



Week of August 2 - 8



Oceanspray along the Cave Exit Trail

Lindsey Brown

Special Events This Week

Ranger Programs

Free Ranger programs will be offered each day. Check the blackboard in the Visitor Center for fascinating topics and times. Candlelight tours that present a unique perspective of the caves will take place on Friday and Saturday evenings. Reservations for the adventurous off-trail tours are now being accepted.

Join Ranger Suzan Thursday night for a free evening program: "Caves of the National Park Service." Ranger Jonathan presents a program on Saturday night: "2010: A Cave Odyssey."

Chateau Programs

Entertainment at the Chateau is in full swing this week. Monday is "Artist's Adventure," featuring interviews with local artists. David Hodges brings poetry to life on Wednesday evening. Chateau Artist-in-Residence, Jennie May Donnell reads intriguing stories in the Lobby on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Visitors on Sunday afternoon can enjoy the Celtic harpist, Bob Clark. Inquire at the Chateau's front desk for the finer details of these hotel events.

Mycena fungus (*Mycena purpureofusca*)

Perhaps you have been through the cave and wondered about the fuzzy-stemmed, conical-capped growth on the tree root just beyond the entrance. This is a *Mycena* fungus, one of many fungi that benefit our ecosystems at Oregon Caves.

Fungi differ from plants in that they do not need sunlight; they eat organic matter, which is why they can survive in a cave. A fungus eats by sending out tiny root-like structures called mycelium, which contain enzymes that digest organic matter. Once a healthy food supply is stored up and conditions are right, the fungus will sprout its fruiting body: a mushroom much like what is growing on the tree root!

Fungi are more than decomposers: they can protect roots from parasitic fungus, aid in water absorption, and exchange nutrients with the tree. They are an essential part of our ecosystem. If you take a walk on the trails at Oregon Caves, keep in mind that even if you can't see them, the mycelia

of countless fungi are under your feet and hard at work.



Mycena in Oregon Caves

Marie Landis

Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*)

When you finish your cave tour, you may spot some lovely, cascading blooms as you walk back to the Visitor Center. This is the Oceanspray.

This member of the Rose family is a common shrub in areas dominated by Douglas-fir, as are our forests here in the Siskiyou Mountains. Cascading clusters of white flowers drooping from the branches have a faint, sugary smell. Oceanspray blooms from June through August. In autumn, flowers turn beige-brown and often

persist through the winter. Each flower will produce five tiny hairy seeds.

The wood has long been used in making furniture and tools such as spears, arrows, bows, harpoons, and sewing and knitting needles. Native American tribes used the flowers to treat intestinal complaints. Luckily for us, we can simply appreciate the Oceanspray as part of the beautiful forest tapestry at Oregon Caves National Monument.