

Selected Edible Wild Mushrooms of Northeastern North America

Illustrations and descriptions from: Lincoff, G.H. (1981), "National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms"

Disclaimer: This list is not intended for use as a field guide in providing definitive identification of mushrooms intended for consumption.



Yellow Morel
Morchella esculenta L. ex Fr.
Morchellaceae, Pezizales

Blond to yellow-brown, honeycombed cap on whitish stalk.



Black Morel
Morchella elata Fr.
Morchellaceae, Pezizales

Black-ribbed, honeycombed cap on whitish stalk.



Chanterelle
Cantharellus cibarius Fr.
Cantharellaceae, Aphyllophorales

Bright yellow to orange cap with wavy margin and yellow-orange, forked, thick-edged ridges descending stalk; fragrant.



Black Trumpet
Craterellus fallax A.H.S.
Cantharellaceae, Aphyllophorales

Vase-shaped mushroom with small, flat, brownish scales on top and within; outer surface smooth to wrinkled, gray to dark brown or black; fragrant.



King Bolete
Boletus edulis Bull. ex Fr.
Boletaceae, Agaricales

Large, with reddish-brown cap, white to yellowish pores, and whitish to brownish stalk, thickening toward base.

Sweet Tooth
Dentinum repandum (Fr.) S.F.G.
Hydnaceae, Aphyllophorales

Description: Fleshy, orange to buff, irregularly shaped cap with pale teeth descending slightly off-center stalk.



Purple-gilled Laccaria
Laccaria ochropurpurea (Berk.) Pk.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Large, purplish-brown to grayish cap with thick, purplish gills and stout, solid stalk.

Honey Mushroom
Armillariella mellea (Vahl ex Fr.) Kar.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Description: Yellow-brown, sticky cap with erect black hairs over center, discoloring whitish gills, and stalk with white to cream ring; on wood.



Blewit
Clitocybe nuda (Bull. ex Fr.) Big. & A.H.S.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Large, violet cap, fading to tan, with violet to buff gills and violet, often bulbous stalk; in the open or in open woods.

Angel's Wings
Pleurocybella porrigens (Pers. ex Fr.) Sing.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Description: Broad, thin-fleshed, stalkless white cap with white gills; in clusters on wood.



Oyster Mushroom
Pleurotus ostreatus Fr.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Broad, fleshy, white, gray or brown cap with broad, whitish or yellow-tinged gills arising from attachment to wood or small, hairy, stublike stalk; on wood.

Late Fall Oyster
Panellus serotinus (Fr.) Küh.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Description: Sticky, yellowish-green cap with yellowish gills and stublike stalk; on dead wood.



Meadow Mushroom
Agaricus campestris L. ex Fr.
 Agaricaceae, Agaricales

White to brownish, mostly smooth cap; in grass.



Parasol
Lepiota procera (Scop. ex Fr.) S.F.G.
 Agaricaceae, Agaricales

Broad, brownish, densely scaly, knobbed cap with free gills and movable ring on tall, scaly stalk.



Fawn Mushroom
Pluteus cervinus (Schaeff. ex Fr.) Kum.
 Pluteaceae, Agaricales

Brownish cap with white to pink, free gills and whitish stalk.



Shaggy Mane
Coprinus comatus (Müll. ex Fr.) S.F.G.
 Coprinaceae, Agaricales

Cylindrical, shaggy-scaly, white cap turning inky from liquefying gills.



Voluminous-latex Milky
Lactarius volemus (Fr.) Fr.
 Russulaceae, Agaricales

Orange-brown cap with fishlike odor.



Hen of the Woods
Grifola frondosa (Fr.) S.F.G.
 Polyporaceae, Aphyllophorales

Large, clustered mass of grayish-brown, fleshy, spoon-shaped caps with whitish pores and lateral, white stalks branching from compound base.

Purple-spored Puffball
Calvatia cyathiformis (Bosc) Morg.
 Lycoperdaceae, Lycoperdales

Hemispherical, minutely cracked, tannish, with white interior becoming deep purple-brown, with large, persistent, dark violet, cutlike remains

Horse Mushroom
Agaricus arvensis Schaeff. ex Secr.
 Agaricaceae, Agaricales

Description: Large, white mushroom, bruising yellowish, with spicy odor; in grass.

Rooted Oudemansiella
Oudemansiella radicata (Rel. ex Fr.) Sing.
 Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Description: Sticky, smooth, gray-brown or paler cap with white gills and rigid-brittle, long-rooted stalk; on tree roots.

Aborted Entoloma
Entoloma abortivum (Berk. & Curt.) Donk
 Entolomataceae, Agaricales

Description: Gray-brown cap with pinkish gills and whitish stalk; found with whitish, bumpy, roundish to irregular masses.



Wine-cap Stropharia
Stropharia rugosoannulata Farlow ex Murr.
 Strophariaceae, Agaricales

Red, red-brown to tan cap with lilac- to gray-black gills and lined ring on stalk.

Chicken Mushroom
Laetiporus sulphureus (Fr.) Murr.
 Polyporaceae, Aphyllophorales

Description: Single to overlapping clusters of fleshy, smooth, orange-red to orange-yellow caps with sulfur-yellow pores.



Dryad's Saddle
Polyporus squamosus Fr.
 Polyporaceae, Aphyllophorales

Large, fleshy, tough, scaly, yellowish-brown cap with large, white to yellowish pores descending short stalk.

Skull-shaped Puffball
Calvatia craniformis (Schw.) Fr.
 Lycoperdaceae, Lycoperdales

Description: Skull-shaped, white, smooth, cracking into irregular areas and revealing white interior, which becomes yellow-green.

The Mycophagist's Ten Commandments

From: "Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America",
D. W. Fischer and A. E. Bessette, 1992.

1. **Never eat a mushroom unless it is positively identified as edible.** Mistakes can result in toxic reactions ranging from mild gastric upset to death. If in doubt, throw it out!
2. **Eat only fresh mushrooms that are free from infestation by insects or larvae.** Mushrooms can spoil, and eating any spoiled food can cause food poisoning or other adverse reactions.
3. **Thoroughly cook all mushrooms unless they are specifically known to be edible raw.** Some mushrooms contain toxins or gastrointestinal irritants that must be destroyed by cooking.
4. **Eat mushrooms only in moderate quantities.** Mushrooms are not easily digested; overeating them is an easy way to get sick.
5. **When trying a mushroom for the first time, eat only a small portion, and don't try any other new kinds for forty-eight hours.** As with many kinds of food, some people are sensitive or allergic to mushrooms commonly eaten by other people. Individuals with known food allergies or sensitivities should be extra careful when trying mushrooms new to them, especially those species known to present problems for some individuals.
6. **Don't pick mushrooms from contaminated habitats.** These include polluted areas, chemically treated lawns, ornamental trees, and places close to highways, landfills, toxic waste sites, crop fields, power lines, railroads, buildings, industrial areas, or firebreaks. Contaminants may accumulate in wild mushrooms.
7. **Never assume that a wild mushroom you find overseas is the same edible species you know from North America or vice versa.** Too many serious cases of mushroom poisoning occur because vacationers and immigrants unwittingly gather dangerous look-alike species not found in their native lands.
8. **Be conservative about feeding wild mushrooms to children, the elderly, and the infirm.** Avoid edible species known to cause adverse reactions in some people, and don't let children, the elderly, or persons in poor health try an unfamiliar kind of wild mushroom until you and other friends or relatives have identified and eaten it without any adverse reactions. Limit portion sizes for children, the elderly, and the sick because they're generally more susceptible to toxins than other people are.
9. **When trying a mushroom for the first time, save a few intact, uncooked specimens in the refrigerator for forty-eight hours.** If someone develops an illness within two days after trying an unfamiliar mushroom, the physician may want expert identification to rule out the mushroom as the culprit.
10. **Examine every specimen in every collection of mushrooms to avoid inadvertent mixing of different species.** Even experienced mushroom hunters can err if they become careless and fill their baskets too hurriedly.

Poisonous Wild Mushrooms



Death Cap

Amanita phalloides (Fr.) Secr.
Amanitaceae, Agaricales



Smooth, greenish cap with skirtlike ring at top of stalk, and saclike cup about base of stalk.



Destroying Angel

Amanita virosa Secr.
Amanitaceae, Agaricales

White mushroom with flaring to ragged ring on stalk; large, saclike cup about base.



Fly Agaric

Amanita muscaria var. *muscaria* (L. ex Fr.)
Hook.
Amanitaceae, Agaricales

Blood-red cap with pyramidal, white patches; stalk has ring and bulbous base with rows of cottony patches.



Deadly Galerina

Galerina autumnalis (Pk.) A.H.S. & Sing.
Cortinariaceae, Agaricales

Fading, brownish, tacky cap with yellowish gills becoming rust; ring on brownish stalk; on decaying wood.



Jack O'Lantern

Omphalotus olearius (DC. ex Fr.) Sing.
Tricholomataceae, Agaricales

Orange to yellowish-orange mushroom with sharp-edged gills descending stalk; in clusters on wood or buried wood.

Other poisonous species in northeastern North America include:

Various *Amanita* species; yellow-bruising *Agaricus* species; Sealy Vase Chanterelle (*Gomphus* species); Green-spored Lepiota (*Chlorophyllum molybdites*); Alcohol inky *Coprinus atramentarius*; Sealy Inky Cap (*Coprinus variiegatus*); Sweating Mushroom (*Clitocybe dealbata*) and other *Clitocybe* species; *Inocybe* species; *Gymnopilus* species; Poison Pie (*Hebeloma crustuliniforme*); Sulphur Tuft (*Hypholoma fasciculare*); *Conocybe filari*; *Paxillus involutus*; *Russula emetica*; *Boletus* species with orange to red pore surfaces and/or blue-staining flesh; Pigskin Poison Puffball (*Scleroderma citrinum*); Wrinkled Thimble-cap (*Verpa bohemica*); and False Morels (*Gyromitra* species)

FIELD GUIDES

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WEBSITES

NAMA (North American Mycological Association): <http://www.namyco.org/>

Kuo, M. <http://www.mushroomexpert.com/>

Phillips, R. <http://www.rogersmushrooms.com/>

Stamets, P. <http://www.fungi.com/>

Volk, T. <http://tomvolkfungi.net>

Other links:

<http://www.newyorkmyc.org/links.htm>