



Natural History Field Seminars, Workshops, and Courses at Eagle Hill on the Eastern Maine Coast

Mushroom Identification for the Novice; Focus on Edible and Medicinal Mushrooms

July 29 – August 4, 2012



Mushrooms bring up many different and divergent associations. For the ecologist they are invaluable either as decomposers (nutrient recyclers), as symbionts with green plants, assisting with nutrient absorption and sharing in the products of photosynthesis, or as parasites. To the taxonomist they are an ongoing puzzle of relationships to explore, in an attempt to tease out phylogenetic relationships, with the ultimate goal of tidy, understandable order. Culturally, in North America, we associate wild mushrooms primarily with the risk of poisoning or death and take to heart our parental admonitions to avoid even a touch.

This seminar will address the macro-fungi, the mushrooms, of Maine, assisting participants to learn the skills of field identification, by use of features easily seen with the naked eye or a hand lens rather than through the objective lens of a microscope. We will take a broad overview of representative divisions of the Kingdom Fungi, investigating biology, ecology and cultural elements. We will focus on the skills needed to identify common mushrooms into family and generic groups using macroscopic features, dichotomous keys and field guides. The underlying theme of the week will be the use of mushrooms as food and medicine, exploring the place of fungi in diverse cultures across the world. Through the week we will enhance the dining experience by collecting great wild edible mushrooms to add to the menu, offering those who wish an opportunity to develop cooking skills. The seminar will appeal to the amateur mycologist wishing to go deeper and to the student or field biologist desiring an opportunity to expand their knowledge of the world of mushrooms. Participants are urged to bring the mushroom field guides and material they use for identification.

Greg A Marley (mushroom@midcoast.com) has been exploring mushrooms for over 35 years. Marley has shared his love of mushrooms with others through walks, talks and classes across New England over the past 20 years. He is the founder of Mushrooms for Health, a small company providing medicinal mushroom education and products made with Maine medicinal mushrooms, and 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 and substance abuse.

Michaeline Mulvey (mjpm955i@gwi.net) Michaeline Mulvey has been wandering field and forest since before her mother thought she could find her way back home. Looking at everything, but always most fascinated by plants, she was most intrigued by the ephemerals. 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, over almost thirty years. She believes that, though a microscope can be very useful for identification, many species are best identified by careful observation of field characteristics through the use of keys. 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 over 25 years. As a Maine Professional Land Surveyor, she happily works, rain or shine, in field and forest across the state.