## The ABCs of mycology

bout 20 people discovered how to identify and correctly cook mushrooms in an initiation to the ABCs of mycology, held in October at the Marguerite-d'Youville Wildlife Refuge in Châteauguay. Agri Vallée was among the participants.

Having received some practical lessons from two mycologists based in the Montréalregion, the group left in search of mushrooms, of which there are hundreds of varieties. The shaggy mane mushroom, elm oyster mushroom, parasol mushroom and turkey tail polypore, ideal in herbal tea, were among the species spotted on the lands of the Refuge. In a small detour to an old swamp white oak, brought down by the winds of hurricane Irene in 2011, the group made a wonderful discovery. The maitake mushroom, a mushroom polypore that grows in clusters, was sprouting in abundance. "This edible mushroom is known to increase the number of white cells in the blood," noted mycologist Judith Noël Gagnon. Visitors to the Refuge also spotted artist's fungus along several metres of the trail, which is a very large mushroom with a hard crust. As its name suggests, this mushroom is sometimes used as a canvas by amateur and professional artists alike.

At the end of the excursion, the group returned to the starting point having picked several mushrooms to be carefully analyzed by the mycologist guides before sampling. But participants did not have to wait... they got to taste two enormous fried mushrooms, a matsutake and a maple-syrup milky cap, straight from the reserves of the two mycologists.

(MJB Trad. Denise Chilton)



Several species of mushrooms were spotted, including the elm oyster



(Photos Agri Vallée)

The group discovered a maitake mushroom on the stump of an old swamp white oak, brought down by the winds of hurricane Irene in 2011. According to mycologist Judith Noël Gagnon, this edible mushroom is known to increase the number of white cells in the blood.

## S12-L5

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