



# Symbiosis<sup>©</sup>

The newsletter of the Prairie States Mushroom Club

Volume 26:1

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<http://www.geocities.com/iowamushroom>

## Mushrooms and Anti-Semitism

Information compiled by Dean Abel

Dean Abel noticed the anti-Semitic tract *Der Giftpilz* for sale on eBay and he sought out more information. However, he was scooped by David W. Rose in the article “*Auricularia auricula*, Anti-Semitism, and Political Mushrooms” in the new magazine *Fungi*. Rose’s article examines *Der Giftpilz* and other Nazi propaganda employing mushroom metaphors as well as discussing the history of the “Jew’s Ear” mushroom. Visit the homepage of *Fungi* at [www.fungimag.com](http://www.fungimag.com). Some current articles may be downloaded.

In any case, here is what Dean gleaned from the website [www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/thumb.htm](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/thumb.htm).

*Der Giftpilz*, the German word for toadstool, was a publication of Julius Streicher’s publishing house. It was aimed particularly at kids, and was sometimes used in the schools. For more information on Julius Streicher (he was executed as a war criminal in 1946) and his anti-Semitic propaganda, see the book *Julius Streicher: Nazi Editor of the Notorious Anti-Semitic Newspaper Der Sturmer* by Randall L. Bytwerk. For more on Nazi Anti-Semitic propaganda directed toward children, see the essay by Mary Mills titled

“Propaganda and Children during the Hitler Years”. <[www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/m/mills-mary/mills-00.html](http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/m/mills-mary/mills-00.html)>.

She writes: “*Der Giftpilz* (The Poisonous Mushroom) appeared in Germany in 1938 and leaves little question regarding the intended Nazi solution to the “Jewish problem.” The book begins innocently enough by describing a favorite German pastime, picking wild mushrooms in the woods. A young boy, Franz, accompanies his mother on a walk in a beautiful, wooded area and helps her gather mushrooms. After carefully describing and showing Franz several varieties of both edible and poisonous mushrooms, his mother compares the good mushrooms to good people and the harmful mushrooms to bad people. The most dangerous people are, of course, the Jews.

“Franz proudly announces that he has learned in school that the Jews are bad people. His mother continues her comparison of Jews to mushrooms by emphasizing that, just as poisonous mushrooms are difficult to distinguish from edible ones, it is difficult to differentiate Jews from Non-Jews because Jews can assume many forms. Franz’s mother repeatedly alludes to the terrible destructive force of the Jews. One Jew can destroy an

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# Auricularia auricula

By Dave Layton

*Auricularia auricula* (Tree Ear or Ear Fungus) is quite distinctive and can be easily spotted looking like clumps of ears on dead logs. It can be found any time of year on dead elms and other deciduous wood. There have been many times when it was the only edible in my basket. I've even found it in an edible state in the winter. It can still be edible if it has begun to dry. Actually drying it and reconstituting it in broth is the best way to eat it. It's important to know that it is either fresh or dried while fresh and hasn't become dessicated. If its rubbery or pliant it should be okay, but if its fragile and crumbly its probably old and not good.

I'd eaten it many times but was never too impressed until I tried it in several dishes in China. The Chinese name for it is Yung Ngo or Black Mushrooms because they blacken when dried. Its mild flavor and gelatinous texture fit just right with other vegetables in Chinese dishes. I even got pretty good at sliming it up onto chop-sticks.

Mildly flavored mushrooms are very popular in Chinese cooking. They serve to accentuate the more stronger flavored components of a meal. *Auricularia*'s cousin [Tremella mesenterica](#) ([Witches Butter](#)) is also widely eaten in China and called White Mushroom. It can be found commonly in Iowa too.

My cooking mistake with *auricula* was the same as my mistake with *Lyophyllum decastes*. I tried to cook it with strong mushrooms or in traditional mushroom recipes and it didn't perform well. I look forward to experimenting with sautéed vegetables and rice or noodles.

*Auricularia auricula* is considered to have a wide variety of healthful effects. It is also known as *Auricularia auricula-judae*. (Jew's Ear). This last name speaks to fungi's strange historical relationship with different cultures. Dean Abel provides us with a fascinating insight on this topic in the article "Mushrooms and

Anti-Semitism." To learn more about this often under-rated fungus, visit Tom Volk's web page: [http://botit.botany.wisc.edu/toms\\_fungi/apr2004.html](http://botit.botany.wisc.edu/toms_fungi/apr2004.html) or Micheal Kuo page: [http://www.mushroomexpert.com/auricularia\\_auricula.html](http://www.mushroomexpert.com/auricularia_auricula.html)



*Auricularia auricula*

Photo by Jim Frink can be found at <http://iowamushroom.smugmug.com/>



## Foxfire Funnies



David Arora with [more](#) mushrooms, circa 2000.

