other members. If you've been meaning to join a walk—or even lead one—this is the season to do it. Looking ahead, I want to highlight a few key events:

- **Mushroom Education Day (June 13)** at Powdermill Nature Reserve—our annual day of talks, walks, and hands-on learning. Be sure to check the article in this newsletter for full details.
- **Overnight Camping Trip (July 10–12)** at Laurel Hill State Park—a weekend of mushroom walks, community, and collecting specimens for DNA work.
- **The 2026 Gary Lincoff Foray (October 8–10)**—our flagship event, featuring guided walks, speakers, exhibits, and the mushroom feast. Planning is well underway, and it's shaping up to be another fantastic gathering.

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2026 Meeting Schedule

MARK YOUR CALENDARS now for this year's monthly WPMC meetings. The May cultivation meeting has been moved to May 12 to avoid a conflict with Election Day. All meetings will be held on Tuesday evenings from March through November at the Frick Environmental Center and will feature updates on club activities, a speaker/presentation, mushroom identification table, and mushroom-related merchandise for sale. Meetings are free and open to the public. WPMC will email members in advance with a Zoom link, so that they have the option of joining remotely.

Please note that Service Animals are welcome at the Frick Environmental Center, provided they meet the criteria of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This means they must be trained to perform specific tasks for a person with a disability and must remain under the handler's control. Pets and other non-service animals are not permitted.

MAY 12 Annual Cultivation Meeting

NOTE: This meeting will be held on the **SECOND** Tuesday.

Our cultivation meeting will begin with log drilling at 6:00 p.m. Current members who attend will receive an oyster mushroom grow kit. For those new to cultivation, oyster mushrooms provide a great starting point, as they are more resilient than some other mushroom varieties, and they're delicious to eat, as well! The kit will consist of oyster spawn and cottonseed hulls, with instructions provided.

Shiitake mushrooms are another delicious mushroom for cultivators and are traditionally grown on hardwood logs and kept outside. We encourage you to bring a log for shiitake inoculation. WPMC will



provide the tools, wax, and shiitake spawn to inoculate it. Volunteers will be at the event to help you through each of the stations as you inoculate your log. No prior experience is needed.

Ideal logs will be 36 to 40 inches long and 4 to 8 inches in diameter. The best logs are oak or maple, but other hardwood varieties will work as well. The logs should be newly harvested from a live tree within the last few months, as older logs will not be viable for the spawn to colonize. Once inoculated, logs should be protected from drying out by storing them out of the sun and where they can receive natural rainfall. We ask that you bring no more than two logs per person, to allow time and materials for all members.

The inoculating stations will be outside, so please dress appropriately. If the weather is severe enough to pose a risk, we will postpone the event; otherwise, we will accommodate light rain. Here's a link to video instructions on how to prepare your oyster mushroom kit:

<https://youtu.be/7CKz9AqNqCg?si=poAhpFHe7ZoaOu3K>

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MEETING SCHEDULE, CONTINUED

JUNE 16 Colin Domnauer: Bicolor Boletes (virtual)

What's in a name: Uncovering the hidden diversity within the Bicolor Boletes

Bolete mushrooms are notoriously diverse and difficult to identify, but just how many different species are out there? DNA sequencing is revealing much more diversity than our current taxonomy recognizes. In this talk, Colin will share the latest scientific findings surrounding the complex "bicolor" *Boletaceae* mushrooms in North America. We will explore what species exist, how they're related, how we can identify them in the field, and how community scientists are a pivotal part of making these exciting discoveries possible. He will also discuss some interesting properties beginning to be uncovered within this diversity, such as boletes that produce strange hallucinations of little people when eaten undercooked!

JULY 21 Kerri McCabe: *Lactarius/Lactifluus* (virtual)

AUG. 18 Michael Wilson: *Amanita muscaria* (in person)

SEPT. 15 Maria Pinto: A Survey of Black Mycologies (virtual)

OCT. 20 Photo Contest Results, Costume Contest & Election of Officers

NOV. 17 Potluck & Annual WPMC Awards

Merlin Sheldrake Comes to Pittsburgh

MYCOLOGIST MERLIN SHELDRAKE, author of *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures*, was in Pittsburgh on Monday, April 13, to present an

evening lecture at Carnegie Music Hall. WPMC members had the opportunity to meet him in person that morning at Allegheny Land Trust's Churchill Valley Greenway.



Merlin Sheldrake (the tallest one) joined WPMC for a mushroom walk at Churchill Valley Greenway. Photo by Sony Ton-Aime



(l-r): Cara Coulter, Mike Henry and Dawn Wehman hosted a WPMC table at Carnegie Music Hall. Photo by Theresa Colecchia

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

Behind the scenes, we're continuing to build momentum on projects that connect our field observations to broader research and real impact. Our fungal biodiversity efforts are expanding, and we're working to make it easier for members to contribute meaningful collections and data—much of which will soon be accessible through a new website that **Richard Jacob** and I have started to work on.

Richard has been building tools to better collect and visualize our data, including a redesigned Bolete filter, with more planned (*Amanita*, coral fungi, and chanterelles, to name a few). If you'd like to get involved in any way, please let us know. We've also launched a new YouTube channel and migrated our existing video archive and created a new iNaturalist project that automatically tracks observations based on location.

As part of this, we're also implementing a more structured email system. All WPMC Mycologists and Identifiers will be assigned official WPMC email addresses, which will be used to access these tools and contribute data from walks and collections. This is an important step—not just for organization, but to ensure continuity as roles change and to better protect and manage the data we're building together.

