

FUNGI

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Granted my mushroom picking self-esteem is a little low right now. I went out for a little bit on a recent afternoon to see if any were out yet, even though I knew they wouldn't be but I don't want to take a chance of missing the short season. I found zero. Zilch. I feel like Punxsutawney Phil the groundhog. I stuck my head out, didn't find any mushrooms and am ducking my tail and going back down in my hole for another week or so.

But despite painting such a doom and gloom picture, surely any day now they are going to start popping up. And when they do, you want to be there. Morels are the tastiest fungi in the world next only to the truffle in England. They are not only my favoritist (is that a word?) outdoor food but probably my favoritist food ever.

Mushroom hunting gives you an excuse to go hiking in

the mountains and if you're up there bear/turkey hunting why not kill two birds with one stone? There are multiple edible mushrooms, but I only feel safe picking two species. One time I thought, you know, this is dumb. I'm up there going to all of the expense and spending time hunting so why not learn to identify all of the edible species? So I found out about a mushroom picking club and started attending their meetings. Unfortunately, I still only feel comfortable picking my original two species.

So to get you started, the first season go with an experienced picker who can train you. If you don't and make a mistake and pick the Angel of Death. ... Let's just say, you and God had better be on pretty good terms because you will be in the judgment room muy pronto.

So where do you find them? I'll tell you some generalities but as soon as I say that, I'll find them in some random spot. When you find them at one elevation everyone will tell

you to move higher after a few days. I do find some by old logs but I also find plenty just randomly throughout the woods. I find a few on the uphill banks on old logging roads.

I don't recommend looking on grassy slopes but one year I found a ton on a grassy hillside in the forest. But haven't found them there since. Usually it's smart to go recheck the same good spots every year. Check out old stump holes, especially in old burns. My old buddy Roger Ross said to look under firs. Problem is, I can hardly differentiate the difference between a pine tree and an aspen.

I've got one spot on an old logging road that isn't a low spot but slightly so. I find them there every year. I find them in semi open areas that are somewhat shaded.

The indisputable world's best scenario is last year's forest fires. They can be magical. I remember at one such old fire I found 17 almost underneath a fallen lodgepole.

The stump holes had a million. The open burn area had a quadrillion. So if you know where old burns are from last summer/fall, hit them. If you don't know of any, go check with the Forest Service.

One year I knew where some prescribed burns had taken place. No one else had hit it yet. I thought that I had scored big time. Unbelievably I didn't find a one there.

If you find some on a steep hillside, check above and below. The spores will flush downhill and I've found a bucketful in one spot in this scenario.

I've never actually done this but one time I was theorizing with a lady at the Forest Service office. We were kicking ideas back and forth and she said she'd always been tempted to check the soil temp but kept forgetting to. I bet she is onto something. I bet their popping up is directly linked to the temp of the soil.

Well, we're out of room. Good luck.

MUSHROOM PERMITS, PICKING ADVICE

Mushroom pickers on national forest land can keep up to one gallon per day, or five gallons in Washington, for personal use, with no permit required to harvest, possess or transport amounts up to those limits.

People who plan to collect more mushrooms, or who want to sell them, will need a commercial permit, which are on sale now at Forest Service offices around the region. Commercial mushroom picking is prohibited in wilderness areas, research areas, or any areas that are currently closed. A mushroom guide is available at https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/wallowa-whitman/home.

In Oregon a pound of fresh morels can sell for over \$50, a dried pound for over \$200, in an upper scale restaurant they might sell for \$200 a plate.

The Forest Service offers advice for collecting mushrooms:

- Use a knife to cut your mushrooms at their base. This reduces disturbance to the soil and can help mushrooms to continue growing in that location.
• Carry your mushrooms in a net bag, which better preserves them and allows spores to spread for future production.
• Give wildlife plenty of space and leave newborns alone.
• Practice "leave no trace" ethics, and please take all your trash home with you.
• Be aware that some forest roads may not be accessible due to mud and snow. Traveling on wet mountain roads and terrain can be dangerous.
• Keep in mind that many wild mushroom varieties are poisonous. When in doubt, leave it out! Always invest in a local mushroom guide.
• Also be sure to tell a friend or family member where you are going; stick to your plan and let them know when you will confirm your safe return.

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HOROSCOPES by Stella Wilder SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022 YOUR BIRTHDAY by Stella Wilder Born today, you are quite soft-spoken, and yet in spite of this, everyone knows just exactly who you are and what you stand for...

CROSSWORD PUZZLER SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022 ACROSS 1 Go at an easy gait 5 River duck 9 Form 1040 sender 12 Island near Corsica 13 Earthenware pot 14 — choy 15 Fast warship 17 O.T. priest 18 Cartoon shriek 19 Siren 21 Says for sure 24 Zen riddle 26 Count (on) 27 Corn serving 28 Flower container 32 Daniel Dae — 33 Deli bread 34 High note 35 Gin flavoring 37 Sticky stuff 38 Grad-school exam 39 Mr. Perot 41 Unseals 42 Faulty 45 Cabin 46 Press for payment 47 Step-by-step solving procedure 53 Rope-a-dope boxer 54 — -Aid drink mixes 55 Luigi's farewell 56 Encountered 57 Advice giver 58 Barbershop sound DOWN 1 Was in charge of 2 Flamenco shout 3 "This Old House" network 4 Luncheonette 5 Grabbed

103 Announcements 104 Community Calendar VFW POST 460 Every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 7pm. Corner of Main at Birch in Union Baker County United "freedom rallies" 3rd Thursday each month 6 p.m. at the Sunridge 1 Sunridge Lane. The public is invited KEY OF DAVID Starting May 7th - 2PM Baker County Library Taught by: Gary Robinson & Blaine McKnight Kiwanis Club of Baker City Tuesday at 12:00 PM Sunridge Inn Restaurant 1 Sunridge Lane For more information call: (541) 523-6027 ROTARY CLUB of Baker City Meets every Monday Noon - 1 PM Baker Towers Meeting Room POWDER RIVER SPORTSMAN'S CLUB Meets 1st Tuesday of every month 8th & Broadway, Baker City 6 PM - Pistolettes 7 PM - Regular Membership

104 Community Calendar LA GRANDE LIONS CLUB Meets 2nd & 4th Monday of each month @ 12 PM Union County Senior Center 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande PINOCHLE Fridays at 6:30 p.m. Senior Center 2810 Cedar St., Baker City Public is welcome

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104 Community Calendar 114 Group Meetings NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS 541-805-2229 neo-na.org AL-ANON Keep Coming Back Family Group Mondays, 7 pm at NKWest, 1208 Adams, La Grande, OR CELEBRATE RECOVERY Calvary Baptist Church Third & Broadway Baker City, OR EVERY THURSDAY 6:15 - 8:00 PM DO YOU HAVE....HURTS, HABITS and/or HANG UPS? 12 Step Biblical Support Harvest Church 3720 Birch St. Baker City Thurs., 6:30 - 8:30 PM LA GRANDE GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS Every Friday Night @ 5pm, 2107 Gekeler Ln, LG, Church of Christ basement. For more info please call 971-219-8411 Someone's drinking a problem? AL-ANON Meetings are available by phone Info for Baker City Meetings Call: 541-239-7323 NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Goin' Straight Group Meetings: Mon., Tues. Thurs. & Fri. Start at 8 PM Episcopal Church Basement 2177 1st Street, Baker City

114 Group Meetings AA MEETINGS - La Grande Wednesday Nights, 7-8:15pm. Fort Union Grange Hall, corner of McAlister & Gekeler Lanes. For more info, call 541-786-1222

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PEOPLE with PARKINSON'S Caregivers, Family, Friends SUPPORT GROUP Contact Judith at 208-855-9199 Meetings resume @GRH when restrictions ease.

BAKER COUNTY AA MEETINGS BAKER CITY MONDAYS Survivor's Group 12 - 1:00 pm Baker Presbyterian Church 1995 4th St. (4th & Court, Side Door) WEDNESDAYS Survivor's Group 12:05 pm Baker Presbyterian Church 1995 4th St. (4th & Court, Side Door) THURSDAYS Survivor's Group 12:00 pm Baker Presbyterian Church 1995 4th St. (4th & Court, Side Door) SATURDAYS As Bill Sees It Group 10:00 am 2970 Walnut (Corner of "D" & Grove St.) Grove Apts. Community Rm SUNDAYS Been There Done That 5:30 pm Grove Apartments Community Room 2970 Walnut Street Questions call AA Hotline: 541-624-5117 www.oregonaadistrict29.org