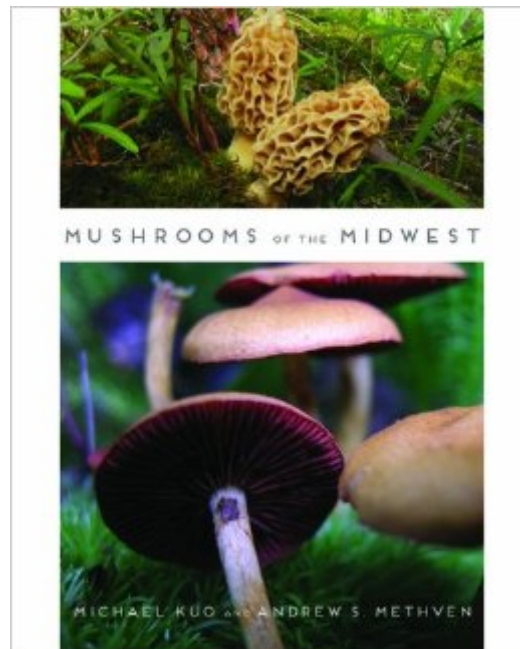


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Mushrooms Of The Midwest



Synopsis

Fusing general interest in mushrooming with serious scholarship, *Mushrooms of the Midwest* describes and illustrates over five hundred of the region's mushroom species. From the cold conifer bogs of northern Michigan to the steamy oak forests of Missouri, the book offers a broad cross-section of the fungi, edible and not, that can be found growing in the Midwest's diverse ecosystems. With hundreds of color illustrations, *Mushrooms of the Midwest* is ideal for amateur and expert mushroomers alike. Michael Kuo and Andrew Methven provide identification keys and thorough descriptions. The authors discuss the DNA revolution in mycology and its consequences for classification and identification, as well as the need for well-documented contemporary collections of mushrooms. Unlike most field guides, *Mushrooms of the Midwest* includes an extensive introduction to the use of a microscope in mushroom identification. In addition, Kuo and Methven give recommendations for scientific mushroom collecting, with special focus on ecological data and guidelines for preserving specimens. Lists of amateur mycological associations and herbaria of the Midwest are also included. A must-have for all mushroom enthusiasts!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is long over due for those of us in the Midwest needing a field guide describing the mushrooms we encounter. This book does an excellent job of listing the common mushrooms found throughout the Midwest, which will be great for those just starting out with identifying mushrooms. And it also describes many mushrooms that are less often encountered, which will allow seasoned mushroom enthusiasts to hone their identification skills. The keys in this book are well written, starting with a

key to the major groups of mushrooms which leads to the appropriate key to use in tracking down the mushroom in hand. Although the names of mushrooms are constantly changing, this volume reflects many of the recent name changes; such as the new names for several species that were in the *Coprinus* genus and several newly named *Morchella* (morel) mushrooms. If you like to hunt for morels, this book will help you figure out exactly which one you have. And the false morels (*Gyromitra*) are given extensive treatment, with seven species described. Many genera are well represented; for example, there are 23 *Amanita* species described, 17 *Cortinarius*, 32 *Lactarius* and 11 *Tricholoma*. The pictures in this book are large, full color and are arranged next to the description for easy reference. Aside from the detailed mushroom descriptions, images and keys, this field guide also includes sections on collecting, preserving and documenting mushrooms; using a microscope to study fungi and information on all the Midwestern mushroom societies. It even includes good hunting ground locations for eight Midwest states. An extensive glossary and index are a big plus. I think that any mushroom enthusiast in the Midwest will enjoy this book and find it useful in many ways. In fact, this book would be appropriate for anyone looking to identify mushrooms in all of eastern North America, as the majority of the mushrooms described can also be found throughout the East. I'm off to the woods.....

Michael Kuo, author of *Morels* and *100 Edible Mushrooms*, teamed up with Andy Methven again to produce an excellent identification book for over 500 of the Midwest's mushrooms. Their previous collaboration, *100 Cool Mushrooms*, covered many of their favorite fungi, some of which are seldom illustrated. Thanks to more recent publications and online resources, such as MycoPortal and Mushroom Observer, the knowledge of the Midwest's fungi is growing. A favorite resource for checking photos and descriptions is Michael Kuo's Mushroom Expert website. It is great to have a big chunk of that content concentrated into a very usable book for forays and workshops. This book weighs in at 2 pounds 11 ounces; this is 3 ounces less than *Mushrooms Demystified*. The 8 x 10 inch size, and just under an inch thick, makes this book manageable to carry in a backpack, or to pull out of the car at the end of a foray. The introduction covers the importance of amateur mycology, how to use the book, coverage area, and a list of Midwestern clubs. Chapter 2 describes collection methods, spore prints, making descriptions, odor and taste, chemical reactions, drying, and storing specimens. Chapter 3 covers use of the microscope, techniques and chemicals, spores, making sections, and working with dried specimens. Microscopes are more varied and affordable now and every club should have one. These two chapters are a welcome addition to a mushroom guide and together with the keys

make this book very suitable for classes. Chapter 4 has 58 pages of 18 keys, with two choices at each step (dichotomous), each choice leading to the next step in the key, the next key, or a species name with page number. The keys are easy to follow, use simple language, and each choice is concise, from a few words to two or three lines. The book covers 555 species with descriptions and photos, plus 76 other names mentioned in the text. Lichens and slime molds are absent. Many of the species included are found outside the Midwest. The focus of the book is eight states in the Upper Midwest (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI). The book has better than average coverage of some genera, notably *Amanita*, boletes, *Cortinarius*, *Gyromitra*, *Lactarius*, *Morchella*, *Russula*, and *Volvariella*. The species descriptions are arranged alphabetically by genus. The photos are on the same page as the descriptions, mostly two species per page. Descriptions cover ecology, distribution, and morphology. Chemical reactions and informative microscopic characters add usefulness to the process of identification. Comments may include well known common names. Edible and poisonous statements are only given for the obvious types. Readers will have to look elsewhere to find text or descriptions for a genus and some idea of how many species are in a group. The end of the book has a 4 page outline of classification and 3 pages of bibliography. The 13 page index with combined glossary is well done. It lists species under both the genus name and the species epithet. The glossary entries include technical to more general terms, for example hardwoods versus conifers. I found there are a few words we take for granted that could be added to any glossary for beginners, e.g., terrestrial, and spermatic (see Kuo's website for that one). I strongly recommend this book to those interested in the mushrooms found in the Upper Midwest. It is useful to anyone hunting mushrooms east of the Rocky Mountains.

Midwest mushroom hunters should be very grateful to Michael Kuo for writing such a useful and user-friendly volume covering 557 mushrooms commonly found in our area, including Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Unlike his previous book, 100 Edible Mushrooms, this book does not focus on only edible species, but rather is a guide for the mushroom enthusiast or amateur mushroom scientist who wishes to learn more about the identification, ecology and modern taxonomy of mushrooms. Kuo points out that mycology is a field where the amateur scientist/naturalist can make a real contribution. He gives a clear account of common ways of identifying mushrooms including structural features, simple chemical reagents, and evaluating spores under the microscope. The best feature of this book, however is the key to the mushrooms. It is by far the best, easiest to use, clearest, and most useful key I have encountered in mushroom books. After going through the key, the reader arrives at a page with photos of the mushroom as

well as text detailing the ecology, mycorrhizal associations, specific tests, size, edibility, and many other features of the species. The photos are excellent and the book is a high quality printing with very high quality paper and binding.

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