



Morel Booster™

Morel Mushroom News From Morel Mania, Inc.

Editor: Tom Nauman

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What's the Difference?

A Comparison Between
the Shroom Sack™ and the Spore Spreader™



Shroom Sack™



Spore Spreader™

We've been asked to detail the differences between the Shroom Sack™ and Spore Spreader™ mushroom collection tools. But first, let's compare the similarities. Both are designed to collect mushrooms in a mushroom friendly manner. Both are made from a strong, durable mesh material with a special weave to have thick threads and small holes when compared to your standard onion, orange, or potato sack which tend to have thin threads and large holes and cut into mushrooms. The mesh allows the spores, bugs, and debris to escape. The mesh also aerates the mushrooms and slows the growth of bacteria.

Both have an attached shoulder strap which keeps your hands free for climbing and hopefully, picking mushrooms. Both have their own pouch attached for convenient storing when not in use. The pouch is also handy for carrying your knife, compass, water bottle, etc.

The major difference is that the Spore Spreader™ won't damage your harvest on those great days that you gather a bumper crop. Take a look at the pictures above. Both products contain twenty-two pounds of our large resin morels. A similar volume of real mushrooms would only weigh four to seven pounds but we've used resin ones to dramatically show the effect.

With the Shroom Sack™, when filled with four pounds or more, the mushrooms tend to push out into the mesh and the mushrooms get grated into the mesh which breaks off some of the ridges of the morels. If you usually gather less than four pounds at a time, the Shroom Sack™ works wonderfully.

The Spore Spreader™ is so unique that we are applying for a patent. It was

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Differences - continued from page 1

designed by Tom Nauman of Morel Mania, Inc. after several years on the drawing board and a lot of "trial and error".

To begin with, it is cylindrical, like a bucket. The perimeter of the bottom has a 3/16" flexible plastic ring sewn into it to help keep the bottom flat and to help prevent the weight of the mushrooms from gathering in the center of the bottom. In other words, it helps distribute the weight evenly on the bottom to minimize crushing. The plastic ring also acts as a bumper to absorb the shock of bumping against trees, the user's hip, etc. The ring is also ergonomic in that the Spore Spreader™ will tend to roll around your body rather than rub against it.

Secondly, the bottom itself is solid cloth and the sides are mesh. The spores, debris, and insects can still escape through the mesh sides. If you've ever been fortunate enough to see spores emanating from a morel, you know that they don't merely "drop", they float. And any movement of the Spore Spreader™ or even the slightest breeze will cause the spores to float out through the mesh sides. Without a doubt, some of the spores will collect on the cloth bottom. In fact, you may even find spore prints on it. With continued use, those spores will fall out of the Spore Spreader™ also.

Ever had to clean morels crumbs off of your vehicle's seat or the kitchen table? We've discovered there are fewer crumbs with the Spore Spreader™ because the mushrooms aren't grated as much as in a conventional sack and the smaller amount of crumbs that do collect on the cloth bottom can be discarded easily after you've removed the mushrooms. And, when you set the Spore Spreader™ down in the woods, the solid cloth bottom will keep your mushrooms from picking up any debris from where you have placed it.

The Spore Spreader™ was designed specifically for gathering lots of mushrooms and continues to receive rave reviews since it's introduction in the Spring of 2010.

Readers Write

Hi Tom, fun newsletter as always (*Morel Booster™* No. 10). I was intrigued by the article on the Sclerodermas. I'd have to agree with your other experts. And would add an easy way to know. Simply slice open: earthballs while not true puffballs will not have the white interior (that turns icky yellow green then tawny brown); earthballs will be quite hard, with a thick peridium or rind (or skin as in the pigskin puffball, *Scleroderma citrina*) and the clincher is the purple black spore mass inside that is also very firm. These should **NOT** be eaten. (Truth be told I never really eat true puffballs either as there's either a good supply of good mushrooms in the woods or plenty of dried morels in the pantry!)

Also curious to watch for: there is a bolete that fruits **ONLY** on earthballs that it parasitizes. Very cool and exciting to spot... they're somewhat rare but if you're in the woods a lot, you just may see one. Or you can google *Boletus parasiticus* on the web and see images of the bolete and its earthball host. ~Britt

Tom's note: Britt Bunyard, PhD is the publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Fungi Magazine:

<http://www.fungimag.com>

Thanks for the kind words, Britt, and the additional information.



Cordyceps militaris.
Photo courtesy
Michael Kuo

<http://www.mushroomexpert.com>

Mushrooms Fighting Cancer

Mushrooms and fungi get a bad rap historically and that's the subject of a future article. Here's some hopefully good news. I found an interesting article on the internet about scientists in Great Britain who have discovered how mushrooms can help in the fight against cancer. Read the complete story at:

http://www.naturalnews.com/027869_cordyceps_cancer.html

According to the article, "*The University of Nottingham scientists found that the Cordyceps-derived treatment has two important effects on cells that could impact the growth of malignant tumors. At low doses, cordycepin inhibits the uncontrolled growth and division of cells while at high doses it prevents cells from sticking together, essentially blocking the cells from growing.*"

The genus *Cordyceps* is amazing in that grows from other mushrooms or from insect carcasses and/or larva. I've probably seen them in the woods, but didn't pay much attention to them because I wasn't sure of their edibility.

For more information on Cordyceps, check out:

http://www.mushroomexpert.com/cordyceps_militaris.html

18 Deaths Reported in Italy from Mushroom Hunting

Don't let that headline scare you away from consuming mushrooms. The fatalities were from mushroom "hunting", not "eating". According to the article at:

<http://newsfeed.time.com/2010/08/30/>

[the-new-danger-career-mushroom-hunting/](http://newsfeed.time.com/2010/08/30/the-new-danger-career-mushroom-hunting/)

"*The terrain where the mushrooms are growing is marked with steep hills and cliffs and a number of hunters have fallen to their death. Adding to the danger is the competitive edge that mushroom hunters seek. In efforts to outwit the competition, hunters will go to great lengths to reach the areas with the largest numbers of porcini and chanterelles--including hunting alone at night in rocky, unfamiliar territory.*"

That sheds a whole new darkness on our Late Night Mushroom Hunting T-shirt.

So, while many would consider consuming wild mushrooms to be dangerous, seeking them may be even more hazardous. The 18 deaths were reported over a ten day period. I believe that's more than the number of deaths recorded from eating poisonous mushrooms in the USA in all the past ten years combined.

Be careful out there!