A lot of this work may feel like behind-the-scenes "housekeeping," but it's laying the foundation for something much bigger—making it easier for us to share knowledge, collaborate more effectively, and increase the impact of what we do as a club.

I hope to see many of you out in the woods this spring—whether you're finding your first morel, adding a new species to your list, or simply enjoying the process of looking more closely. Happy hunting, and may your baskets be full!



Mushroom Education Day

REGISTRATION IS NOW open for Mushroom Education Day on **RSATURDAY, JUNE 13**, at Powdermill Nature Reserve in Westmoreland County. Here's the full schedule:

9:00 – 9:30 AM – Registration

9:30 – 10:30 AM – STEPHEN BUCKLIN:

An Introduction to Pennsylvania Fungi and Their Relationship with Birds



Hen of the Woods (*Grifola frondosa*)

Fungi shape and connect our world, so naturally they form unique and fascinating symbiotic relationships—both parasitic and mutualistic—with different groups of organisms. Ornithomycology is an emerging field that studies the ecological relationships between fungi and birds. In this presentation, Stephen will review basic fungi biology and ecology and shed light on what we know so far about these relationships in North America's forests.

Hen of the Woods (above) embodies a web of relationships that includes birds—beyond the similarity of their physical resemblance to a chicken with ruffled feathers. A potential parasite of oaks and other broadleaf trees, *Grifola frondosa* plays a role in creating standing dead trees used by birds for nesting cavities and foraging for wood-decay invertebrates. A millipede crawls along the pore surface of a frond munching away, creating an energetic link between the mushroom and whatever thrush, turkey, grouse, or other ground-foraging bird may eat them.

10:40 – 11:40 AM – BARBORA BATOKOVA:

Know What You're Picking: Edible Mushrooms and Their Lookalikes



Some of the most sought-after edible mushrooms also happen to have some convincing—and sometimes dangerous—lookalikes. And while many foragers learn to recognize a few “safe” species, the real skill lies in understanding what you're comparing them to.

In this presentation, we'll take a closer look at some of the most commonly confused edible mushrooms and their lookalikes and break down how to tell them apart using clear, practical features you can actually use in the field.

We'll explore real-world comparisons like true morels vs. false morels, blewits vs. webcaps, wood ears vs. other jelly fungi, oyster mushrooms vs. angel wings and oysterlings, or honey mushrooms alongside their toxic lookalikes such as *Galerina marginata* and *Hypholoma fasciculare*. The focus is on the subtle—but critical—differences that separate a confident ID from a risky guess. If you've ever hesitated over a mushroom that “looks right” but didn't feel certain, this talk will give you the tools to slow down, compare with confidence, and make more informed decisions in the field.

11:40 AM – 12:30 PM – LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

12:30 – 1:30 PM – DAWN WEHMAN:

Better Fungal Photography for iNaturalist



Ready to take your mushroom observations to the next level? Join Dawn Wehman for a fun and practical session designed for users who already love sharing their finds but want to make them truly count. Learn how small changes—like capturing key features, improving lighting and focus, and following a simple field workflow—can turn an unidentifiable snapshot into valuable data that contributes to science. We'll look at real examples, common mistakes (we've all made them!), and tips on thinking like an identifier to help you contribute more meaningfully to iNaturalist.

Attendees should have the iNaturalist app downloaded on their phone and are encouraged to watch our iNaturalist 101 video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QJs0b36CZc in advance to get the most out of the session. Whether you're a casual observer just getting started, working toward your ID Button Program goals, or an amateur photographer with a DSLR, this session offers something for everyone.

1:45 – 3:30 PM – Walks/ID table

Identifier-led walks to explore the fungal diversity on Powdermill's trails!

3:30 – 4:00 PM – CLEANUP

Registration is required to attend the lectures and walks. The cost is \$35 for WPMC members; \$45 for non-members. Register at this link: <https://wpamushroomclub.org/mushroom-education-day-2026/>

City Nature Challenge 2026: Pittsburgh Region



The City Nature Challenge began with taking photos from April 24-27. Identification of the photos will continue until May 10, and the results will be announced on May 13. To join the 2026 Pittsburgh

Region project or to check on the status, go to:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2026-pittsburgh-region>



Lincoff Foray Will Feature Two Guest Mycologists

OUR GUEST MYCOLOGISTS this year will be **Kristen Wickert, PhD** and **Alden Dirks, PhD**. Dr. Wickert is a plant pathologist by training and avid naturalist in her personal time where she tries to spend as much of it as she can outside. Her educational background includes a bachelors in Forest Biology from Penn State and a master's and PhD in Plant Pathology from West Virginia University. She is looking forward to sharing her knowledge about the not too obvious world of plant pathogenic fungi and their role in forest health and ecology.



Dr. Wickert's talk, "Fungal Plant Pathogens: Ecological Role in the Forest," will cover the fungi that help keep our forests in balance: the plant pathogens. These cryptic fungi are co-evolved with the plants in our forests and cause diseases to the weak and sick, which constantly increases the resiliency of our forests. Unfortunately, there are some exotic pathogens that are accidentally introduced and cause diseases that our forests aren't naturally co-evolved with to adapt to. Kristen's talk will cover the role of plant pathogenic fungi in our forests, their

natural and unnatural balance, as well as how we can prevent them from becoming the next invasive species harming our forests.

