

## What are fungi?

Fungi are not plants or animals. They are a separate Kingdom. Their cell walls are made of a substance called *chitin* (similar to the composition of shrimp or crab shells). They digest their food outside of their bodies.

## What are mushrooms?

A mushroom is the "fruit" (reproductive part) of a fungus. It is the visible part of the fungus. For most of its life, the fungus grows underground (or in wood) in a vast net-like structure called *mycelium*, which is made up of tiny thin threads called *hyphae*. In some species, the mycelium can stretch for miles.

## Why should I care about fungi?

Fungi are important to life on earth as we know it. Here are some fascinating facts about fungi:

1. Most fungi are decomposers. They break down dead matter on the land and in the water. This frees up minerals, especially nitrogen and phosphorus, plus other nutrients, and makes them available to plants and animals. Fungi also keep the land and water free of debris.
2. Most plants have beneficial fungi living in or on the tips of their roots. Both the plants and the fungi share what is known as a *mycorrhizal* (my-co-RYE-zul) relationship. The fungi use the carbon compounds and sugars that the plants make, and the plants use the minerals and water that the hyphae of the fungus absorb from a larger area. This creates healthy, strong plants.
3. The mycelium of the fungi holds the soil in place, preventing erosion. It also filters runoff water in a natural process called *mycofiltration*.
4. Fungi absorb toxins from the soil (through a process called *bioaccumulation*.)
5. Fungi provide food for animals and insects.
6. Fungi affect biodiversity. For example, New Jersey and the Northeast were quite different places before a fungus killed most of the American Chestnut trees.

## How can I learn more?

- Join a mushroom club such as NJMA.
- Invest in books and field guides, and subscribe to periodicals such as *Mushroom the Journal* and *Fungi*.
- Use internet resources! A few valuable sites on the World Wide Web are:

Northeast Mycological Federation (NEMF)  
[www.nemf.org](http://www.nemf.org)

North American Mycological Association (NAMA)  
[www.namyco.org](http://www.namyco.org)

Rogers Mushrooms  
[www.rogersmushrooms.com](http://www.rogersmushrooms.com)

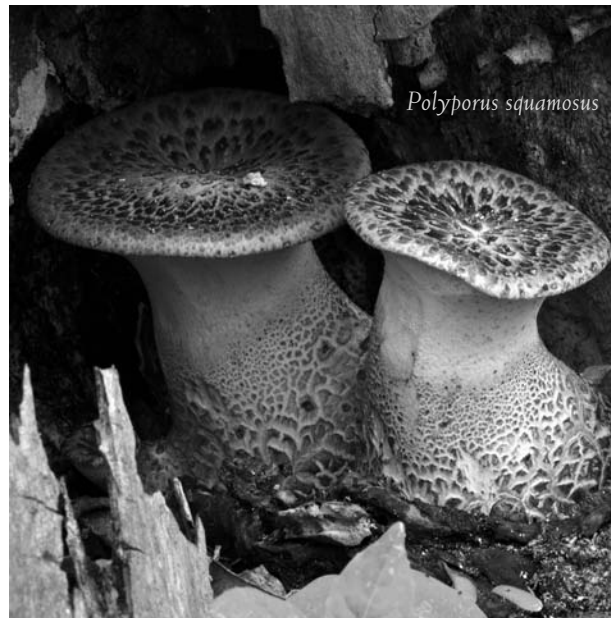
Michael Kuo's Mushroom Expert Pages  
[www.mushroomexpert.com](http://www.mushroomexpert.com)

Tom Volk's Fungi Pages  
[www.tomvolkfungi.net](http://www.tomvolkfungi.net)

Rod Tulloss' Amanita Website  
<http://www.amanitaceae.org>

**The cardinal rule for mushroom hunters is:**

**WHEN IN DOUBT,  
THROW IT OUT!**



# NEW JERSEY MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Application for Membership

Learn about  
mushrooms!

*Flammulina velutipes*

[www.njmyco.org](http://www.njmyco.org)

# JOIN THE NEW JERSEY MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The New Jersey Mycological Association (NJMA) is a nonprofit organization whose approximately three hundred members delight in sharing their interest in mycology (the study of fungi) and mycophagy (the eating of fungi).

*The aims of NJMA are:*

1. To provide the means for sharing ideas, experiences, knowledge and common interests regarding fungi.
2. To furnish mycological information and educational materials to those who wish to increase their knowledge about mushrooms.
3. To promote interest in mycology and mycophagy.

*To fulfill its aims, the association:*

A. Provides mushroom forays, under experienced leadership, on Saturday and Sunday mornings from May to October, starting at 10:00am, at various locations in NJ.

B. Holds monthly winter meetings, usually with a speaker of note, from November through April at 2:00 pm, Sundays at various locations. (Locations are announced in our newsletter and on our website, [www.njmyco.org](http://www.njmyco.org))

*Directions to meeting locations and foray locations are published on our website.)*

C. Publishes a nationally-recognized bi-monthly newsletter announcing Association activities and items of mycological interest.

D. Maintains a circulating library of mycological books and materials and a reference slide collection.

E. Offers educational courses in mushroom identification, cooking, cultivation, and crafts.

F. Maintains a herbarium of identified and preserved mycological specimens.

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**Anyone who is interested in any aspect of fungi is welcome to apply for membership.**

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*Membership in the NJMA is inexpensive, too!*  
(Dues are based on how you'd like to receive our newsletter.)

Membership with online newsletter only:

**Individuals \$10.00 per year**

**Families \$15.00 per year**

Membership with hardcopy mailed newsletter:

**Individuals \$35.00 per year**

**Families \$40.00 per year**

(Also includes access to the online newsletter)

- First-time members joining NJMA after June 30 of any given year will be covered through December 31 of the following year.
- Lapsed members who pay their dues after August 31 of any given year will be provided membership coverage through December 31 of the following year.

Complete this application, enclose a check (made payable to NJMA) and send to:

**Igor Safonov**

**115 East King's Highway, Unit #348  
Maple Shade, NJ 08052-3478**

You can also apply and pay online by visiting [www.njmyco.org/membership.html](http://www.njmyco.org/membership.html)

## Application for NJMA membership

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Questions about membership?  
Contact Igor at [njmycomember@gmail.com](mailto:njmycomember@gmail.com)  
(Please fill in all information...and please print very clearly!)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

\*EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

(\*Required if you opt for membership with online newsletter only.)

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### Choose your membership:

Individual (online newsletter only) \$10/yr.

Family (online newsletter only) \$15/yr.

Individual (hardcopy mailed newsletter) \$35/yr.

Family (hardcopy mailed newsletter) \$40/yr.

*Reminder: If you chose to receive only the online version of our newsletter, please be sure that you've included your email address!*

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I hereby release the New Jersey Mycological Association and any officer or member thereof from any legal responsibility for injuries or accidents incurred during or as a result of any field trip, excursion, or meeting sponsored by the Association.

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE