

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 violaceus* (L.:Fr.) S.F.Gray

ENGLISH NAME(S) violet Cortinarius

NOTES subgenus *Cortinarius*; features include very deep violet color and dry rough cap due to the presence of many small scales or tufted fibrils; the species that occurs in the Pacific Northwest may be a variety of *C. violaceus* (L.:Fr.) S.F.Gray but this is not entirely clear; in Europe, subsp. *hercynicus* (Pers.) Brandrud is distinguished from subsp. *violaceus* by habitat and spore shape; fairly common in the Pacific Northwest and reported specifically from BC (in Redhead(5)) and from WA (Jumpponen(1)), **CHEMICAL REACTIONS** KOH reacts blood red according to Brandrud for both subspecies

CAP 3.5-12(15)cm, convex becoming broadly convex, broadly umbonate or flat; deep violet to nearly black, often with a metallic luster when old, often grayish black when old, margin often somewhat paler; dry, densely covered with minute erect, tufted hairs or small scales, giving it a rough, somewhat velvety appearance, margin fringed often or ragged, (Arora), 5-9(12)cm, (hemi-)spherical, then flat-convex, sometimes broadly umbonate; dark violet with a metallic shine when young, later somewhat paler bluish violet, often grayish black when old, (Brandrud for both subspecies)

FLESH thick; deep violet becoming grayish violet, (Arora), violet, paler bluish in cap and base of stem, (Brandrud for both subspecies)

GILLS adnate becoming adnexed or notched, fairly well-spaced; deep violet or colored like cap, then dusted with cinnamon-brown spores, (Arora), moderately crowded, later rather distant; dark violet, then dark purplish brown, edges white-fringed, (Brandrud for both subspecies)

STEM 6-18cm x 1-2.5cm thick at top, equal or more often thicker below, solid, firm; deep violet; dry, fibrillose or woolly, (Arora), 6-12cm x 1-2cm, more or less strongly clavate-bulbose (to 4cm wide), (grayish-)violet, basal mycelium bluish (Brandrud for both subspecies)



John Dennis



Alvin Funk

VEIL cortina violet, soon disappearing or leaving a few indistinct hairs on stem, (Arora), veil grayish, fibrillose, forming indistinct girdles, (Brandrud for both subspecies)

ODOR mild or cedarlike, (Arora), not distinctive (Phillips), "weak but distinct of cedar wood or leather" (Brandrud for both subspecies)

TASTE not distinctive (Phillips)

EDIBILITY edible but not choice (Arora)

HABITAT solitary or in twos or threes under conifers, sometimes next to rotting logs, or mixed woods, in Europe said to favor hardwoods, (Arora), subsp. violaceous favors hardwoods, and subsp. hercynicus favors spruce, (Brandrud)

SPORE DEPOSIT rusty-brown (Arora)

MICROSCOPIC spores 13-17 x 7-10 microns, broadly elliptic to oblong, rough, pleurocystidia and cheilocystidia present, (Arora), 11.5-13.5 x 7-8(8.5) microns, elliptic to almond-shaped, distinctly verrucose; cheilocystidia abundant, large, 60-95(110) x (

NAME ORIGIN means 'violet-colored'

SIMILAR dozens of violet Cortinarii, but none as deeply colored and cap don't have the same dry roughness; like violet Lepiotas which lack cortina and have pinkish spores; crassus and subtortus are two other species that have large cystidia, otherwise unusual in Cortinarius

SOURCES Arora*, Phillips*, Lincoff(1)*, Courtecuisse*, Bessette(2)*, Brandrud*, Ammirati*, Barron*, Schalkwijk-Barendsen*, Jumpponen(1), Breitenbach(5)*

FAMILY Cortinariaceae of Order Agaricales