Matchmaker: Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest

Below are written descriptions and images of fruiting bodies, mushrooms, of the fungal species in this ectomycorrhizal association. The information is from the web version of the Matchmaker: Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest (MMPNW) created by the Canadian Forest Service and based on the Windows MMPNW version 1.3 by Ian and Eli Gibson.

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LATIN NAME(S) Coprinus atramentarius (Fr.) Fr.; Coprinopsis atramentaria (Bull.:Fr.) Redhead, Vilgalys & Moncalvo

ENGLISH NAME(S) inky-cap, tippler's bane

NOTES Section Atramentarii, which some include in Section Coprinus; Coprinopsis atramentaria is the recently published name based on molecular evidence (Redhead(49)); features of atramentarius include lead-gray to brownish, radially lined cap which deliquesces, relatively thick stem, and often clustered growth; Van de Bogart's description is for var. atramentarius, other varieties are as follows: var. acuminatus as var. atramentarius except that a prominent umbo is present at cap apex, var. crassivelatus as var. atramentarius except that veil thick and often forming areolate patches (like cracked mud); C. atramentarius is common in the Pacific Northwest, Breitenbach & Kranzlin give distribution as North America, Europe, Asia, North Africa, Australia

CAP 2-6.5cm high before expansion, 3.0-8.0 wide after expansion, shape variable at first, spherical, short acorn-shaped, ovoid, nearly conic and then broadly rounded conic, often finally revolute (upturned) or laciniate; light grayish tan and medium brow

FLESH ranging from thin and membranous at cap margin to 0.3cm thick at top in large specimens, in stem thick and fibrous, sometimes brittle, 0.1-0.35cm thick, (Van De Bogart), thin, soft; pallid or grayish, (Arora)

GILLS free, extremely crowded, narrowly ellipsoidal, 4.5-6.2cm long and about 1.4cm broad; dingy white, then brown, and finally deep brownish black; destroyed by autolysis, (Van De Bogart), free or nearly free, crowded; at first white, soon gray or with pinkish to wine-colored tints, finally black and inky, (Arora)

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STEM 3.0-17.5cm x 0.25-1.0cm, slightly enlarged about 1/3 of the way up, an annular ring or flangelike zone present on this enlarged area, hollow; white, smooth, and often silky above the enlarged area and white with small brown appressed scales below it, (Van De Bogart), 4-15(20)cm x 0.6-1.5cm, equal or with narrowed or enlarged base, hollow; white or with grayish to brownish fibrils below, VOLVA may even have a rudimentary volva at base, (Arora)

VEIL universal veil forms small brown closely adherent scales on cap and stem base, similar hyphae making up the annular ringlike zone on the enlarged area of the stem, (Van De Bogart), partial veil fibrillose, may be evanescent or leave a median to basal ring or ridged zone on stem, (Arora)

ODOR none (Van De Bogart)

TASTE mild (Van De Bogart)

EDIBILITY edible but reacts with alcohol, it contains a disulfiram-like compound (coprine) that reacts with alcohol in the body to produce acetaldehyde, which in turn produces reddening of the ears and nose, a metallic taste in the mouth, light-headedness, rapid heartbeat, a throbbing sensation and sometimes nausea and vomiting, (Arora), take no alcohol for 1-2 days after eating

HABITAT solitary or in loose groups of several to many or in dense cespitose clusters, usually on soil and frequently near rotting wood, and especially partially buried rotten wood, rarely directly on rotting wood, (Van De Bogart), scattered to densely gregarious or in massive clumps in cultivated areas, lawns, gardens, roadsides, on or around old stumps, etc., (Arora)

SPORE DEPOSIT dark brownish black (Van De Bogart), black (Arora)

MICROSCOPIC spores (6.2)8.1-10.0(11.4) x (3.7)4.4-6.5 microns, broadly ovate, narrowly ovate, or elliptic, round in cross-section or nearly so, smooth, germ pore apical, 0.6-2.2 microns in diameter, apiculus of medium to small size, usually visible, ligh

NAME ORIGIN means "pertaining to ink", atramentum = ink (Latin)

SIMILAR like micaceus which is less fleshy with tan to yellow brown cap, thinner stem, gills pallid soon becoming gray or brownish then black; like striatus which has prominent brownish striations (but no plicate striations), to depressiceps which has top of cap depressed, spores laterally compressed (as opposed to round in cross-section or dorsoventrally compressed); like pinguisporus (with different spores)

SOURCES Van De Bogart(3), Arora*, Phillips*, Lincoff(2)*, Lincoff(1)*, Ammirati*, Kibby*, Courtecuisse*, Bessette(2)*, Barron*, Redhead(49), Breitenbach(4)*

FAMILY Coprinaceae of Order Agaricales