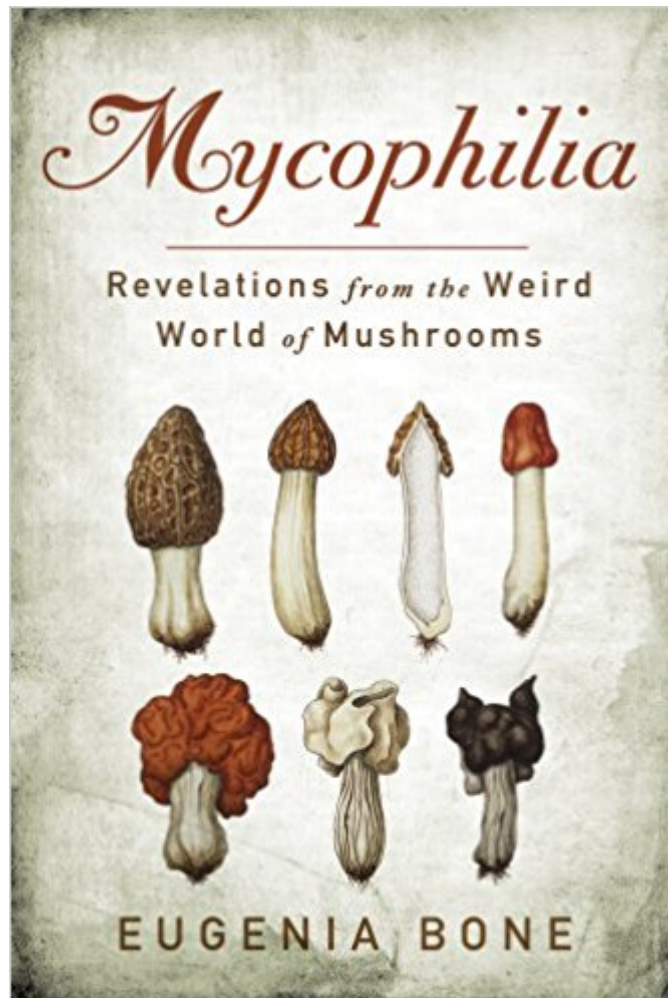




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Mycophilia: Revelations From The Weird World Of Mushrooms



Synopsis

In *Mycophilia*, accomplished food writer and cookbook author Eugenia Bone examines the role of fungi as exotic delicacy, curative, poison, and hallucinogen, and ultimately discovers that a greater understanding of fungi is key to facing challenges of the 21st century. Whether one's interest in mushrooms is culinary, scientific, recreational, or entrepreneurial, *Mycophilia* will open a reader's eyes to the vast and bizarre world of fungi and their role in the deeply complex yet profoundly graceful interplay of life on earth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In *Mycophilia: Revelations from the Weird World of Mushrooms* noted food writer Eugenia Bone takes us along on her personal voyage of discovery in the mushroom realm and it's (mostly underground) parent the fungal kingdom. An unusual book, *Mycophilia* is a journal peppered with scientific information, folklore, gardening tips and the occasional bad pun, providing us with a window into the world of mushrooms and the cast of characters who hunt, cook, document, experiment, dye (and much more) with them. As I read I could not help but wonder at how little attention we collectively pay to an organism (neither plant nor animal) which makes up 25% of the planet's biomass, is among the earliest life forms and which is intricately intertwined with so many aspects of our existence. As she was instructed prior to embarking on a mushroom hunt (foray), one only need to stop and look. It is a very well written and enjoyable read. Along the way I learned a great deal more than I had anticipated, not least of which is how little I have learned about this large and varied kingdom in 20+ years of science education. I was surprised to find that fewer than 5% of

the species have been identified, described scientifically, and yet how many uses have been discovered and described for mushrooms.

Mycophilia is a hard-to-categorize blend of popular science, memoir, and travelogue, but here's what I think it really is: the story of one woman's love affair with all things mushroomy. And while I was expecting something maybe a little more focused and less gregarious, I enjoyed plunging into the strange world of mushrooms and mushroomers. Just to be clear, *Mycophilia* is not a mushroom guide. It won't tell you how to avoid the poisonous ones or identify the edible ones. There are no recipes or color photos, and the grainy black and white photos that are there rarely add much. Instead, Eugenia Bone's growing interest in mycology and travels to different conferences, festivals, and farms form the basis of interesting, if eclectic, chapters that cover truffles, psychedelics, pro mushroom hunting, medicinal mushrooms, and even mushrooms as potential environmental heroes. The chapters stand well on their own and can be read out of order. (If anything, they can be just a little repetitive as several people are introduced more than once.) Read together, however, they drive in Bone's point that mushrooms are in, on, or affecting just about everything on this planet. Accessible but not dumbed down, *Mycophilia* is perfect for the factoid-loving layperson. Although I have several books on mushrooms, Bone has an eye for quirky and fascinating facts that few others mention: the fungal parasites that turn their caterpillar and ant hosts into zombies and eventually fruit through their bodies, the truth about truffle oil, the fungus growing within Chernobyl, the possible link between fossil fuels and mushrooms.

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