

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 varicolor* Fr.

NOTES subgenus *Phlegmacium*; characterized by viscid fibrillose cap violaceous at least toward margin when young, soon becoming umber to red-brown from center, flesh bluish white when very young, then whitish and bruising brownish, grayish blue gills, clubshaped stem that is pale bluish later turning (red-)brownish at least when bruised, odor that may be strong earthlike, and almond-shaped verrucose spores; uncommon in WA, **CHEMICAL REACTIONS** flesh goes yellow with KOH, flesh goes intensively bluish green with guaiac (Brandrud)

CAP 5-10cm, (hemi-)spherical, then flat-convex; when young and fresh violaceous (at least) toward margin, soon becoming umber (to red-brown) from center; initially viscid at least at margin, frequently coarsely (innately) fibrillose-veined to even faintly tomentose or scaly at center, (Brandrud), 5-13cm, convex, a mixture of violet and pale rusty red; glutinous especially at first, later it may become dry, (Phillips)

FLESH bluish white when very young, then whitish, turning brownish when bruised, (Brandrud), whitish with patches of violet, or more brownish when old and wet, (PNW keys)

GILLS crowded; grayish blue, more distinctly blue towards cap margin, (Brandrud), adnate; violet to pallid clay when young, then more rusty, (Phillips)

STEM 5-9cm x 1.5-2.5cm, clubshaped at base (to 3.5cm), pale bluish later turning (red-)brownish (spotted), at least when bruised, (Brandrud), 5-12cm x 1-1.8cm, with base swollen to club-shaped, violet, (Phillips), equal, without bulbous base, with a dense coating of pale lilac to whitish fibrils, violet or lilac beneath these, (PNW keys)

VEIL initially violaceous, then whitish, sparse and inconspicuous, (Brandrud)

ODOR strongly earth-like (Brandrud), sweetish, pleasant, (Phillips), not distinctive (PNW keys)

TASTE mild (Phillips)

HABITAT under conifers (Brandrud, Phillips)

SPORE DEPOSIT rusty brown (Phillips)

MICROSCOPIC spores 10-12 x 5.5-6.5 microns, almond-shaped, distinctly verrucose, (Brandrud), spores 8.5-11.6 x 5-6.5 microns, rather variable in size, almond-shaped to lemon-shaped, rough, (Phillips), no pleurocystidia, marginal cells slenderly clavate, basidiole-like, (Breitenbach), presumably without apical pore

NAME ORIGIN means 'with different colors'

SIMILAR *balteatus* but no lavender marginal zone, violet or grayish lilac flesh, paler gills; *substriatus* which may have striate margin and which has purplish brown to liver brown young cap

SOURCES Brandrud*, Phillips*, PNW keys, Courtecuisse*, Breitenbach(5)*

FAMILY Cortinariaceae of Order Agaricales