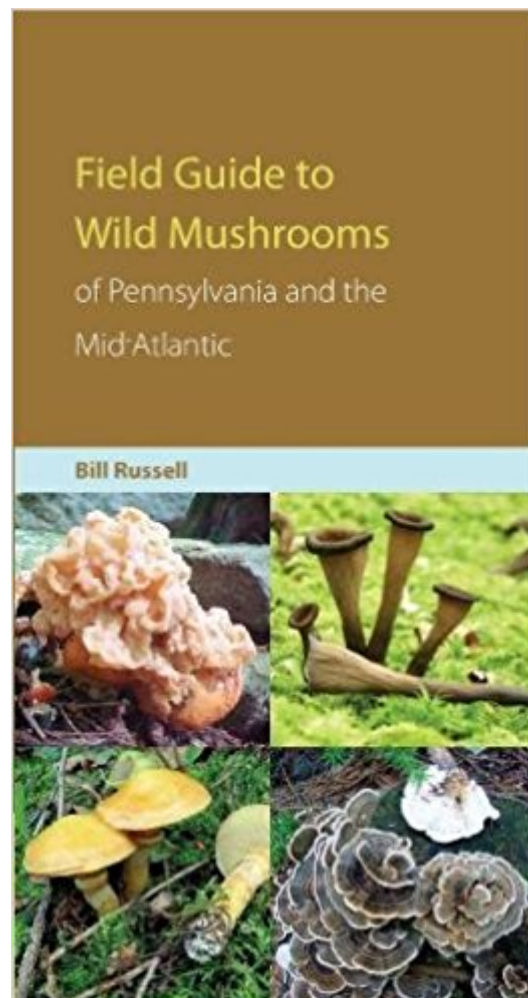




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Field Guide To Wild Mushrooms Of Pennsylvania And The Mid-Atlantic (Keystone Books)



Synopsis

To most Americans, mushrooms are the brown lumps in the soup one uses to make a tuna casserole, but to a select few, mushrooms are the abundant yet often well-hidden delicacies of the forests. In spite of their rather dismal reputation, most wild mushrooms are both edible and delicious, when prepared properly. From the morel to the chanterelle and the prolific and aptly named chicken of the woods, mushrooms can easily be harvested and enjoyed, if you know where to look and what to look for. Bill Russell's *Field Guide to the Wild Mushrooms of Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic* helps the reader learn just that—specifically for the often-neglected East Coast mushrooms of the United States and Canada. Suited to both the novice and the experienced mushroom hunter, this book helps the reader identify mushrooms with the use of illustrations, descriptions, and environmental observations. Russell's fifty years of experience in hunting, studying, and teaching about wild mushrooms have been carefully distilled into this easy-to-use and well-designed guide. The book is divided into the four seasons, each with its unique mushroom offerings. Each mushroom section includes a detailed description, information about the mushroom's biology, tips on where the mushroom is most likely to be found, and a short "nutshell" description for quick reference. The book also includes color photographs of each of the mushrooms described. *Russell's Field Guide to the Wild Mushrooms of Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic* shows the reader not only how to identify the most common mushrooms found in the region but also how to avoid common copycats—and what to do with the mushrooms once they're identified and harvested. With both color illustrations and insightful descriptions of one hundred of the area's most common mushrooms, *Field Guide* is an indispensable reference for the curious hiker, the amateur biologist, or the adventurous chef.

Book Information

Series: Keystone Books

Flexibound: 248 pages

Publisher: Penn State University Press; 1 edition (October 11, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0271028912

ISBN-13: 978-0271028910

Product Dimensions: 4.5 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 68 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #197,682 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in [Books > Travel > Specialty Travel > Travel with Pets](#) #63 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Plants > Mushrooms](#) #134 in [Books > Travel > United States > Northeast > Mid Atlantic](#)

Customer Reviews

“This small and convivial volume is packed with stories, lore, reminiscences, humor, and, best of all, practical advice. If you want to collect mushrooms for the table, or simply to learn about these fascinating life forms this book is indispensable.”
—Charles Fergus, author of *Wildlife of Pennsylvania* and *Common Edible and Poisonous Mushrooms of the Northeast*
“This excellent guide to mushrooms will be useful far beyond the region in the title. Overall, a delightful treatment.”
—D. L. Richter, *Choice*

Bill Russell has been giving mushroom workshops, walks, and talks since 1960. In 1992 he developed unique mushroom cultivation methods that resulted in his business, Mushroom Kingdom Laboratories, which specializes in the commercial propagation of wild mushrooms. Founder and past president of the Central Pennsylvania Mushroom Society, Russell is a longtime resident of State College, Pennsylvania.

