

2011-2012 BMC Winter Program

All programs take place in the Seminar Room of Harvard's Farlow Herbarium unless otherwise noted. Registration is not required unless stated in the description.

Monday, December 5, 7 PM Annual 'Duff' Sale and Movie night. Enjoy cider and popcorn and a Welcome to Winter movie, after doing your holiday shopping at the BMC. Mushroom-themed books, calendars, T shirts, and fresh and dried mushrooms will be available for purchase -- most at less than retail. Our film this year is "Father Frost", a Russian retro extravaganza with a handsome prince, a beautiful heroine, a sled, a wicked witch (Baba Yaga) in her chicken-footed hut, lots of snow, and a forest full of boletes. You'll be let in to the less public areas of the Farlow to see their famous fungal Christmas exhibit! What more could you want?

Monday, February 6, 7 PM. *Leaf-Cutting Ants and Endophytes: Two Fungal Mutualisms Meet.* Leonora Bittleston, a Harvard grad student in Anne Pringle's mycology lab will talk about her research on leaf-cutter ants -- these amazing creatures, which cut huge amounts of leaves every day in the tropics to feed the fungus that they have been cultivating for millions of years. The ant-fungus relationship is complex, including pathogens, antibiotics and symbionts and we are just starting to learn that the relationship between the ants and the leaves they cut are also complex, with the ants choosing leaves on the basis of the endophyte loads in those leaves. Who knew? You will, after attending this talk, which will introduce you to one of the most fascinating, oldest, complicated and best studied mutualisms on earth.

NOTE: To compensate for our having no January program, we're offering a February packed with goodies. No date has been set yet, but we are partnering with Boston University's Culinary Arts program, and hope to offer a **Mushroom Cooking Demonstration** during this month. There will be a small charge for this program (food and wine served), and limited registration. We'll let you know by email as soon as the program is solidified and the date is set.

Saturday, February 18, 10:30 A.M. - ? Join our justly famous **Chinatown Foray**; the ultimate in urban foraging. Visit Chinese groceries, herbalists, etc. searching for fungi as food, medicine, art, etc. Document your finds with drawings, lists, purchases, photos, prose or poetry (the latter is especially welcome!), and share your experiences afterwards at an inexpensive and mushroomy Chinese lunch. We'll meet inside and downstairs at the Chinatown Trade Center, 2 Boylston Street, in Boston. The Center is located at the corner of Boylston and Washington, directly across from the Orange Line's Chinatown stop, and only a few blocks from Downtown Crossing or Park Street. This event can absorb any number of participants, but please register with Marcia at xxx.net or at xxx-xxx-xxxx. Your registration means we'll wait for you at the start point, have a printed map for you, and let the restaurant know how many to expect. This event has a snow date of Saturday, February 25, same time and place. But it takes real snow to stop us -- not just a few flakes!

Sunday, March 18, 2 PM *How Wood Rots.* If you're interested in the role that rot fungi play in the wooded environment, or in the cycle of life in the forest, do NOT miss this talk! Lynne Boddy, Professor of Mycology at Cardiff University (Wales), President of the British Mycological Society, one of the world's preeminent investigators of wood rotting fungi (and a

lively and likeable speaker) will spend an afternoon discussing this fascinating and amazingly complex topic with us. There are a small number of internationally known researchers who we try to get for BMC talks, and Lynne has been on our list for years. We feel lucky that she could make the trip. Note the Sunday date -- we hope this will allow more of you to attend, and take advantage of the free parking then in Cambridge.

Monday, April 30, 7 PM BMC Annual Meeting, enhanced by a talk, *In the Footsteps of Roland Thaxter in Patagonia* by our own Club sponsor, Harvard Professor Don Pfister. This bipartite evening offers two treats. First, the chance to play a role in Club governance and learn more about how we operate at our annual meeting. If you're unhappy with us (or, for that matter, happy with us), here's your opportunity to speak up and ask for change or say what you'd like to see kept. And afterwards, a talk about a past eminent local mycologist who traveled far a field, by a present eminent local mycologist, who has followed his predecessor's travels to the far southern Americas, bringing back photos and stories to share. This month marks the 80th anniversary of Thaxter's death; an auspicious occasion to celebrate an exotic part of his life.

Sunday, May 20, 10:30 AM - 2:30 PM Drawing Fungi. Have you ever wished that you could produce one of those beautiful illustrations of mushrooms? Well, you can. Starting out with a loose drawing, we'll begin to establish proportion and perspective to get a sense of the correct shape. Then, after adding tone, you will see your drawing turn into a 3- dimensional form. We'll have several different kinds of color media to experiment with at the end of the day. It's more important to learn to enjoy the process than to judge your drawing. Any level of drawing experience is welcome. Two BMC members, Carol and Pat, will share their expertise and offer instruction at this workshop. Pat has studied botanical drawing and done field sketches of fungi; Carol teaches courses combining science and art for the Certificate of Botanical Art for Wellesley College Friends of Horticulture and the Certificate of Native Plants at The New England Wildflower Society. Suggested materials to bring to the workshop (in addition to lunch) are:

- Hard pencil (2H, H)
- Soft Pencil (HB, 2B)
- Plastic eraser
- Small ruler
- Drawing paper

Optional: Color media such as colored pencils or watercolor (some materials will be made available). Some specimens will be provided but you're welcome to bring a favorite fungus of your own. **NOTE: Registration for this workshop will be limited.** Sign up early with Pat at xxx.net.