

## **Eating Wild Mushrooms...A Pleasure That Is Not Without Risk**

Confirmed Mycophagists, those humans more commonly known as “mushroom eaters”, have certain guidelines that are necessary for surviving the joys of harvesting and consuming wild mushrooms. Many people either do not relish wild mushrooms or are too timid to trust their identification skills. There are hardy souls who prowl the springtime timber seeking their favored fungi.

### **“Ten Commandments” by R.V. Gessner, Department of Biological Sciences, Western Illinois University**

1. Never eat a mushroom unless it is positively identified as edible.
2. Eat only fresh mushrooms that are free from insect infestation.
3. Thoroughly cook all mushrooms unless they are specifically known to be edible raw. (SVIMS caution: ALWAYS cook all mushrooms)
4. Eat mushrooms only in moderate quantities.
5. When trying a mushroom for the first time, eat only a small portion, and don't try any other kinds for 48 hours.
6. Don't pick mushrooms from contaminated habitats.
7. Never assume that a wild mushroom you find overseas is the same edible species you know from North America.
8. Be conservative about feeding wild mushrooms to children, the elderly and the infirm.
9. When trying a mushroom for the first time, save a few intact, uncooked, specimens in the refrigerator for 48 hours.
10. Examine every specimen in every collection of mushrooms to avoid inadvertent mixing of different species.

### **“Additional Cautions”**

1. Do not eat any Amanita, Amanita look-alikes or any white mushrooms.
2. Avoid little brown mushrooms (LBM), large brown mushrooms with pinkish, brownish, purple-brown or black gills.
3. Avoid false morels.
4. Eat only firm, fresh young specimens.
5. Do not drink alcohol;, even in moderation, when eating wild mushrooms.
6. Refrigerate and use as quickly as possible.

**Happy ‘Shrooming!**