

## **WVMN Class Description**

<b>Title:</b>	<b>MUSHROOMS</b>
<b>Objectives:</b>	Explore the structure, classification, and ecology of the larger fungi. Learn how to safely collect for eating and how to properly collect for study.
<b>Class type:</b>	Elective
<b>Time:</b>	2-3 hours
<b>Optimal season:</b>	Summer, fall
<b>Materials:</b>	Basket, knife, waxed paper roll or bags, camera, hand lens, notebook, field guides, and if possible a 400x microscope and food dehydrator
<b>Expected outcomes:</b>	The student will gain a basic understanding of <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. terms for describing mushrooms and their life histories.</li><li>2. some of the ways fungi are related to other organisms in their environment.</li><li>3. how to safely collect and prepare wild mushrooms for the dining table.</li><li>4. how to properly collect fungi for scientific study, what kinds of notes to take at the time of collecting, and how to permanently preserve specimens.</li><li>5. how to approach further study, including helpful references and organizations.</li></ol>

### **WVMN Class Outline**

1. What is a mushroom?
  - a. Mushroom versus toadstool
  - b. Kingdom Fungi
  - c. Lichens
2. The organism
  - a. Spores
  - b. Mycelium
  - c. "Fruiting bodies" mushrooms, etc.
  - d. Overwintering as seeds, underground parts, winter annuals, woody stems)
3. Classification
  - a. Ascomycetes and Basidiomycetes
  - b. Convenient (and sometimes artificial) groups: gilled, toothed, boletes, polypores, cups, corals, etc.
4. Ecology
  - a. Decomposers and parasites
  - b. Mycorrhizae
  - c. Food for wildlife and humans
5. How to collect mushrooms
  - a. For food precautions, cooking, preserving
  - b. For study complete specimens, notes, preserving (drying)
  - c. The West Virginia. fungus collection, Davis & Elkins College Herbarium
6. How to learn more
  - a. Books
  - b. Mushroom: The Journal of Wild Mushrooming
  - c. NAMA, West Virginia Mushroom Club, and other organizations