

king bolete *Boletus edulis*

Kingdom: Fungi

Division/Phylum: Basidiomycota

Class: Agaricomycetes

Order: Boletales

Family: Boletaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

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 king bolete has a brown, thick, rounded cap that is smooth and dry. Its color is yellow-brown to brown with lighter shades near the edge. The white or brown stalk is thick and solid. There is a netlike appearance to the upper stalk. The cap may be nearly 11 inches wide, while the stalk may attain a height of eight inches.

BEHAVIORS

The king bolete may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows alone or in groups in forests. Unlike plants, fungi do not have roots, stems, leaves, flowers or seeds. The king bolete must absorb nutrients and water from the objects it grows in. Spores are 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.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

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

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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