

South Vancouver Island Mycological Society (SVIMS)

Mushroom Consumption Guidelines

All members should be aware that:

1. There are risks to mushroom consumption.
2. Many edible mushrooms have a look alike that may be toxic and even deadly.
3. There is no substitute for a designated expert in the region of harvest. Edibility can vary by location. "Location, location, location", applies not only to real estate but the identification and edibility of mushrooms.
4. Improving your own identification skills is invaluable. Relying on photos only and no real life experience can result in errors, partly due to false colour reproductions and misinterpretation of critical identification features. The internet is loaded with misleading erroneous information and identifications, although, there are also some excellent sites. You can always ask your local experts for recommendations. Always check on the origin of your guide books as a publication from one region, country or continent does not apply to all. Learn how to use identification keys and enroll in identification courses. Forays offered by SVIMS are always a great learning opportunity. MatchMaker a software program by Ian Gibson, a member of SVIMS, is available for free download from our website, which also has the comprehensive identification keys of the Pacific Northwest Key Council.
5. You should learn how to post to your SVIMS Facebook page as well as sites such as iNaturalist and Mushroom Observer to get help from a network of skilled experts.
6. That you alone are responsible for any fungi consumed.
7. **If in doubt chuck it out. Never consume any specimen unless you are certain of its identification and edibility** and even then individual sensitivities and allergies may come into play. Numerous SVIMS members are willing to guide you.

8. It is important to learn how to field dress and care for your specimens and their storage and always rely on fresh specimens for consumption. Any mushroom eaten for the first time should be eaten sparingly; with a sample kept for reference should unexpected toxicities occur. Always eat in moderation. Recipes are so important for the enjoyment of your edible collections and sometimes these species specific. The same cooking techniques do not apply to all mushrooms

9. Almost all experts advise that you do NOT eat ANY mushroom RAW.

Please see the separate document from COMA (Connecticut Westchester Mycological Association) on our website.

“The Ten Commandments of Eating Wild Mushrooms”

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*Document amended January 11th, 2024