

apricot jelly fungus

Guepinia helvelloides

FEATURES

The apricot jelly fungus is also known as the red jelly fungus. The fan-shaped cap may curl under in the back. The cap tapers to a short, thick stalk at the base. The cap may be pink to orange. The “jelly fungus” name is given because of the jellylike consistency of the cap. The cap is firm and may be two to four inches tall and one to two and one-half inches wide. The body of a fungus (mycelium) is made up of strands called mycelia. The mycelium grows within the soil, a dead tree or other object and is rarely seen. The fruiting body that produces spores is generally present for only a short period of time but is the most familiar part of the fungus to people.

BEHAVIORS

The apricot jelly fungus may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows singly or in clusters on soil or decaying conifers. Unlike plants, fungi do not have roots, stems, leaves, flowers or seeds. The apricot jelly fungus must absorb nutrients and water from the objects it grows in. Spores are most often produced in summer and fall. The spores provide a means of reproduction, dispersal and survival in poor conditions. Spore production occurs when conditions are favorable, generally with warm temperatures and ample moisture.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Fungi
Phylum: Basidiomycota
Class: Agaricomycetes
Order: Auriculariales
Family: Exidiaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; peatlands; swamps; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie