Mushroom fungi are an important ecological component of our Maine fields and forests. Some are decomposers, recycling nutrients back into the soil; others are parasites which cause diseases of plants; and still others cooperate with plants in networks of nutrient exchange. Mushrooms are most commonly observed in the fall, when their reproductive fruit bodies are often produced in abundance. This weekend workshop will introduce participants to the fall mushrooms of the downeast coast with excursions to collect. Discussions will cover the basics of mushroom activity in nature and the methods and resources of mushroom identification using a variety of easily learned morphological features, keys to major groups, field guides and on-line resources. Toxicity, edibility, cooking and preservation for later use will be discussed as well.

About the instructors

David Porter (porterd@uga.edu) lives in Brooklin, Maine. He is Professor Emeritus at the University of Georgia, where for 37 years he carried out research and taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate level mycology classes. Porter has continued his teaching with occasional classes at College of the Atlantic. In addition, he is active in outreach programs with lectures, forays and identification services. He is editor of the Maine Mycological Society newsletter, Mainely Mushrooms.

Michaeline Mulvey (mjppm955i@gwi.net) 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. They were fun to find and challenging to identify. In Maine the best ephemerals are mushrooms, appearing like magic throughout the season, and often disappearing just as quickly. She has been an active member of Maine Mycological Association for over 30 years. As a Maine Professional Land Surveyor, she happily works, rain or shine, in field and forest across the state.