

APRIL 2024

# Conservancy Talk

The Official Newsletter of the Northern Illinois  
Conservation Club

Welcome Spring!



Flowers are blooming and we are very excited Spring has arrived here at NICC. We have lots of exciting events ahead this Spring and Summer. You can find all of those in this newsletter, along with some updates!

Grounds & Highway  
Clean-up

If you'd like to assist with our Spring opening of the clubhouse, grounds clean-up or our yearly highway clean-up, join us on May 4th at 8:00am at Triangle Sports and Marine. We will start with the highway clean-up and then head back to the NICC grounds once completed.

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## Upcoming Events

As we are still in the planning phases for the below events, stay tuned for specific dates, times and locations!

July: Outdoor Education Day  
(Pheasants Forever)

August: Summer Fishing Derby

October: Fall Fest & Farmer's Market

Trap Shoots:

September 8th, October 20th &  
November 10th

If you'd like to be a vendor at our Fall Fest & Farmer's Market, please send us an email at [nicc60002@gmail.com](mailto:nicc60002@gmail.com) for more information!

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## Membership Update

The colors are beginning to pop and the air is beginning to warm; which means it's that time of year again and the membership renewals are around the corner next month. Make sure to keep your membership up-to-date so you don't miss out on the beautiful blossoming of Spring at the NICC Grounds and all the events slated for excitement this year! Renewing your membership can be done on the website, click [here](#).

More big news in membership: a new membership structure is to be voted on at next month's Board Meeting, to be implemented January 2025. All members are always welcome and encouraged to join these meetings. The new structure is included in this month's newsletter for your review - the most notable change is the addition of Membership Tiers that aims to accommodate households and nurture involvement within the club. We'd also like to ask that you take this survey on Member Involvement to help us tailor events to what our members would like to see from NICC. Survey can be found [here](#).

We thank you for your continued support and cannot wait to see you around the grounds and events this year!

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## Mushroom Foraging During Springtime


As the Spring dawns upon us, so do the mushrooms! Known as a season of new beginnings and growth it is that time of the year again when flowers, herbs, and mushrooms bloom and sprout. While there are a variety of mushrooms that pop up during the spring season, some of the most common edible mushrooms to look for are morels, oysters, and boletes.

Morels (*Morchella* spp.) are possibly one of the most revered and celebrated mushrooms of North America. Not only are they delicious, they are extremely hard to farm and therefore only found in the wild due to the complex and symbiotic relationship that they have with trees. Morels grow from as early as late April till about the middle of June and are usually found in temperate regions under hardwoods and conifer trees or nestled around garden edges, along wood chips or compost. Their sponge-like honeycomb appearance attracts all kinds of mushroom enthusiasts, foraging chefs, and nature lovers. Morels are so popular due to their meaty texture and earthy, toasted flavor. They have a distinct taste and are usually served either sautéed or deep fried and accompanied with chicken, fish, cheese, and a glass of wine.

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Morels are packed with nourishment as they grow in rich soils that are packed with vitamins and minerals. Generally, morels contain a significant amount of Copper, Vitamin D, Zinc, among other vitamins and minerals.

Unlike morels, oysters (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) are one of the most common cultivated mushrooms but like morels, they also grow naturally on and near trees in temperate and subtropical forests around the world especially during the spring season. Oyster mushrooms have a mild texture, they have broad fan-shaped caps with gills lining the underside and can be found in clusters of small mushrooms. Like other mushrooms, oyster mushrooms can be sautéed, stir-fried, braised, or grilled and are often found in a variety of cuisines especially in oriental recipes. When foraging for oyster mushrooms look for mushrooms that are bright and have a springy texture and avoid those that are wilted and have dark spots as this may be a clear indication that they have started to go bad. Oyster mushrooms grow in huge numbers if the conditions are favorable, and once you spot a cluster you will likely find several more in that same vicinity.



Last, but not least, the Spring King (*Boletus rex-veris*) is also an edible mushroom found in Western North America from May to June. Spring Kings also known as spring porcini tend to grow near fir or pine trees and in areas that have a moderate amount of moisture such as the Cascade Mountain Range or in the Sierra Nevada mountains. Morphologically,



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Spring Kings are robust and have thick fleshy caps with a sponge-like surface underneath instead of gills. The cap is typically pink and brown and begins to turn darker as the mushroom matures. The stems are thick and creamy in color. These mushrooms are a chef's favorite! They have a subtle taste, a meaty texture, great aroma, and excellent nutritional properties.

As with most mushrooms, there are a variety of oyster, morel, and poisonous bolete look-alikes these include the Jack o' Lantern, the Deadly False Morel, and the Satan's Bolete. Exercising caution when foraging is highly advised regardless of experience!



## Board Meetings & Members

May 13, 2024 at 7pm on Clubhouse Grounds

June 10, 2024 at 7pm at Clubhouse Grounds

July 8, 2024 at 7pm on Clubhouse Grounds

President Leonard Dane | Vice President Mark Fini | Treasurer Jordan Marcelain  
Secretary Ashley Grimon | Director Katy Morgan | Director Steve Morgan  
Director Mike Chivers | Director Jim Waldow | Director John Mathatas  
Director Jon Boettcher