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THE SANTA CRUZ FUNGUS FAIR RETURNS AFTER FOUR YEARS FOR ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

JANUARY 12-14, 2024
PRESENTED BY FUNGUS FEDERATION OF SANTA CRUZ
AND SANTA CRUZ MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

SANTA CRUZ, CA — JANUARY 4, 2024 — The Santa Cruz Fungus Fair celebrates its 50th anniversary this month. The Fair is presented by the Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz and the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History and will feature hundreds of fascinating species from the area, uniquely displayed in a re-created woodland habitat. This iconic Santa Cruz tradition will offer three days of demonstrations, informative speakers, and fungus-forward activities for the whole family.

"We're thrilled to be back in partnership with the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History for the 50th anniversary of the Fair. That's where it all began, and we can't think of a better way to celebrate this important year for the Fair," said Richard Rammer of the Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz.

Christian Schwarz, co-author of the popular field guide, *Mushrooms of the Redwood Coast*, will be the keynote speaker, presenting about mushroom regions of the United States on Saturday, January 13. Other special presentations will cover health benefits of psilocybin, methods for cooking with mushrooms, and more.

The Fair originated in 1974 at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History, led by the efforts of David Aurora, who went on to write *All That the Rain Promises and More…* and *Mushrooms Demystified*, which is widely considered to be the best and most comprehensive mushroom guide that exists. As the Fair grew, it found new homes throughout the County, including Harvey West Park and London Nelson Community Center. During the pandemic years of 2021-2023, the Fair took on new forms, utilizing virtual formats, small guided experiences, and the Mini Fungus Fair held at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History.

"This town loves mushrooms," said Marisa Gomez who runs community programs at the Museum. "Even with the Museum's *mini* fairs the past few years, we've still had hundreds of people brave storms to be in the company of mushrooms and mushroom-lovers alike. We're excited to partner with the Fungus Federation and welcome even more folks for the return of the *big* fair this winter."

Learn more about the 50th Anniversary Santa Cruz Fungus Fair and purchase tickets at ffsc.us. Contact Marisa Gomez for more information at marisa@santacruzmuseum.org.

About The Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz
The purpose of the Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, is to expand the understanding and appreciation of mycology (study of mushrooms) and to assist the general public, related institutions, and societies to further this goal. The annual Fungus Fair is a major contributor to this important educational process and thousands benefit from this activity every January. Many continue the learning process throughout the year at monthly meetings and activities open to the public. Learn more about the Fungus Federation at ffsc.us.

About The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History
The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History's mission is *connecting people with nature and science to inspire stewardship of the natural world*. The Museum was first established with the personal collection of local naturalist and lighthouse keeper Laura Hecox. Founded in 1904, becoming an independent nonprofit in 2009, it has a proud history as the first public museum in Santa Cruz. The Museum is located in Tyrrell Park, bordered by its Garden Learning Center featuring native plants and grasses, and a life-size gray whale model greeting the public. The historical collection, public programs, and location make this institution a cherished landmark located across from the entrance to Seabright State Beach. Learn more about the Museum at santacruzmuseum.org.

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