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Chanterelles



Morel Booster™

Morel Mushroom News From Morel Mania, Inc.

Editor: Tom Nauman

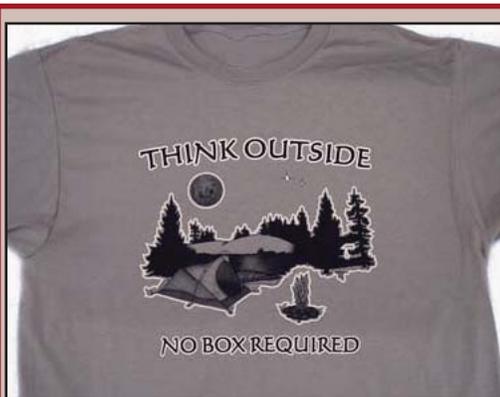
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My New Year's Resolution

Ok. I'm guilty. I haven't written in quite awhile. At first it was the workload that kept me silent. Then the 2012 morel season started about three weeks early. In fact, it was a full six days (March 22) before the previous early start (March 28) for the Peoria, IL area. That's when things really got busy. They always do during the season regardless of when it starts.

An early season is still okay if it progresses. The progression didn't happen for us here in Central Illinois and many other places. In fact the drought that started about the same time resulted in the worst morel season I've ever witnessed. And, I've seen quite a few of them. There were a few areas that received ample rain at the proper time and the morels responded accordingly. But, those areas were few and far between.

We can tolerate a poor season once in awhile. But, 2010 and 2011 morel seasons were also mediocre, at best, for us here in the North-Central Illinois area. The result is that I developed a severe case of writer's block. Mostly because I'd rather report good news than the alternative. There just wasn't much to write home about. I promise to be more frequent in 2013.

By the time the festivals came around, the morels were all but gone. The winner of the Midwest Morel Fest found a total of seven. I'll post complete results in the next issue. The winner of the National Championship in Boyer City, Michigan found fifteen.

The people that benefitted most from the weak season were those that brought mushrooms to sell at the Illinois festivals. Many of the morels sold came from the area where Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin meet, which had received rainfall at the proper time.



The first half-pound bag of morels to sell at the Wyoming, IL morel festival brought the seller \$160!



Alex Babich of Ft. Wayne, IN displays a half-pound morel he sold at the Midwest Morel Fest in Ottawa, IL for \$75!

Find Morels at the Indiana Deer, Turkey, & Waterfowl Expo!

“*Find Morels*” is the title of Tom Nauman’s presentation at the Indiana Deer, Turkey, & Waterfowl Expo on February 15, 16, & 17, 2013 (the first weekend of the Ford Indianapolis Boat, Sport and Travel Show – the largest outdoor consumer show of its kind.) For times and more information visit the website:



<http://renfroproductions.com/>

Tom will also be at these events in 2013:

**ILLINOIS Deer & Turkey Expo,
February 1-3**

Springfield / Prairie Capital Convention Center
(New location)

**OHIO Deer & Turkey Expo,
March 15-17**

Columbus / Ohio Expo Center (State Fairgrounds)

**WISCONSIN Deer & Turkey Expo,
April 5-7**

Madison / Alliant Energy Center of Dane County
Websites for the IL, OH, & WI expos may be found at:

<http://deerinfo.com/>

Mushroom Poisonings

This is turning out to be a really negative issue. First the report on the terrible season and now I’m sad to report numerous people have been treated for mushroom poisoning in the past few months. At least four of them have died. You may read the entire stories at these websites:

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2012/11/28/fourth-person-dies-in-california-mushroom-poisoning/>

<http://fox8.com/2012/10/05/death-cap-mushrooms-making-ne-ohioans-sick/>

The main culprit seems to be the “Death Cap” mushroom (*Amanita phalloides*). In one Ohio case, someone created a chicken cacciatore made with the Death Cap that a friend had given him. Four people were hospitalized. Additionally, several immigrants from Southeast Asia have become ill from eating this mushroom because it resembles an edible found in their homeland. Another poisonous mushroom that has been mistaken as edible is the “Destroying Angel” (*Amanita virosa*). You may find descriptions and photos at David Fischer’s website:

<http://americanmushrooms.com/deathcap.htm#virosa>

In the California case, a caretaker at an assisted living center for senior citizens made a soup from mushrooms he harvested from the backyard of the facility. The result was that four of the residents died. According to the article, California recorded 1,700 cases of mushroom-related illnesses from 2009 to 2010, including two deaths.

As a result of the Ohio incident and others, Ohio doctors are recommending that people don’t eat any wild mushroom. I have mixed emotions about their advice. I can’t imagine not being able to forage for mushrooms. But then I’ve educated myself. If I’m not 100% sure of a mushroom’s edibility, I leave it alone. Not doing so is stupidity in its purest form. My dad had a euphemism for stupidity. He called it “Lack of Knowledge”.

I’m reminded of an Arabian proverb that begins with, “*He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool; avoid him.*” If you’re not 100% sure of the identity of a mushroom you’re thinking of consuming, avoid it. It truly is a matter of life and death. If you “know not”, get your mushrooms from the grocery store. And, after your trip to the grocery store, stop at a bookstore and gain some knowledge by picking up a mushroom field guide. Easier yet, there are thousands of web pages with pictures and descriptions on a web search. Just be sure the website is credible.

These events are also creating legal problems for people who sell harvested wild mushrooms. In Iowa and Indiana, it is illegal to sell any wild harvested mushrooms, including morels, unless someone trained in mushroom identification has inspected them and declared them safe. The states differ in requirements necessary to be a “mushroom inspector”. The state of Maine passed one of the most comprehensive laws regarding the sale of wild mushrooms. It has yet to be implemented because the certification fee and the advisory board as required by the law have yet to be established.

The Maine law is a result of two chefs purchasing mushrooms the seller identified as porcini (*Boletus edulis*) which are edible and choice. The mushrooms were really (*Boletus separans*) also shown in some field guides as (*Xanthoconium separans*). The common name is lilac brown bolete. The mushrooms were never served to the public. But the chefs consumed them and required hospitalization.

Beware the Purple Trees!

“Purple Paint Law” now in effect in Illinois

Illinois landowners now have the option of using purple paint instead of “No Trespassing” signs to post their property. Public Act 97-0477 gives landowners or lessees the option of marking their property with a series of purple marks on trees or posts.

This law has been in use for several years in the states of Arkansas and Missouri. There are specific instructions at the website below.

Illinois Governor Quinn signed Senate Bill 1914, which became Public Act 97-0477, on August 22, 2011. The law became immediately effective.

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/PublicAct97-0477.aspx>

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