The North American Truffler

Journal of the North American Truffling Society

Volume 42, Issue 2 **Spring 2025**

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Announcements

Room **2602** in Cordley Hall on the Oregon State University campus is reserved for NATS speaker meetings!!! NATS will have in-person meetings October through June for local members. All meetings will also be broadcast on Zoom for those of you who live farther away. See you soon either way!

The address for Cordley Hall is 2701 SW Campus Way, Corvallis, Oregon. Parking is across the street, and you'll need to enter at the NW corner of the building.

Thanks to Dave Pilz, NATS representative with NAMA, for alerting us to this foray!

"NAMA Oregon Dunes: Regional Foray of Coastal Oregon is coming this fall and, with a limit of 100 attendees, Oct. 30 to Nov. 2, 2025 .These tickets will be hotter than a grilled matsutake! We are also thrilled to announce the formal engagement of renowned Renee Lebeuf as Chief Mycologist for our 65th Annual Foray and the artists among you will want to get a jump on our Annual Foray Logo."

Vole drawing by Tate McMillan

NATS 2024 Spring Speakers

April 8, 2025: Christopher Bivins

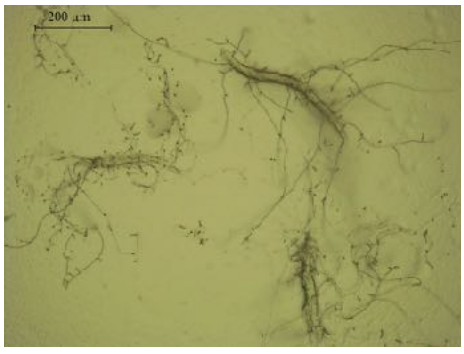
The Genetics Behind the Fungal Fantasies of Woodrats

Do you spend a lot of time wondering what kinds of fungi woodrats prefer? If so, you won't want to miss the April 8, 2025 NATS meeting where speaker Christopher Bivins will return to give participants a comprehensive picture of the kinds of fungi these rodents consume. Since last visiting NATS, Christopher has sequenced over 400 individual woodrat fecal pellets. Additionally, he's compiled a review of various truffle taxa collected from the same regions as the fecal pellets. Find out what he plans to do with this pile of data in the future!

Christopher completed work for his master's degree at Fresno State. He is currently a Ph.D. student at UC Merced where he works on a number of fungal ecology projects in the Sierra Nevada Foothills.

May 6, 2025: Prasanth Prakash Prabhu

To Trap or Not to Trap: The Nitrogen Dilemma in Carnivorous Mushrooms



Wood-decay fungi, like oyster mushrooms and their relatives, hunt nematodes for extra nitrogen. To test how external nitrogen affects this predatory behavior, I conducted a "marshmallow test" with *Hohenbuehelia mastrucata*, an oyster mushroom relative. Further gene analysis revealed key pathways involved in trap formation and fungal metabolism.

Prasanth is a budding mycologist interested in fungal ecology, systematics, and evolution. Originally from Kerala, India, he moved to Massachusetts to pursue a Ph.D. in biology at Hibbett lab, Clark University. His current project is focused on the evolution of nematode-trapping in the Pleurotaceae, which includes the genera *Pleurotus* and *Hohenbuehelia*. Prasanth is also one of NATS's 2025 Pavelek Scholarship Awardees.

NATS 2024 Spring Speakers

June 10, 2025: Monika Richardson

Ectomycorrhizal fungi associated with three co-occurring *Pinus* species on the Far North Coast of California

Northwest California is heavily forested with a high diversity of Ectomycorrhizal (ECM) tree species, yet fungal symbionts crucial to maintain these forest environments are understudied. Join NATS as Monika Richardson shares findings from her master's thesis work comparing species of ECM fungi associated with 3 north coast California pine species. Distribution of these species offers a unique opportunity to investigate effects of biogeography, soil environment, and host tree species on pine-associated ECM fungi. This study elucidates fungal biodiversity and novel symbiotic associations that sustain regional pine forests. Her talk will also provide background on the importance of ectomychorrhizal symbiosis in Pacific Northwest forests.

Before joining the M.S. Biology program at Cal Poly Humboldt, Monika spent 7 years working for various government and nonprofit conservation organizations such as Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, Mendocino Land Trust, and Feather River RCD. After years of being obsessed with identifying mushrooms, Monika decided to go for a master's degree to investigate the symbiotic mutualisms between fungi and plants. Her research is conducted on the unceded territories of the Yurok/ and Wiyot peoples of Northern California. When not looking for mushrooms, Monika spends her time surfing, co-managing a compost company, gardening, and enjoying the beautiful and wet Humboldt County. Monika is also one of NATS's 2025 Pavelek Scholarship Awardees.

