

# SUMMER MUSHROOMS



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# INTRODUCTION

For much of the year, any walk through the woods reveals an assortment of fascinating mushrooms, each playing an important role in the forest ecosystem.

This guide serves as a reference for some of the mushrooms you may encounter while hiking in the Metro Parks. It is arranged in three sections: mushrooms with gills, mushrooms with pores, and others. Each mushroom is identified by its common and scientific name, a brief description, where and when it grows, and some fun facts.

As you venture into the woods this summer, take a closer look at the mushrooms around you. Our hope is that this guide will help you to identify them, develop a better understanding of the role they play in nature, and inspire you to further explore the world of mushrooms. Happy Mushrooming!

NATURALIST DAVE BRUMFIELD

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**FRUITING BODY** ..... The reproductive structure of a fungus; typically known as a mushroom.

**FRUITING** ..... The reproductive stage of a fungus when a mushroom is formed.

**FUNGUS** ..... A group of organisms that includes mushrooms and molds.

**HYPHAE**.....Thread-like filaments that grow out from a germinated spore.

**MYCORRHIZAL** ..... Having a symbiotic relationship between a plant root and fungal hyphae.

**PARASITE** ..... Fungus that grows by taking nourishment from other living organisms.

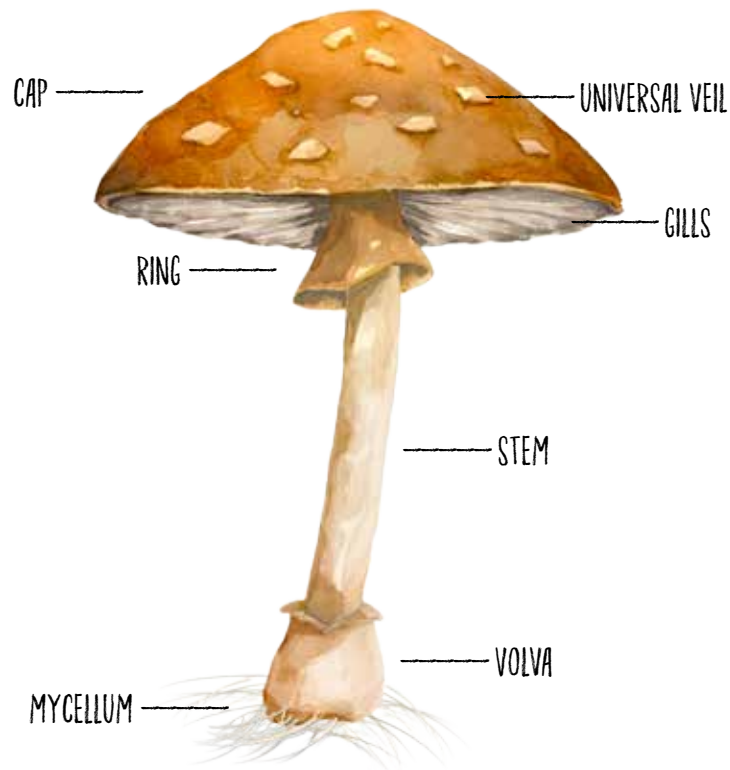
**POLYPORE** ..... A group of fungi that form fruiting bodies with pores or tubes on the underside through which spores are released.

**SAPROPHYTE** ..... A fungus that grows by taking nourishment from dead organisms.

**SPINES** ..... Small “teeth” hanging down from the underside of the cap of a mushroom.

**SPORE** ..... A microscopic, reproductive unit of a fungus, similar to a seed in an apple.

# STRUCTURE OF A MUSHROOM



**CAP** ..... Supports and protects the gills; color and shape depend on stage of growth and species.

**GILLS** ..... The lower surface of the cap, composed of blade-like layers stacked side by side. Spores are produced and released by the gills; other mushrooms have pores, teeth-like structures or some other means of spore dispersal.

**MYCELIUM** ..... The mass of thread-like hyphae found in soil and other substrates; it absorbs nutrients from the substrate. When conditions are right, mushrooms develop as the fruiting body of the mycelium.

**RING** ..... As a mushroom matures, a partial skin covers the edge of the cap to the stem. The ring is what is left when the mushroom cap grows and stretches the skin to breaking.