Photo found at [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Arora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Arora)

### Aroraisms

David Arora is one of the most outspoken mushroom experts in America. His comments on edibility are often unique (to say the least) as you'll see in the following quotes from his book [Mushrooms Demystified](#).

*Panus Rudis*: "Edible but very hairy. You'd do better to brush your teeth with it than eat it."

*Phyllostopsis nidulans*: "The odor is so disgusting that only a zealot with the iron constitution of Charles McIlvaine would consider eating it."

*Clitocybe nebularis*: "Its rank odor doesn't exactly make you want to rush home and throw it in a frying pan."

*Boletus "marshii"*: "Sautéed delicately in butter with a pinch of pepper and a clove of garlic, served steaming hot on toast with cream-cheese and

celery, broiled belligerently on a skewer with spiced lamb and bell peppers, or layered lovingly in a casserole with Parmesan cheese, egg noodles and onions, *Boletus "marshii"* is still inedible." *Cryptoporus volvatus*: "To tough to be edible, however Alexander Smith says that worms (insect larvae) found inside the fruiting bodies can be used as fish bait. So can worms found outside the fruiting bodies."



# Finding Mushrooms in the Winter

Finding mushrooms outdoors in the winter can be a challenge for Iowans, but six PSMC members including myself found ways to do it. For Bob and Linda Scarth as well as Sally Myers and myself, the ways involved traveling half-way around the planet. You'll find stories of what we found and where we found it interesting. But I think you'll find Glen Schwartz and Roger Heidt's account of finding wild mushrooms growing in the winter right here in Iowa just as interesting. I'll begin with how I found mushrooms in northern China when I visited Sally there in January.

Actually, I found mushrooms everywhere I went to eat. Even the little packaged meal on the flight from Tokyo to Beijing contained a variety of *Pleurotus* that I was unfamiliar with. Upon further study it might be what is called "Baby *Pleurotus*." Or a diminutive variety close to *P. eryngii*. That variety of mushroom was broadly available in stores. I learned that this was what I was actually

seeing when I incorrectly labeled it *Grifola* for a picture in the last issue of *Symbiosis*. Also, a mushroom that I thought might be *Poria tuberosa* in that issue were actually the fat stalks of King Trumpets (*Pleurotus Eryngii* or Xing Bao Gu in Chinese). I tried several species in a variety of preparations in restaurants. My favorites were Dong Gu (*Flammulina velutipes*) cooked in hot pots and Shitake (*Lentinus edodes*) with Peking duck.

I did find mushrooms outdoors but that was because TEDA where Sally lives has a giant outdoor market even in the winter. I brought back some *Lyophyllum shimeji* and experimented with cooking it. It is similar to *L. decastes* but smaller and a bit more flavorful. It was very interesting that the Chinese make use of milder flavored mushrooms more than stronger ones like our common button mushrooms, though they use those too.

Okay, I didn't really find any wild mushrooms growing, but the Skarth's figured out a good way to find fresh wild edible mushrooms in the winter – just take a trip to the Falkland Islands - DL



Vegetable market in TEDA China



Shimeji [www.flickr.com/photos/fotoosvanrobin/3015770092/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/fotoosvanrobin/3015770092/)



## Mushrooms in the Falkland Islands

Text and photos by Bob and Linda Skarth



© LINDA & ROBERT SCARTH



After a wind-blown walk to the cormorant and penguin colonies on Bleaker Island in the Falklands, we were taking a mid-afternoon break for tea and biscuits. We then noticed Elaine Short, accompanied by her pet bottle lamb, making their way around the sheep paddock stopping to pick up whitish objects. They could have been feathers from the wild Upland Geese which also grazed, keeping the pastures short. But in fact, Elaine was gathering mushrooms for the delicious soup we would have for dinner that evening. We photographed several

mushrooms during our visit which appeared to be two species. One species had a smooth cap and the other had flaking on the cap surface. Both had brown gills that were free of the stalk and had thin annular rings.

We asked people if they knew the scientific names for the white mushrooms we saw in the sheep, penguin and goose pastures on several of the Falkland Islands. No one was certain. They just knew the

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# Mushrooms in the Falkland Islands

(cont. from pg. 3)

ones that made good soup or were sautéed for breakfast. Very little is written about the fungi, especially the mushrooms, found in the Falkland Islands. There have been a few scientific papers over the last 100 years, including one about the genus *Agaricus* in the *Kew Bulletin* in 1999. Marijke M. Nauta, a researcher from The Netherlands, found six *Agaricus* species on the islands, including two new taxa which were described in very detailed scientific terms. We believe the photo with the flaked cap may be one of the newly described species – *Agaricus maclovianus*. We found it on Saunders Island, one of the locations Nauta included in the description. It looks very much like the drawing in the article.



