

shaggy mane fungus

Coprinus comatus

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 cap of the shaggy mane fungus is white, yellow or light brown. As it matures, the cap becomes broken into curling scales. The thin flesh changes from white to pink to purple to black. At the black stage, the flesh dissolves. The white stalk is cylindrical and hollow. The cap may be two and one-half inches wide while the stalk may attain a height of six inches.

BEHAVIORS

The shaggy mane fungus, also known as the shaggy ink cap or lawyer's wig fungus, may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows singly or in clusters in disturbed areas, such as roadsides and clearings. Unlike plants, fungi do not have roots, stems, leaves, flowers or seeds. The shaggy mane fungus must absorb nutrients and water from the objects it grows in. Spores are produced from late summer to 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: Agaricales
Family: Agaricaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



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Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge