

Title:

Truffle Fungi of the Midwest

Name:

Mariah Rogers

Department:

Biology

Abstract:

Truffle fungi are a cryptic yet charismatic polyphyletic group including genera with rich culinary and ecological histories. Because they produce their spore-forming bodies below ground, their distribution ranges can be less well-documented than other macrofungi. While there is a stronger record of truffle documentation in certain parts of North America, there is still a need to fill in sampling gaps. One such area that has been comparatively undersampled for truffle fungi is the Midwest region. I am creating an inventory of truffle fungi in the Midwest. The results will convey the state of our knowledge and will allow us to dig deeper into any potentially-meaningful patterns and sampling priorities within the study area that may guide future collections. In the upcoming 2025 season I will conduct my own survey for truffle-forming fungi across various sites in the study area, documenting and potentially describing novel species and noting which of our native truffles have the potential to be cultivated for culinary use within the Midwest.