



**For more Information, Please Contact:  
Keep Sedona Beautiful, Inc. (928) 282-4938**

**Mike Dechter, Arizona Mushroom Society  
Featured at KSB Speaker Series on Wednesday, November 20, 2024**

Keep Sedona Beautiful will hold its next Preserving the Wonder Speaker Series event on Wednesday, November 20 at 5:00 pm. This month, mushroom expert Mike Dechter returns to discuss “Southwestern Native American Use of Fungi”. As always, this presentation will be free and open to the public, and will be held at the KSB EcoHub, 360 Brewer Road in Sedona. Doors will open at 4:30. Please visit the KSB website, [www.keeppedonabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppedonabeautiful.org) for details.

Mike’s talk will illustrate how the Southwestern region is a landscape inherently shaped by Native American groups that in turn has shaped the cultures and traditions of those who have lived here. One of the crucial strategies employed by civilizations in the arid and highly variable environments of the southwestern United States has been an extensive and specialized use of available resources. This knowledge has been extremely well documented in hundreds of ethnobotanical studies, historical accounts and scientific investigations. Paradoxically, very little is known about the relationship between southwestern Native American groups and fungi that grow in the region. While this suggests ancestral Native Americans may have represented a “mycophobic” culture, recent evidence shows ancestral Native American groups of the southwest understood the nuances of local fungi and cleverly used edible fungi to support health and nutritional needs.

Mike Dechter works for the Coconino National Forest and spends his spare time wandering the woods to find and learn more about native fungi. He has been a leader with the Arizona Mushroom Society over the past decade and frequently teaches classes on fermentation and wild foods in northern Arizona.

The Preserving the Wonder Speaker series is held on the third Wednesday of each month. For over 50 years, Keep Sedona Beautiful has been dedicated to protecting and enhancing the scenic beauty and natural environment of Sedona and the Verde Valley. For more information about Keep Sedona Beautiful, please visit [www.keeppedonabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppedonabeautiful.org).