

## BMC Winter Programs 2014-2015

**Monday, December 1, Annual Duff Sale, Social and Movie Night.** Fresh and dried mushrooms for sale, an opportunity to sell any mushroom-related books or tchotchkes; also have a little wine and popcorn and chat before settling down to watch "Father Frost," that year's mushroom-themed movie.

**Monday, January 12th: Jason Karakehian gave a lecture on morels, earth tongues, elf saddles and other cup fungi - A Tour of the World of Ascomycetes.** Ascomycetes, fungi that produce their spores within sack-like cells called *asci*, are commonly found on every BMC foray. Often lumped at the end of the display table with the other "non-gilled" fungi, the diversity of forms and ecology in this class of fungi are astounding, and worthy of attention. He touched upon the history of the classification of these fungi and showed some examples of the ground-breaking and magnificent literature on them, including the Tulasne brother's *Selecta Fungorum Carpologia* and Emile Boudier's *Icones Mycologicae*. He also explored their biology and the structure of some commonly found Ascomycete fruiting bodies. The lecture concluded with a brief survey of the "earth tongue" fungi, pondering convergent evolution. Jason Karakehian has been a member of the BMC for seven years and is the Club's Librarian and Archivist. Mycology is his avocation.

**Sunday, February 8th: Wesley Price offered a Workshop on Simple Methods for Cultivating Mushrooms at Home. Limit: 20 participants. Cost: \$10.** BMC member Wes Price, who's in remission from running a mushroom farm on Cape Cod, offered a 3 to 4 hour long workshop on growing oyster and bricktop mushrooms at home. He demonstrated technique and showed which easily available materials (coffee grounds! newspapers! cardboard!) can be used as feedstock. He gave participants some spawn to get them started, as well as instructional handouts.

**Saturday, March 14: Larry Millman led a Winter Foray in Mass Audubon's Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary.** The Sanctuary has snowshoes for rent (\$6 for Audubon members; \$12 for non-members). A warm drink in a thermos and a snack are good ideas. Larry is not only an ardent mycologist, he's also an ethnologist, explorer and writer, which means that he's a great story teller. For those who think that fungi disappear in winter, Larry pointed out that his annual Christmas Fungus Count turns up 65 to 85 species. The Sanctuary is in Princeton, MA. (Cancelled due to bad weather: rescheduled for April 19.)

**Monday, March 23: At the Harvard Herbaria, BMC member and past President Bill Neill spoke on Edibles through the Seasons.** For those who were suffering from collecting withdrawal, this talk (almost) compensated. Bill is an amazing naturalist and collector, and he's been documenting his finds photographically for a long time. It was amazing the number of edible species in our region and the length of the collecting season he demonstrated. Bill is an enthusiastic and very knowledgeable guide (he's our main Google group identifier).

**Monday, April 6: Visiting scientist Rosanne Healy spoke on Mycorrhizal Fungi: The Underground Story.** Participants heard fascinating things about the mycorrhizal fungi that support almost all plant life. What is known about this kind of relationship? What ways do mycorrhizal fungi manifest themselves? How do we study things that are growing underground? Rosanne discussed some of the answers to these questions, and talked about her research on truffles and other fungi that are mycorrhizal with trees. Rosanne is a post doctoral researcher with Donald Pfister at the Harvard University Herbarium (Farlow). She taught The Biology of Fungi the previous semester, is active in mycological research, and is co-author of "Mushrooms and Other Fungi of the Midcontinental United States."

**Saturday, April 11: Growing Shiitakes on Logs with BMC member Chris Neefus in Topsfield.** Chris has been growing shiitake mushrooms on oak and sugar maple logs. He started five years ago with a few and now has about 250. Each log will produce mushrooms 2 or 3 times a season for about 3 years. During this workshop, participants had a chance to help inoculate logs that would begin producing mushrooms in summer 2016, and learned how Chris built his hobby.

**Sunday, May 3: Workshop on Growing Mushrooms at Home** (A second one, due to huge response to the February 8 workshop.) Eric Milligan is one of the founders of the young but rapidly growing and wildly successful NH Mushroom Farm.

**Sunday, May 10:** Just in time for the start of the season, BMC member Gary Gilbert offered beginners **A Short Course on Mushroom Identification Basics.** Gary explained the key physical features of mushrooms that are referred to in all the books and field guides. He then showed their many different variations by reviewing the most common families (genera) of mushrooms encountered in our region. A great hands-on immersion into identification.