



Summer 2005

Helen Thomas-Williams, Editor

# NEWSLETTER

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### Insert:

Information and reservation  
form for Catskill Weekend  
(Sept. 23-25)

## Globally renowned expert visits NYMS & NJMA to hunt for truffles:

### Save Nov. 5-7 for first truffle foray & lectures

In an exciting collaborative event by NYMS and the New Jersey Mycological Association (NJMA), internationally renowned truffle expert, Dr Jim Trappe, will visit both clubs during the first weekend and Monday in November to educate us about the most expensive edible mushroom in the world, truffles, and to explore the possibilities of finding them and other underground fungi in our area.

Dr Trappe, who is Professor of Botany, Forest Science, and Plant Pathology at Oregon State U. will lead a NJMA truffle foray in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey on Saturday Nov 5, to which NYMS members are invited. Club members may also attend the truffle lecture which Dr. Trappe will give on Sunday, Nov. 6, at the NJMA meeting place in Basking Ridge, New Jersey. On the evening of Monday, Nov. 7 Dr. Trappe will then travel to New York City and give a lecture to NYMS members in one of our member's

apartments, and later that week, a party for Dr Trappe will be arranged. Details concerning all of these events will be provided in a separate mailing in late September

Dr Trappe has studied truffle taxonomy, ecology and its uses around the world. He is known for his lectures on the role of fungi in ecosystems and on his discoveries of the complex interaction between truffles and flying squirrels.

He is coming to check out the New Jersey Pine Barrens for truffles because Sue Hopkins, the NJMA president, hunted there several years ago and discovered four species of *Rhizopogon* (underground fungi, also called "False Truffles") – *nigrescens*, *evadens*, *subaustralis* and *couchii* – specimens of which Dr Trappe confirmed. According to the NJMA News (Mar-Apr 2003), "all four are

(Continued on pg.2, col. 1

the first reports for New Jersey, and a northward extension of the ranges for three of them, previously known only as far north as West Virginia and Maryland." At that time Dr Trappe expressed an interest in visiting the Pine Barrens for a more extensive hunt.

On NYMS's final walk of the season (Saturday, November 12, 2005) – a joint walk with the Long Island MC to Deer Park in Long Island — club members will be hunting in another mostly pine barren woods where truffles and other underground fungi may also be found.

The type of true truffle which we may find on our New Jersey and Long Island walks is *Tuber canaliculatum*. According to Gary Lincoff, it looks like marble cake when split open. □

### **Make reservations now for Popular Catskill Weekend in late Sept.**

This year's Catskill Weekend scheduled September 23-25 will again offer lodging at the Crystal Spring House in the Big Indian area of the Catskills of Ulster County, NY, and is limited to only 18 spaces.

Complete details and a registration form are located in the insert of this newsletter. To assure the lodging, complete the form and send it in soon.

Any questions? Contact Paul Sadowski (212) 348-3092, <pabloski@earthlink.net> for further information. □

### **ANNUAL NYMS/COMA PICNIC & WALK TO TAKE PLACE SEPT. 11**

The tenth annual picnic and mushroom walk will take place for members of the NYMS and COMA (Connecticut-Westchester Mycological Association) at Pelton Pond in Fahnestock State Park, Putnam County, New York on Sunday, September 11, starting at 10AM.

The event begins with an easy mushroom walk around the pond before lunch, then a potluck lunch, and a mushroom ID session. Please bring any fungi that you want identified or just to show off! In the afternoon there will be a longer walk in the park if there is enough interest.

Please bring plenty of good food and drink (wine if you want) to share with everyone as well as your own utensils, plates, cups, napkins, etc. Pelton Pond has tables, both sheltered and outdoors.

There is no direct public transportation, so Walk Leader Dennis Aita will attempt to find rides for people from NYC or have them picked up from the train station. Please call him (212 – 962-6908) if you need or can offer a ride as early as possible in order to make his task as easy as possible!

By car, take the Taconic Parkway to route 301 (Fahnestock State Park, Putnam County) and go west towards Cold Spring on route 301 for less than a mile, passing the camping area on the left, entering the parking lot at the picnic area, also on the left where we meet. If you arrive late, catch up with us by walking the yellow blazed trail around the pond in a counterclockwise direction. □



### **NYMS Newsletter**

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A quarterly publication of the New York Mycological Society, distributed to its members.

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# ALL ABOUT TRUFFLES

## What to do with the truffles you collect

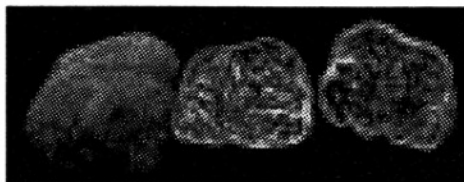
(These recipe ideas and preserving suggestion were quoted from the <[www.RogersMushrooms.com](http://www.RogersMushrooms.com)> website.)

The wonderful aroma of truffles can be turned to advantage and you will still retain the truffles to eat later. It also solves the problem of how to store them.

Brush the dirt and soil from each truffle and then place one or two in a large jar of either arborio rice, pasta shells, or eggs. The truffle aroma will permeate the rice, pasta, and even the eggs right through the shell.

After about three days just use the pasta, rice, or eggs to make a simple dish – there is no need for elaborate flavorings – the ingredients will have such a super truffle flavor.

Preserving truffles for a short time is best done in rice as the rice also absorbs any moisture and thus prevents the truffles from deteriorating. □



*Tuber canaliculatum*, which may be found in our area.

## Time waits for no truffle cognoscenti

**David Willey, BBC News, Rome**

(reprinted from the MYCOFILE, the newsletter of the Vancouver Mycological Society, Winter/Spring 2005)

The world's most expensive truffle, bought at a charity auction, for more than \$50,000, is being buried in Italy on Saturday after being returned there. The 850g white truffle, (*Editor's Note*: equivalent to 2.4 pounds) a very rare type of mushroom that grows underground, was accidentally left to rot in a restaurant safe in London.

The gourmet's delight was dug up by specially trained truffle-hunting dogs in the mountains near Pisa last month. It is being buried in the grounds of an historic castle in Tuscany.

The truffle finally went under the auctioneer's hammer for a world-record figure of more than \$50,000(US) (*Editor's Note*: \$52,000, as reported by AP, Nov. 22, 2004). The price tops the previous record paid for a  
(Continued on pg. 4, col. 1)

## Museum of truffles opens in Italy

(reprinted from *Duff*, the newsletter of the Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz, December, 2004)

Rome – *Tuber magnatum*, the white truffles of Italy, were once an aphrodisiac for the ancient Romans and are now the most expensive fungus in the world. At long last they are getting their own museum.

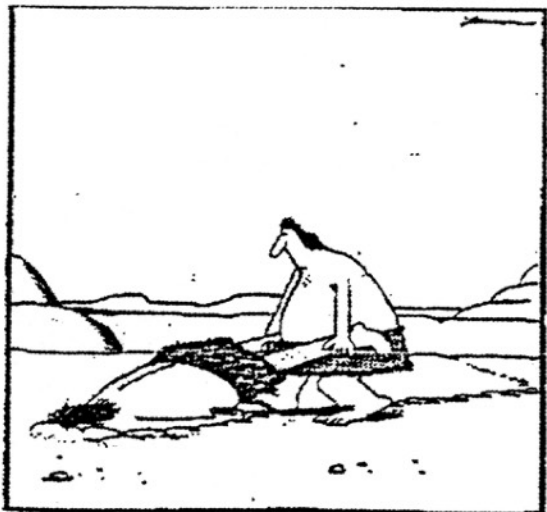
The small Tuscan village of San Giovanni d'Asso will host the opening of Italy's first truffle museum this month. "It's going to be more than a museum, it will be an assault on the senses," said Enzo Francini, head of finances for the medieval town of 950 people.

A pharmacist, a botanist and a chef collaborated to create the museum in a 13 century castle where exhibitions, videos and interactive programs will explain the history of the prized fungus and recreate the modern-day hunt for it. The highlight of the exhibit is the "odorama" which will convey the aromas of many different varieties of truffles. "There's a reason they're considered aphrodisiacs," Francini said. "They're not exactly viagra, but our chemical tests showed that the smell has a tranquilizing effect which puts people in the mood for love."

Chefs around the globe use slices or shavings of the delicacy to enhance dishes. The museum will not only highlight fancy recipes, but will also trace the tuber's history in Italian and ancient Roman home-cooking. According to Francini "They are more than just a gourmet accessory for us, they are a part of our culture."

Indeed, hunting truffles can be a cut-throat venture in Italy, where truffle dogs – preferred to pigs since they don't eat the prey – are worth thousands of euros themselves. In one case of extreme competition a few years back, 12 truffle dogs were mysteriously poisoned in the middle of high hunting season, which lasts from September to January.

*Editor's Note*: San Giovanni d'Asso is about 150 miles north of Rome and 75 miles south of Florence. The Museo del Tartufo di San Giovanni d'Asso, Piazza Gramsci, 1 is now open on weekends from 10 to 1 and 2 to 6. Admission is \$3.70. For more information: (39-0577) 803 101, <[www.museodeltartufo.it](http://www.museodeltartufo.it)> Half-day truffle excursions are offered by Assotartufi at Via XX Settembre, 22 (39-0577) 803 076, <[www.assotartufi.com](http://www.assotartufi.com)> □



Truffle hunt, original method.

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### TIME WAITS FOR NO TRUFFLE COGNOSCENTI Continued from p. 3, col. 2

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white truffle of a similar size sold the previous year at auction for \$41,000 to New York restaurateur Francesco Giambelli, owner of Giambelli 50 Restaurant on New York's East Side.)

This year's purchasers were clients of a fashionable Italian restaurant in London. The precious truffle was hand-carried to London and displayed at the restaurant. For a week, manager Engo Cassini refused to cut it given the huge interest his record-breaking truffle had aroused among food lovers and journalists.

#### Tuscan farewell

Then the unimaginable happened. The world's most expensive truffle began to go bad. It putrefied. It became uneatable.

When the truffle experts of Florence heard about the unhappy fate of their most precious truffle, they asked for its return and organized a solemn burial. It was set to take place in the grounds of an historic castle build by the Medici, former rulers of Florence, after the truffle's remains were brought back by Mr. Cassini.

After a farewell poem, the truffle is being solemnly re-interred not far from where it was originally found. The hope is that it will regenerate and produce another monster truffle next year. In exchange, Mr. Cassini will get back a selection of much smaller white truffles weighing the same as his original trophy mushroom – a gesture which will doubtless delight his disappointed London customers. □

## Clues to finding truffles: Read the animal signs

Daniel B. Wheeler

(reprinted from THE NORTH AMERICAN TRUFFLER,  
Journal of the North American Truffling Society,  
January-February, 2005)

One of the most asked questions at mushrooms shows and during forages is "How do I find truffles?"

The answers are simple. And simply complex.

When searching for truffles, I first look for animal activity. Many animal species are known to eat truffles either directly or indirectly. Signs of animal activity are perhaps the first indication that mature (or nearly mature) truffles are present.

Exactly what animals signs are indicated? Whole truffles on top of the ground or on lower tree branches are probably first. Animals appear to air dry some truffles for later consumption. At other times an animal is upset transporting a truffle, and leaves it where it falls.

Another indication is deer or elk scuffing duff with their antlers or hoofs. Visible truffles are then eaten.

But the vast majority of truffle-eating animals are small. The most common signs are small holes or pits in the soil or duff. Pieces of truffles (white or other color) or even whole truffles (brown, white, red, yellow, etc.) can be partially eaten at the bottom of these excavations.

Why do animals only eat part of the truffle, and leave the rest?

[Due to their size they] may be unable to eat a whole truffle at one meal. They may return at a later date to eat more of the truffle. Or they might expose [it] enough that another truffle eater (such as myself or a deer) might find the truffle. □

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### Truffles are an aphrodisiac?

The pungent odor of truffles contains the highest content of pheromone of any plant scent. Pheromone is the aroma which animals emit as a sexual stimulant and the specific pheromone that truffles exudes is similar to the odor given off by pigs and dogs in season. This explains why both pigs and dogs can be used to scent out truffles.

Perhaps this also helps explain the high value that man places on truffles – and the aphrodisiac power that some say it has. □

## **A Memorial to NYMS Founding Member LOIS LONG, (1918 - 2005)**

Textile designer and artist, Lois Long, who died in July at 88, was a NYMS founding member and led a life of inquisitive, experimental, and creative activity, focused on mushrooms and other forms of nature.

Ms. Long's relationship with mushrooms began in the 1950s after moving to Rockland County and meeting composer poet, and artist, John Cage, through a mutual friend. They began to research mushrooms together, first studying at the New York Botanical Gardens, where they met noted mycologist Guy Nearing, who, with Cage, was a prime leader in the formation of the New York Mycological Society. When the Society was officially established, Lois Long was one of its twenty-six founding members.