Dr. Dirks (they/them) has been a practicing mycologist for over a decade. They are currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where they investigate antifungal resistance in invasive fungal diseases affecting immunocompromised children. Previously, Alden earned their PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Michigan in 2024 and an MS in Agroecology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2019. Their primary research interests include fungal systematics (especially pertaining to lorchels, crust fungi, and fungal dark matter taxa); fungal mating systems and queer mycology; fungal genomics and secondary metabolites; and medical mycology. Alden is also an avid forager with the lifelong goal of eating 1001 fungal species.

Dr. Dirks' talk, "False morels or true lorchels? A deep dive into the toxicology and edibility of *Gyromitra* mushrooms and related species", will present an overview of their latest findings, informed by widespread fungarium sequencing, in-depth taxonomic revisions, and cutting-edge phylogenomic analyses. Lorchels, also known as false morels (*Gyromitra* spp. and related species), are iconic mushrooms for their impressive morphology and infamous production of the gyromitrin mycotoxin. For centuries, there has been much confusion and speculation regarding species concepts and the distribution of gyromitrin in lorchels. Tremendous progress has been made in recent years in understanding species boundaries and evolutionary relatedness in the lorchel family (*Discinaceae*, *Pezizales*), as well as their ecological roles and toxin production.

New to Us: DNA Discoveries from NAMA 2025

By Dawn Wehman

THE ANNUAL FORAY hosted by the North American Mycological Association (NAMA), held September 12–14, 2025 in Marlboro, Vermont, brought together mycologists from across the country for a weekend of exploration, collaboration, and discovery. This year's event proved especially exciting on the DNA front, with several remarkable finds that highlight just how much fungal diversity remains undocumented.



Genus *Arrhenia* found by Richard Jacob



Family *Mollisiaceae* found by Cara Coulter

We're proud to share that several of our club members were recognized for their contributions. WPMC Mycologist **John Plischke**, WPMC Mycologist **Garrett Taylor**, and **Shannon Nix** were all thanked for their hard work on the DNA Team, helping process and analyze specimens collected during the foray.

There were several extraordinary discoveries despite the dry weather. Among them was a collection made by WPMC Mycologist **Richard Jacob** in the *Hygrophoraceae* family (<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/313156822>). The DNA didn't perfectly match any known mushroom in MycoMap database, showing only about 83% similarity to the closest known match. Because of this, the mushroom has been given the provisional name *Arrhenia* sp. "VT02." With such a large divergence from known species, this specimen could potentially represent an entirely new genus. There's no way to know at this stage, as only a single specimen has been found so far—but it is still a remarkable discovery!

Another standout discovery came from WPMC Mycologist **Cara Coulter**, who collected a striking *ascomycete* (<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/313219254>) that was initially identified morphologically as a *Calycina* due to its orange color and wavy margin. However, DNA analysis told a different story. Its closest match in the MycoMap database was *Mollisia* sp. "CA11," with only a 93.65% similarity. Members of *Mollisia* are typically steel gray to greenish in color, making this bright orange specimen particularly unusual. Due to this discrepancy, the fungus has been assigned the provisional name *Mollisiaceae* sp. "VT01." This surprising result highlights how DNA analysis can challenge traditional morphology-based identifications and reveal hidden diversity within familiar groups.

These discoveries from NAMA 2025 serve as a reminder that by looking a little closer, we may uncover something truly new to science.



26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray

Registration is open for the 26th annual Gary Lincoff Foray on Saturday, October 10. Use the form in this newsletter or register online at: <https://wpamushroomclub.org/lincoff-foray/>. Here are the events we're planning for that weekend:

Thursday Evening, October 8 – Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest State Park. Join WPMC Identifier **Jared White** and Cook Forest Environmental Education Specialist **Dale Luthringer** for our annual Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lodging.

Friday Morning, October 9 – Pre-Foray Walk at Cook Forest State Park. Meet WPMC Mycologists and Identifiers at Shelter 2 for our annual pre-Foray walk at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lunch.

Saturday, October 10 – The 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray at The Lodge in North Park. Activities will include:

- Guided Morning Walks in North Park • Afternoon Speakers
- Mushroom Display Tables • Auction & Sales
- Cooking Demonstration • Mushroom Feast • Table Walk

Auction Donations

DONATIONS KEEP COMING in for the Auction/Raffle at this year's 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray on Saturday, October 10. Prizes include books, art, ceramics, shirts, and more! If you would like to donate a mushroom-related item to this year's auction, call **Kathy Gilotty** at 412-445-3121 or email Past President **Cecily Franklin** at cfranklin@wpamushroomclub.org.

Bring Food for the Foray Feast

THIS YEAR, FORAY FEAST Chair **Mike Henry** will be joined by two co-chairs: **Scott Pavelle** and **Marylou Lenhart**. The team is looking for members who are willing to bring a dish to the Foray. You don't need to cook for 100 people – just 10 to 15.

If you plan to bring a dish containing wild-foraged mushrooms, you will need to first get them approved by a club Identifier or Mycologist. It's OK to use store-bought mushrooms if you're uncomfortable with cooking wild mushrooms. In fact, your dish doesn't need to contain mushrooms at all. Some club members are allergic or sensitive to mushrooms and will need an alternative meal choice.

If you are interested in bringing a dish or volunteering for other kitchen duties, email foray-feast@wpamushroomclub.org.

Weekend of Walks With or Without Camping

By Dawn Wehman

JOIN WPMC MYCOLOGIST **John Plischke** and host **Eileen Schaffer** for a weekend of mushroom walks in beautiful Somerset County! Laurel Hill State Park will serve as the meeting location for three walks that weekend: Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon, and Sunday morning. The club has reserved the group camping site here for the weekend:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/HJBkLDaDeNr1RCa6>

Friday, July 10 through Sunday, July 12
Laurel Hill State Park (Somerset County)
1454 Laurel Hill Park Rd, Somerset, PA 15501

Pit toilets are available at the group camping area. There is no electricity at the group camping area. Additional restrooms and showers are available near the RV area at the bottom of the hill. We ask those staying overnight Friday or Saturday to contribute \$20 per tent to help pay for the group tent spot (not refundable).

Not a camper? No problem! Members are welcome to join any one—or all—of the walks and skip the overnight stay. No registration required for non-campers. Here are the four trail options for hiking:

1. **Hemlock Trail:** 1.2-mile loop, more difficult hiking
2. **Bobcat Trail:** 1 mile, most difficult hiking
3. **Tram Road Trail:** 1.7 miles, more difficult hiking
4. **Pumphouse Trail:** 1.6 miles, easiest hiking

Those just hiking with us that weekend and not staying overnight in the group camping area do not need to register, but those who want to reserve one of the \$20 rustic tent sites should go to this link and scroll to the end of the page to register!

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/wpmc-camping-trip-2026/>

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, JULY 10:

3 PM John Plischke will set up camp and check hiking locations. Those registered to camp Friday or Saturday night are welcome to set up their tent in the group camping area after 3 PM.

SATURDAY, JULY 11:

Breakfast (on your own)

9 - 9:30 AM Sign in and safety briefing at the group camping area

9:30 – 10 AM Drive or walk to location of the group's preference

10 AM – 12 PM Hike and collect mushrooms

12 - 12:30 PM Return to the group camping area

12:30-2 PM Lunch (on your own). Table the mushrooms from the morning's walks

2-2:30 PM Drive or walk to location of the group's preference

2:30 – 5 PM Hike and collect mushrooms

5-5:30 PM Return to the group camping area

Dinner (on your own)

7:30 PM Campfire (weather permitting) & socialize about the day's finds

SUNDAY, JULY 12:

Breakfast (on your own)

9 - 9:30 AM Registration and safety briefing at the group camping area

9:30 – 10 AM Drive or walk to location of the group's preference

10 AM – 12 PM Hike and collect mushrooms

12 - 12:30 PM Return to the group camping area

12:30-2 PM Lunch (on your own). Table the mushrooms from the morning's walks

2-3 PM Pack up and clean up camp

3 PM Checkout



Interview with Barbara DeRiso

By Dawn Wehman

BARBARA DERISO didn't exactly plan on becoming a 20-year member of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club—it just sort of happened (as the best things do). A friend of hers received a gift membership and invited Barb along. Barb liked mushrooms, and she really liked Italian food, so the decision practically made itself. Her friend stuck around for about a year, but Barb never left!



When asked what drew her in, the answer is simple: "I loved cooking. Cooking was what brought me to this club." And she didn't just show up—she showed commitment. She served as Treasurer from 2009 – 2019 and somehow still had the energy to coordinate the Lincoff Foray for five years. She received WPMC's President's award in 2010 and 2015, the Outstanding Service award in 2011, and Honorary/Lifetime membership in 2020. She was even recognized for sleeping outside the North Park office in 2015, in order to secure our venue for the annual foray. That's dedication!

Barb's mushroom journey didn't stop in Pennsylvania. In 2009, then-president **John Stewart** and his late wife Diane convinced Barb to take things international with mushroom tours in Italy. One trip turned into many. Traveling with the company now known as "whatscookin," Barb formed a lasting friendship with mycologist **Britt Bunyard** (founder and Editor-in-Chief of *FUNGI* magazine and guest mycologist at the 2025 Lincoff Foray).

And the stories? They're as rich as a good risotto. On one unforgettable trip through the Umbrian chestnut forests near Spoleto and Foligno, Barb recalls black trumpets so abundant—and so massive (up to 8 inches tall!)—that the group purchased frying pans locally and cooked them up.

On another adventure near Alba, the group toured a commercial truffle operation where hazelnut and filbert trees were inoculated with white truffle spawn. The soil conditions had to be just right, and the trained dogs were so skilled they barely disturbed the earth—yet you could smell the truffles lurking a foot underground. That's when you know you're in the presence of something special.

Reminiscing about the late **Gary Lincoff**, Barb always had great admiration. "He was world-famous and yet he lived simply. We'd pick him up at the bus station when he came to Pittsburgh from Manhattan. He was a wonderful raconteur, always filled with greatly

entertaining stories, occasionally about his travels through the universe, courtesy of magic mushrooms. And he was so courtly toward his wife Irene, always concerned about her comfort, even after 40 or 50 years together. He was a delightful person and really earned the honor of being remembered annually at our Foray."

Lucky for us, Barb has brought a taste of these experiences home. She shares her recipe for Black Trumpet Risotto here. Though we can't promise Umbrian forests or truffle dogs, we can promise that it pairs well with a good story and great company.

Black Trumpet Risotto

2 ounces dried or 2 cups of fresh black trumpets

8 cups stock (chicken, vegetable or mushroom). Porcini bouillon cubes are available at Penn Mac.