**STEM** ..... The structure that holds the cap above ground; not all mushrooms have a stem.

**UNIVERSAL VEIL** ..... A tissue surrounding the developing mushroom button (it is like the shell covering an egg).

**VOLVA** ..... If the mushroom has a universal veil, what is left at the bottom of the stem when the veil is broken is the volva; common in Amanita species.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## GILLED MUSHROOMS

AMETHYST DECEIVER ( <i>Laccaria amethystina</i> ) .....	1
BLUSHER ( <i>Amanita rubescens</i> ) .....	2
CORRUGATED MILKY CAP ( <i>Lactarius corrugis</i> ) .....	3
DESTROYING ANGEL ( <i>Amanita bisporigera</i> ) .....	4
MEADOW MUSHROOM ( <i>Agaricus campestris</i> ) .....	5
ORANGE MYCENA ( <i>Mycena leaiana</i> ) .....	6
PARROT MUSHROOM ( <i>Gliophorus psittacinus</i> ) .....	7

## POLYPORES

CHICKEN OF THE WOODS ( <i>Laetiporus sulphureus</i> ) .....	8
TWO-COLORED BOLETE ( <i>Boletus bicolor</i> ) .....	9

## OTHERS

BEARDED TOOTH ( <i>Hericium erinaceus</i> ) .....	10
CHANTERELLE ( <i>Cantharellus cibarius</i> ) .....	11
COMMON SPLIT GILL ( <i>Schizophyllum commune</i> ) .....	12
EYELASH CUP ( <i>Scutellinia scutellata</i> ) .....	13
FALSE TURKEY TAIL ( <i>Stereum ostrea</i> ) .....	14
GEM STUDED PUFFBALL ( <i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i> ) .....	15
VIOLET CORAL ( <i>Clavaria zollingeri</i> ) .....	16
HOW TO MAKE A SPORE PRINT .....	17

# AMETHYST DECEIVER (*Laccaria amethystina*)



Photo taken at Furnace Run Metro Park

DAZZLING!



It's easy to SEE how this mushroom got its COMMON name.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruits on the ground in hardwood forests, especially under oak and beech trees; mycorrhizal

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is purple, convex with a central depression
- Gills are waxy and deep purple, attached and thick, interspersed with short gills
- Stem is light purple, up to 3 inches tall

## FUN FACTS

- It is vividly purple when young, but loses the bright color as it ages, making it more difficult to identify and thus is a “deceiver.”



DECEIVING!

### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# BLUSHER (*Amanita rubescens*)



Photo taken at Sand Run Metro Park

WELL, THIS IS EMBARRASSING



*Amanita rubescens* gets its COMMON name, BLUSHER, because its flesh reddens or "BLUSHES" when touched.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruiting body grows on the ground in oak woods and under white pines; grows alone, scattered or in groups; mycorrhizal

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is a dull and brassy reddish-brown, 2 to 6 inches across; convex to flat; covered with wart-like patches (sometimes washed off with rain) spread over the cap
- Stem is 3 to 8 inches tall; whitish, becoming a dirty red and hollowing with age; has a prominent ring
- Gills are close; free from the stem or slightly attached

## FUN FACTS

- Some mushrooms are poisonous no matter how appealing they look. NEVER eat a wild mushroom unless you are certain of its identity.



### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# CORRUGATED MILKY CAP (*Lactarius corrugis*)



Photo taken at O'Neil Woods Metro Park

## GOT MILK?

Gills are **ATTACHED**, close together and **BUFF** in color; they change to orange and finally **YELLOW**.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruiting body grows on the ground, mycorrhizal with oak and other hardwoods

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is reddish-brown to rusty brown; convex then becoming sunken; 2 to 8 inches across; velvety, dry and sometimes wrinkled at the margins
- Latex is white, and stains brown when bruised

## FUN FACTS

- This mushroom belongs to a group of mushrooms that exudes white latex when bruised or broken, thus the name “milky cap.”



Gills often become **WAVY** with age.

## Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# DESTROYING ANGEL (*Amanita bisporigera*)



Photo taken at Furnace Run Metro Park

**POISONOUS**



Most mushroom **FATALITIES** in North America result from **EATING** this deadly beauty.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

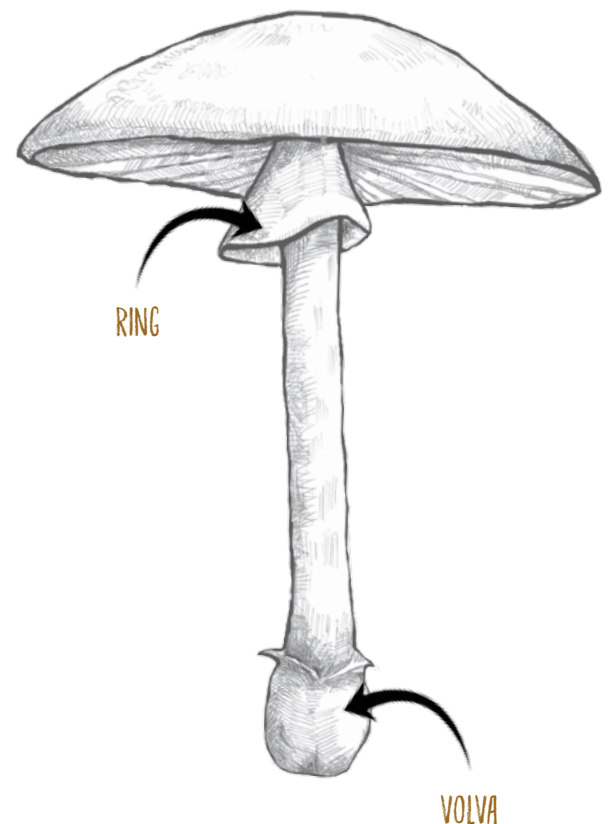
- Fruits on the ground in the woods; mycorrhizal with oaks

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is smooth, convex to flat; white and 2 to 5 inches across
- Stem is white, 3 to 8 inches tall; small membranous ring near the top; white volva encompasses the base (usually buried)

## FUN FACTS

- “If an animal can eat it, I can eat it.” This is not true! Squirrels and rabbits can eat *Amanita* mushrooms, but they are poisonous to people.



## Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# MEADOW MUSHROOM (*Agaricus campestris*)



Photo taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm



Meadow MUSHROOM  
SPORE prints  
are BROWN.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruits in lawns, meadows, pastures and grassy areas; solitary or in groups, sometimes in fairy rings; saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is smooth and white, 2 to 4 inches across; begins convex and flattens out as it matures
- Stem is 1 to 3 inches tall, with a thin ring that may disappear as the mushroom matures
- Gills are crowded and free, starting pink and progressing to dark brown

## FUN FACTS

- The meadow mushroom is closely related to the white mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*) found in grocery stores.



These mushrooms  
are a FAVORITE  
FOOD for eastern  
box TURTLES.

### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# ORANGE MYCENA (*Mycena leaiana*)



Photo taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm



The STEM of orange mycena sometimes exudes an orange "JUICE" when squeezed.

"ORANGE" YOU DELIGHTFUL!

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruits on dead, deciduous wood (particularly beech); usually in clusters; saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is a bright orange (fades as it matures), a half-inch to 2 inches wide
- Stem is orange and 1 to 2.5 inches tall
- Gills are orange and attached; spore print is white

## FUN FACTS

- *Mycena leaiana* was named after Thomas Gibson Lea (1785-1844), a mushroom collector from Cincinnati, Ohio.



Orange mycena is a FAVORITE food of the PLEASING fungus BEETLE.

### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# PARROT MUSHROOM (*Gliophorus psittacinus*)



Photo taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm



EARLY STAGE



END STAGE

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruits on the ground in hardwood and coniferous forests

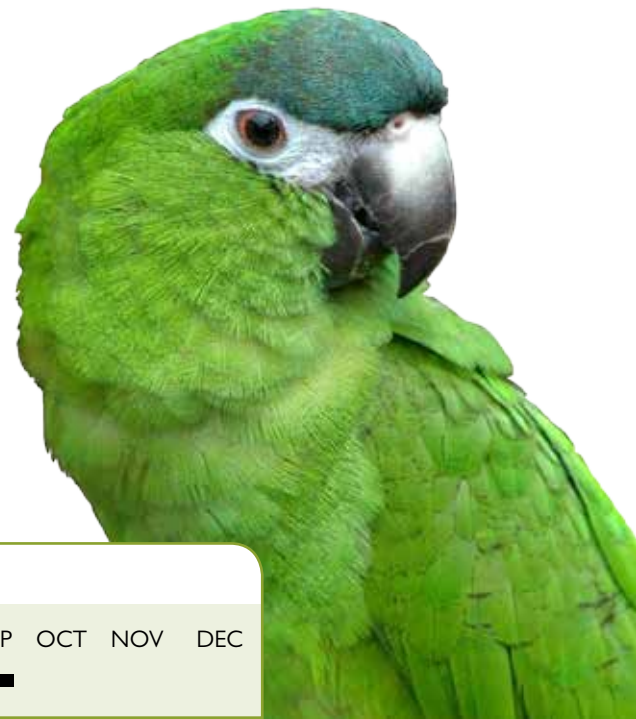
## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is conical to bell-shaped; green when young, quickly fading to orangish-yellow; often slimy
- Stem is 1 to 3 inches tall, greenish to yellowish
- Gills are attached; greenish to yellowish