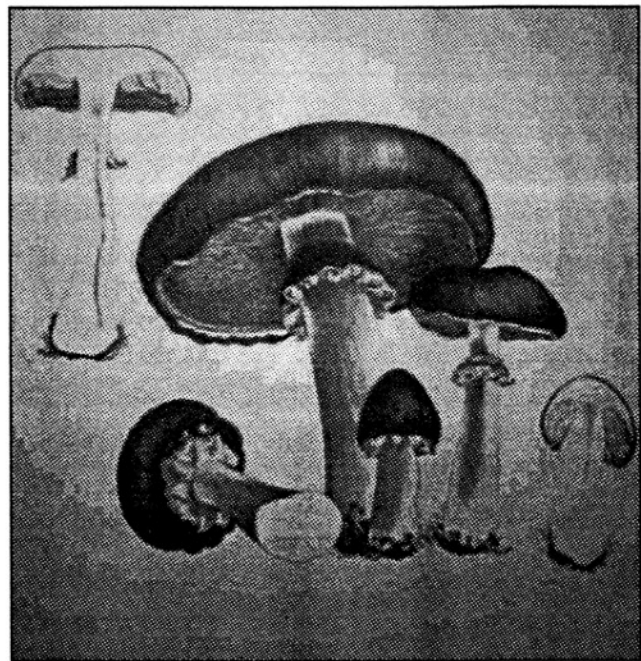
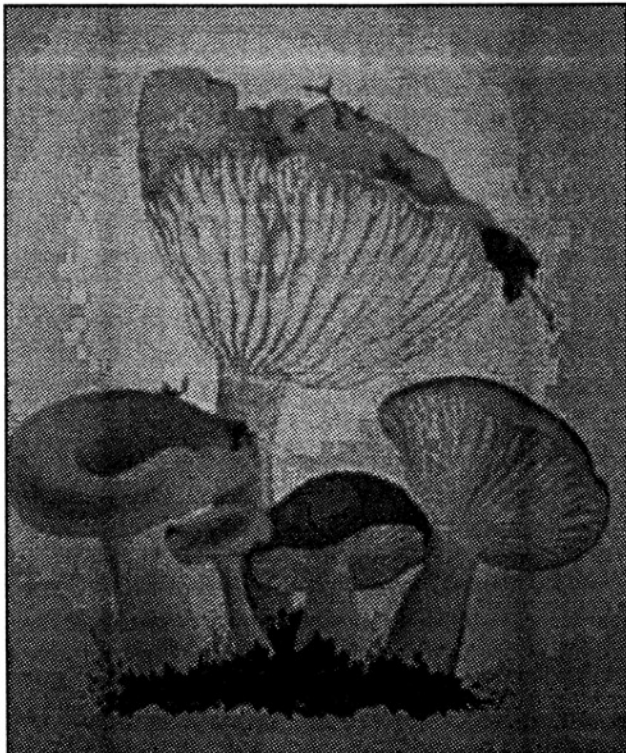
Long's deep interest in mushrooms led to trips in search of them throughout the world, including Mexico, China, Japan, Madagascar, and India.

In addition to her activities in the club, Long also collaborated with Cage on two limited edition books:

*The Mushroom Book*, with 20 lithographs by Long, commentary by Cage, and scientific information by the then dean of mycology, Dr Alexander Smith (1972), and *The Mud Book: How to Make Mud Pies and Cakes*, later published as a silk screened volume in 1983 by Simca Print Artists, Inc. and today represented in major museums, library and private collections around the globe.

Long's last gallery show took place in the spring of 2003 at the Cavin-Morris Gallery and consisted of life-sized mushroom drawings in watercolor and graphite and sculpture in paper mache.

Drawn from life, the drawings included fungi in cross-section and the kind of earth in which they grow. Precise in color and detail, they are accurate enough to be used for research and yet the drawings are also an aesthetic success, expressed in simplicity of line and composition and uniquely rendered in watercolor and graphite. □



From *THE MUSHROOM BOOK*,  
illustrated by Lois Long  
Left: *Lactarius hygrophoroides*  
Above: *Stropharia rugoso-annulata*

## **NYMS members teach mushroom courses at NY Botanical Garden in September & October**

### **MUSHROOM CULTIVATION WORKSHOP**

Todd Odmundson, MS  
Saturdays, Oct. 15 & 22, 10AM-  
2:30PM

Want to give mushroom growing a try? In this combined lecture/hands-on workshop designed for beginners, learn about the biology of mushrooms and how it relates to reproduction, the basics of mushroom propagation including sterile culture technique, media preparation, tissue and spore culture, spawn preparation and inoculation, and fruiting. Produce your own Oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) kit to take home. Please bring lunch.

