



BUILDING YOUR MUSHROOM MEMORY IV

By Dr. Walt Sundberg, Mycologist,
Professor Emeritus, Southern Illinois University
Chief Mycologist (Scientific Advisor), Missouri Mycological Society
This is the 4th in a series of articles by Dr Sundberg on this subject

Mycological New Year's Resolutions

By the time you read this we will be about three months into 2010--the new year will be about one fourth already over. Did you make New Year Resolutions? Are they still being worked on or are they now just memories of good intentions?

Regardless of the status of your original 2010 resolutions, the regional mushroom season for this year has yet to start. So, there is still time to make some "Mycological New Year's Resolutions" before hunting season begins. If you didn't participate in any of the "Building Your Mushroom Memory" activities presented in 2009, you might consider resolving to do so this year.

Begin by consulting articles 1, 2, and 3 of the series in issues of the 2009 Earthstar. (You may find them on our web site www.MoMyco.org)

Have you started making a **personal mushroom life list** yet? If so, great. If not, it is NEVER too late. Begin now—before the 2010 mushrooms begin to appear! Start by making a list of fungi you know and **have personally seen fresh**--in the field or at a foray on the table. As the season begins this year, continue adding to your list each time you see another "fresh" mushroom that is new to you! Review your list over

and over again, and modify it often as your knowledge of mushroom species increases. **Most important: Carry your list with you, and use it to jog your memory on field trips!** You will be surprised at how much more you will remember with the help of your list.

Remember, once started, a **personal mushroom life list** is like each of us. It may start small, but grows, changes, and, with time and continued attention or input, becomes better, more useful, and effective.

Those who study or enjoy recognizing and knowing bird species have long been keeping personal "life lists" and using them as a learning tool and memory jogger. Many bird enthusiasts use seeing rare species of birds as a reason for making special trips to different parts of the country (and/or the world) to expand their life lists via personal sightings. Following their lead, maybe starting and growing your mushroom life list will provide reasons for planning travel to mushroom hunt or attend a foray in other parts of the United States—or even other parts of the world!

Good luck, and let me know how your **personal mushroom life list** is going.

FEATURED RECIPE

Spring Wild Harvest Ragout with Fiddlehead Greens & Morels

By David Yates (Courtesy of Wild Harvest - www.wild-harvest.com)

1/2 pound fiddlehead fern, cleaned*
1/2 pound small pattypan squash, trimmed
1/2 pound baby carrots, trimmed**
3/4 cup shelled fresh peas
1/2 stick (1/4 cup) unsalted butter
1/2 pound pearl onions, blanched in boiling water for 1 minute, peeled, and trimmed
2 thyme sprigs
1 bay leaf
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth
1/4 pound fresh morels, cleaned and trimmed and sliced
3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley leaves
1 tablespoon minced fresh mint leaves
1 large garlic clove, minced

Boil the fiddleheads in salted water for 4 minutes, or until they are crisp-tender. Drain and plunge in ice water to stop the cooking. When cool, drain in a colander. Repeat the process of boiling and cooling with the squash and the carrots. Boil the peas for 2 to 3 minutes, or until they are just tender, and drain them.

In a large heavy skillet combine 2 tablespoons of the butter, the onions, the thyme, the bay leaf and 1/4 cup of the broth and simmer the mixture, covered, for 5 minutes. Add the morels and 1/2 cup of the remaining broth and simmer the mixture, covered, for 10 minutes, or until the morels are tender.

Add the fiddleheads, the squash, the carrots, and the remaining 1/4 cup broth and simmer the mixture, covered, for 1 minute. Add the peas, the parsley, the mint, and the garlic and simmer, covered, for 1 minute.

Stir in the remaining 2 tablespoons butter, stirring until the butter is just melted. Discard the bay leaf and season with salt and pepper.

*If you can't find your own fiddlehead, in the woods or at the specialty produce monger, use young asparagus.

**Don't use those flavorless prepackaged carrot nubbins... save those for your sack lunch!

FEATURED WEB SITES

By Patrick Harvey

Here are a few interesting sites for you to look up:

Forest Slime Molds of New Zealand:
www.hiddenforest.co.nz/slime/index.htm

Good photos, also suggestions for macro photography and a list of myxomycete reference books.

Ants use antibiotics ... no, REALLY:
www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/11/081117082048.htm

Study on heavy-metal content of mushrooms from Britain:
archive.food.gov.uk/maff/archive/food/infosheet/2000/no199/199multi.htm

Mid-Missouri Morels and Mushrooms, with an article featuring our own MOMS member John Rapp:
missourimorels.blogspot.com/