## FUN FACTS

- The parrot mushroom belongs to a group of mushrooms known as waxy caps because they all have thick, waxy gills.

GREEN WITH  
ENVY!



### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

# CHICKEN OF THE WOODS (*Laetiporus sulphureus*)



Photo taken at Gorge Metro Park

SAME, BUT  
DIFFERENT



*Laetiporus cincinnatus*

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

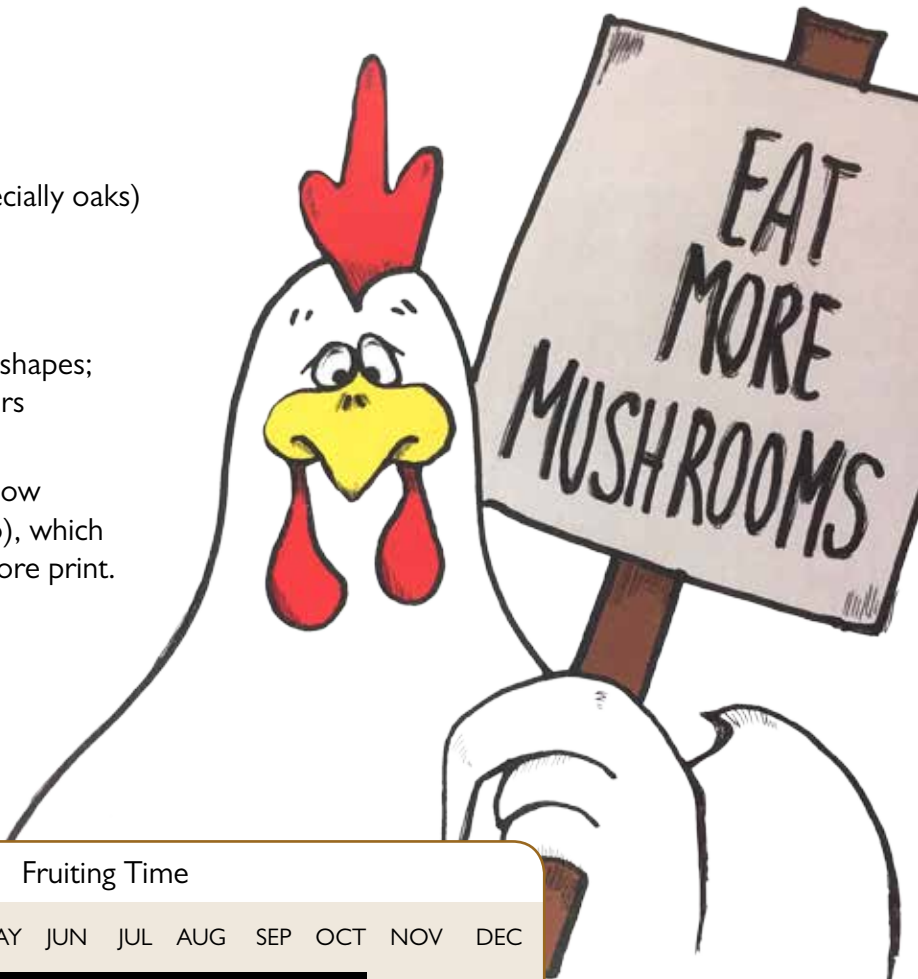
- Fruits on living and dead hardwood trees (especially oaks)

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Caps are yellowish-orange and fan to irregular shapes; 2 to 16 inches wide, often in overlapping clusters or rosettes
- Pore surface on the underside of the cap is yellow compared to *Laetiporus cincinnatus* (right photo), which has a white pore surface. Both have a white spore print.

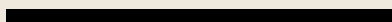
## FUN FACTS

- Chicken of the Woods is one of the most recognizable fungi in North America.



### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# TWO-COLORED BOLETE (*Boletus bicolor*)



Photo taken at O'Neil Woods Metro Park

SHHH...  
IT'S A SECRET!

This VELVETY, rosy capped mushroom has a SECRET. Its bright YELLOW pore surface slowly bruises BLUE when the pores are INJURED, making it easy to carve into.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Grows on the ground in the woods, especially near oaks; mycorrhizal

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Rosy-red cap, 2 to 6 inches wide
- Stem is red, 2 to 4 inches tall

## FUN FACTS

- The beautiful red cap and contrasting yellow underside give the two-colored bolete its name



## Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# BEARDED TOOTH (*Hericium erinaceus*)



Photo taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm

The PURPOSE of these TEETH is to manufacture and release SPORES.



## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Often fruits high on living tree trunks (parasitic); also on dead or dying trees (saprophyte), especially beech and oak

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Fruiting body is a roundish clump with long, hanging spines (teeth); white in color, becoming yellowish with age. The clump can grow 4 to 10 inches wide and high with the spines 2 to 3 inches long.

## FUN FACTS

- This species of tooth fungus has many other common names including Pom-pom and Icicle mushroom.



AKA: LION'S MANE

## Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# CHANTERELLE (*Cantharellus cibarius*)



Photo taken at Sand Run Metro Park



SEE THE  
RESEMBLANCE?

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruiting body grows on the ground; mycorrhizal with hardwood trees, especially oaks; grows singly or in small groups

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is yellow to yellow-orange with wavy margins, somewhat funnel-shaped at maturity, and up to 5 inches wide
- Underside of cap has thick ridges that descend the stem
- Stem is 4 to 5 inches tall; color is similar to the cap

## FUN FACTS

- As with all chanterelles, these mushrooms have “false gills.” They are not sharp and blade-like, but rather well developed ridges.



ENLARGED RIDGES

## Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

# COMMON SPLIT GILL (*Schizophyllum commune*)



Photo taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm

FUZZY WUZZY!



MR. POPULAR

Split gill is the most **WIDESPREAD** mushroom on the **PLANET**.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruits on dead wood, logs and branches; solitary, scattered or in overlapping clusters; saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Cap is fan-shaped, covered with white hairs; no stem; a half-inch to 1.5 inches across
- Gill-like folds on the underside are deeply grooved and split lengthwise; whitish-gray to pink in color; spore print is white

## FUN FACTS

- Shrivels up during dry weather, then rehydrates and revives during times of wet weather; found year-round



### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# EYELASH CUP (*Scutellinia scutellata*)



Photo taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm

THE "EYES"  
HAVE IT!



CLOSE-UP VIEW

SEE THE RESEMBLANCE?

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

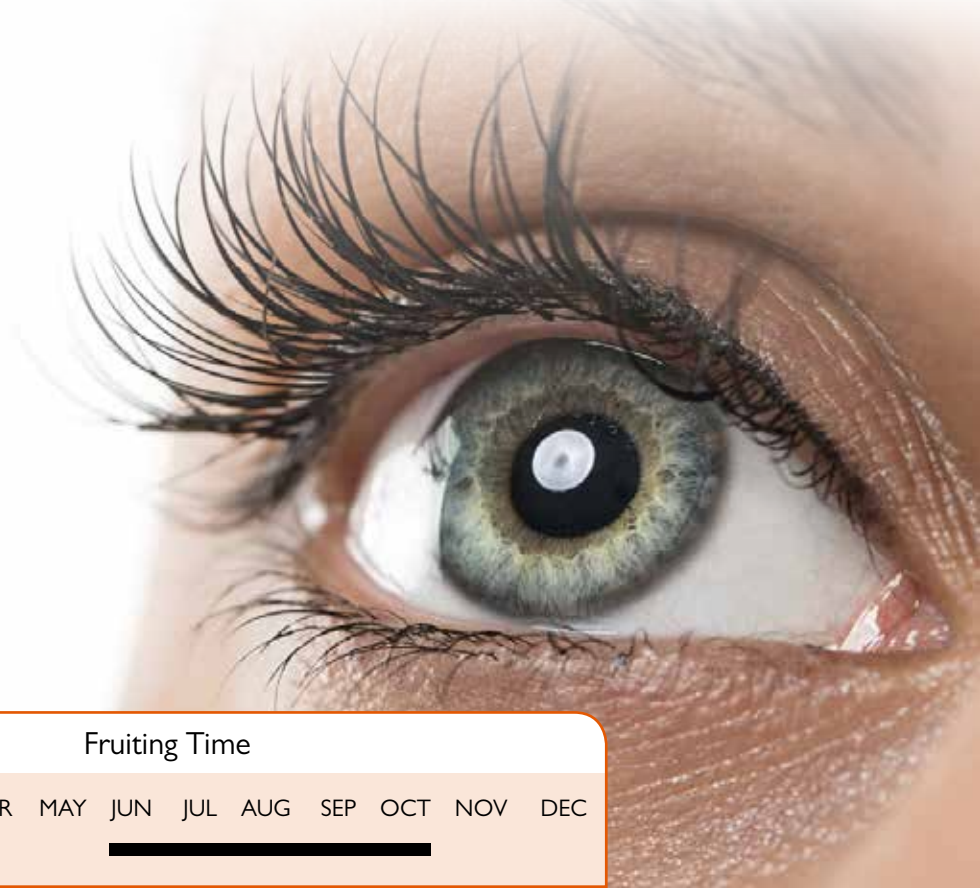
- Fruits on wet, well decayed wood (logs and stumps); saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Fruiting body is cup-shaped and orange-red in color; surrounded by short, dark hairs around the outer rim; grows in clusters,  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch across

