

SANCTUARY

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The
White Memorial
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Museum Hours:

Tuesday - Saturday 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

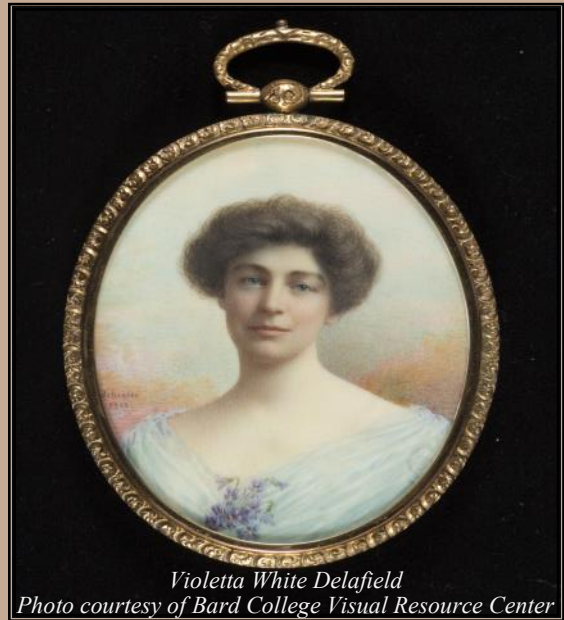
Sunday 12:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

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Violetta White Delafield

Photo courtesy of Bard College Visual Resource Center

Violetta White Delafield 1875 - 1949

Introduction by Gerri Griswold, White Memorial Conservation Center Director of Administration and Development

"Borders I have never seen one. But I have heard they exist in the minds of some people." ~ Thor Heyerdahl

The Victorian Era (1820 –1914) mirrored the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901). In Great Britain, the period was characterized by a class and gender-based society and enormous empirical growth.

In the United States, the Victorian era is more commonly known as The Gilded Age. It was the time of the American Barons; families with names like Vanderbilt, Carnegie, and Rockefeller. This affluent period refers mostly to the heavily populated Northeast as well as the deep South. Victorian styles and ideals were emulated. It was the period of the Second Industrial Revolution and Women's Suffrage Movement. There was a distinct gender divide in Victorian Society. Men and women were meant for different things. Men were strong and independent. Women were weak and dependent. Men belonged on stage. Women languished backstage behind the curtains.

There were women, however, who ripped those curtains to shreds, took center stage, played the lead, and made waves. In spite of their accomplishments, they were considered amateurs or hobbyists.

Katherine Routledge (English, 1866-1935), organized and conducted the first archaeological expedition (1913 – 1915) to Rapa Nui (Easter Island) with her tag-a-long Australian Adventurer husband, William Scoresby Routledge. Katherine Routledge's journal, *The Mystery of Easter Island: The Story of an Expedition*, is considered an important work to this day. Her findings were significant enough to Norwegian explorer / archaeologist, and *Kon Tiki* hero, Thor Heyerdahl (1914 - 2002), that he references her expedition in his book *Aku Aku* (1958). Heyerdahl led his own archaeological expedition to Rapa Nui in 1955 – 1956. We all know who Heyerdahl is...but what about Katherine Routledge? As a female "archaeologist" in the early 20th century, she was considered nothing

more than an amateur.

British Author and Illustrator Beatrix Potter (1866 - 1943) is best known for her children's books featuring animal characters like Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddle Duck, and Mr. Jeremy Fisher. But did you know that Potter made significant contributions to science? She was a naturalist and a conservationist. She was a mycologist! In these arenas, she was considered a hobbyist. Being a naturalist and conservationist were simply not gazed upon as womanly pursuits!

Lady Florence Dixie (1855-1905) was a Scottish writer and dogged feminist. She was the first female tourist to visit Chilean Patagonia. She wrote a book, *Across Patagonia* (1881), where she alone is the heroine, besting men, including her husband, in this wild part of the world. She is "heartly, active, and resilient"; certainly not adjectives applied to the weaker of the sexes. Lady Florence Dixie was a firecracker. She was active in European women's suffrage. She tirelessly fought for the emancipation of women proposing that men and women be equal in marriage and divorce. Her most astonishing accomplishment was spear-heading the establishment of women's association football. Imagine! What sort of radical woman was this Lady? One who has faded into obscurity.

White Memorial's very own Margaret Whitlock White (1866-1941) stands in the shadow of her dashing and brilliant brother, Alain Campbell White (1880-1951); Alain the author, botanist, chess master, conservationist, protector of wood ducks and mallard ducks. May White played a significant role in the creation of The White Memorial Foundation in 1913. Was May considered an "armchair conservationist?" I refer to her as, "The Iron Fist in the Velvet Glove."

Have you ever heard of Alain and May's sister Violetta? My long-winded introduction

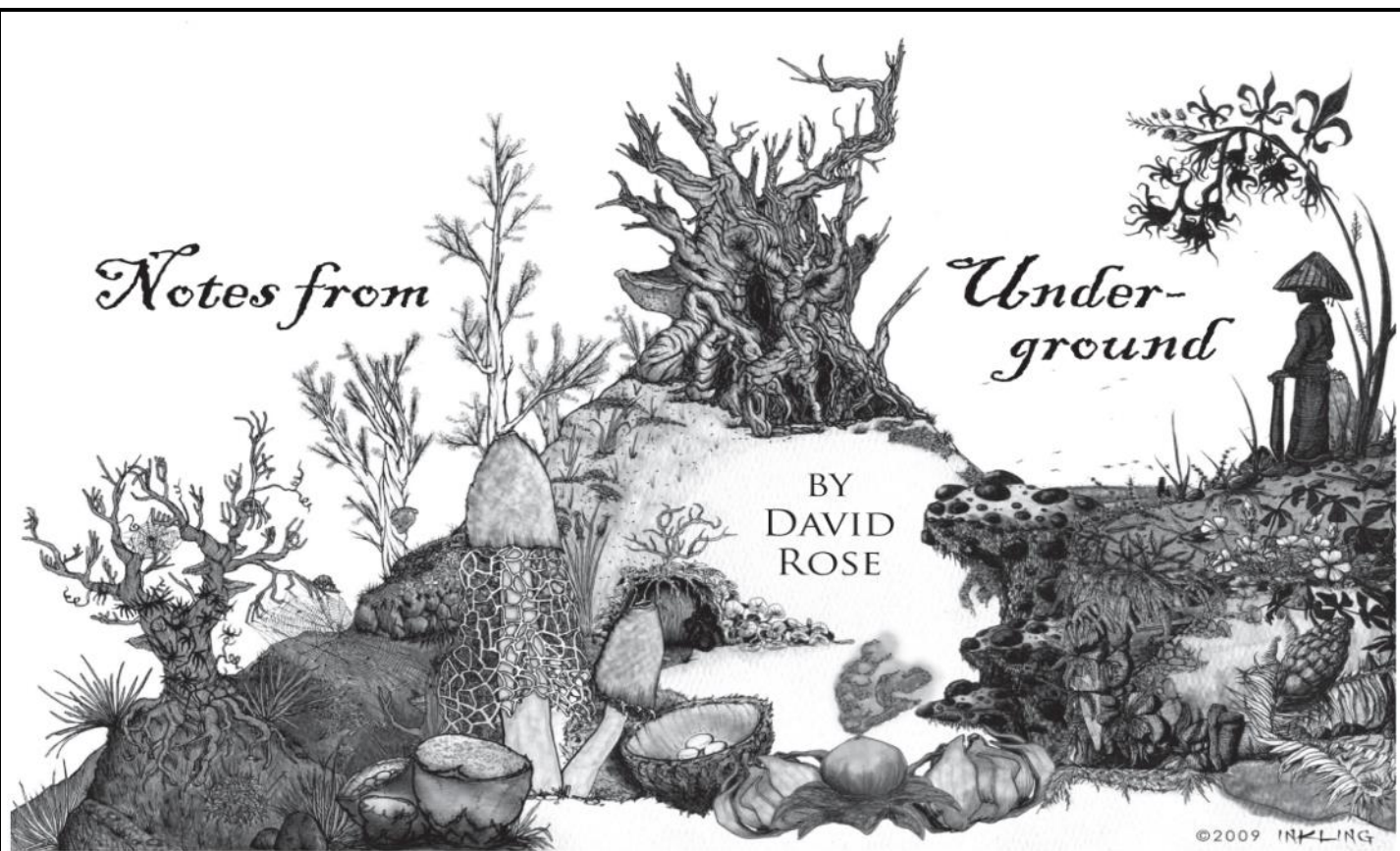
guides us to the breathtaking subject of this unprecedented 16-page issue of *Sanctuary*! Alain and May were not the only children in their family who were deeply rooted in nature and philanthropy. Violetta was one of the most important mycologists of her era! Several species of mushrooms have been named after her. She was an artist. Five hundred of her precious watercolors of mushrooms, many painted at Whitehall, reside in the archives at Bard College in the Hudson River Valley. Violetta's story is one filled with nature, science, creativity, generosity, love, and loss.

Not long ago, local historian, Lee Swift, presented me with a brilliant article about Violetta written by mycologist and archivist David Rose. It was published in *Fungi* magazine. I was smitten with Violetta's story! I contacted David and asked permission to reprint his article. He kindly obliged. I enlisted the help of Bard College's Amy Herman and Helene Teiger for assistance with the illustrations. David agreed to give a presentation in our A. B. Ceder Room on October 14 (see page 14 for details). A road trip to Violetta's home, Montgomery Place to see a selection of Violetta's paintings at Bard College is in the works as well.

How wonderfully enlightening to meet the sister of Alain and May through David Rose and to learn that Violetta's life work, like that of her brother and sister, along with her story, will not be forgotten.

Cheers and thanks to Katherine Routledge, Beatrix Potter, Lady Florence Dixie, Margaret Whitlock White, Violetta White Delafield, and countless other Victorian women, for blazing trails through art, science, literature, and athletics...in what was erroneously perceived as "a man's world."





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Our Lady of the Gasteromycetes: The Mushroom of VIOLETTA WHITE DELAFIELD

The dead, so people say, are forgotten, or they should rather say, that life has for the most part little significance to any of us.

— Virginia Woolf, *Moments of Being*

Violetta White Delafield (1875–1949) was an American botanist and one of the early female taxonomists in the field of mycology. She has been most well known for her horticultural pursuits at Montgomery Place, the ancestral estate of the Delafield and Livingston families of the Hudson River Valley. An independent scholar who developed a passionate interest in puffballs, earthstars, stalked puffballs, and bird's nest fungi, she became an authority on the Gasteromycetes. She was also broadly knowledgeable about agaric mushrooms through a systematic study of mycology and field work that was largely self-directed. As an artist, her stippled draw-

ings of Gasteromycetes are models of punctilious design, and her watercolor illustrations of agaric mushrooms reveal an appreciation of living form and color that come from plentiful field study.

In her rapport with the mycologists who became her informal mentors, she made contributions of specimens to the herbaria of the New York Botanical Garden and New York State Museum that retain significant scientific value to this day. Yet with all this, her work and reputation have suffered from long neglect to become suffused with enigma. Though her career was fractured by personal loss and bereavement, her devotion to mycology was as unques-

tionable as her accomplishments are enduring and worthy of close study.

It is not inappropriate to refer to Mrs. Delafield throughout as *Violetta* though that was not her given name. She was born in Florence, Italy on May 10, 1875 and christened Susan Elizabeth White. In other circumstances she might have been "Sue White," a bland name to be sure, but she was tended by a nursemaid in Florence





Violetta Susan White, c. 1895
Courtesy Bard College
Visual Resource Center

who admired her deep blue eyes and called her Violetta.

Perhaps Verdi's *La Traviata* lurks in the background to this re-naming; his famous opera of 1853 was originally to be titled *Violetta* for its main character. Susan White became Violetta from then on, accepted unanimously as such by the White family. In 1904, she changed her name legally to Violetta, in advance of her marriage to John Ross Delafield, to become Violetta White Delafield.

According to the patriarchal conventions of the age she would be styled "Mrs. John Ross Delafield," though privately she was called "Dolly" by her husband and "Letty" by her sisters. As "V. S. White," she authored three important studies of the fungi just after the turn of the century. Her full name was Violetta Susan Elizabeth White Delafield.

Violetta was born to wealth, the sort of wealth that was considered respectable poverty by the truly monumental old wealth of the New York aristocracy. Her grandfather, Eli White (1791–1873), made a fortune in hat manufacture in Danbury, Connecticut. Her family was a product of the Gilded Age, the last three decades of the 19th century characterized by Mark

Twain for its rampant corruption, accumulation of colossal wealth, and insatiable greed. The Whites, on an extended tour of Europe through the 1880s, saw the birth of Violetta in Florence and the birth of her brother Alain at Cannes et Clairan, France. When their ailing mother Louisa Lawrence Wetmore (1839–1890) died, the family returned to New York. Violetta then attended the Brearley School in Manhattan for two years from 1890 to 1892, but did not graduate. This was the full extent of her classroom education; otherwise she was tutored and self-educated. She returned to Paris to study piano, traveled through Italy, and then back to New York where she became fascinated with botany. It is likely that her close observation of nature began at the White family home in Litchfield, Connecticut. Her brother Alain was a chess composer and amateur botanist, co-author of *Succulents for the Amateur* (1946), who with their sister Margaret May Whitlock White, founded the White Memorial Foundation in Litchfield in 1913. Violetta was fluent in French, Italian, and German, though initially deficient in English. She was known to be timid and had very few friends. She was closest with the friends of her siblings.

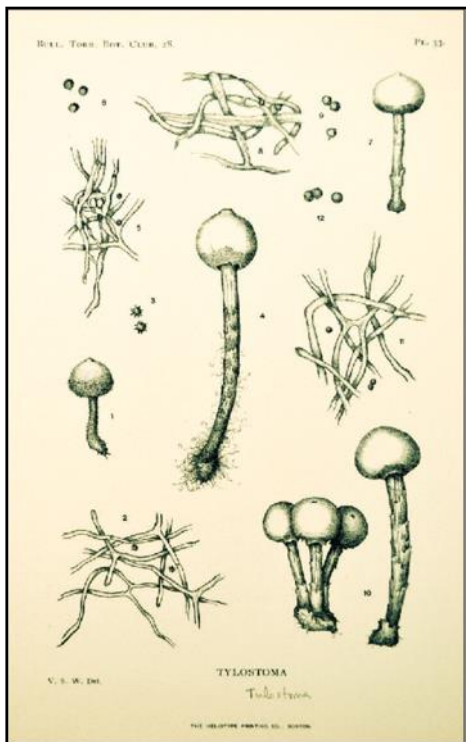
Violetta's self-study of botany was deliberately comprehensive, and she was meticulous with her own sketches and illustrations. What stimulus provoked her to notice the mushrooms is hard to know. By the aristocratic norms of New York high society, too much education of young women was suspect, and college education was not fashionable; by these standards her turn toward mycology might have been considered positively freakish and would certainly not make her marriageable. The relatives of novelist Edith Wharton (1862–1937), for example, believed Edith's brilliant writing to be a family disgrace. However, Violetta's notebooks reveal a systematic study of the fungi from the kingdom level through to family, genus, and species. Her sketches of fungal anatomy populated her study notes. Microscopy became prevalent in mycology in the last decades of the 19th century, and Violetta adopted this immediately. She used a compound microscope manufactured by Carl Reichert of Vienna for her studies of spores, spore ornamentation, and microscopic structures.

