

fairy ring mushroom

Marasmius oreades

FEATURES

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. The fairy ring mushroom, also known as the Scotch bonnet or fairy ring champignon, has a bell-shaped or flat cap on a slender stalk. The cap is shaded brown or yellow. It is thick at the center, tapering to a thin edge. The cap may be two inches wide, while the stalk may be as much as three inches tall.

BEHAVIORS

The fairy ring mushroom may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in groups that often take the shape of a circle or an arc of a circle, hence its common name. This mushroom grows in grassy soil or fields. Unlike plants, fungi do not have roots, stems, leaves, flowers or seeds. The fairy ring mushroom must absorb nutrients and water from the objects it grows in. It fruits at any time in the year when conditions are suitable. The spores produced provide a means of reproduction, dispersal and survival in poor conditions.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Fungi
Phylum: Basidiomycota
Class: Agaricomycetes
Order: Agaricales
Family: Marasmiaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

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