*A. campestris*



*A. Sp.*

The ones Mrs. Short picked were probably the *Agaricus campestris* or some close relative, described in the above article, and also enjoyed by mushroom hunters here in Iowa, in South America and in Europe. Nauta described *campestris* as a “rather variable taxon.” The name *campestris* is interesting on several levels, especially for its presence in the Falkland Islands. It is derived from the Latin, *campus*, meaning field, hence the common name, Field Mushroom. In the Falkland Islands, anyone who does not live in Stanley (Town), lives in Camp, from the Spanish, *campo*. Campo means countryside in Spanish. And the people we met in Camp (the outlying island settlements) were often mushroom hunters.

By the way, Mrs. Short’s mushroom soup was followed by the best lamb roast (and trimmings) we have ever eaten. On another island, one of our fellow visitors, picked a batch of mushrooms and the cook at the guest house sautéed them for his breakfast, which he ate with gusto.

For some examples of the wildlife and scenery we photographed in the Falkland Islands, visit our web site: [www.scarthphoto.com/falklands.htm](http://www.scarthphoto.com/falklands.htm)



# Winter Foray

Text by Glen Schwartz  
Photos by Roger Heidt



Winter Lichens

Editors note: More text (including a list of species found) and photos can also be found at the PSMC website: <http://www.geocities.com/iowamushroom/>

Mushroom foray in the middle of winter? Are you nuts? Surprisingly, a winter foray in the Midwest can be quite productive. Sure, you expect to find *Ganoderma applanatum* (Artist’s Conk), and maybe some turkey tails, but what else is out there? On a recent outing to the Wickiup Hills area just north of Cedar Rapids, Roger and I found more than 20 species of fungi and several species of lichens.

Mushroom hunting in winter is best on a warm winter day. Make sure you can keep your feet dry and dress to keep from getting too cold or too hot. Use snowshoes if the snow in the woods is more than 8 inches deep. Take a camera with you, but be careful not to drop it in the snow.

There are actually some advantages to a winter outing. First, you don’t need to worry about mosquitoes or wood ticks. Second, you can see the woods without the leaves and brush blocking your view. This is a great way to get to know your favorite area better.

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# Morel Stories

The following tales from PSMC members depict some of the fun, frustration and surprise that can be part of morel hunting. The stories culminate with Don Huffman sharing amazing morel historical information as well as his own stories.  
Dave Layton



## Morels on Sally's counter top

by Dave Layton

Sally and the Mushroom Expert

Sally said, "Let's take that path".

"Let's not. It ends in brambles and I don't see any mushroom trees."

"No morels would be growing there?"

"It's not likely."

"Well, maybe that's what all the other mushroom experts thought too. Maybe they just passed by them like you might do." She had a point, so we took the obscure dead end path which, naturally, led to a nice patch of morels. For the record: there were no obvious "mushroom trees" in sight.



Image found at [mausersandmuffins.blogspot.com/2009\\_02\\_08\\_arc...](http://mausersandmuffins.blogspot.com/2009_02_08_arc...)

## The 8 Point Morel

by Arnold Christian

My 2007 morel story of interest began as I walked into a "glory patch" and had about 100 in the bag. I reached down among some tall foliage/ground flora for a large specimen of a *Morchella esculenta* and not 12 inches away was a deer skull with a nice 8 point set of antlers. Since it wasn't chewed by rodents, I separated it from its skeleton and

donated it to the Nahant naturalist to use in his teachings of mammals inhabiting the Nahant Habitats of prairie fields and bottomland woods. It was all I could carry with 200+ morels and a set of antlers about 1 and 1/2 miles back to my parked vehicle. T'was a notable "find" to say the least-and I still have frozen morels we eat with venison at home.





# Morel Stories

(cont. from pg. 5)

## An Interview with Tom and Erma Kehoe




Dave ~ You folks have been hunting morels for a while. I imagine you have a few interesting stories, good or bad.

Tom ~ I guess a 9 headed clump of morels was my most interesting find. My worst time was when another fella and I got into a big area with no cover and it hailed on us. Neither one of us was wearing a hat. That really stung.

We've been hunting morels for 40 to 50 years now. We always find enough for a few good meals, but the best hunting was during the 60s and 70s when the Dutch Elm disease was just starting. We'd pick them by the buckets full. One time we had a big

ice chest along to keep any we found cold. We ended up dumping the ice out and completely filling that chest with morels.

