

# The Fungus Among Us

Rex Bastian, PhD.  
Hendricksen the Care of Trees

We usually relate the words "fungus" or "fungi" with a negative connotation. With trees, fungi are associated with plant diseases such as scab, rust and anthraenose. However, many of us do not realize that some types of fungi are very important for proper tree health and development. In fact, many species of trees may not develop at all, or may even die if these fungi are not present.

The name given to these special fungi is mycorrhizae. Mycorrhizal fungi are found in the soil and form associations with tree roots. The derivation of the term is from the Latin words "myco" and rhizi," meaning fungus and root, respectively.



There are many different types of mycorrhizae. They can be found either inside or outside tree roots, or both. The fungus and the tree root form an intimate

association with each other. The result is a true symbiotic, or mutually beneficial, relationship.

The mycorrhizal association creates a thicker, more fibrous, farther reaching root system. The fungi provide an improvement in water and nutrient absorption, especially phosphorus. Phosphorus is difficult for trees to extract from the soil. The fungi help absorb the phosphorus and pass it on to the tree roots. In return, and tree provides its root system as a place for the fungi to grow and supplies 15% to 20% of the energy it produces to support the fungi.

Most of these beneficial organisms are found in our urban soils. Research has shown that the addition of mycorrhizal spores during fertilization procedures

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# Golf Updates

Brian Bossert  
Bryn Mawr C.C.

Brad Helms hosted the August meeting at Palatine Hills Golf Club. A full field turned out for the four-person best ball event. The Lively brothers, Paul Schaefer, and Paul Yerkes took first place at 500 under par. (Who needs Van Acker?) Joe Presta won the long putt, Mark Neuroth the long drive and Paul Schaefer doubled up with the closet to the pin shot. Lastly, Bob Kronn shot the low round of the day, a nifty 71.

The annual MAGCS Championship was held on September 14 at Settler's Hill Golf Club. Dan Murray was our host for the day. Tim Scott turned in the low round of the day, a two-under total of 70. For his efforts, Tim

has earned the right to represent the MAGCS in next year's Illinois Open. Congratulations, Tim!

Only a handful of players broke 80 on the drizzly day. They included the first flight winner, Jeff Smith. Jeff's net total was 69. The remaining flight winners included Brad Johnson (net 72 in second flight), Lynn Wesson picked up longest putt, Bob Lively knocked out the longest drive, and Trent Bradford was closest to the pin.



Tim Scott the 1998 MAGCS Golf Champion with the winning round of two under for a total of 70 at Settler's Hill G.C.

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can produce a significant improvement in tree root systems over fertilization alone. For trees under stress because of poor soils, compaction, root injury or other problem conditions, adding mycorrhizal spores to the soil may speed up root system reformation. This may prove to be a key factor in maintaining trees in our landscapes.

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