She advanced rapidly with an intensive study at the New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) beginning in 1900, focusing on the Gasteromycetes, fungi whose spores mature inside the fruiting

body protected by an outer layer (peridium). Her three key publications were *The Tylostomataceae of North America* (1901), *Nidulariales of North America* (1902), and *Some Mount Desert Fungi* (1902). All three monographs were published in the *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club* and as *Contributions to the New York Botanical Garden*. The Tylostomataceae include the stalked puffballs; the Nidulariales are known as the bird's nest fungi; and her survey of mushrooms on Mount Desert Island, a part of Acadia National Park in Maine, was a comprehensive list of her collections with interpolated descriptions of new species she discovered by Charles Peck. The first two monographs remained standards in the field for nearly half a century. The Mount Desert article was intended to serve as "preliminary supplement" to Edward Lothrop Rand's *Flora of Mount Desert Island, Maine* (1894) that had excluded the fungi.¹

Several prominent mycologists benefitted Violetta in her quest to know the Gasteromycetes. One of these was Charles Horton Peck (1833–1917), the first Botanist of New York State and a public authority on the fungi for nearly a half-century. His discoveries were widely known through the annual reports of the New York State Museum in Albany. In the absence of convenient mushroom guidebooks, hundreds of people requested these reports directly from Peck, and he attracted quite a following. Violetta corresponded with him in 1901/02, sending him many specimens, often accompanied by her watercolor illustrations. In return, he loaned her museum specimens and helped to guide her research of the Mount Desert fungi, naming *Cortinarius whiteae* in her honor. For this, she professed to be flattered. Their relationship was never close, but truly sincere, for he was always willing to help, and she was an ardent student. She wrote to Peck, "It is so hard to put into words what one feels, but I must say again how much I appreciate your kindness to me. The little work I can do in Botany and what it has brought into my life, means so much to me." Her passion for mycology seemed always tinged with regret: "The more I work on these plants, the more the fascination for [them] grows upon me; I only wish I could devote all my time to their study and collection."²





Tulostoma spp., stippled drawing
by V.S. White, 1901

As a resident of New York City, Violetta's deepest immersion into mycology came from visits to the New York Botanical Garden. In 1901, "Miss V. S. White" became a certified researcher "with privileges to the Collections and Laboratories" at an institution that was bursting at the seams with activity and discovery. Nathaniel Lord Britton (1859 – 1934) was founder and Director in Chief. A humorless and driven scientist with long-standing ties to Columbia University and the Torrey Botanical Society, Britton devoted the Garden to nothing less than the complete botanical reconnaissance of the Americas and the Caribbean. He drew support from the Gilded Age titans of industry: Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, and Cornelius Vanderbilt, all board members of the Garden. Fiercely independent, Britton formulated a system of nomenclature that rigidly insisted on the priority of names for plants and fungi.

Britton's *American Code of Botanical Nomenclature* competed with European systems and was rejected or ignored by many American mycologists, some of whom believed it nothing more than a self-serving ploy to upset taxonomic logic and nomenclatural reasonableness. As for Violetta, she was registered as an "Investigator in Taxonomy" and a life member of the NYBG from 1901.

At the Garden, Violetta's studies flourished under the tutelage of Lucien Marcus Underwood (1853–1907), who was Chairman of the Board of Scientific



Dictyophora duplicata, by V. W. Delafield, 1909
(Courtesy Bard College Visual Resource Center)

Directors, succeeding Britton as Professor of Botany at Columbia University. One of Britton's key lieutenants, Underwood was an expert of ferns and hepatics. His *Moulds, Mildews, and Mushrooms* (1899) helped to popularize mycology just at the moment that Violetta entered the field. As editor of the *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club* he was instrumental in publishing her scientific writing. He allowed her free access to his private collection of specimens and guided her through the herbarium collections of the NYBG, especially those of Job Bicknell Ellis and of Lewis David von Schweinitz at the Philadelphia Academy of Science. Their relationship was cordial and productive. In 1907, tragedy struck the Underwood family. Distraught after losing money in a business deal, Underwood attempted to murder his wife and ended up committing suicide at their home in Redding, Connecticut. Britton was aghast beyond measure at this loss, which not only deprived the Garden of a brilliant mind but interrupted the publication of a key project, the *North American Flora*. Though his role as her mentor had diminished by this time, Violetta experienced Underwood's sudden death as an irreparable tragedy.

However, she had found a long-lived friend in William Alphonso Murrill (1869–1957), who was staff mycologist at the NYBG from 1904 to 1924. Murrill had the reputation of a charming southern gentleman, a parlor room pianist who styled him-

self "the Naturalist." He identified hundreds of agarics, boletes, and polypores with names following Britton's American Code. Murrill identified the fungal pathogen responsible for chestnut blight, founded the journal *Mycologia*, and established the Yama Farms Mycological Club at a Catskill watering hole for the rich and famous. Murrill believed in science education for the masses, and he wrote many popular nature guides ("nature and character books") apart from his scientific publications. Violetta corresponded with him long before he joined the Garden, and though he guided her toward agaricology, he failed to deflect her interest from puffballs and their allies. For example, *Leptonia* and *Leptoniella* are typically not genera of mushrooms first studied by the beginner, but she identified and painted several exquisite watercolors of these diminutive pink-spored mushrooms, formerly of the genus *Entoloma*. In her honor, Murrill remembered her with *Leptoniella whiteae*, along with several others: *Scutigera whiteae*, *Pluteus whiteae*, and *Entoloma whiteae*.



Violetta also corresponded with Curtis Gates Lloyd (1859–1926) though they never met personally. Lloyd was a “professional amateur” with the mojo and reputation of a mycological maverick. Heir to the Lloyd pharmaceutical fortune of Cincinnati, Ohio, he was more knowledgeable about Gasteromycetes than most anyone in the field at the time. A cranky perfectionist without affiliation, Lloyd published the journal *Mycological Notes* where he felt comfortable to fling his opinions and barbs about freely.

With petulant arrogance he ridiculed the practice of adding an author’s name to a species name as a personal advertisement (though he created hundreds of new names himself), and he mercilessly heckled taxonomists as “name jugglers.” But he knew the fungi thoroughly, his discoveries were rampant thanks to *Mycological Notes*, and his scope of study was nearly global. Violetta shipped him puffball specimens for the Lloyd herbarium, and he acknowledged her contributions in his publications on the Gasteromycetes.

In her research of stalked puffballs, Violetta identified eleven new species of *Tulostoma*; three were named by Underwood. She wrote: “The members of this family are puffball-like plants, which form underground in the shape of rounded masses, appearing at first on the mycelium as minute thickenings, and gradually reaching their full development.” She included her own ink-stippled drawings of fruiting bodies, hyphae, and spores in the publication. Her monograph on the Nidulariales was the first covering North American species. She acknowledged the assistance of Peck, George Francis Atkinson, William Gilson Farlow and “most especially ... Prof. L. M. Underwood, under whose direction the work was undertaken.”³ Her stippled drawings of this group of tiny fungi were exquisite; her work was admired by all. Of the Mount Desert collection of mushrooms, made during a summer vacation in Maine, Peck praised Violetta for the discovery of *Cortinarius whiteae*: “It gives me great pleasure to dedicate it to its discoverer, a most enthusiastic mycologist from whose specimens, notes, and colored sketch of the fresh plant the description has been derived.” Not all was praise, however. On one occasion

she received a testy letter from Professor Theodore D. A. Cockerell of the University of Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station. Cockerell praised her “excellent and lucid account” of the Nidulariaceae, but begged leave to express his criticism, writing to her:

I deplore exceedingly that you do not give precise localities for your specimens cited. It would take up little more room and would be so much more satisfactory, especially to workers in local floras. I feel myself injured in a way by having my collections vaguely cited, as the reader may infer that I did not properly label them.⁴

Cockerell’s injury was not fatal, and if his carping discouraged her we do not know it. (Today we might be tempted to reply to him with two words of sarcasm: “Poor baby!”) Amidst all this Violetta revealed to Peck in March 1902 that she had commenced work on a revision of the genus *Geaster* under the tutelage of Lucien Underwood. As early as 1901, Underwood advised her “to get all our species separated as distinct things,” believing that the species determinations of foreign specialists were mostly unreliable. She got as far as a first draft of a long manuscript.⁵

Violetta’s successes in mycology coincided with years of profound personal loss. Early in 1901, just as she was involved with her treatise on *Tylostoma*, her brother Arthur Eli White died. She retreated from her studies in heartbreak but resumed during the summer. Her father’s illness and death followed late in 1903. Underwood offered comfort and encouragement, writing to her, “I trust your splendid vitality will continue and that this summer will give rest to your overworked nervous system.” This sentiment conforms to the male stereotype of the neurasthenic female, but Violetta’s emotional insecurity and pain were based in the actuality of family illness. After her brother’s death, she wrote strictly on mourning stationery—letters edged in black, as this one to Lloyd in 1903: “Dear Sir: It gives me great regret that I have