## FUN FACTS

- When you get a close look at these tiny mushrooms, dark hairs on the cups' edges look like eyelashes.



## Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# FALSE TURKEY TAIL (*Stereum ostrea*)



Photo taken at Furnace Run Metro Park

## WHO ARE YOU CALLING TURKEY?

The **FALSE** turkey tail mushroom has a **SIMILAR** banding pattern as the turkey tail mushroom, but **NO** visible pores.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruits on decaying logs, stumps, and branches of deciduous trees in clusters; saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Fruiting body is fan-shaped with various colors (red, orange, yellowish, brown and buff); a half-inch to 4 inches wide
- Underside is smooth

## FUN FACTS

- Although this mushroom mimics the turkey tail, it is a crust fungus, not a polypore.



UNDERSIDE of a **FALSE** turkey tail mushroom.



UNDERSIDE of a **TURKEY** tail mushroom.  
(See the pores?)

### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# GEM STUDDED PUFFBALL (*Lycoperdon perlatum*)



Photo taken at Sand Run Metro Park



Spore **MASS** inside is white and solid when young. As it matures, the **SPORES** go from white to yellow to brown and become **POWDERY**.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Grows on the ground, both in the woods and open areas where it decomposes organic material; saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Small, pear-shaped mushroom covered in short, spiny bumps; white when young and becomes brown with age; 1 to 2 inches across; 1 to 3 inches tall.

## FUN FACTS

- Looking like a medieval weapon of warfare, you need not fear: The tiny spikes surrounding this mushroom break off easily when handled.



**IT ONLY LOOKS PAINFUL!**

### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



# VIOLET CORAL (*Clavaria zollingeri*)



Photo taken at O'Neil Woods Metro Park

## DON'T BE FOOLED!

Violet coral MUSHROOMS only look like they belong in the OCEAN.



## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

- Fruiting bodies grow on the ground in mixed hardwood forests; saprophytic

## HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Tubular, upright branches grow from a common base; up to 4 inches tall
- Branches are purple to pinkish-violet

## FUN FACTS

- This species of mushroom was named after Swiss botanist Heinrich Zollinger, who specialized in the study of the genus *Clavaria*. Why a botanist? Up until 1969, mushrooms were classified as plants.



**HANDS OFF!**  
THIS MUSHROOM IS  
EXTREMELY FRAGILE!

### Fruiting Time

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

# HOW TO MAKE A SPORE PRINT

One **METHOD** that helps in the identification of mushrooms is to make a spore print. Some mushrooms look very **SIMILAR** but differ in the **COLOR** of their spores.

To make a spore **PRINT**,

1. Remove the **CAP** from a mature, fresh specimen. Be sure it is dry.
2. Turn it **GILL** side down on a piece of white paper (some people recommend both black and white paper since the spores can be dark or light).
3. Cover the cap with a plastic cup or glass to **PROTECT** it and let it sit undisturbed for 24 hours or overnight.
4. **LIFT** up the cap carefully to reveal the pattern of spores left on the paper. Compare your results with descriptions given in field guides.

