



MUSHROOM IDENTIFICATION FOR NEW MYCOPHILES: FORAGING FOR EDIBLE AND MEDICINAL MUSHROOMS

Greg Marley and Michaeline Mulvey

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Until recently in North America, the public associated wild mushrooms with the fear of poisoning, or the promise of food. Today, the value placed on locally sourced and sustainable diets has expanded awareness of the flavor and variety of wild mushrooms. The increased interest in foraging mushrooms for food has also increased mushroom poisonings. But mushrooms bring up many different and divergent associations. For the ecologist they are invaluable decomposers (nutrient recyclers), symbionts (mycorrhizal), or parasites. To the taxonomist, fungi are a tangled web of relationships to explore, with the ultimate goal of tidy, understandable order. Students will use dichotomous keys, field guides, websites, and their naked eyes, aided with a hand lens, to gain skills for macroscopic identification of the mushrooms we will find in Maine during mid-summer. We will discuss representative divisions of the Kingdom Fungi, investigating biology, ecology and cultural elements. The theme of the week will be learning to identify mushrooms to species with additional focus on use of mushrooms for food and medicine, while exploring the place of fungi in diverse cultures. We will develop cooking skills by adding great wild mushrooms to our menu. The seminar is for beginning fungiphiles and amateur mycologists who are interested in expanding their knowledge of the world of mushrooms.



about the instructors

Greg A. Marley (mushroom@midcoast.com) has been exploring mushrooms for over 40 years. Marley shares his love of mushrooms with others through walks, talks and classes across New England. He is the founder of Mushrooms for Health, a small company providing mushroom education and medicinal products made with Maine mushrooms. He is the author of *Mushrooms for Health: Medicinal Secrets of Northeastern Fungi* (Down East Books, 2009) and *Chanterelle Dreams, Amanita Nightmares: The Love, Lore, and Mystique of Mushrooms* (Chelsea Green, 2010). Marley is a volunteer mushroom identification consultant to Poison Centers across New England, providing identification expertise in mushroom poisoning cases. A frequent lecturer to college groups and a mushrooming foray faculty member, Marley is also a clinical social worker providing training and technical support on suicide prevention.

Michaeline Mulvey (mjpm955i@gwi.net) has been wandering field and forest since before her mother thought she could find her way home. Looking at everything, but always most fascinated by plants, she was most intrigued by the ephemerals. They were both the most fun to find and the most challenging to identify. In Maine the best ephemerals are mushrooms, appearing like magic throughout the season, and often disappearing as quickly. Fascinated by the short fruiting periods of fleshy fungi, and frustrated that some species occur only every few years, Michaeline began recording fruiting dates of her finds, graphing the results for thirty species yearly, for more than thirty years. She believes that, though a microscope can be very useful for identification, the first step should be careful observation of field characteristics. More recently, she has dabbled with creating fabric dyes from mushrooms, and mushroom cultivation. She has been an active member of Maine Mycological Association for 30 years. She happily works as a Maine Professional Land Surveyor in field and forest across the state, rain or shine.