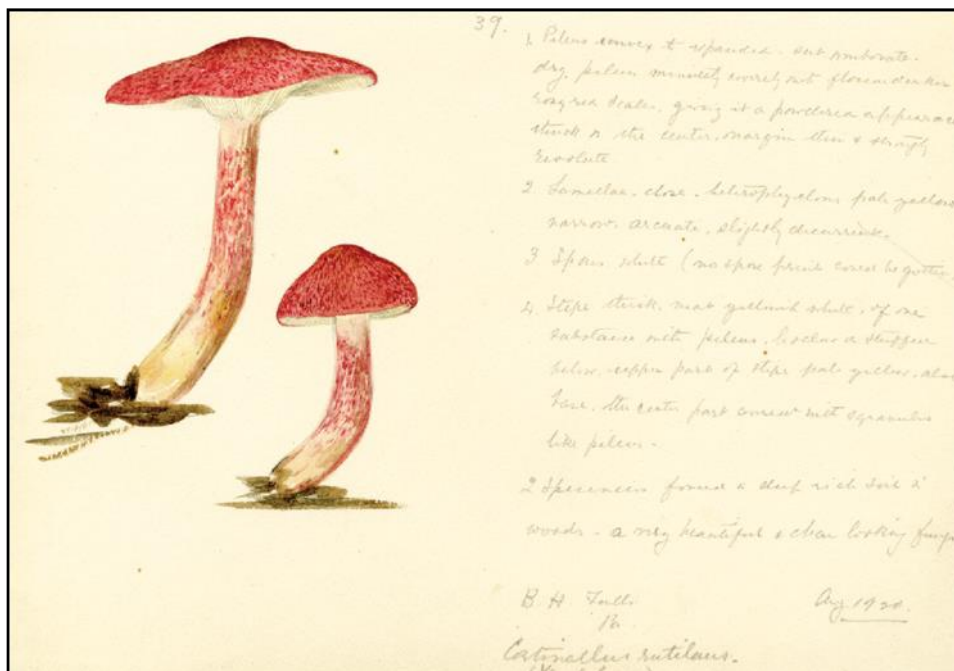
Chanterelles, by V. W. Delafield, 1919.
(Courtesy Bard College Visual Resource Center)

not had an opportunity to attend to the specimens you sent me, but owing to very serious illness in the family, it has been impossible for me to do so. However, now I hope to get at my microscope and will write you again shortly. My paper on the Tylostomataceae, being my first effort in this line of work is very faulty, and I hope that any work I might do now would be better deserving of consultation, still under present circumstances I have been obliged to finish all personal work of mine.” Her self-deprecating assessment of her own work intimates a sense of rejection by the male science establishment.⁶

On June 14, 1904, at age 29, Violetta married John Ross Delafield (1874–1964), whom she met through his sister Julia, a classmate at the Brearley School. Delafield was forthright, bold, ambitious, wealthy, and he loved outdoor life, natural history, and genealogy. A graduate of Princeton and Harvard, he became a formidable New York attorney who inherited the Montgomery Place estate in 1921. He was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army, an anti-communist, and a vocal advocate for military preparedness.



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Cortinellus (Tricholoma) rutilans, by V. W. Delafield 1920
(Courtesy Bard College Visual Resource Center)

In 1917, during World War I, he organized and trained a corps of 1,400 men for the defense of New York City. Violetta inevitably addressed her letters to him "General John Ross Delafield." At this juncture her life was entirely transformed. Her mycological work was cut short, and she herself recognized this as a permanent rupture in her scientific career. She became a wife, and then a mother, and her allegiance to her family was paramount. But there were difficulties to come: she experienced four pregnancies; three of her children predeceased her. In 1916, her infant daughter Sylvia died the day after birth. One bereavement followed another.

When the U.S. entered World War I in 1917, Violetta took Red Cross courses in first aid. Her study notes in this subject are as meticulous as her earlier study in mycology. Though pre-occupied with her family and Red Cross volunteerism, she made an attempt to come to terms with her unfinished manuscript on *Geaster*. In 1917, she wrote to Nathaniel Lord Britton requesting the return of her manuscript "read by dear Prof. Underwood at some botanical gathering, and I think it was returned to me, but I have never been able to find it since."⁷ Britton replied that he had no idea of its whereabouts. She asked him, however, to return her drawings because she valued them so highly. She

was not finished with mycology yet. In 1919, the Delafields changed the location of their summer vacation to Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania. Violetta began to collect mushrooms, to paint, and to correspond with William Murrill. She spent three productive summers at Buck Hill Falls, 1919 to 1921. She exchanged specimens with Murrill and directed collections to William Chambers Coker (1872–1953) of the University of North Carolina. Coker was embroiled in research for a large compendium of *Gasteromycetes* co-authored with John Nathaniel Couch that was published as *The Gasteromycetes of the Eastern United States and Canada* in 1928. Coker cited many collections from Buck Hill Falls, but one wonders whether he understood that "Mrs. Delafield" and "Miss White" were one and the same person as he cited both names for the same species in a couple of descriptions.

During these years Violetta's *Geaster* manuscript somehow turned up. In January 1920, sixteen years after retirement from her incomplete monograph, she wrote to Murrill for advice about preparing the manuscript for publication. His recommendations were onerous, on the level of advice to a doctoral candidate writing a thesis. He told her to ensure that all species names conformed to the rules of Britton's taxonomy;

to review the works of Lloyd and Saccardo and the *Mycologia* index; and to review the relevant NYBG herbarium specimens. Murrill admitted "this will take time." He also acknowledged her precarious health with some realistic encouragement: "If you are to do this and the large amount of work I have in mind for you, you want to get strong and well as soon as possible. If you begin right away, you can turn back the clock about 20 years before it is time to go to Buck Hill Falls for your summer's work I shall tell you about this when I see you again."⁸

However, Violetta did not follow through. She had been separated from the intensity of scholarship for sixteen years, and her manuscript "The Genus *Geaster* in North America" remains unpublished; today it is part of an unprocessed archival collection of her papers at the NYBG. Instead, she returned to the refuge of her private study of agarics through her watercolor paintings. In the years that the Delafield family summered in Buck Hill Falls, she produced hundreds of fine watercolors. Most of the originals are held in the archive of the Montgomery Place campus of Bard College; others in the herbaria in the Bronx and Albany.

Violetta's later portfolio of mushroom illustrations might be seen as her personal allegory of her interrupted career in mycology. This body of artwork is a survey of elegant and statuesque agaric mushrooms, a rendition of the picturesque from an aesthetic ideal that strives to remain true to a scientific purpose. She painted primarily the agarics: gilled mushrooms. She showed no evident interest in polypores other than a single painting of *Fistulina hepatica*. There are also some *Gasteromycetes*. Violetta not only painted what she saw, she wrote what she saw: a written catalogue of fungal anatomy parallels every painted image. After 1921, there were a mere handful of paintings through 1926. This falling off coincided with the death of her eight year old daughter Janet in 1922, whose ear infection caused a fatal systemic infection. This was the age before life-saving antibiotics. Like Beatrix Potter, another famous mushroom illustrator, none of Violetta's paintings were ever publicly exhibited during her lifetime.⁹

The story of Violetta's mushrooms does not end in 1926 with her last watercolor and subsequent turn toward horticulture. Her herbarium specimens continue to have fundamental value.



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Geastrum sp. (Courtesy B. Bunyard)

In the 1980s, Rodham Tulloss, authority on the genus *Amanita*, received collections of a large *Amanita* from Maine that fit no existing description. Rod traced and matched these collections to a mushroom that Violetta had collected in Bar Harbor, Maine in 1901, identified as *Amanitopsis vaginata*. Charles Peck described it from her watercolor as a varietal, naming it *Amanitopsis vaginata* var. *crassivolvata* in the paper that Violetta had written on the Mount Desert fungi. Rod recognized that this large mushroom differed significantly from any known species in the unconserved genus *Amanitopsis*, and he re-named it *Amanita violettae* in her honor, publishing the new name with his findings in *Mycotaxon*. There have been nine mushroom species named to honor Violetta, but four are no longer current, reduced to synonymy with other names. Most of these names use the species epithet *whiteae*; added to these, the name "*Amanita violettae* Tulloss" also remains current and valid.¹⁰

As a Livingston family descendent, John Ross Delafield inherited Montgomery Place in 1921, and the Delafields relocated there permanently in 1925. The famed architect Alexander Jackson Davis contributed his re-design of the mansion in 1844, and Andrew Jackson Downing helped to develop the landscape. Violetta became strongly involved in horticulture and garden design of the property for the balance of her life. The Delafields managed the estate together, and they appreciated its many associations with healthy

living, horses, and horticulture. Soon after their arrival Violetta conducted an inventory of its flora and fauna. She took the lead in developing its gardens, introducing a colonial herb garden, rock garden, alpine garden (the wild garden), and rose garden. Sundials were placed strategically as emblems of the passage of time. She became fond of letting the force of time change her gardens; she allowed them to evolve naturally through the seasons. She joined the Millbrook Garden Club in 1931 and began to design floral arrangements for exhibit.¹¹

Violetta's flower arrangements are suffused with a subdued Orientalism, and many won her public acclaim. A prominent member of the Millbrook Garden Club, she won first prize in the International Flower Show of 1934 and many winning entries thereafter. Her floral arrangements appeared in the World's Fair in 1940. In concert with this, she grew interested during the Great Depression in improving the appearance of farm stands as part of a broader movement to beautify roadsides. In 1935, she and a colleague designed a wooden fruit and vegetable stand with bay windows and shelves for farm products to be entered by the Millbrook Garden Club at an annual flower show at the Dutchess County Fair. The entry won first prize. The farm stand was then displayed at the 1936 New York Flower Show to win the bronze medal in the Garden Club of America section and then on to the New York exhibit of Rural

Arts during the 1937 Agricultural Exhibition in Washington. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt saw it and found it praiseworthy. Today, the Montgomery Place Orchards Farm Stand is a local legend, open for the sale of fresh vegetables and fruits during warm weather on Route 9G in Red Hook, NY. On occasion, one might find there fresh wild *Laetiporus sulphureus* for sale.

Violetta was guided by a philanthropic impulse her entire life with donations of fungi to herbaria, of rare books to botanical libraries, and, during World War II, of thousands of books to American servicemen overseas. In 1943, she became a member of the Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy and chair of its Book Committee. During 1944/46 she mailed out over 3,000 books per month to military personnel overseas, many of which she bought and contributed herself. The war years were overloaded with disasters for humanity, and so too for Violetta. Her sister Lucy died in 1943 in Great Britain, and her second son Richard died of pneumonia in the Pacific Theater in 1945. After the war she wrote a final horticultural article, "Plants that survived the war years" in 1946. A long-time smoker, she succumbed to emphysema in 1949 after a long illness.¹²

Mere weeks after Violetta's death, her husband wrote to NYBG Director William J. Robbins for a list of her accomplishments, professing interest in writing her biography. Robbins replied that her activities were "especially noteworthy because they demonstrate how an amateur with the interest and ability can pursue research in science and make substantial contributions." He claimed her two Gasteromycete monographs "were the first general treatments of these groups for America and are still standard works."¹³ Yet this summing up was damning her with faint praise, consigning her to second-class status as an amateur. Delafield accepted this assessment, the biography was never written, and her life receded into the past. But like Edith Wharton, Violetta's life "was a revolution against the idea that a lady should be in everything a mere amateur."¹⁴ The sinologist Simon Leys has written, "The superiority of the amateur over the professional is an important and provocative notion—all the more provocative because it is not commonly held in Western culture."¹⁵



Men of science, respected as specialists for their specialized “professional” knowledge, have tended to de-value female workers as “amateurs” when what this subject demands is a revolution in thinking: amateurs are often universalists, and women are the true universalists. Here is our case in point: Violetta White Delafield, who was during the course of her lifetime a mycologist, botanist, artist, horticulturalist, gardener, pianist, botanical historian, floral arranger, landscape designer, domestic manager, mother, wife, grandmother, and friend. She was wealthy, but she lived a life of sacrifice, nurturing her family through all the pains of living and dying, yet cultivating her intellectual and artistic talents all the while. Knowing this, we might grow closer to overthrowing the comfortable prejudice that implicitly devalues amateurs in science.

Violetta White Delafield’s intellectual and artistic endeavors after her early association with the NYBG are marked by nostalgia for the mycological. The Russian film-maker Andrei Tarkovsky once reflected, “Nostalgia is not the same as a longing for the past. Nostalgia is a longing for the space of time that has passed in vain.” It would be presumptuous to impose on Violetta a wish to reverse time as the single interpretation available for her truncated mycological career, for nostalgia can also be a stimulus to the imagination. Tarkovsky insisted that, “The preparatory discipline that art demands is not a scientific education but a particular spiritual lesson. Art is born and takes hold wherever there is a timeless and insatiable longing for the spiritual, for the ideal: that longing which draws people to art.”¹⁶ In all her precision of method and intellectual rigor in her study of mushrooms, Violetta was driven by an unspoken spiritual quest in her fascination to know the fungi and advance the science of mycology. She will remain Our Lady of the Gasteromycetes.

Acknowledgements

I extend my sincere gratitude to Barbara Thiers, Director of the Herbarium of The New York Botanical Garden, and Laura Kuhn, Executive Director of The John Cage Trust at Bard College, for their helpful advice and for providing occasions for public presentations on Violetta White Delafield. Many thanks also to several archivists, historians, and mycologists for essential information and assistance: Laura Briscoe, Roy Halling, Vanessa Sellers, and Steven Sinon (NYBG); Lauren Bailey, Amy Herman, Emy Martin, and Helene Tieger (Bard College); Daniel

Linke (Princeton University Library); Lorinda Leonardi (NY State Museum); Arete Warren (Garden Club of America). Special thanks to Rod Tulloss for a scintillating discussion about *Amanita violettae* and much more.

Endnotes

- 1 White, V. S. “The Tylostomataceae of North America” (1901) *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club*, 28:421-44; “Nidulariales of North America” (1902) *BTBC*, 29:251-80; “Some Mount Desert Fungi” (1902) *BTBC*, 29:550-63.
- 2 V. S. White to Charles Peck, March 16, 1902; Charles Horton Peck Papers, NY State Museum; Albany, NY. Note: four additional archival collections were consulted for this research: 1) Bard College Archives and Special Collections; 2) Garden Club of America Archive; 3) Violetta White Delafield Papers, LuEsther T. Mertz Library, NY Botanical Garden; 4) Delafield Family Papers, Princeton University Library.
- 3 White, V. S. op. cit.; *Tylostomataceae*, p. 421; *Nidulariales*, p. 251.
- 4 Theodore D. A. Cockerell to V. S. White, June 18, 1902; Violetta White Delafield Papers, NYBG.
- 5 Lucien Marcus Underwood to V. S. White, November 21, 1901; Delafield Family Papers, Princeton University Library.
- 6 V. S. White to Curtis Gates Lloyd, November 24, 1903; Lloyd Library and Museum.
- 7 Violetta White Delafield to Nathaniel Lord Britton, June 16, 1917; Violetta White Delafield Papers, NYBG.
- 8 William Alphonso Murrill to Violetta White Delafield, January 28, 1920; Delafield Family Papers, Princeton University Library.
- 9 Violetta White Delafield artwork; Bard College Archives and Special Collections.
- 10 Rod Tulloss, personal communication; October 9, 2019; *Mycotaxon*, 1994, 52:380, figs. 46-47.
- 11 Lauren Bailey, personal communication; Montgomery Place campus; October 18, 2019.
- 12 Garden Club of America Archive.
- 13 William Jacob Robbins to John Ross Delafield, August 1, 1949; Bard College Archive and Special Collections.
- 14 Wharton, Edith A *Backward Glance* (1964; orig. 1933) Scribners; introduction by Louis Auchincloss, p. viii.
- 15 Leys, Simon *The Hall of Uselessness: Collected Essays* (2011) New York Review Books, p. 104.
- 16 Tarkovsky, Andrei *Sculpting in Time* (1986) University of Texas Press, p. 38



MUSHROOMS



OVERNIGHT, VERY
WHITELY, DISCREETLY,
VERY QUIETLY

OUR TOES, OUR NOSES
TAKE HOLD ON THE LOAM,
ACQUIRE THE AIR.

NOBODY SEES US,
STOPS US, BETRAYS US;
THE SMALL GRAINS MAKE ROOM.

SOFT FISTS INSIST ON
HEAVING THE NEEDLES,
THE LEAFY BEDDING,

EVEN THE PAVING.
OUR HAMMERS, OUR RAMS,
EARLESS AND EYELESS,

PERFECTLY VOICELESS,
WIDEN THE CRANNIES,
SHOULDER THROUGH HOLES. WE

DIET ON WATER,
ON CRUMBS OF SHADOW,
BLAND-MANNERED, ASKING

LITTLE OR NOTHING.
SO MANY OF US!
SO MANY OF US!

WE ARE SHELVES, WE ARE
TABLES, WE ARE MEEK,
WE ARE EDIBLE,

NUDGERS AND SHOVERS
IN SPITE OF OURSELVES.
OUR KIND MULTIPLIES:

WE SHALL BY MORNING
INHERIT THE EARTH.
OUR FOOT'S IN THE DOOR.

~ SYLVIA PLATH

THE WHITE MEMORIAL CONSERVATION CENTER
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MUSIC BY: THE BOG HOLLOW BOYS

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Executive Director Reunion!

White Memorial Foundation Executive Director Lukas Hyder (center) is flanked by his predecessors Keith Cudworth (left) and Gene Marra (right) at lunch on August 15, 2023. Marra served as Executive Director from 1978 - 1998. Cudworth joined White Memorial as Superintendent in 1985 and became Executive Director in 1998. He retired in 2019. Hyder arrived in 2000 as Assistant Superintendent / Forester. He assumed the role of Executive Director of The White Memorial Foundation in 2020.



For anyone who lives in the oak-and-maple area of New England, there is a perennial temptation to plunge into a purple sea of adjectives about October.

~ Hal Borland

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VACATION PROGRAMS (SEE PAGE 15)



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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10
(VETERAN'S DAY)

ONE-DAY FUN DAY!
GRADES 1-3: THURSDAY, DEC. 28
GRADES 4-6: FRIDAY, DEC. 29

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS (SEE PAGE 15)

NATURE'S NURSERY
FIRST THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH

BABIES IN BACKPACKS
THIRD THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH

AFTER-SCHOOL ADVENTURES (SEE PAGE 14)

SCOUT PROGRAMS



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Smoke on the Water – How Does Wildfire Smoke Effect Lake Ecology?

By John McEachern, Seasonal Research Technician, White Memorial Conservation Center

In June 2023, a series of wildfires burning in Nova Scotia and Quebec produced large plumes of smoke that drifted across the eastern United States as far south as Georgia. Wildfire smoke can have serious impacts on human health, especially for children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing respiratory conditions. Research conducted within the last few decades has also demonstrated that it can have a significant impact on freshwater ecosystems, including lakes.

One of the best understood effects of wildfire smoke on lake ecology is also the most noticeable for those of us standing on shore – a decrease in temperature and light availability. Many readers will remember the cooler temperatures, overcast conditions, and the sun's strange, orange tint during the days when smoke from the Canadian fires was most intense. The presence of smoke in the air, as well as the deposition of smoke particles on the surface of a lake, prevents sunlight from penetrating as deep into the water column as it otherwise might. This restricts light availability for photosynthetic organisms like aquatic plants and algae and reduces water temperatures.

Smoke from wildfires can also impact the water chemistry of a lake. As smoke particles settle and dissolve in the water, lakes with low-buffering capacities may grow more acidic due to an influx of carbon and nitrogen compounds. Smoke may also deposit certain nutrients important for plant growth, including organic nitrogen, potassium, and calcium, as well as trace metals, into lake waters.

Scientists are only just starting to understand how smoke-induced changes in light availability, temperature, and water chemistry affect the dynamic communities of plants and animals that exist in freshwater lakes. One recent study looking at the impact of wildfire smoke on the overall ecology of Castle Lake in California found that algal productivity in deeper waters declined significantly on smoky days, due to a reduction in the depth of light penetration. One might think that the same thing would be happening closer to the surface, but investigators found that productivity had actually increased in shallower waters by as much as 109%! The authors of the study theorize that this discrepancy was caused by a reduction in the amount of UV-B radiation penetrating the water column due to the presence of smoke. UV-B radiation is a photoinhibitor, meaning that its intensity can damage the cellular machinery needed for photosynthesis, thus reducing its efficiency. Under normal conditions, much more UV-B radiation is able to penetrate into shallow waters, and so a reduction in UV radiation due to smoke cover has a much greater positive impact on algal growth here than in deeper waters, where UV isn't much of a

problem. Other possible explanations include deposition of trace metals at the surface (which algae need to grow) or changes in the shallow water algal community to favor species that are both more productive and more sensitive to UV radiation.

Changes in temperature and light availability due to smoke can also impact zooplankton – the tiny, free-floating animals that live in the water column. Zooplankton migrate up and down through the water column daily, coming closer to the surface under low light conditions in which they are less likely to be spotted by their fish predators or damaged by UV radiation. In one study from Lake Tahoe, scientists found that zooplankton

populations responded to reduced levels of UV radiation due to wildfire smoke by moving closer to the surface than they had on a previous, clear day. Interestingly, the investigators working at Castle Lake did not observe this happening, though they did discover modest population increases in certain zooplankton species during days with lots of smoke. The Castle Lake scientists also failed to catch any trout in nearshore waters until after the smoke had cleared, indicating that they had moved farther offshore. The trout may have done this in order to take advantage of a temporary increase in zooplankton attracted to algal blooms in the upper part of the water column.

As is often the case in ecology, the impacts of wildfire smoke on lake ecosystems seem to vary depending on the situation. Factors including baseline water chemistry and how far away the fire causing the smoke is from the lake and its watershed have an effect. If the fire is burning in the lake's watershed, its exposure to excess sediments, nutrients, and toxins will be more intense because of runoff carrying debris directly into the lake, in addition to smoke deposition. Smoke from a distant fire, on the other hand, will have a less severe, more temporary impact on a lake's ecology.

Researchers working for the White Memorial Conservation Center and the Bantam

Lake Protective Association regularly collect data on the physical, chemical, and biological attributes of Bantam Lake in Litchfield County. This includes before, during, and after the Canadian fires, providing an interesting opportunity to potentially add to our understanding of the impact of wildfire smoke on lakes. This kind of research, and the information it provides, will be increasingly important for managing freshwater resources as human-caused climate change continues to drive the formation of frequent and intense wildfires.



The sun blocked by smoke on June 6, 2023, in Litchfield, CT



View of Lake Bantam in Litchfield County, CT during the June 2023 wildfires

Make a Difference

In her continuing series, Zoë Greenwood helps you find small ways to help the environment.

My Aunt Bev Fay made the best Bread and Butter Pickles! Hands down. When I was a little girl, I once ate an entire jar in one sitting. By myself. No lie. They were that good! I have her recipe, which reads like a mystery novel, "take a large pot and a good number of cucumbers and a large bowl." Makes me wonder how she turned out the amazing food that she did. But, I digress.

Pickles are made with vinegar, among other things. But, after some research, I discovered that vinegar can do a whole lot more! For example, cider vinegar in a bowl with a squirt of dish detergent can help cut down on the number of fruit flies in your kitchen. Vinegar and baking soda can act as the leavening agent in baked goods. Vinegar and baking soda can help clear a clogged drain if you follow with very hot water. Vinegar can also kill weeds in your walkway or driveway; don't use in the garden, however, because it will kill other plants as well.

Vinegar comes in several forms: cider; wine; white; balsamic; champagne; malt; industrial or horticultural, to name a few. Wow! Each type has its own flavor and use. For most of this article, I will be talking about using standard white vinegar. It is very versatile. Many people use it when they are making hard boiled eggs or mashed potatoes. I use cider vinegar when I make potato salad. I just pour a bit on after I've drained the potatoes. It gives a nice little zip to the recipe.

You can make a simple cleaning solution by adding equal parts white vinegar and water. Add a few drops of your favorite essential oil to cut the odor of the vinegar, if you find it offensive. Put the solution in a spray bottle and clean away.

Equal parts of water and white vinegar can be used to clean office equipment like printers and computers. Dampen a cleaning cloth and wipe down the surfaces. Use a cotton swab in and around keyboard keys and phone buttons. Remove the mouse ball and clean it with the solution as well.

You can erase stray ballpoint pen marks with full strength white vinegar. Dampen a cleaning cloth and go to it. When scissors get grimy, clean the blades with full strength vinegar. This works for can openers, too.

Use white vinegar and water to clean blinds and windows. Piano keys, as well. Equal parts of white vinegar and olive oil help remove water rings on furniture. Wipe with the wood grain. Vinegar and water work to revive rugs. Brush with a clean broom or scrub brush. No need for rinsing, even! Light carpet stains may be dissolved with 2 tablespoons of salt and ½ cup of vinegar. Let the mixture dry, then vacuum as usual. You can also clean stainless steel and chrome with vinegar. Apply a light mist and buff with a soft cloth to restore luster. Vinegar added to dish liquid will increase the detergent's grease

fighting abilities.