We began hunting for other kinds of mushrooms 30 years ago when Don Huffman got us to join the Prairie States Mushroom Club.

Erma ~ Our best time finding mushrooms was in the Summer when we were camping in Missouri. There were different mushrooms every step we took. Our two favorite things to do are playing with our great-grandchildren and finding mushrooms! 

## Two Tales, One of Frustration and One of Fun

by Don Huffman

My biggest morel disappointment: I started a morel/false morel plot southwest of Pella in what I thought was an isolated place. I had a plot 100m x 100m, laid out in 1 m. squares so that I could record the fruiting of any of the morels or false morels in that really good habitat on a rather flat area sloping off to a stream on two sides.

I had data from several visits at 2-4 day intervals each year for 7 years in what I had planned to make a 10 yr. study. My hope was to establish rather firm data of the size of mycelium supporting each of the species and morels and false morels present. I had also kept data on developmental stages of spring flowers concurrent with morels, bud

(cont. on pg. 8)

## Interesting Iowa Morel Facts by Don Huffman


- 1) The largest morel I've seen. Lois Tiffany at I.S.U. received a specimen several years ago which weighed in at 4 lbs. 2 oz.! It was the biggest morel I've ever seen, and Lois has a photo of it, and so do I if I can find it. It was growing on the dirt floor of a tool shed!
- 2) The earliest Iowa morel I've collected was on March 11 at Keosauqua State Park.
- 3) The strangest habitat I've heard of was reported, I think to Lois Tiffany and George Knaphus, *Morchella esculenta* growing on a wet, rolled up carpet in an unfinished basement. 



Photo: Dr. Tiffany with giant morel

# Winter Foray

(cont. from pg. 4)

Third, the lighting for photography is great in winter. The deep woods can be very dark in summer, requiring a flash or bulky tripod to get decent photos. Fourth, you will probably have the woods to yourself, and the combination of white snow, blue skies, and solitude is very therapeutic.

There are a few mushrooms that will pop out whenever the temperature is above freezing for a few days in a row. *Flammulina velutipes* (velvet foot) and *Galerina autumnalis* are 2 such mushrooms. Pay attention, because one of these choices is edible, the other is deadly poisonous. Jelly fungi can rehydrate and look as fresh as you might expect in the spring.

The most rewarding part of winter mushroom hunting is to find the unexpected. So far this winter, Roger and I have found several species new to us, including the jelly *Dacryopinax elegans* and the shelf fungi *Trametes villosa*.

Without a doubt, the biggest shock of all was finding *Armillaria mellea* Honey Mushroom.



That's right; we found a perfect honey mushroom in Iowa in February! This is the kind of find that keeps us going back into the woods once every few weeks.



# Recipe Corner

## Creamed Mushrooms w/ Cheese

- 2 T. butter
- 1 T. olive oil
- 1 lb. firm white mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 2 T. dry sherry
- 1/4 c. sour cream
- 2 T. grated parmesan cheese
- salt & pepper, to taste

Melt butter in skillet add oil; add mushrooms; sauté 2 minutes. Add sherry and cook 1 minute. Mix sour cream, cheese, salt and pepper cook over low heat until thoroughly warm.



# Mushrooms and Anti-Semitism

(cont. from cover)



*Dacryopinax elegans*



*Trametes villosa*

entire people because the Jew is the Devil in human form. The Jew poses a deadly threat not only to the survival of the German people but to the survival of the world! It is Germany's obligation to warn the rest of the world about this terrible toadstool and thereby save humanity from destruction. Thus begins one of the most insidious storybooks ever composed for children."

A partial translation of *Der Giftpilz* can be found at <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/story2.htm>.



The cover of *Der Giftpilz*



"Just as it is often hard to tell a toadstool from an edible mushroom, so too it is often very hard to recognize the Jew as a swindler and criminal..."



# PSMC Spring 2009 Happenings

## Two Tales...

(cont. from pg. 6)

### PSMC invites members to host Mushroom Forays

We are always looking for new patches of woods to explore. Please invite us to explore your favorite patch. Contact us by email: [iowamushroom@yahoo.com](mailto:iowamushroom@yahoo.com) or phone: Dave Layton (563) 242-0880.

### PSMC Photo Site now up!

If you have not looked at the Club photo site, [www.iowamushroom.smugmug.com](http://www.iowamushroom.smugmug.com), please take a little time. There are already dozens of photos posted and Glen has been working hard putting information on Jim Frink's photos. **Club members are invited to contribute to this site.** This is a great resource that Glen has set up for us. Let's take advantage of it.

