



Morel Booster™

Morel Mushroom News From Morel Mania, Inc.

Editor: Tom Nauman

Issue No. 17 ♦ November, 2011

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Late Season Morels

I received an email from Bill H. in Mid-June. Bill wrote: "Found two 'morels' yesterday, June 14, here in Whiteside County, IL. Funny looking ones, the small one got crushed before I could get a picture of it." Bill also attached the following picture and wanted my opinion as to if it really was a morel.



In my opinion, it is definitely a morel. Logic tells me it is a mature morel because the pits are wide-open, the diameter of the stem is actually larger than that of the cap, it's length is approximately seven inches (as compared to the tool box handle in the upper right), and the date it was found. It is

possibly a black morel because of the shape of the cap and the elongated pits. But, more likely, it's a gray morel.

Whiteside County is located in Northwestern Illinois with Morrison being the county seat. It borders the Mississippi River and the Rock River runs through it. Rivers and their tributaries are important to mushroom hunters because they create a landscape that cannot be cleared for farming or residential development. Bill's mushrooms had the correct amount of shade and moisture to survive until June 14.

I've found fresher morels along the Illinois/Wisconsin border during the first week of June. Whiteside County is a little south of that border, but given that the 2011 morel season was a week or two later than usual, I don't think Bill finding these is that unlikely. Bill didn't say whether he was still looking for morels that late in the year or just happened upon them.

Is Bill's mushroom still edible? Possibly. But, that cannot be determined from a picture. To determine edibility, I would first inspect it for mold or spoiled areas. Secondly, I would need to smell the mushroom. I trust my nose more than anything when it comes to mature morels. If it doesn't smell right, it probably isn't.

Fall Mushrooms

I've only had one opportunity to look for fall mushrooms this year. There's always something that seems more important. I guess I just don't have my priorities in the correct order. On the one time Vicky and I did go walking in the woods, we found a nice batch of Sulfur Shelf and another of Oyster mushrooms.

Rat & Sis Jenkins joined Vicky in early October on a foray, but did not find anything. We've had a fairly dry autumn in Central Illinois. Had we had a little more rainfall, I'm sure we would have a better report.

The Sulfur Shelf mentioned in Issue 10 of the *Morel Booster* did not produce anything this year. Find it on our Archives page at:

<http://www.morelmania.com/5Mushrooms/content.html>

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A Great Day!

In the last issue of the Morel Booster™ (#16), I reported on the 2011 morel season being less than good. However, I also mentioned there were some bright spots. Adam and Andy H. from south and east of Indianapolis reported on one of them: *“April 2011, biggest yellows we've ever found and most plentiful year of all types of mushrooms. Every mushroom in these pictures is from the same patch, 65 total, nearly 20lbs! Largest one is foot tall and very big around. Fresh yellows and quite tasty!”*



Tater Sack Tree

Ron S. also reported one great excursion in an otherwise lousy year: *“Attaching a couple video clips of a real "mother lode" found in Wisconsin in mid-May. Basically, it was a very poor year in our area, except for this miracle find under the "perfect tree. I can't imagine what we would have found under that tree in a good year!”*

Thanks Ron. I've bookmarked them for viewing on those cold winter days and I'm sure to watch them again in early April to get prepared for the season.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=safM4PEtIsU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kV4UpZJUyCA&feature=related>