Not only is the information on mushrooms invaluable, but Bill's stories are an absolute delight to read! The organization of the book into the seasons when mushrooms can be found is very helpful, particularly at the end of the mushroom season. If you are a regular hunter, you know that the signs of winter mean mushroom hunting, hiking, and loving the great outdoors are nearly over for a time. Quickly flipping to the winter mushrooms, there is hope in still venturing out to search for the few lesser known, but still wonderfully edible, mushrooms he writes about. As the description states, there are not a huge number of mushrooms discussed in this book, however; it is perfect for a beginner, or even intermediate mushroom hunter. Most people aren't going to need or want to learn about more mushroom than this book discusses. Even so, with mushrooms, it is always recommended to use several guides to assist in this sport that some consider dangerous. This is most often the book we choose to take out with us on our hunts as it is smaller in size than some books, it has thick sturdy glossy pages, the pictures are very good, and the descriptions are excellent. I have to admit that I have met Bill Russell and that my review could possibly be biased as a result. He is great person, and it would be really hard to separate him from his book. However; just

read his book and you will "know" him too! This is more than just a guide. If you live in the Pennsylvania area, and have the opportunity, I highly recommend going to his website to find out when he is speaking, or to go to his free wild mushroom identification sessions.

This a wonderful book, with a rich mixture of personal experience and scientific information. I love the unique layout by season. The seasonal layout is very accessible and provides a different context to organization and identification than other field guides I have used. I consider the content of this book a vital part of my fungi library, but I need to upgrade to hard copy. I wish I had purchased the hard copy of this book, because it is very difficult to navigate the kindle e-book edition. Like many e-books this edition lacks a hot linked, table of contents. you can not click on a chapter or season and go there directly. You have to go threw page by page to find the content you are looking for. You can create your own bookmarks for more efficient browsing, but a hot linked table of contents would be much more user friendly. I do not recommend buying the kindle version of this book, unless the publisher can come up with a more user friendly, easy to navigate, e-book edition. I highly recommend buying the print edition.

Returning from vacation to a front yard filled with at least a dozen different types of mushrooms rekindled my interest in these wonderful fungi. Bill Russell's book is an excellent read, with a casual style that imparts a lot of information. The book has a great introduction, basics of mycology and then is split into the characteristics of 100 commonly found mushrooms in this area of the country, separated by the time of year that they are found. I am looking forward to making spore prints and attempting to identify the variety of 'shrooms in our vicinity. I may even pluck up enough courage to eat some if I am sure I can identify them.

While the content is good, I hope the paper copy is better than the electronic Kindle version. It's extremely frustrating to have the photos in a different section of the book than the description of each mushroom. Had I known this I would have skipped this guide for another.

I am very much a beginner shroomer. I also am an avid reference and non-fiction book reader. And reader in general. While I cannot speak to the accuracy of the descriptions and photos of the mushrooms (it did come highly recommended from my mushroom club) I can speak to how well written it is. The author is even has a sense of humor in his descriptions. I like how it is organizes by seasons and how each mushroom has its points as well. The only reason I do not give it 5 stars is

that it is a pain to have to go back to to picture rather than having the picture right there with the description.

I got it as a gift for a friend who mushroom hunts and he said even though it's tall, he loves it because it fits in your back pocket and if there's no cell signal, well, gotta go old fashioned and it's always nice having a reference on hand while 'shroom pickin'

I wish the pictures were with the written descriptions. They are all at the end of the chapter. You have to flip back and forth. Not very functional. I really like how the book is segmented by the seasons.

As a beginning mushroom hunter, I was looking for a book that describes mushrooms I may find in my area. This book fits the bill. The author's advice is good concerning safety, from what I can tell. With this book, and various YouTube videos, and other web sites, I can be confident about at least a few species of mushroom. However, I will take the author's advice, and get at least one more field guide before I branch out beyond a very few, easily identifiable mushrooms. This book is not an end-all, be-all book on mushrooms; nor was it intended to be. But if you live in the mid-atlantic region, it is a valuable addition to your library. Added May 3, 2011: I ate my first wild-harvested mushrooms a few days ago. Those "inkies" were pretty good. A friend says that the morels are starting to come out. I can't wait! About my first harvest... I almost gave up. I was 3/4 home when I saw a patch of "inkies". What a rush! The book is very clear and helpful. Half the people I talk with about mushrooms think I'm nuts because of the dangers. Do your homework. Get this book (and others), and enjoy the bounty!

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