



Alabama Mushroom Society Newsletter

February 2023

Greetings Fungiphiles!!

We are so excited to be back from our winter hiatus and jump back in for the new year! We have been hard at work over our 'break' catching up on processing the many specimens collected at the Alabama Mushroom Festival last October, getting them vouchered at the University of West Alabama Herbarium, getting the photos uploaded to iNaturalist, and sent the samples off for sequencing.

February will kick off our monthly forays! In addition to our regular Cullman, Baldwin and Elmore County forays, we are happy to announce that we are adding a monthly foray in Jefferson County as well starting in March!

If you attended the Alabama Mushroom Festival last October, you know that we were hard pressed to accommodate parking for everyone who came out to support us! We are looking for a possible new location for next year that has facilities but does not have their own fees for camping. If anyone has any suggestions, please send us an email at almushroomsoc@gmail.com.

We have also been hard at work finishing up our Wild Edible Fungi certification course, the majority of the work being handled by AMS founder Anthony Goodman. This is a thorough course that includes an comprehensive book and online presentations that breakdown everything you need to know to confidently identify edible mushrooms in Alabama and surrounding areas. It is chock-full of High-quality, full color photos and information. We are in the process right now of working with the state health department to make it a state certified course to allow you to sell wild edible mushrooms in Alabama. Having reviewed the other courses available for our state, this is, in my opinion, the most thorough and complete mushroom course available. Also, since we are a non-profit with the aim to educate people, this will be the most affordable course available. Join us at our February zoom meeting Feb 7th at 7pm to hear Anthony tell us about the course and the certification and ask any questions you might have about becoming Wild Mushroom Certified in Alabama.

We are continuing the Alabama Fungal Diversity Project into 2023, which encompasses collecting for researchers, supplying the Herbarium at Auburn and U of West Alabama and our citizen science project. Read more about the project here:

<https://alabamamushroomsociety.org/Alabama-Fungal-Diversity-Project/>

We will also be running our big Morel Foray and our Chanterelle Foray again this year! As the date of these are very weather dependent, keep an eye out for updates as Spring approaches.

Thank you all for all your support! I can't wait to see what we can do together in 2023!



**Suspect
Mushroom
Poisoning?**
Call US Poison Control
at
1-800-222-1222
EMERGENCY ID:
Poisons FB Group

AMS Board

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AMS President



Clathrus columnatus
Photo by Mark Waldo

Upcoming Events

Click [→HERE←](#) for more info or to register for an event!

- Feb 7th ----- February AMS Meeting via Zoom
- Feb 11th ----- Cullman County Monthly Foray
- Feb 11th ----- Baldwin County Monthly Foray
- Feb 18th ----- Elmore County Monthly Foray

****BIRMINGHAM FORAY TO BEGIN IN MARCH****

Tremella mesenterica
By David Cartwright



Mushroom of The Month

Written by Logan Borosch

Amanita lavendula group

The Amanita lavendula group is a small group of species in Amanita section Validae, stirps Citrina. These mushrooms are commonly found throughout the winter months in the Eastern United States.

They are small, whitish-yellowish mushrooms with a cap, stipe, basal bulb, and annulus. They are also commonly mistaken for Destroying Angels, but throughout this write-up we will discuss the differences between these groups.

There are three species within this group present in the US: Amanita lavendula, Amanita americitrina, and Amanita cornelihybrida. Many field guides will call these all Amanita citrina, though that is a species found in Europe that now goes under the name Amanita mappa. Amanita taxonomy can be really confusing, so to keep this simple we will refer to the American species as the “lavendula group”.

Photo by Alisha Millican

Identifying Features:

Cap (Pileus):

The caps are usually hemispherical (convex) and white or slightly yellowish to yellow, they may have thin patches of universal veil remnants that seem lavender-ish, they will have a nonstriate margin (not lined), and will usually have the scent of raw potatoes.



Stipe (Stem, Stalk):

The stipe is smooth, kind of rough towards the base, with a yellowish-white annulus (ring) about $\frac{3}{4}$ up the stipe. It will be somewhat short, and slightly thick; unlike the Destroying Angels with big, thin, skirt-like annuli. Sometimes it may have longitudinal lines across the top, seeing this can be important for species identification. At the bottom of the stipe, you will see a large basal bulb; this is where some people might mistake these for Destroying Angels, because they can have little “limbs” coming from the bulb. These limbs can look very similar to a saccate volva, but if you look down the stipe or cut the base in half, you will see that they are just small pieces of flesh sticking up rather than a large cup starting from the very bottom of the stipe. The base will commonly have rusty stains.



Photos
by Alisha
Millican

Hymenium (Underside, Spore Bearing Surface):

The underside will have gills that are free from the stipe. A very important part for species identification is to see the point where the gills would attach to the stipe. If there is a little decurrent line or “tooth” on the top of the stipe, it can help point in the direction of a certain species.



Despite the close resemblance to the dangerously toxic *Amanitas* in section *Phalloides*, the *Amanitas* in the *lavendula* group are not toxic.

Photo by Alisha Millican

Fungi Foragecast

The mushrooms found this month will range substantially depending on your location in the state and recent temperatures and precipitation. If you are getting as much rain as I have been, we are going to need it to dry out a bit before we will start finding the ground growing mushrooms, but the moisture will be good for the wood growers! Most notably, and commonly reported, are an abundant crop of *Pleurotus* (the Oysters), and *Hericium* (Lion's Mane, Coral Tooth and Bearshead Tooth). Of course you can't get far in our Alabama woods without seeing the many dozens of small polypores (especially *Trametes* and *Stereum*) with gelatinous and sometimes colorful growth around them (the Jellies!) and often parasitizing the *Stereum*. These jellies are discussed in great detail in our ID Key available to members (you will have to log in to access this page) [Here](#). As the winter holds us in it's not-so icy grips, we'll also see the explosion of Ascomycetes. This entire phylum of the kingdom Fungi is massive but will include the cup-fungi of the class *Pezizomycetes* (including morels!), the hard lumpy balls of *Hypoxylon*, and the fingery appendages of *Xylaria* and similar in the class *Sordariomycetes*. You may still be finding many Basidiocarps such as the *Hydnum* (hedgehogs), *Clavariadelphus* (sweet clubs), *Hygrocybe* and *Hygrophorus* (wax-caps), and *Lepista* (wood blewit and allies). There are also a host of *Mycena* and other especially small fungi that thrive in this season, but for those, you may need a hand-lens and to crawl around a bit! Don't forget to post your cool and unusual finds both on our Facebook group and on iNaturalist!

Calendar Contest

The 2022 calendars featuring these photos and all of last year's other amazing winners are available for sale on

→[our Etsy Shop](#)←

Congratulations to our November winner

Rocky Nadrich with his photo of a
Hericium erinaceus!



Congratulations to our December winner

Alisha Millican with her photo of
Hohenbuehelia mastrucata!



Congratulations to our January winner

Cassie Pugh with her photo of
Schizophyllum commune!



**Go submit your favorite mushroom
photos taken this month for
February's Calendar contest on
Facebook!!**

[Go now!](#)

In The Kitchen

By Kevin Hébert

Spicy Shiitake Balls with Fennel Slaw and Creole Aioli

This mouth watering recipe soaks some earthy shiitakes in Louisiana heat and then takes them straight to the fryer! It is paired up with a sweet and crunchy slaw and a zesty dipping sauce. Laissez les bon temps rouler!



Ingredients (serves about 4):

Spicy Shiitake Balls:	2 tbsp fresh parsley	1 egg
15 oz Shiitake Mushrooms (Lentinula edodes)	1 tbsp fresh oregano	peanut oil (for frying)
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup cooked rice	1 tbsp fresh thyme	
1 med green bell pepper	1 tsp cayenne	Fennel Slaw:
1 med red bell pepper	1 tsp garlic powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ bulb fennel
6 tabasco peppers	1 tsp onion powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ head purple cabbage
1 large yellow onion	2 tbsp salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ bunch scallions
3 ribs celery	1 tbsp black pepper	1 tsp sugar
4 cloves of garlic	$1 \frac{1}{2}$ cup mushroom stock	Creole Aioli:
1 bunch of scallions	2 cups panko	1 egg yolk
	1 cup flour	1 tbsp creole mustard

1-2 cup canola oil
½ tbsp red wine vinegar
½ shallot
2 cloves garlic
¼ tbsp cayenne

¼ tbsp salt
¼ tbsp black pepper

Directions:

Step 1: Cook the rice and prep the ingredients

Cook the rice in your preferred method. Small dice the mushrooms, bell peppers, onion, and celery. Thinly slice the tabasco peppers and mince the garlic and shallot. Finely chop the herbs and use a mandolin to shave the fennel and cabbage. Thinly slice all of the white scallion bottoms and cut the green tops in long diagonal slices.

Step 2: Make the Shiitake Balls

Heat a large stock pot to medium high and add a drizzle of peanut oil. Add the shiitake, onion, celery, and bell peppers, and cook stirring occasionally until slightly softened. Add the garlic and green onion bottoms. Cook for another minute or so then add the mushroom stock, cayenne, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper. Bring to a simmer and reduce until most of the liquid has cooked away. Strain any remaining liquid and save in case your mix ends up too dry. Return the mix to the pot and stir in cooked rice, thyme, oregano, paprika, ⅓ of the green onion tops, and parsley. Add one egg, mix well, and then roll the mix into golf ball sized balls. Place the balls on a plate and chill in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes.

Step 4: Make the Creole Aioli

Separate the egg yolk and add to a medium sized prep bowl. Add creole mustard, red wine vinegar, minced shallot, minced garlic, cayenne, salt, and pepper. Slowly drizzle the canola oil into the bowl while whisking at the same time. Continue this process until you have a decent amount of creamy aioli. Taste the mixture along the way to adjust heat and spice level. Place aioli in the fridge until ready to eat.

Step 3: Make the Fennel Slaw

Add the shaved fennel, red cabbage, and the remaining green onion tops to a large bowl. Add the sugar and place in the refrigerator. Right before serving, toss the mix in a small amount of creole aioli and then season with salt and pepper to taste.

Step 4: Fry the balls and finish the dish

Set up a dredging station with flour, egg wash (beaten egg and a splash of milk), and panko. Heat a pot of peanut oil (enough to cover the balls) to 350 degrees. Work in batches and dredge the shiitake rice balls in flour, then egg, then panko. Work the panko in with your hands to ensure a good coating. Add the balls to the oil in batches and fry for about 5-8 minutes, or until crisp and golden with a hot center. Remove the fried balls from the oil and place on a cooling rack. When cooled slightly, toss the slaw, salt to taste, then serve alongside the spicy shiitake balls and use the remaining creole aioli for dipping!

Meeting Information

AMS meetings take place the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm CST via Zoom and are open to the public.

Join us February 7th where we will have a brief business meeting to discuss everything we have planned for this coming year. Then AMS founder Anthoni Goodman will be talking to us about the up-coming AMS backed Wild Mushroom Certification Course!! If you have an interest in learning to confidently identify the edible mushrooms of Alabama, you will not want to miss this!

Link to the zoom meeting: [Join Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 861 8427 9443 Passcode: 781569

2022 Scavenger Hunt

We are starting up a brand new year of mushroom hunting! Find and properly identify as many mushrooms in Alabama as you can and win prizes at the end of the year! You get credit for finding the mushrooms when you add them to our project on iNaturalist. Read the full rules on our website [here](#). Any observations you upload to iNaturalist will be automatically submitted to the project after joining. Joining the project is easy!

1. Download the iNaturalist app on your smartphone or access it via the website www.inaturalist.org.
2. Sign up for free to make your account.
3. Join the iNaturalist project titled "AMS 2022 Scavenger Hunt"
→Must be a paid AMS member to win←

Is there something you would like to see included each month? Do you have foray photos, a recipe or something else you would like to contribute? Reach out to us at www.almushroomsoc@gmail.com