

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) Cortinarius camphoratus Fr.; Cortinarius hircinus Fr.; Cortinarius caesiocyaneus

NOTES subgenus Sericeocybe; characterized by pale bluish lilac colors when young, dry cap and stem, and strong distinctive odor; description derived from Brandrud except where noted; at least BC, WA, OR, fairly common in the Pacific Northwest

CAP 3-10cm, (hemi-)spherical, then flat-convex, frequently irregular and diffracted at margin, (Bessette says with or without low broad umbo, margin incurved when young); pale bluish-lilac to almost white, then turning yellow to yellowish brown from center; margin fibrillose from scattered veil remnants (Bessette gives dry, with a silvery whitish bloom at first, coated with tiny, flattened fibrils)

FLESH thick; bluish violet when young (at least in upper part), then dark ochraceous yellow from base (Brandrud), pale lilac to purplish (Bessette)

GILLS crowded, (Bessette: attached, subdistant); bluish violet when young, soon dark cinnamon brown; edge sometimes white fimbriate (fringed)

STEM 4-10cm x 1-2.5cm, equal or more often widening downward to clubshaped base; pale bluish lilac, turning yellowish with age or when damaged; (Bessette: solid, sheathed from base to ring zone with silky white matted fibrils)

VEIL universal veil sparse, forming indistinct scales, pale bluish violet when young, later turning yellowish (Brandrud); white webby cortina, leaving a thin fibrous ring zone (Bessette)

ODOR of raw potatoes (Bessette), powerful, remarkably raunchy odor of rotting meat or vegetables (Arora), strong and unpleasant, as of burnt flesh or burnt horn (Brandrud for Europe), cold mashed potatoes and goat's cheese (Courtecuisse for Europe)

TASTE unpleasant (Bessette)

EDIBILITY yes, but not recommended (Bessette)



Michael Beug

HABITAT solitary, scattered or in groups on ground under conifers and hardwoods (Bessette), mainly under spruce and fir in acid, fairly moist forests amongst deep moss (Brandrud for Europe)

SPORE DEPOSIT rusty brown (Bessette)

MICROSCOPIC spores 8.5-10.5 x 5-6 microns, amygdaliform (almond-shaped) to elliptic, slightly to distinctly verrucose, gill edge with indistinct cylindric sterile cells, (Brandrud), no pleurocystidia, marginal cells not abundant, 30-58 x 8.5-17 microns, fusiform to lageniform, (Breitenbach)

NAME ORIGIN pertaining to camphor, kafur = camphor (Arabic)

SIMILAR traganus differs in having fruity smell and lacking bluish colors in flesh and gills

SOURCES Brandrud*, Bessette(2)*, Courtecuisse*, Arora, Breitenbach(5)*

FAMILY Cortinariaceae of Order Agaricales