Truffle-hunting dog finds fabulous new fungus!

From the hit CBC Listen show, 'Quirks and Quarks' with Bob McDonald:

A chance discovery has turned out to reveal a new species of North American truffle. These fungi can be desirable and valuable delicacies. An American truffle hunter, Lois Martin, and her trained dog Monza found a distinctive truffle in a city park that turned out to be a fungus new to science.

Although native to North America, it was more similar to European truffles than any found in the Americas. Dr. Greg Bonito at Michigan State University named this new truffle *Tuber canirevelatum*, meaning the 'dog-found' truffle in honour of Monza and other dogs who look for truffles. The work was published in the journal Mycologia.

Dr. Greg Bonito gave a presentation to NATS way back in 2009 on Tubers!

Tune in at: https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-51-quirks-and-quarks/clip/16125199-truffle-hunting-dog-finds-fabulous-fungus

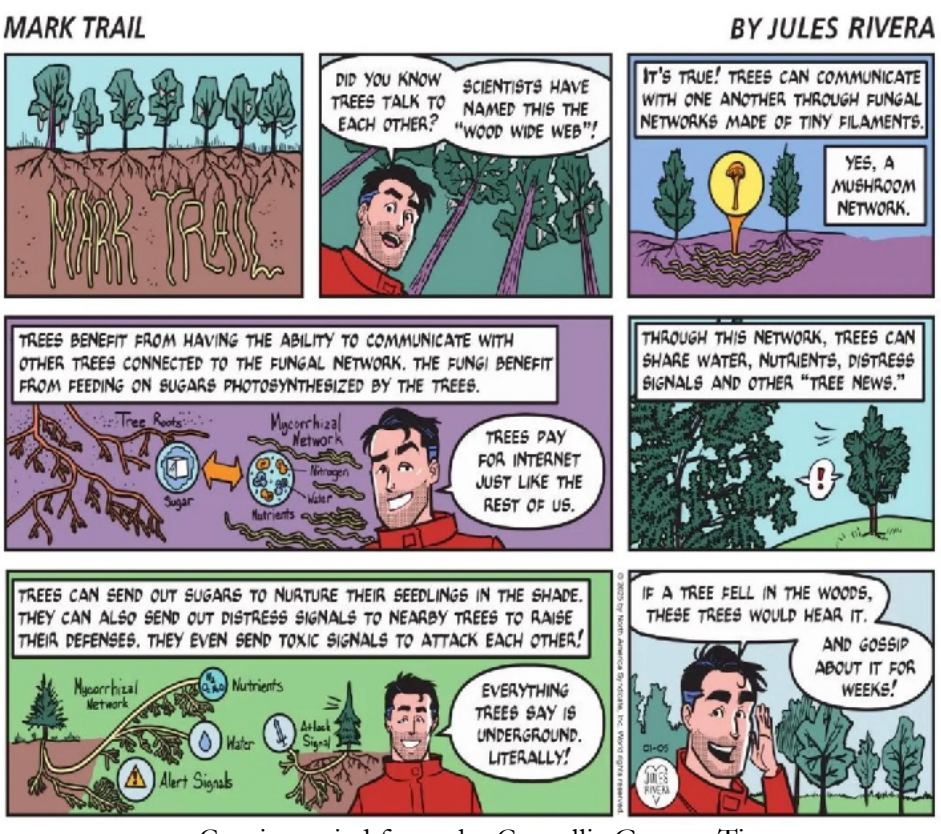
Mycorrhizae research makes it into the comic pages!

Original "wood-wide web" work from Dan Durall's UBC Kelowna lab:

"Architecture of the wood-wide web: *Rhizopogon* spp. genets link multiple Douglas-fir cohorts"

Kevin J. Beiler, Daniel M. Durall, Suzanne W. Simard, Sheri A. Maxwell, Annette M. Kretzer

Published in the journal "New Phytologist", January 2010



Comic copied from the Corvallis Gazette Times

Stinky, Fussy, $800 a Pound: The Rush Is on for Oregon Truffles

NYT reporter Pete Wells joins the pack of dogs and humans trying to sniff out these culinary treasures.

An alert NATS member forwarded this fascinating article about truffles recently published in the New York Times. Our very own past president of NATS, Charles LeFevre, is heavily featured in the article. Hopefully, this link will allow you to read the whole article:

https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/11/dining/oregon-truffles.html

In case you can't access the article, here are a few segments from the article.

Picking Up the Scent

On the last day of February, accompanied by Charles Lefevre, who has done more than anyone to spread the word about Oregon truffles, I explored a cool, shady Douglas fir grove just outside Eugene. More accurately, Dr. Lefevre's dogs, Dante and Luca, explored the grove, while he and I scrambled to keep up.

"If I take my eyes off him for a second, he'll eat a truffle," he said as he followed Dante through a thicket of downed branches.

Black and white truffles, the region's two most commonly dug varieties, have been found as far south as Point Reyes in California and as far north as Vancouver Island in British Columbia, but Oregon is especially rich in their favorite habitat. Dr. Lefevre described the ideal hunting ground as former grassland where Douglas firs were planted 15 to 30 years ago. He can spot classic truffle terrain from the wheel of his car, but finds satellite images more useful.

"The modern truffle hunter starts from Google Earth," he said.

Charles Lefevre and his dogs, Dante, left, and Luca, hunting in a grove of Douglas fir outside Eugene, Ore. "Every time we've come in here, we find $5,000 worth of truffles," he said. Saeed Rahbaran for The New York Times

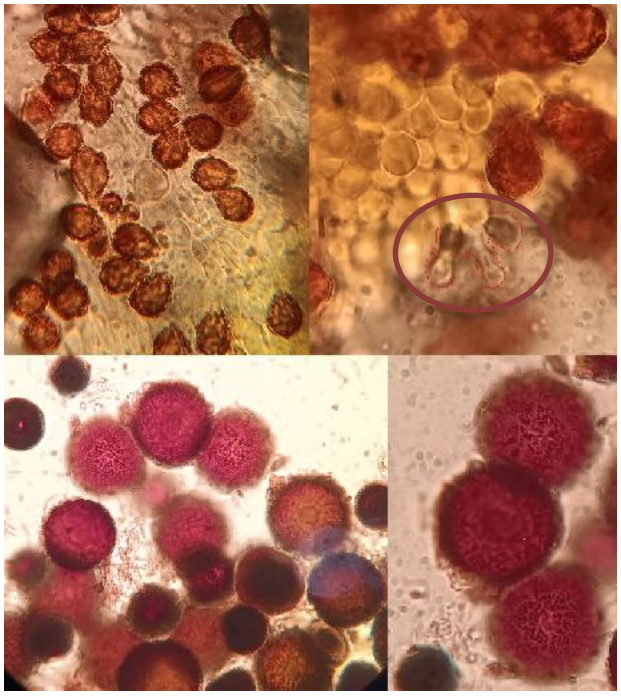
Read the whole article if you can - it is full of information about our Oregon culinary truffles.

NATS Fall Forays

This fall, NATS members were led on forest outings by new foray coordinator, Jamie Ure. Thank you, Jamie, for leading the forays, and thanks to everyone who participated! Thanks especially to Starker Forests and property owners Dave and Barb Sullivan for hosting the events.

Findings included species of *Hymenogaster*, *Elaphomyces*, *Genea*, *Scleroderma*, *Rhizopogon*, among others.

Probable *Genea* species.

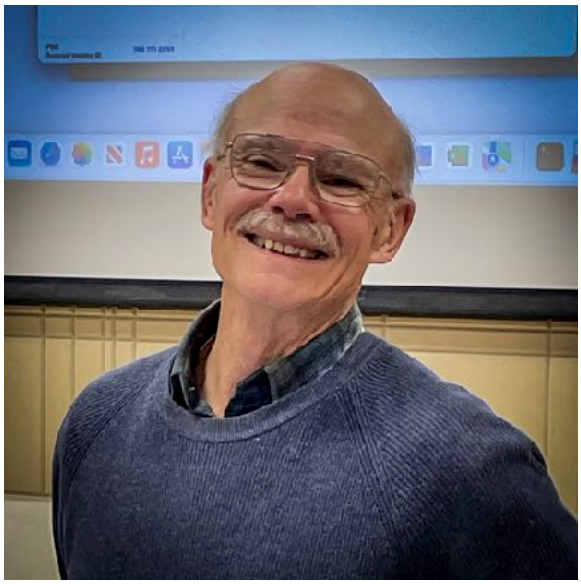


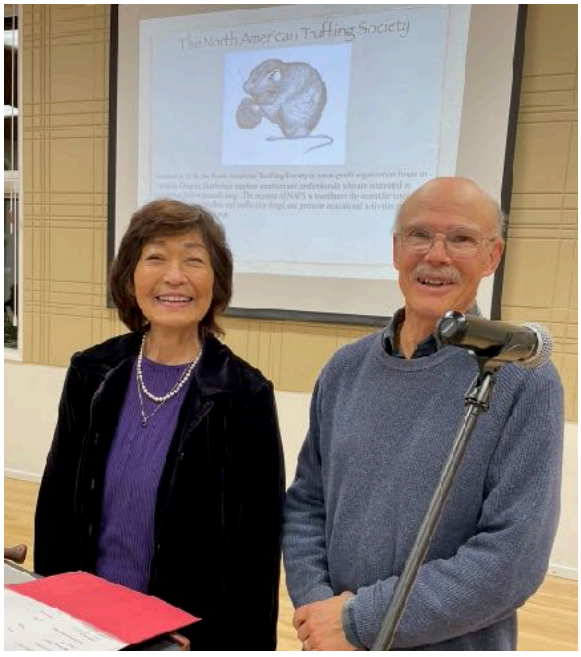
Top: Spore images from a basidiomycete w/ whitish peridium and dark gleba found under Doug fir. Narrowly citriform, 20-30 x 14-16 microns, w/ truncate cupped base, and the basidium with small basidiospores attached by sterigma (outlined in red) indicate *Hymenogaster subalpinus*.

Bottom: the cracked, warty reticulum of the *Elaphomyces granulatus* spores, 18-35 microns in diameter.

Spore photos by Jamie Ure

NATS 2025 Potluck Highlights





NATS members gathered together again on February 8, 2025 to celebrate friends, food, and fungi at the annual potluck dinner. In-person attendees were not disappointed as mushroom-themed appetizers, entrees, and desserts were fantastic! ZOOM-goers weren't able to partake of the goodies, but were treated to hearing speaker Dan Luoma recount stories and share photos and insights from his seeming centuries in the field of mycology.

Winners of the NATS Pavelek Scholarship awards were announced, centerpieces were bid on, and no one was hurt during the raffle. In all, the evening was a success. We look forward to seeing you there next year!

Thanks to all who purchased centerpieces and bought raffle tickets - Pavelek Scholarship awards happen because of your generosity!

And thank you to NATS treasurer Barry Wulff for remembering to take photos at the potluck!

NATS ZOOM Speaker Meeting Refresher

Our meetings this season will all be hybrid meetings, giving you an opportunity to attend in person or connect via Zoom. If Zoom seems a mystery, you are certainly not alone! Direct your questions to natrufflingsociety@gmail.com. The in-person meetings will be held in Room **2602** in Cordley Hall on the Oregon State University campus.

For the foreseeable future, NATS monthly speaker meetings will continue via Zoom. Meetings will usually start at 7:00 pm with a short business meeting. The speaker portion of the meeting will follow when our business portion is finished. The speaker will be introduced, fascinate us with their subject material, and linger for follow-up questions/discussions. In an effort to keep meetings short, speakers will present for 45 minutes or less. Zoom participants will be able to interact with audio or through the Zoom chat.

When you receive your monthly NATS email about upcoming meetings you will need to register ahead of time to attend via Zoom by clicking on the link in the email. Just fill in the short form to receive an invitation to that month's Zoom meeting. Our meetings are hosted through Oregon State University, and we will be very sure to keep them securely password protected to avoid uninvited guests.

Want to share your Zoom meeting invite with an interested non-NATS member?

Don't forget to let us know their name and email address so we will allow them into the meeting!

NATS iNaturalist Submission Process

If you have a specimen that you think should be accessioned, be sure to dry the truffles to prevent rot (see https://fundis.org/sequence/collect-dry/dry-your-specimens), and please email natrufflingSociety@gmail.com to learn if we can accept your specimens.