\$193 non-members, \$177 members (Includes a \$35 materials fee)

### **MUSHROOM MANIA**

Gary Lincoff 3 Thursdays, Sept.  
8-22, 9:30AM-1:30PM  
Certificate Elective (tracks 1&2),  
classroom Hours: 12

Labor Day through Halloween is one of the best times to harvest a host of wild mushrooms in our area. Learn how to identify many of these species, how to differentiate edible from poisonous kinds, and where they tend to grow. Survey the great variety of mushrooms in our region and learn the differences between groups of mushrooms, especially look-alikes. An optional post-course trip to Bear Mountain to collect mushrooms can be arranged if the day can be agreed upon and enough cars are available. Bring lunch each day.

\$246 non-members, \$221 members

### **MEDICINAL MUSHROOM WORKSHOP**

Gary Lincoff  
Sunday, Sept. 18, 10AM – 4.30PM  
Certificate Elective (track 3),  
Classroom Hours: 6

People have been using mushrooms for medicinal purposes throughout time. The 5,000 year old remains of an ice man included a first-aid kit containing a birch tree polypore. Learn how contemporary Chinese and Japanese people use mushrooms to maintain good health and to treat a number of ailments. Explore the nearly 100 medicinal mushrooms that can be found in the United States and learn which can be cultivated. Please bring lunch.

\$123 non-members, \$111 members

To register, request a continuing education catalog, or for more information, call the Registration Office of the NY Botanical Garden, (718) 817-8747. ☐

### **Foul Weather Friends Resume Meetings**

Monday nights are bringing the Foul Weather friends together again this year. We meet to identify fungi, mushrooms permitting, at Maria Reidelbach's loft in Tribeca.

To be contacted about upcoming meetings, please speak with Paul Sadowski, the coordinator, at (212) 348-3092.

At the meetings we have microscopes and a library at our disposal to ease our way through unknown collections. So bring your weekend mushroom finds.

Beginners are most welcome! ☐

### **MEDICINAL MUSHROOM CONFERENCE IN OCT.**

The Third International Medicinal Mushroom Conference will take place Oct. 12-17 in Port Townsend, Washington. An outstanding team of scientists including Dr. Andrew Weil, Dr. Tom Volk, David Aurora, and Gary Lincoff will be participating.

Scientific proof of the medicinal properties of mushrooms has increased substantially in the last few years. As sources for new antibiotics (both antibacterial and antiviral), immunomodulators, enzymes, enzyme-inhibitors and other medicines, mushrooms play a unique role in complementary therapies. The most recent innovations in medicinal mushrooms will be explored.

For further information and an online registration form, see <[www.fungi.com/immc/index.html](http://www.fungi.com/immc/index.html)> ☐

### **Veracruz Fungi Tour takes place in October**

The unique opportunity to foray in lowland, jungle and mountain habitats in a region of Mexico where more than 2,000 fungi species have been described will take place October 16-23, 2005. Organized through Mexican Mushroom Tours, the all-inclusive, 7-day, 7-night excursion starts in Veracruz City and also includes unique historical, cultural, scenic and culinary attractions along the way.

For detailed information, check out the web site <[www.mexmush.com/veracruz.htm](http://www.mexmush.com/veracruz.htm)> or contact Gundi Jeffery, tour organizer, directly at (246) 461-8829 (from US, first dial access: 011-52). ☐

## Some Summer Club Happenings

### Chef Farges & 16 Club Members Cook up a Gourmet Dinner To Remember

Helen Thomas-Williams

Chef Amy Farges led sixteen Club Members to gourmet glory with a mushroom infused menu using sautéing, roasting, and steaming methods on June 8 at Maria Reidelbach's loft in Tribeca.

Four teams of 4 each divided up the menu, each of which tackling a different recipe. The team I was working with was responsible for the Mediterranean-style Chicken En Papillote which employed the steaming method. Dried wood ear and honshimeji mushrooms were used and remember a whole lot of chopping (mushrooms, fennel, red pepper, scallions), grating (orange zest), squeezing (2 oranges), and mixing (with white wine). Then came the combining of the chicken breast, previously coated with sesame seeds and sautéed, with the vegetable mixture in a folded packet of foil and baking for 12 minutes. Utterly delicious, and this was just one of the recipes!

We all sat down and feasted on the menu below:

Wild Mushroom Bruschetta with two variations (roast/sauté)

Crawfish Tails with Mosserons in Leek-Infused Cream (sauté)

Mediterranean-style Chicken en Papillote (steam)

Grilled steak radicchio and cèpe salad with chipotle mayonnaise (grill)

These recipes and more are found in Chef Farges' book, *Mushroom Book and Primer*, published by the Workman Publishing Company, Inc.

Thanks to Maria for the use of her apartment and wonderfully designed and well equipped kitchen that accommodated us all.

Those Club members who missed this event and would like another opportunity should contact Maggie Vall, president, (212) 877-1312 or <Vallmadhatter@aol.com>, and another culinary event might be arranged, possibly before the year's end. □

### Club members collect fungi for Bronx River BioBlitz Survey in June

Dennis Aita

This past June NYMS participated in a 24-hour biodiversity survey of the Bronx River. Four of us covered an area called the Bronx River Forest (just north of the NY Botanical Gardens in the Bronx) as well as some of the woods along the river in the Bronx Zoo (Note: we didn't examine any animal dung).

We actually recorded about 45 different fungal species and one slime mold. While some of them were dried up polypores from another time, we did find a good number of fresh fungi, somewhat surprising since mid-June is certainly not the best time of the year to look for fungi.

We found some interesting things. On several well-decayed logs were very tiny gray cup fungi that I had never seen before. Not being very photogenic they are not to be found in any of our field guides. In fact the only book in my collection that had a picture of what turned out to be *Mollisia cinerea* was the *Fungi of Japan!* (Roz Lowen, a discomycete expert, says it is very common in our area.)



*Psilocybe sub-aeruginascens*, collected in the BioBlitz but normally found in southern Japan, southern India, and Java.

Other interesting collectibles were found in the many woods chips laid down by the NYC Parks Department which is doing major restoration work in the Bronx River Forest along the Bronx River. Of particular interest were the *Psilocybes* that we collected there. We found a surprising variation in collections with regard to size and even more so regarding colors. In fact I thought that I had collected two different mushroom genera, one of them *Naematolomas!*

Most of them had brownish caps with darker disks but some of them – mostly the young ones – had greenish blue caps and some even had bluish shiny stems. With dark purplish brown spores we knew we were in the *Strophariaceae* family.

(Continued on pg. 8, col. 1)

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**CLUB MEMBERS COLLECT FUNGI**

Continued from p. 7, column 2

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Looking at field characteristics (collyboid cap shape, annulate, umbonate cap, blue staining, somewhat viscid but highly hygrophanous cap that quickly fades in color with age and several microscopic characteristics such as the cap cuticle structure which is cellular, spore size and shape, as well as the size and shape of the pleurocystidia and cheilocystidia (sterile projecting cells on the gill faces and edges respectively) it appears that we may have found *Psilocybe subaeruginascens* or something very close to it. Aaron Norarevian apparently has also found the

same mushroom on a Long Island club walk in late June. One problem is that the above named mushroom has only been reported from southern Japan, southern India, and Java!

Many thanks to Aaron Norarevian, Todd Odmundson, and Konstantinos (Gus) Georgiadis who, with me, formed the NYMS fungi collecting team at the BioBlitz. Aaron and Todd also deserve special thanks for help with the microscopic work. Todd, a club member who works at the NY Botanical Gardens, also keyed it out in Guzman's *Psilocybe* monograph. He is planning on including samples of the two above collections in some future DNA analysis. If we get more information I'll let you know. ☐

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**POSITION OF NYSM NEWSLETTER EDITOR/DESIGNER IS OPEN**

After several years as editor/designer of the NYMS Newsletter, I have decided to concentrate my efforts in other areas, effective as of the completion of this newsletter want to thank those of you who have submitted material and also Paul Sadowski who has an eagle eye for spotting copy errors.

The responsibilities of editor/designer could be divided so that one member was involved with the

research, writing, and editing side and the other with the layout and design side -- or one person could assume the entire responsibility of writing and design.

In either case, involvement with the newsletter provides a wonderful opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the club operations, the whole field of mycology, and the problems and joys of newsletter development and design. Those interested are encouraged to call Maggie Vall, (212) 877 1312. ☐

Helen Thomas-Williams