

## JOIN US! AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE PENNSYLVANIA BIOLOGICAL SURVEY'S (PABS) MYCOLOGICAL AND PROTISTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (MAP TC)

**The Pennsylvania Biological Survey (PABS)** is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization whose purpose is to increase knowledge of, and foster the perpetuation of, the natural [biological diversity](#) of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Among other [tasks](#), the Survey is responsible for determining the status (endangered, threatened, etc.) of wild species of animals, plants and other organisms in the state (click [HERE](#) to see how that's done). Its over 150 [members](#) (including more than 70 PhDs) are scientists from throughout Pennsylvania, representatives of state and federal agencies concerned with natural resource management, representatives of Pennsylvania's major natural history museums and scientific institutions, and other interested and knowledgeable individuals. PABS is governed by a [Steering Committee](#) that functions through technical and standing committees focusing on species groups or program areas. To learn more, click on the links at left.

The mission and vision of the **Mycological and Protists Technical Committee** is: *Conservation of Fungi and Protista, informed by scientific data to serve the public's interests.*



### MAP's OVERARCHING GOALS:

- 1) Promote research into the status and diversity of fungi and protists within the state.
- 2) Communicate the importance of fungi and protists, and promote their conservation.
- 3) Increase the scientific and conservation value of ongoing forays and citizen scientists.
- 4) Assist the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to develop a conservation and management plan for forest fungi.
- 5) Maintain the official state checklist of PA fungi.

The bearded tooth (also called the hedgehog fungus or satyr's beard) is a common edible and medicinal Basidiomycete in Pennsylvania. But MAP includes this species as a focal species of concern because this species is found on the following national lists of endangered fungi in Europe: Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Macedonia, Poland, Sweden (also protected by law), Switzerland, and The Netherlands.

The current MAP Technical Committee has fewer than 10 members. Since more than 7,000 species of fungi have been found in PA the MAP TC clearly needs all the help it can get.

## **Current (Year 2019) Chair of MAP: Jerry Hassinger, [jd.hass@yahoo.com](mailto:jd.hass@yahoo.com)**

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO JOIN MAP?** The short answer is (1) anyone with more than a passing interest in looking for, identifying, and monitoring fungi; (2) anyone that appreciates the multiple values of fungi and is capable of communicating this to students and the public; and (3) anyone interested or participating in fungi research and conservation. This includes scientists with a pertinent degree and it includes citizen scientists many of which belong to one of five mushroom clubs in Pennsylvania.

**WHAT IS EXPECTED OF MAP MEMBERS?** PABS is a volunteer organization. There are no dues or obligations. However it is hoped you'll volunteer your time to assist (as requested by the Chair) with mutually agreed upon MAP projects (one example, [a white paper](#), is included with this recruitment package); and individual initiatives are encouraged. MAP does not have regular meetings although an occasional meeting will not be ruled out. Instead most communication is via email.

### **TO GET STARTED:**

- Initially you'll be asked for some brief biographical information: Name, Address (home and email), Education, Current Position, Years of interest in Fungi and any relevant club affiliations. If you maintain more specific biographical information, you are welcome to submit that.
- Initially become familiar with the PABS web site; start by referring to the first paragraph of this invitation to join MAP. This will take some time. Arguably, the most important thing for a new member to do is familiarize him or herself with the PABS Status Determination Process. This process is at the heart of what PABS is all about. Essentially, through repeated surveys and the status determination process we help Pennsylvania's management agencies (DCNR, DEP, PGC and PFBC) focus on those species in need of the most help, e.g. endangered species or species in steep decline. The Status Determination Process is Chapter 2 in the PABS Procedural Manual. To access this Chapter, control/click on "Here" in the first paragraph of this invitation.
- I'd encourage all MAP members to read "*Fungal conservation in the USA*" by Jessica L. Allen and James C. Lendemer <http://www.int-res.com/articles/esr2015/28/n028p033.pdf>  
Dr. Lendemer is a member of the MAP TC.
- MAP functions at its best when the entire membership is focused on accomplishing a mutually agreed upon discrete project. Stay tuned.
- Mushroom Club Members that serve on MAP are liaisons. They can report on interesting (rare) finds (as John Plischke recently did) and they can help MAP increase the vigor and value of ongoing forays. At present there is no systematic way for foray results to be adequately used for conservation purposes. Thus one of our objectives or projects is to develop a standardized

protocol (a form) for citizen scientists to record the encounter of an unusual species or species of conservation concern. Location information is not enough. At present this “form” does not exist, but with the help of the Clubs, DCNR and MAP, a useful form can be developed and used. The end result would be to increase the research and conservation value of the multiple annual surveys and individual efforts ongoing in PA.

- The individual initiatives of MAP members are an important function of the TC. One good example of this is the fungi monitoring project on State Game Lands 295 that Barry Overton (past MAP Chair) has organized and supervised with the help of students and citizen scientists (often Club members). This has been ongoing for 13 years. Education is also important (anything to up the profile of fungi importance). For instances, Marion Kyde, a MAP member does fungi talks and I wrote an article on the value of fungi for wildlife that was published in the PA Game News. But the King of all, when it comes to surveying, photographing and identifying fungi in Pennsylvania, is John Plischke.

**The MAP TC hopes you'll accept this invitation and agree to join.**

**It's as easy as contacting: [jd.hass@yahoo.com](mailto:jd.hass@yahoo.com)**