Additional information fields are provided to record your observations on iNaturalist. Such information is often crucial for specimen identification, so if possible, please include:

Collector's (real) name for the specimen label
Elevation*

Slope*

Overstory/understory trees & shrubs (scientific name preferred)

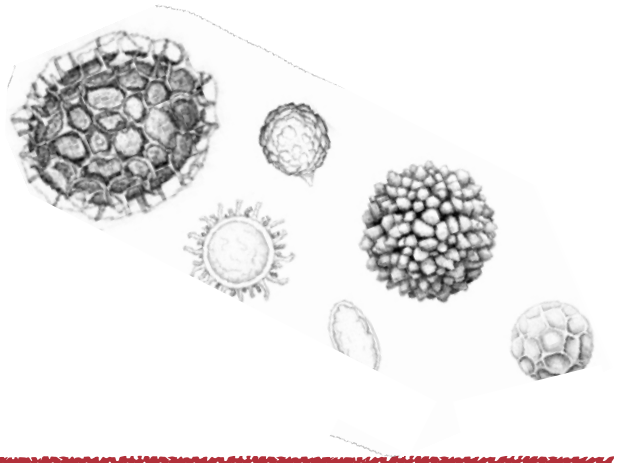
Substrate (moss, mineral soil, soil, wood, or litter)

Fresh notes such as colors and odor (using the notes section on iNaturalist)

*Estimates of these data are acceptable, however, **PLEASE** denote such instances.

WANTED

Creative suggestions for newsletter topics, comments about articles, your opinions about any truffle and/or fungi related topic. Send contributions to: newsletter editor Sarah Shay at natrufflingsociety@gmail.com



Information contained in *The Truffler* is to be used at your own risk. NATS Inc., its officers, editors, and members are not responsible for the use or misuse of information presented herein. If you are unsure of mushroom identification or safety, **please** consult an expert! In addition, attending and participating in a NATS event is entirely at your own risk. No person associated with NATS is either directly or indirectly responsible for anything that occurs during, or in transit to/from, a NATS event. Be responsible.

UNIDENTIFIED TRUFFLE?

What to do?

Visit www.natruffling.org for a printable field data card (hand-written submissions on awesome stationary certainly welcome). Please provide a description of significant characteristics of the habitat immediately surrounding the collection site, including the dominant trees and other vegetation species and slope/exposure. Also include site coordinates (GPS data, if available) and, when possible, color digital images showing a surface view and an interior section, cut top-to-bottom, through the center of the truffle.

Prior to submission, gently remove loose soil from the specimen. DO NOT scrub briskly or use a stiff brush; an intact outer skin is important for identification. Dry thoroughly using a food dehydrator OR by refrigerating samples in a loosely closed paper bag for a couple days. For faster drying, cut truffles in half to reduce moisture trapped by the outer skin.

Mail your dried specimen to:

The North American Truffling Society
P.O. BOX 296
CORVALLIS, OREGON 97339

If you mail a dried specimen, please let us know by sending an email to natrufflingsociety@gmail.com.

The North American Truffling Society, Inc.

The North American Truffling Society is a non-profit organization based in Corvallis, Oregon that brings together amateurs and professionals who are interested in fungi that fruit below ground. The mission of NATS is to enhance the scientific knowledge of North American truffles and truffle-like fungi, and promote educational activities related to truffles and truffle-like fungi.

NATS is the only organization of its kind in the world devoted to gathering truffles and enhancing our knowledge about them. Primary activities include educational meetings and truffle-collection forays. NATS members collect truffles worldwide, thereby contributing to our understanding of their habitat and range, identification and classification, and edibility. NATS specialists also provide truffle identification services.

NATS offers:

- Forays (field trips) to collect truffles.
- Monthly educational meetings (autumn through spring) on varied mycological topics.
- A periodic newsletter, "The North American Truffler: Journal of the North American Truffling Society", describing recent truffle finds, program meetings and other topics.
- An annual potluck dinner.
- The excitement of participating in valuable scientific research.
- New and interesting friends.

NATS welcomes new members. As a nonprofit, membership dues may be considered a tax-deductible donation for those who itemize their taxes. Dues may be paid by cash (in person) or by check (US Mail). If you pay by check, please retain your canceled check as your receipt for tax purposes. You can also pay online with a credit/debit card via Paypal at www.natruffling.org/renew.htm.

For further information on truffles and membership, contact NATS and START TRUFFLING!

Please return completed form (with check made out to NATS) to:

THE NORTH AMERICAN TRUFFLING SOCIETY, INC.
P.O. BOX 296
CORVALLIS, OREGON 97339
www.natruffling.org

Name(s):_____Phone:_____

Address:_____

City:_____State:_____Zip:_____Country:_____
(Province) (Postal code)

Email address(es):_____

Annual membership fees: $20 first family member, $10 each additional family member in the same household over the age of 18 years. Businesses: $20. Individuals/Businesses from other countries: $20, **payable in US funds.**

Annual contribution categories: Donor: $15-$49; Contributor: $50-$499; Sustaining $500+