Disinfect cutting boards or wooden counter tops with a spray of vinegar. You can also clean an electric coffee maker by running a cycle using two cups of vinegar and one cup of water. Instead of pricy dishwasher additives, use ¼ cup of vinegar instead. It will cut down on water spots.



You can even use vinegar to clean windshield wiper blades. Just dampen a rag with full strength vinegar and wipe down the wiper blades. Before cold weather, spray car windows with 3 parts vinegar to 1 part water. Each coating may last a few weeks. This helps to keep frost from forming on the glass.

Wash away mineral deposits from showerheads by placing a small plastic bag filled with vinegar and tape or rubberband it around the showerhead. Let sit for at least one hour, then remove the bag. Vinegar helps control mold and mildew when combined with 1 tsp borax, 3 tablespoons vinegar and two cups of hot water. Using a soft brush, clean the af-

fected areas. Pour one cup of vinegar into the washer with your clothes to help freshen and soften them. Run the washer with two cups of vinegar to clean and disinfect. Maintain your iron with vinegar by filling it with undiluted vinegar and let steam for five or ten minutes. Sometimes, you can re-stretch shrunken woollens by boiling them in a solution of one part vinegar to two parts water for twenty five minutes. Remove, stretch and let air dry. What do you have to lose? You can't wear the sweater anyway.

Vinegar also helps remove blood, cola and wine stains on washable cotton fabrics. Sponge the stain with undiluted vinegar and launder immediately. Scrub sweat stains with two parts vinegar and three parts baking soda made into a paste. This works to remove light mildew from fabrics as well. Disinfect the toilet. Clean the toothbrush holder. Clean mildew from the shower curtain. Brighten your laundry. Whiten your dingy crew socks. Spray away wrinkles by misting with vinegar and water.

Use vinegar to treat rust and other plant diseases such as black spot and powdery mildew. Spray on affected plants in the morning or early evening, when there is no direct light on the plant until the condition is cured.

Vinegar can also help keep away unwanted animals from your garden. Soak rags in straight vinegar and place around the garden. Might work. Can't hurt. Ants apparently hate the smell of vinegar. Pour equal parts of vinegar and water into a spray bottle and spray on anthills. If you have lots and lots of ant hills, pour full strength vinegar over them and they will pack up and leave. Use cider vinegar to remove bird droppings from outdoor furniture and patio areas. Vinegar helps remove the smell from skunks, equal parts vinegar and water.

Pour vinegar into a shallow tray and add rusted nuts and bolts or even old tools. Soak for several days. Use vinegar to remove rusted hinges and screws. Soak air conditioner or humidifier filters in equal parts vinegar and warm water to remove potentially harmful bacteria and other nasties. Squeeze dry before putting it back into the machine. Revive old paintbrushes in full strength vinegar until the paint dissolves, then wash in hot, soapy water. Beyond hope? Try boiling it in a cup or so of vinegar for ten minutes before washing in hot soapy water.

Use vinegar to unstick stickers, decals, price tags and the like by saturating the sticker corners and sides and then scraping it off with an old credit card. Add a couple of tablespoons of vinegar to the water when you are arranging flowers. The flowers will last longer, especially if you change the water every few days.

So, there you have it. Vinegar. Who knew? Useful for lots more than pickles and a very easy way to

Make a Difference.

Fall 2023 Calendar of Events

For more information on any of our programs, please call us at 860-567-0857 or register online: www.whitememorialcc.org

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 23rd
41st ANNUAL
FAMILY NATURE DAY

Sky Hunters in Flight
Riverside Reptiles
*The Turtle's Back * Edible Insects!*
*Jake the Moose Man * The Bat Lady*
Horizon Wings Raptor Center
Ferncroft Wildlife Rescue:
Opossums!
Music: The Bog Hollow Boys

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 See page 9 for details.

28-Oct. 4 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
 Courtesy of Joan and Jack Benham
 honoring Wesley D. Parcell

30 **The Pandemic Pantry**
with Gerri Griswold
Sixty Minute Meals!

Bring your appetite and your sass!
 12:00 p.m., Zoom and Facebook Live!
 For Zoom registrations visit:
www.whitememorialcc.org

OCTOBER

After School Adventures
Sponsored by the Torrington Savings Foundation
 Tuesdays and Wednesdays in October
 For grades 1 - 6
 See page 14 for details.

Nature's Nursery Series
 October 5, November 2, December 7
 See page 15 for details.

7 **Forestry in Practice**
with Jeff Ward & Mike Berry
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 Meet at the Five Ponds Trailhead at
 the intersection of Routes 63/61.

9 **COLUMBUS DAY**
 Offices Closed

12 - 18 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
 In Memory of Tish Samponaro from her
 husband Philip G. Samponaro

14 **Bats in Art & Culture**
with Gerri Griswold
 See page 14 for details.

14 **Our Lady of**
Gasteromycetes:
The Mushrooms of
Violetta White Delafield
with David Rose
 See page 14 for details.

October 19, November 16, December 21
Babies in Backpacks with Kelly Orr
 See page 15 for details.

20 **Star Party**
 Astronomy program. Star gazing
 will follow, weather permitting.
 7:00 p.m. A. B. Cedar Room.

21 **The Fungus Among Us!**
with Dave Paton
 See page 14 for details.

21 **Camping with Kids! with Kelly Orr**
 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
 Pine Grove 2 Campsite
 Please pre-register by calling
 860-567-0857 or register online
www.whitememorialcc.org

26 - Nov. 1 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
 In Memory of Ron Hummel
 from His Family and Friends

28 **Hitting White Memorial's Peaks**
with Gerri Griswold
 8:00 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Cedar Room.
 Please pre-register by calling 860-567-0857 or
 register online: www.whitememorialcc.org

NOVEMBER

4 **Twilight Hike & Stories**
by the Campfire
with Colleen Harrak
 See page 14 for details.

Wednesdays from November 8 to March 6
Dark of Winter Yoga
with Judith Ehrman-Shapiro (virtual)
 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., \$10.00
 Register by calling Judith: 860-309-9489.

9 - 15 **Museum Kids Free Week***
 In honor of Louise W. Willson

10 **Veteran's Day Program for Kids!**
Learn 'Em and Log 'Em
 See page 15 for details.

11 **The Secret Lives of Owls**
with Mary Beth Kaeser
 See page 14 for details.

17 **Star Party**
 Astronomy program. Star gazing
 will follow, weather permitting.
 7:00 p.m., A. B. Cedar Room

18 **Crack o' Dawn Owl Prowl**
with Fran Zygmont & Gerri Griswold
 4:30 a.m., A. B. Cedar Room.
 Pre-register online or call 860-567-0857.
LIMITED TO 15 PARTICIPANTS!

18 **Totally Turtles**
with Colleen Harrak
 2:00 p.m., A. B. Cedar Room

23/ 24 **THANKSGIVING**
 Museum & Offices Closed

23 - 29 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
 Courtesy of the Swift Family
 in Memory of Betsy & Henry Swift

25 **Walking the**
Cranberry Pond Trail
 2:00 p.m., Meet at the Cranberry
 Pond trailhead on Webster Road. Pre-register
 by calling 860-567-0857 or register online:
www.whitememorialcc.org.

DECEMBER

2 **THE SNOW QUEEN**
 See page 16 for details.

7 **Help Save a Life with the McCall**
Behavioral Health Network
 6:00 p.m., A. B. Cedar Room
 For more information call 860-567-0857 or visit
www.whitememorialcc.org

9 **Let's Look for Porcupines!**
with Gerri Griswold
 See page 12 for details.

16 **Circumnavigating Five Ponds**
 11:00 a.m., Meet at the trailhead where Routes
 63/61 meet! Register by calling 860-567-0857
 or online: www.whitememorialcc.org

17 **Litchfield Hills Audubon Christmas**
Bird Count ~ To volunteer, email
 Dave Tripp dtrippjr@gmail.com

21-27 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
 Courtesy of Tara and Arthur Diedrick
 In honor of Adele and Joseph d'Assen

23 **A Holiday Stroll Up Apple Hill**
 10:00 a.m., Meet at the Apple Hill Trailhead
 on East Shore Rd. Pre-register: 860-567-0857
 or online: www.whitememorialcc.org

24 / 25 **CHRISTMAS**
 Museum & Offices Closed

December 28 & 29
One Day Fun Day at White Memorial!
 Grades 1 - 6
 See page 15 for details.

