

## “A Year for Mushrooms”

By RAY PETERSON, R.R. 2, Tofield, Alberta



A Mushroom of the *Psalliota* Family.  
A Common Mushroom

This year's record rainfall sponsored a great gathering of the clans in the mushroom fold. I have never seen such a wide selection of fungi before. My rather battered copy of "Mushrooms and Toadstools" — by Gussow and Odell, was unable to keep up to the task of identifying all of them. Books from Edmonton libraries failed to supply many of the answers, too.

Varieties recognized were: *Amanitopus vaginata*, *Armillaria mellea*, *Laccaria laccata*, *Clitocybe Infundibuliformis*, *Russula emetica*, *Russula densifolia*, *Russula foetens*, *Russula pectinata*, *Russula lutea*, *Russula Mariae*, *Russula alutacea*, *Collybia dopus nidulans*, *Tricholoma equestre*, *Mycena haematopus*, *Hygrophorus conicus*, *Lentinus cochleatus*, *Volvaria speciosa*, *Coprinus micaceus*, *Coprinus atrementarius*, *Coprinus comatus*, *Philiota squarrosa*, *Smearred Cortinarius*, *Violet Cortinarius*, *Hydnum repandum*, *Hydnum corraleoides*, *Morchella augusticeps*, Long-

stemmed Morel, *Stropharia semiglobata*, *Helvella lacunosa*, *Helvella crispa*, *Psalliota arvensis*, *Psalliota campestris*, *Clavaria stricta*, *Clavaria aurea*, *Clavaria fusiformis*, *Calvatia gigantea*, *Lycoperdon Wrightii*, *Lycoperdon gemmatum*, and *Tremella lutescens*.

In addition to these identified plants, there were many that were tentatively classified, such as *Clitocybe piceina*, *Coprinus sterquilinus*, and *Russula Delica*.

Quite a number of mushrooms were found that could be placed as to genus but not as to variety. An unknown *Lactarius*, for example, turned reddish purple when bruised, exuded a white, unchanging milk, and possessed a decided rose flavor.

A *Russula* that I have not been able to track down so far, was about the size of *Russula Mariae*. It appeared earlier, however, and its cap was white, sometimes with slight traces of green or pink in the centre. Also,

I can add, by virtue of trial, it is edible.

Last on my list are mushrooms that I have not been able to discover their name or genus. Here is a description of one of them that perhaps some fellow Blue Jayeer can identify for me.

Found on side of fallen, decayed log, August fourth. Cap . . . Up to three inches across, light rose in color, edge thin, broadly scalloped, slightly curled inwards, lighter in color, cap almost translucent, viscid when moist, covered with raised

network that is usually of the same color as cap, but is sometimes nearly white, outer skin is tough, rubbery, flesh thick at centre, gelatinous, fairly strong odor, taste mild. Gills . . . Light pink, one quarter of an inch wide, fairly crowded, thin and pointed at edges, rounded at back, partially attached to stem, some short ones starting from edge. Spore print is yellow. Stem . . . Three inches long, even, filled with fibrils, one half inch thick, same color at apex as gills, lower part usually white, strongly attached to wood, tends to curl when split.

## Bluebirds

Mrs. Keith Paton, Oxbow, Sask.

Ever since I was a child, Bluebirds have had a place in my heart; not because we have any special Bluebird friends but because we so rarely see their twinkling blue bodies flitting about. Only two or three at a time as they migrate. I always feel like putting out a sign. "Bird Houses Available".

However, the other day a strong south-east wind must have interfered too much with flying, for quite a large flock of Mountain Bluebirds descended on our alfalfa field, like bits falling from the sky. They fluttered up and down from the posts to alfalfa and back again all that day — and part of the next. Needless to say we were quite thrilled and hope they may someday nest with us.

## Pelicans at Minnedosa, Man.

Mrs. Elmer Johnson

One night, during the third week of September, my son saw a big flock of large white birds settle down in a slough about one half mile away. He followed along a ditch and got quite close to them. There were thirty. They stayed all night and all left in the morning except one. It may have been hurt. Later it left also. Our farm is seven miles south-west of Minnedosa.

## Sand-Coloured Blackbird

Lad. Martinovsky

Gerald, Sask.

On August 3rd, while tilling my summerfallow there were a hundred or more blackbirds in the field, feeding. Among these was one that was sand-coloured — definitely a Blackbird, or should I say a Sandbird. I had the opportunity of watching this bird for about two hours. At one time I got to within thirty feet of it.

This is the first year that I have seen an unusually large number of Ruddy Ducks. Perhaps it was because there was so much water in the sloughs this summer. I noticed that the male ducks left about the middle of August.

## Cobwebs

By Clarissa Stewart, Fairy Hill

In silvery skeins as sheer  
As e'er uncoiled from their cocoons  
By the fine fingers of the maids of  
Far Japan,  
They stretch across the hedges bare:  
Along the bars of barbed fence,  
By agile spinners spun;  
Catching the morning sun, they shine  
In floating lines along the wires  
Strung on the lofty poles that reach  
Far above grasses gray  
Where denizens such as these spin-  
ners  
Art wont to live. These shining lines  
Lymned 'gainst the blue October sky  
By the soft breeze unfelt below —  
A miracle of craftsmanship — appear.