

A MUSHROOM BOOKLET

Wild Mushrooms. Linnea S. Gillman. 1979. Publication Number 1-22-5-79, U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, P.O. Box 25127, Lakewood, Colorado 80225. 29 pages (paper). No charge.

The U.S. Forest Service has published a neat little booklet on mushrooms of the Rocky Mountains and nearby grasslands. It is not a field guide; only a few species are described. It is rather an introduction to the fungi: a definition of what they are and the role they play in the ecosystem, a “how and where” to find them, and tips on collecting and identifying them.

Color photos illustrate the major habitats — spruce-fir forest, lodgepole forest, aspen forest, ponderosa forest, tundra, sagebrush, and grassland — and show one to three of the characteristic fungus species of each.

The author tells us that some of the common notions about the edibility of mushrooms are false, ideas such as all poisonous mushrooms will tarnish silver, and all mushrooms growing on wood are safe to eat. Seven rules for eating mushrooms are given; number one is to be very sure of your identification. Just in case not all seven rules are adhered to, the phone number of the Rocky Mountain Poison Center is given — twice.

At the price, this booklet is certainly a good brief introduction to mycology for the amateur.

Staff