30 **New Year's Eve EVE Hike to Little Pond**
 9:00 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Cedar Room
 Festive attire is optional!

December 31, 2023 / January 1, 2024
News Year's Eve & New Year's Day
 Museum & Offices Closed



* Free admission to Children ages
 12 and under when accompanied by an adult.

Adult Nature Study Workshops & Saturday Programs: Fall 2023



Bats in Art and Culture with Gerri Griswold (VIRTUAL)

October 14, 2023, 10:00 a.m., Zoom

Members: FREE, Non-Members: \$10.00

Are they the demons portrayed in western art or the Swallows of the Night and symbols of goodness in eastern cultures? Gerri Griswold takes you on a journey through eastern and western art to illustrate how bats have been perceived through world art history dating back 1000 years.



Our Lady of Gasteromycetes: The Mushrooms of Violetta White Delafield with David Rose

October 14, 2023, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Cedar Room

Members: \$10.00 Non-Members: \$20.00

Violetta White Delafield (1875–1949), sister of Alain and May White, was an American botanist well-known for her horticultural pursuits at Montgomery Place, the ancestral estate of the Delafield and Livingston families of the Hudson Valley. She was an accomplished mycologist, the author of important papers on a group of fungi known as Gasteromycetes. Her watercolor illustrations of mushrooms and contributions of fungal specimens retain significant scientific value to this day. Mycologist and Archivist David Rose presents her astonishing life and career.



The Fungus Among Us with Dave Paton

October 21, 2023, 10:00 a.m., A. B. Cedar Room, Dress for the weather!

Members: \$15.00 Non-Members: \$30.00 *Foraging is not allowed on Foundation property!*

Dave Paton is just giddy about mushrooms and wants to share his enthusiasm with you! Spend two hours in the forest with Dave learning do's and don'ts, basic identification, and stories behind all of the fungus among us! The program begins with a brief introduction in the Cedar Room to view some specimens.



Twilight Hike & Stories by the Campfire with Colleen Harrak

November 4, 2023, 5:00 p.m., Meet in the A. B. Cedar Room

\$5.00 per person

Join us for an evening of fun as we celebrate fall! First, Environmental Educator Colleen Harrak will lead you on a twilight hike through the woods. Then, we'll gather around a campfire to eat S'mores and tell "spooky" stories. Dress for the weather and wear good hiking shoes. Suggested for ages 8 and older.



The Secret Lives of Owls with Mary Beth Kaeser: Horizon Wings Raptor Rehabilitation & Education

November 11, 2023, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Cedar Room

Members: \$15.00 Non-Members: \$25.00

This is your chance to be only a few feet away from an Eastern Screech Owl, Barred Owl, Barn Owl, and a Great-Horned Owl! Discover the extraordinary features of owls, including exceptional eyesight, hearing, ability to fly silently and more! Fan favorite MaryBeth Kaeser from Horizon Wings www.horizonwings.org gives you the WHOOOOOOOOOO's WHOOOOOOOO with several of Connecticut's owl species!



Let's Look for Porcupines with Gerri Griswold

December 9, 2023, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Cedar Room, LIMITED TO 12 PARTICIPANTS!

Members: \$10.00 Non-Members: \$20.00

Begin with a brief presentation about porcupines with Gerri Griswold. We'll then hop into our passenger van piloted by chauffeur Carrie Szwed and meander backroads through Goshen, into Norfolk, and Winchester in search of our prickly friends in their favorite haunts! Many Connecticut residents don't believe porcupines live here. Hopefully you'll have bragging rights at the end of our time together! Dress for the weather!

AFTER-SCHOOL ADVENTURES!

Generously Sponsored by

The Torrington Savings Foundation

Join us for an afternoon of experiential learning in the outdoors.

Every session brings a new adventure!

Grades 1-3: Tuesdays in October
(Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24)

Grades 4-6: Wednesdays in October
(Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25)

All Classes 3:45 - 5:00 P.M.

Meet in the A.B. Cedar Room.

Admission is FREE, but space is limited. Pre-registration is required.

Visit www.whitememorialcc.org. Adults can stay, but it is not required.



Become a member of
**The White Memorial
Conservation Center**

and take advantage of the member discount, along with free admission to the Nature Museum, a discount in the Gift Shop, and receipt of the quarterly newsletter.

Your tax-deductible fee will help sponsor a rich array of programs for children and adults. A family membership is \$60.00 per year. An individual membership is \$40.00 per year.

<https://whitememorialcc.org/join-renew/>

**PUT A VISIT TO THE
MUSEUM GIFT SHOP
ON YOUR HOLIDAY TO-DO LIST!**



**Our shop is brimming with...
Stocking Stuffers, Maple Syrup,
Bat Houses, Books, Plush Toys,
Pottery, Wooden Bowls, Greeting Cards,
And so much more...**

Orrrr...put on your jammies and shop online!
<https://white-memorial-conservation-center.square.site/>

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

NATURE'S NURSERY

For Ages 3 - 6 Years
Thurs., Sep. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 7
All Classes Start at 4pm
Members: \$9/session
or \$30/whole series
Non-Members: \$13/session
or \$50/whole series
Meet in the A.B. Ceder Room.
Adults, please stay.



BABIES IN BACKPACKS

For Ages Newborn - 2 years
Thurs., Sep. 21, Oct. 19,
Nov. 16, Dec. 21
All Classes Start at 10am
Members: \$9/session
or \$30/whole series
Non-Members: \$13/session
or \$50/whole series
Meet in the Pollinator Garden.



Advanced registration required. Visit
www.whitememorialcc.org or call 860-567-0857.
Please inquire about financial aid as needed.



If nature has made you for a giver,
your hands are born open, and so is
your heart; and though there may be
times when your hands are empty,
your heart is always full...
~ Frances Hodgson Burnett

SCHOOL "VACATION" PROGRAMS

LEARN 'EM AND LOG 'EM!

Friday, November 10 (Veteran's Day)

Kids, have you ever wanted to identify the animals around you, even down to their exact species? This program will do that, and more, as you become citizen scientists! You'll go out "in the field," identify wildlife, record your observations, and submit them to real-world scientific projects, such as E-Bird and I-Naturalist. Education Director Carrie Szwed will be your teacher and lead your team of young naturalists. Parents are welcome to stay and participate in data collection, but it is not required. Meet in the A.B. Ceder Room. 1-4:30pm. Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Visit whitememorialcc.org or call 860-567-0857. Space is limited! For Kids in Grades 5-8. 1:00-4:30pm. Members: \$20/child, Non-members: \$30/child. Please inquire about financial aid as needed.



ONE-DAY FUN DAY!

Grades 1-3: Thursday, Dec. 28, Grades 4-6: Friday, Dec. 29

Nature can be so much fun in the winter! So, grab your coat, boots, and hat, and let's spend one of your vacation days learning about the natural world around you. Get outside, play games, make crafts, and meet live animals! A morning snack and drink will warm us up between adventures. Please bring a lunch and water bottle, and wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Parents/Guardians are welcome to stay, but it is not necessary. Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room. 9:30am-3:30pm. Pre-registration and payment are required. Please call 860-567-0857 or visit whitememorialcc.org to register. Space is limited! Members: \$40/child, Non-Members: \$70/child. Please inquire about financial aid as needed.





*Puppeteer Robin McCahill
and The White Memorial Conservation Center
present*

THE SNOW QUEEN

A benefit for
FISH of Northwestern Connecticut
Saturday, December 2, 2023
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE 9 am - 5 pm
VISIT SANTA & MRS. CLAUS 1 pm - 3 pm
WAGON RIDES 1 pm - 3 pm
HOT CHOCOLATE & COOKIES 1 pm - 3 pm
SNOW QUEEN PERFORMANCE 3 pm

Please visit <https://whitememorialcc.org/> to register.
***Admission: Donations of Cash, Warm Clothing,
Non-Perishable Food***

This special day of giving is made possible
through an anonymous donor.



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WHITE MEMORIAL THANKS
Krummi Travel LLC + Rae Lynn Giannaccio
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for making our 41st Annual Family Nature Day possible.



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