¼ cup olive oil

1 medium onion, diced

Salt and pepper

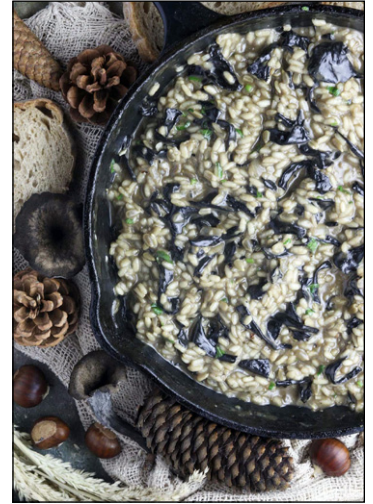
1 clove garlic, diced

2 cups arborio rice

1 cup dry white wine

4 tablespoons butter

½ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (no green-can stuff!)



Soak dried black trumpets in 3 cups of water until rehydrated, about an hour. Strain the mushrooms, reserving the broth for the risotto. Roughly chop the mushrooms, then set aside.

When you're ready, heat the stock and mushroom broth to a simmer.

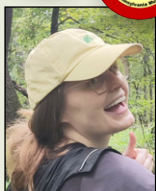
Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat; add onion and season with salt and pepper; add garlic and cook until slightly translucent. Add rice and stir to coat with the oil; season with salt and pepper and cook until slightly translucent. Add wine and stir until almost all the liquid has cooked off. Add hot stock and broth mixture, a ladleful at a time, completely stirring in the liquid each time. Keep adding broth as needed so there is always a ¼-inch liquid layer over the rice.

After 15 to 20 minutes, the rice should be close to al dente. Stir in the mushrooms. Taste and adjust seasoning. Remove from heat and stir in butter, then cheese. Serve immediately.

To serve, spoon into shallow bowls and shave some cheese on top.



WPMC ID Buttons



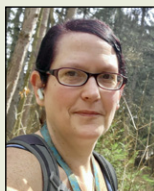
Marlene Strege



Isaac King



Dirk Cappel



Jennifer Uhlman

FOUR WPMC MEMBERS recently earned ID Buttons in recognition of their ability to identify mushroom species: **Marlene Strege** and **Isaac King** (200); WPMC Identifier **Dirk Cappel** (500); and newest WPMC Identifier **Jennifer Uhlman** (300). Congratulations to all!

WPMC's Button ID Button Program offers members a fun way to increase their knowledge of mushroom species. To learn more about the ID Button Program and how to submit your list of known mushrooms, go to:

<http://wpamushroomclub.org/about/button-id-program/>



Lincoff Foray Logo Contest

By Stephen Bucklin

HOPEFULLY YOU HAVE your calendar marked for the 26th annual Gary Lincoff Foray, scheduled for October 10 at The Lodge in North Park. Two years ago, we initiated a Foray Logo Contest to create a transparent and equitable process for selecting artwork. Due to that success, we are offering the same opportunity again this year. Below are the rules for participating; please share this far and wide with any artists you know who might be interested!

RULES:

- Open to anyone. You do not have to be a member of the Western PA Mushroom Club, though special consideration may be given to WPMC members.
- The final design will contain the official name of the event: 26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray.
- Each participant may submit up to 5 entries.
- Artwork must meet certain requirements for printing; please see requirements below.
- If you choose to represent a mushroom, we prefer distinctly recognizable, real mushroom species known to occur in Western Pennsylvania. We have listed a few species below.



Johnathan Kohlhepp's design as it appeared on the 2025 Lincoff T-shirt

DEADLINE:

- Contest entries must be received no later than July 1.
- Winner will be announced no later than September 1.
- Please email all entries to sbucklin@wpamushroomclub.org, with the subject line "2026 Annual Foray Logo Entry."

PRIZES:

The artist behind the winning design will receive the following:

- A one-year membership to WPMC or a one-year extension if they are already a member.
- A feature in WPMC's bimonthly newsletter.
- One example of each item printed with the logo. This will include a t-shirt, sticker, and any other swag that is created for the event.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRAPHIC ARTWORK:

- **NO AI ART.** Digital art is welcome. Vector files such as AI or EPS are preferred.
- Hand-drawn art without text in the layout can be submitted alone. Submit raster files (.jpg, .psd, .tif) scaled to size (10") of 300 dpi or greater.
- All text included in the design must be vector format and outlined unless it is high resolution (300 dpi).
- To keep within product production budget, the design must be limited to 1 or 2 colors (or 3 colors by incorporating the color of the shirt into the design).
- Any fonts used must be free for commercial use.

OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF:

Please note that WPMC may at our discretion alter graphic elements, font, or verbiage on the chosen design. The winning entry becomes the intellectual property of WPMC for exclusive commercial use in all marketing, merchandising, and in any other way the organization sees fit.

Examples of Fall Mushrooms in Western Pennsylvania:

Amanita flavoconia, Yellow Patches
Armillaria mellea, Honey Mushroom
Chlorociboria aeruginascens, Green Wood Cup
Craterellus fallax, Eastern Black Trumpet
Craterellus ignicolor, Flame Trumpet
Grifola frondosa, Hen of the Woods or Maitake
Helvella crispa, White Saddle
Hericium americanum, Bear's Head Tooth
Hydnum umbilicatum, Depressed Hedgehog
Laccaria ochropurpurea, Purple-and-White Deceiver
Laetiporus sulphureus, Chicken of the Woods
Lycoperdon perlatum, Common Puffball
Mycena haematopus, Bleeding Fairy Helmet
Suillus spraguei, Painted Suillus

WPMC Photo Contest Has New Category & Email Address

ONCE AGAIN, WPMC Identifier **Sara Klingensmith** will judge members' photos for our annual Photo Contest. Here are the Photo Contest rules for this year:

- Deadline for Submissions: September 30, 2026
- Maximum of 5 Entries per WPMC member
- Submit high resolution JPEG files
- Rename images before submitting, using name and subject, e.g., "Joe Smith morel.jpg"
- Email entries to **photography@wpamushroomclub.org**
- Indicate in your email the desired category for each photo.
- No AI-generated art or photos are permitted.

You must be a member of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club in good standing to enter. Club dues must be up to date. Photos submitted by non-members will not be considered.



Sara Klingensmith displays a mushroom found at Churchill Valley Greenway. Photo by Barbora Batokova

For more information, categories, and requirements, visit:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/photo-galleries/annual-wpmc-photo-contest/>



Day and time for walks vary. Please read carefully for any registration requirements or fees. Check the website at www.wpamushroomclub.org/events for updates, directions, and much more!

The Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club does not endorse or support the commercial harvesting of wild mushrooms from any state, county or city park. WPMC does promote the gathering of mushrooms—where permitted—for recreational, educational, and scientific purposes.

If you would like to lead a WPMC walk, or if you know a great walk location, please email WPMC Identifier Josh Mowris at jmowris@wpamushroomclub.org.



WPMC Walks & Events

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 9:30 A.M. DEPARTURE

Keystone Trails Association Spring Hiking Weekend. Summit Inn, Laurel Highlands. Mushroom Identification Hike, 1.8-mile, easy, loop, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Join WPMC Identifier **Dawn Wehman** and KTA for a spring mushroom identification hike on the Ferncliff Trail as we wind through rich forest habitat along the Youghiogheny River. Registration closed.

<https://www.kta-hike.org/shw2026.html>

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 10 AM TO 1 PM

Wolf Creek Narrows (Butler County)

Join WPMC Identifier **Josh Mowris** for a mushroom walk at Wolf Creek Narrows. Free and open to the public; no registration required.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 9 AM-12:30 P.M.

The Big Mushroom Hike with Allegheny Land Trust. Dead Man's Hollow – Catfish Pond Parking Area, McKeesport

Join WPMC Identifier **Sara Klingensmith** on an excursion to uncover the Hollow's hidden Kingdom of fungi. This guided hike is approximately 4 miles long and we'll be on the Cool Spirits, Haunted Hollow, and Table Rock trails. The terrain is considered moderate/strenuous with steep hills along the route. Bring snacks, water bottle, and a sturdy pair of hiking shoes. Trekking poles are recommended. We'll take breaks along the way to admire the fungal diversity while learning how to identify mushrooms. This hike is not recommended for kids. Hike runs rain or shine. NO WALK INS will be permitted. We will not be foraging for food on this hike or discussing edibility. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased here:

<https://alleghenylandtrust.networkforgood.com/events/98030-the-big-mushroom-hike>

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 5:30-7:30 P.M.

Montour Woods with Hollow Oak Land Trust. 1875 Hassam Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108

Meet WPMC Identifier and Hollow Oak Volunteer Land Steward **Mike Henry** at the main parking area/trailhead on Hassam Road for a mushroom walk at Montour Woods. Learn about the mushrooms that grow in Montour Woods Conservation area. The all-ages program will be approximately 2 hours covering moderate terrain. Please bring water and wear closed toe shoes. Free for Hollow Oak Land Trust members; \$10 for non-members. Register here:

<https://hollowoak.org/event/mushroom-walk-all-ages-2/>

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

Mushroom Education Day. Powdermill Nature Reserve (Westmoreland County)

See page 3.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 10 AM TO 1 PM

Oil Creek State Park (Venango County)

Join WPMC Identifiers **Ron Hilton** and **Beth Ace** for a mushroom walk in Oil Creek State Park. Meet in the parking area near the bridge and state park office at the pin drop below:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/kNZcx7zgEZsSpxTM8>

FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 6-8 PM

Beginner's Mushroom ID at Dead Man's Hollow with ALT. Catfish Pond Parking Area, 527 Scene Ridge Road, McKeesport, PA 15133

Join Allegheny Land Trust and WPMC Identifier **Julie Travaglini** for a mushroom hunt and ID table at Dead Man's Hollow! Please pull through the first gravel lot and park in the second lot closer to the trails and the kiosk. This will not be a traditional guided hike. Instead, after a brief introduction, attendees will be on their own to search for fungi and slime molds to bring back to an identification table at the end. We'll then learn about the fascinating fungi that everyone found! Hike runs rain or shine. NO WALK INS will be permitted. We will not be foraging for food. Tickets are \$5 for ages 2 through adult. Register here:

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/event/beginners-mushroom-id-at-dead-mans-hollow/>

JULY 8

Mushroom Talk & Walk with Allegheny Land Trust. Fern Hollow Nature Center

<https://alleghenylandtrust.org/events/>

JULY 10-12

WPMC Camping Weekend. Laurel Hill State Park (Somerset County)

See page 5.

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 10:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M.

Dark Hollow Woods, Oakmont. Pennsylvania Avenue Entrance.

Join WPMC Identifier **Cherie Cornmesser** and the Borough of Oakmont for a mushroom walk in Dark Hollow Woods. Meet at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance to Dark Hollow Woods. Choose between the level Memorial Trail loop and the more adventurous Spring Trail down into the hollow. Free and open to the public; no registration required. NOTE: There are no restrooms at Dark Hollow Woods. Directions: From Freeport Road (North or South), cross the Hulton Bridge into Oakmont. Continue on Hulton Road up the hill to the top and part way down. Turn right on 15th Street. At the end of 15th Street, turn left onto Pennsylvania Avenue and proceed into the park entrance. If the parking spaces are full, find a legal parking space on Pennsylvania Avenue and walk into the park.



SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 10 AM-1 PM

I.S. and Gertrude Sahli Nature Park (Beaver County). 194 McKinley Road, Beaver Falls, PA 15010

Join WPMC Identifiers **Dawn Wehman** and **Jennifer Uhlman** for a late summer mushroom walk. At the ID table we will “show and tell” to allow participants to learn the characteristics of local mushrooms, including edible, poisonous, and unique species. Attendees will be introduced to using the app iNaturalist for mushroom identification. Free and open to the public. Foraging for food is discouraged.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 5-7 PM

Jennings Environmental Education Center. 2951 Prospect Rd., Slippery Rock, PA 16057

Join WPMC Identifiers **Dawn Wehman** and **Judy Mackenroth** for a late summer evening mushroom walk. Gather inside the Environmental Center, being sure to wear sturdy shoes and something to protect yourself from insects. Bring your finds to an identification table at 7 PM for analysis. At the ID table we will “show and tell” to allow participants to learn the characteristics of local mushrooms, including edible, poisonous, and unique species. Attendees will be introduced to using the app iNaturalist for mushroom identification. Free and open to the public.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 10 AM TO 1 PM

North Country Trail, Parker, PA (Armstrong County)

Join WPMC Identifier **Josh Mowris** for a mushroom walk at North Country Trail in Parker. Free and open to the public; no registration required.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 5:30-7:30 P.M.

Mushroom Walk with Hollow Oak Land Trust. 500 Nike Road, Moon Township, PA 15108

Meet WPMC Identifier and Hollow Oak Volunteer Land Steward **Mike Henry** at the Nike Road Trailhead for a mushroom walk at Montour Woods. Learn about the mushrooms that grow in Montour Woods Conservation area. The all-ages program will be approximately 2 hours covering moderate terrain. Please bring water and wear closed toe shoes. Free for Hollow Oak Land Trust members; \$10 for non-members. Register here:

<https://hollowoak.org/event/mushroom-walk-all-ages-3/>

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 10 AM TO 1 PM

Muddy Creek Holly Trail. Cambridge Springs, PA (Crawford County)

Join WPMC Identifier **Josh Mowris** for a mushroom walk at Muddy Creek Holly Trail in Cambridge Springs. Free and open to the public; no registration required.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest State Park (Clarion County)

Join WPMC Identifier **Jared White** and Cook Forest Environmental Education Specialist **Dale Luthringer** for our annual Fluorescent Foray at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lodging.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

Pre-Foray Walk at Cook Forest State Park (Clarion County)

Meet WPMC Mycologists and Identifiers at Shelter 2 for our annual pre-Foray walk at Cook Forest. There is no charge for this walk, but you will be responsible for your own transportation and lunch.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

26th Annual Gary Lincoff Foray. The Lodge at North Park

See pages 4 and 5.

Other Walks, Forays & Events

MAY 1-3

Keystone Trails Association Spring Hiking Weekend. The Laurel Highlands. Registration closed.

<https://www.kta-hike.org/shw2026.html>

TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 6-9 PM

Pyrography: Conk Mushrooms. Phipps Garden Center in Mellon Park \$45 for Phipps members; \$50 for non-members

<https://my.conservatory.org/10265/pyrographyconkmushrooms>

JUNE 26-28

Ohio Mushroom Festival. Joe Bottoms Campground, Hammondsville, OH

<https://ohiomushroomfestival.com/>

JULY 30 – AUGUST 3

NEMF Foray. Penn State Mont Alto (Franklin County)

<https://www.nemf.org/>

JULY 31 – AUGUST 9

Summer Continental MycoBlitz

<https://mycota.com/continental-mycoblitz/>

AUGUST 7-9

West Virginia Mushroom Club

<https://www.wvmushroomclub.net/>

AUGUST 15, 9 AM-12 PM

Mushroom ID Journaling & Foraging. Schenley Park Welcome Center. \$33 for Phipps members; \$35 for non-members

<https://my.conservatory.org/10437/mushroomidjournalingandforaging>

AUGUST 27-30

66th Annual NAMA Foray. Marquette, Michigan

<https://namyco.org/annual-foray/>

AUGUST 28-30

Bill Russell Foray. Camp Golden near Petersburg, PA

<https://centralpamushroom.club/>

SEPTEMBER 3-7

Sequanota Foray (Somerset County). Mycological Association of Washington DC

<https://mawdc.org/>

OCTOBER 2 – 11

Fall Continental MycoBlitz

<https://mycota.com/continental-mycoblitz/>



Look Great & Support WPMC!

SHOW YOUR WPMC pride by purchasing customized club gear from spreadshop.com. The WPMC Merch Store offers many products with the WPMC logo, including shirts of various styles, hats, mugs, aprons, tote bags, and more. Whether it's for men, women, or toddlers, you get to choose the size and color! Buy for yourself or as one-of-a-kind gifts. All purchases benefit WPMC.

