

## West Region Morels

From: Dan  
Subject: Questionnaire  
Response:  
Region: West  
State: California  
State Geographic Location: Northern California  
County: Plumas, Lassen

Woods: Mixed conifer to 100% fir and elevation of 4000 to 6000 feet. Red soil seems to be best. Recently logged forest.

Vegetation: White fir and doug fir that has been logged within 3 years.

Weather Issues: In the higher elevations you can expect snow drifts that block the roads. Sometimes the roads are blocked until late June or early July, so I never get to some areas until it's too late.

Competition: Not too popular yet, but sometimes we get a crew of professional pickers come in and they take everything.

Suggestion: Stay in the logged firs

Date Range: May

Techniques: Mostly hunt in logged forest along skid trails and deep ruts.

Challenges: Forest Service has not logged for years, so look for logged private land.

Additional Comments: Please watch where you are stepping and leave the raisins. I usually don't pick anything smaller than a 1 inch diameter.

From: Ronny & Heather B  
Subject: Questionnaire  
Response:  
Region: West (upper)  
State: Washington  
State Geographic Location: Central Washington  
County: National Forests & State Lands

Woods: In the great Pacific Northwest, natural morels are challenging to find or to provide the perfect environment to grow in, but morels can be found growing in substantial burn areas of high mountain evergreens with the understory being fallen needles. Burn morels tend to pop out in what mycophiles have fondly called "ash-holes" which are significant indentions in the earth caused by the falling of burnt trees' root systems. They also tend to grow amongst the branches & pop out from underneath the charred logs. Since it is a mountainous area, elevation, patterns of the sun and snow melt are key factors.

In addition, we have discovered that an environment can possibly be created for the natural garden morels with the use of materials heavy in nitrogen. For example, our vegetable garden is a no till type that utilizes aged steer manure, tons of non-shiny newspapers, layers of cardboard, massive amounts of grass clippings, Catalpa & Silver Leaf Maple leaves and bales upon bales of straw. The soil is rock hard clay with homemade compost continuously added. After two years of doing this method & having great bountiful vegetable harvests, this past April when day temps reached in the 50s for a week or so, a 20x30' plot of the garden produced 49 massive golden morels averaging 6" in height with the golden straw acting as an electric blanket so to speak. Since it is Western Wa, the weather turned immediately back to massive downpours, but quart jars aka mini greenhouses along with measuring sticks were placed over each precious morel to document their rapid growth.

Vegetation: Burnt evergreens in the mountains – usually only the spring/summer after the fire

Weather Issues: Temperatures – nighttime in the 50s or use a soil thermometer. Moisture levels in the mountains of the PNW are not an issue when hunting in the spring/early summer as not only is their snow melt runoff, but precipitation. Small window of time prior to the sun drying up the charred earth & stunting the morels or even worse, having mold attack them.

Competition: Competition in WA is fierce as there are only so many burn areas that have accessible roads.

Suggestion: Move to Michigan for naturals or travel to Montana for burn morels!

Date Range: Now it's mid-April in our garden, Verpa (Thimbles taste amazing!) picking beginning in late March/April, and burn morels are late May through end of June pending soil moisture

Techniques: See above

Challenges: Challenges – lack of environment for naturals in the woods, lack of burns without traveling thousands of miles for recent burn areas of evergreens

Additional Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this insightful survey. Looking forward to reading your compilation article next year. Your IG page is fungtastic!!