Check out the key words. If you see any information that is incorrect or suspect, please let us know so we can correct or remove it. We would like the information attached to be accurate. email: [iowamushroom@yahoo.com](mailto:iowamushroom@yahoo.com)

### Submissions to "Symbiosis" wanted

We are always looking for your mushroom stories, recipes, pictures and jokes. The more members that contribute the more interesting your newsletter will be. Submissions can be made to Dave Layton by email [davelayton@q.com](mailto:davelayton@q.com), mail or fax Dave Layton  
542 9<sup>th</sup> Ave S.  
Clinton, IA 52732

### PSMC Visits Lake Red Rock

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> PSMC will foray at Roberts Creek on Lake Red Rock. At 1PM members will provide a presentation on "Finding, Identifying and Sustainably Harvesting Delicious Spring Mushrooms." More information can be found at the PSMC website: <http://www.geocities.com/iowamushroom/>


### PSMC Members Teach a Morel Cooking Class at New Pioneer Coop, Iowa City

At 4PM on May 16<sup>th</sup> Prairie States Mushroom Club Representatives Dave Layton and Marty Augustine will present a mushroom cooking class Morels and More: Magical Treats from the Iowa Woods, at New Pioneer Coop 1101 2nd Street Coralville, Iowa

Register and pay on-line at [www.newpi.com](http://www.newpi.com) under "classes"


Preregistration required. Class limited to 20 students.

### Thank You Vicki

Vicki Coutant has graciously donated her time and talents as Production Editor to layout and design "Symbiosis" for the last five issues. She also submitted this issue's recipe. If you like the way this newsletter looks, or have suggestions, you can let Vicki know by emailing her at [vicki.coutant@frontiernet.net](mailto:vicki.coutant@frontiernet.net). P.S. (She will accept morels as tokens of gratitude.) 

size on white oaks, and other phenological observations. By the 7th year it became evident that many hooby hunters had found out my plot and it was picked nearly clean from then on, ending my serious attempt to study the plot. I still have 7 years of data, and think it is helpful, but not as complete as I would have wanted. It has not been published.

One unusual morel surprise came when a group of paleobotanists from The Field Museum in Chicago came in early May one year for a return to collect fossil plant material from the strip pits south of Pella. They had asked for several "husky students" to help carry out the heavy rocks which were fossil laden.

As we carried loads of fossil material back to the vehicles parked along the road we walked paths that have been there for many years. We looked on the slopes and saw a huge fruiting of *Morchella* so we unloaded our fossil material, returned to the paths and picked our shirts and hats full of fresh morels. One of the paleobotanists was a native of England, another from China. Both knew of morels, but had never seen them before. We spent a nice evening in my home living room talking fossils and morels, and eating many sautéed morels along with some good cheeses and wine. A great and memorable evening! 

Fax (309) 793-6807



Dave Layton, President  
Prairie States Mushroom Club  
542 9th Ave. S.  
Clinton, IA 52732

PSMC Web Site:  
[http://www.geocities.com/  
iowamushroom/](http://www.geocities.com/iowamushroom/)



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## PSMC Spring 2009 Forays

Complete Foray information found at  
[http://www.geocities.com/  
iowamushroom/](http://www.geocities.com/iowamushroom/)

### **May 2nd at 10 AM**

Roberts Creek Park on Lake Red  
Rock  
Following the Foray at 1 PM PSMC  
members will do a presentation on  
“Finding, Identifying and Sustainably  
Harvesting Delicious Spring  
Mushrooms”

### **May 9th at 10 AM**

Palisade Dows Forest Preserve

### **May 16th at 10 AM**

Cou Falls Northwest of Coralville  
Reservoir  
At 4 PM Dave Layton and Marty  
Augustine will present a mushroom  
cooking class “Morels and More:  
Magical Treats from the Iowa  
Woods,” at New Pioneer Coop  
Coralville, Iowa

Register and pay on-line at  
[www.newpi.com](http://www.newpi.com) under “classes”  
Preregistration required. Class limited  
to 20 students

### **June 13th at 10 AM**

Bill and Marlys Brown’s farm on the  
Maquoketa River

### **June 27th at 10 AM**

Ledges State Park, Boone Mushroom  
experts Dr. Lois Tiffany and Rosanne  
Healy will be on hand to share their  
mushroom lore.

*Save the dates*

### **July 19th at 9 AM**

Amana Nature Trail

**August 8th at 11 AM** as part of the  
Whiterock Conservancy Bioblitz

**October 3rd** at Cedar Bluffs  
Southwest of Oskaloosa (Time TBA)