<https://western-pa-mushroom-club.myspreadshop.com/>



It's Membership Renewal Season!

By Dawn Wehman

AS WE HEAD into another exciting mushroom season, it's time to renew your Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club membership and get ready to start mushing! If you've been meaning to renew, now's the perfect time. Your membership dues are essential to keeping the club thriving and support over 40% of WPMC's annual income. To renew, simply visit: <https://wpamushroomclub.org/about/join/> and follow the instructions provided. As a WPMC member, you'll enjoy:

Nine monthly meetings with guest speakers & mushroom identification • A free mushroom grow kit at our annual May cultivation meeting • Five electronic WPMC newsletters • Advance notice of mushroom walks and other local, regional & national events • Members-only photo contest • Members-only costume contest • Access to the WPMC Facebook Group • A discount at the annual Gary Lincoff Foray

We'd love to have you with us for another year of fungi, friendship, and discovery—see you in the woods!

WPMC Newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER OF the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club is published five times a year: March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December. Articles, photos, news items and other submissions should be sent to the Editor at least 6-8 weeks prior to targeted distribution. The Editor cannot guarantee that submissions will be included in the next newsletter. The Editor reserves the right to make spelling or grammatical corrections and may suggest content changes to the author. Material published in our newsletters may only be used in other non-profit publications with expressed permission and with appropriate acknowledgements.

Cecily Franklin, Editor

Martha Wasik Graphic Arts, Production

Send submissions to: cfranklin@wpamushroomclub.org

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WPMC Scholarship Committee

WPMC ADMINISTERS an annual Scholarship/Grant program to promote wild mushrooming by providing monetary support for attending educational events, projects, research, or mycological studies by individuals or institutions. Application forms are available on our website and must be sponsored by a WPMC member. For more information or to register, go to:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/education/wpamc-scholarship-grant-application/>

Donations Help Fund WPMC Projects

LOOKING FOR A way to support WPMC beyond paying your annual dues? Make a donation anytime; it's tax-deductible because WPMC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. If you're age 73 or above, you can reduce your taxable income by directing some of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Donations may be made in honor or in memory of a loved one. Your employer may even match your contribution. Make checks payable to Western PA. Mushroom Club and submit them to our Treasurer, **Mike Henry**.

NEVER
Eat an unidentified mushroom!





WPMC MEMBERSHIP FORM

REV: 2026

NEW MEMBERSHIP: ☐ RENEWAL: ☐

COMPLETE THIS FORM **PRINT CLEARLY**, SIGN AND MAIL

Benefits: WPMC newsletter • Nine monthly WPMC meetings • Free participation in WPMC walks • Discount for WPMC forays

Name (s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone 1 _____ Phone 2 _____

E-mail (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) _____

Emergency Contact Name _____ Phone _____

Interests (e.g.: foraging, identification, cooking, etc.) _____

**PLEASE PRINT IN PLAIN BLOCK LETTERING. TAKE SPECIAL CARE WITH EMAIL ADDRESSES:
numeral "1," uppercase "i" and lowercase "L" look the same.**

Please return completed, signed and dated form (with check payable to Western PA Mushroom Club) to:

WPMC, c/o Dawn Wehman 285 Kindale Street Ellwood City PA 16117 • membership@wpamushroomclub.org

or visit <http://wpamushroomclub.org/about/join/> to pay using a credit card.

Please indicate your newsletter/event announcement preference: ☐ Electronic via e-mail ☐ Hardcopy via US mail (\$15 additional)

☐ \$20 Individual ☐ \$25 Family ☐ \$15 Full-time Student ☐ \$15 Newsletter Hardcopy Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club Release and Indemnification Agreement

This Release and Indemnification Agreement (the "Agreement") is entered into by and between the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club, as it is presently organized and may be later structured ("WPMC") and the undersigned Member (the "Member") on this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

WHEREAS, WPMC is a non-profit educational organization that has as its principal purpose the sharing of mushroom-related information among its members; and

WHEREAS, all officers, directors, identifiers and members serve WPMC in a voluntary capacity and receive no remuneration for their services; and

WHEREAS, in cases where WPMC charges a fee for its forays, walks, lectures and other events (collectively "WPMC Events"), it is doing so only to cover its direct costs and does not operate in a for-profit capacity; and WHEREAS, the Member understands that there is inherent and unavoidable risk in outdoor activities relating to hunting and consuming wild mushrooms. These risks include but are not limited to the dangers of hiking in difficult terrain, the possibility of misidentifying a wild mushroom, and the possible allergic or toxic reaction that some individuals may have to otherwise edible mushrooms.

NOW THEREFORE, the Member hereby agrees to the following:

1. The Member assumes all risks associated with WPMC Events. The Member expressly acknowledges that it is the Member's sole responsibility to hike safely and to determine whether a wild mushroom may be consumed.
2. The Member releases, holds harmless, and indemnifies the WPMC, its officers, directors, identifiers, and representatives from any and all liability relating to any injury or illness incurred by the Member or the Member's family members as a result of participation in a WPMC Event.

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If any portion of the Agreement is declared for any reason to be invalid or unenforceable, such invalidity shall not affect any other provision of the Agreement. This Agreement shall apply to all current and future WPMC events.

MEMBERS:

SIGNATURE (Members under age 18: signature of parent or guardian)

PLEASE PRINT NAME CLEARLY:

1 _____ 1 _____

2 _____ 2 _____

3 _____ 3 _____

4 _____ 4 _____