

RINGLESS HONEY MUSHROOMS-EDIBLE WILD VARIETIES OR POISONOUS?

Ringless Honey Mushrooms-Edible Wild Varieties or Poisonous?



After doing extensive research to learn the correct species of this mushroom, I'm still not 100% sure that the fungi pictured here are in fact, Ringless Honey Mushroom aka (*Armillaria tabescens*). I would love to know, if for no other reason that I want to create delicious dishes with them. Things like mushroom omelettes and *Southwestern Posole Stew with Jalapeño Cheddar Corn Sticks*.

I spotted this cluster in my backyard growing out from a buried tree stump about two weeks ago. I'm 98.9% certain they are the same, but the fear of hallucinations and possible death has kept me from cooking up the batch.

Case and point: Grossly similar species include **Pholiota** spp. which also grow in cespitose clusters on wood and

fruit in the fall. However *Pholiota* spp. have a yellowish to greenish yellow cast and a dark brown to grey-brown spore print. **Mushroom hunters** need to be especially wary of **Galerina** spp. which can grow side by side with *Armillaria* spp. also on wood. **Galerina** has a dark brown spore print and is deadly poisonous (**alpha-amanitin**) – see: **mushroom poisoning**. Source: wikipedia

Upon first inspection, the cluster had all the hallmarks of the honey mushroom, but after more inspection, and several days growth with drastic visible changes, it became more unclear.

I was unable to detect the fine hairs on the cap the first week of growth, so my first response was that they were poisonous mushrooms. To compact the issues of species detection, Northern California has been hit with a deluge of heavy rain rendering the more mature mushrooms, shiny and wet, making it difficult to get a good read on the species.

It's clear that I am not a *Mushroom Expert* (*Mycologist*) and without years of experience, I've erred on the side of caution and refrained from consuming these beautiful fungi however, they are the perfect specimen for photography.

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Many mushrooms are poisonous some are deadly poisonous. We have made every effort to ensure accuracy on this website but, in the end, the responsibility for eating any mushroom or fungus must rest with the individual; for instance there are people who are allergic to all species of mushrooms. If you collect any mushrooms to eat make sure that your identification checks out in every detail. Never eat any wild mushroom until an expert mycologist has checked your identification. Even when you know a mushroom well weather conditions or animal damage can cause differences in appearance that could lead to misidentification.



If you are a *Mushroom Expert (Mycologist)* with knowledge of the species photographed here, please feel free to leave a comment and link to your website. I'm eager to

learn more about my cluster of fungi and the possibility of cooking the next batch I find.

ARE THEY OR ARE THEY NOT RINGLESS HONEY MUSHROOMS??

MORE HONEY MUSHROOM INFO:

Kuo, M. (2004, October). [Armillaria mellea](#). Retrieved from the [MushroomExpert.Com](#)

Ecology: Pathogenic and [parasitic](#) on the wood of hardwoods (and occasionally on conifers); causing a white, pulpy rot in the wood; spreading through wood, and from tree to tree, by means of long black [rhizomorphs](#); mushrooms typically appearing in large clusters on wood in the fall after rains, but found nearly year-round in warmer climates; eastern and southeastern North America.

Cap: 3-15 cm, convex to broadly convex or flat in age; the margin often arched in maturity; dry or tacky; color extremely variable, but typically honey yellow; smooth, or with a few tiny, dark scales concentrated near the center and vaguely radially arranged.

Gills: Attached or beginning to run down the stem; nearly distant; whitish, sometimes bruising or discoloring darker.

*Stem: 5-20 cm long; .5-3.5 cm thick; tapering to base due to clustered growth pattern; tough and fibrous; smooth and pale near apex, darker and nearly hairy below; with a persistent **ring** at maturity and a white **partial veil** covering the gills when young.*

Flesh: Whitish to watery tan.

***Odor and Taste:** Taste mild to bitter; odor sweet.*

***Spore Print:** White.*





Wikipedia: Honey fungus, or Armillaria or openky (Ukrainian: опеньки), is a genus of parasitic fungi that live on trees and woody shrubs. It includes about 10 species formerly lumped together as A. mellea. Armillarias are long lived and form some of

the *largest living organisms* in the world. The largest single organism (of the species *Armillaria solidipes*) covers more than 3.4 square miles (8.8 km²) and is thousands of years old.^[1] Some species of *Armillaria* are *bioluminescent* and may be responsible for the phenomena known as *foxfire* and perhaps *will o' the wisp*.

As a *forest pathogen*, *Armillaria* can be very destructive. It is responsible for the “*white rot*” *root disease* of forests and is distinguished from *Tricholoma (mycorrhizal)* by this parasitic nature. Its high destructiveness comes from the fact that, unlike most parasites, it doesn't need to moderate its growth in order to avoid killing its host, since it will continue to thrive on the dead material.

In the *Canadian Prairies* (particularly Manitoba), the term “*honey fungus*” is unknown to many; due to the large presence of Ukrainian Canadians in this area, the fungus is often referred to as *pidpenky* (*Ukrainian*: підпеньки), from the Ukrainian term, “*beneath the stump*”.

Armillaria hinnulea

The *fruit bodies* of the fungus are *mushrooms* that grow on wood, typically in small dense clumps or tufts. Their *caps* are typically yellow-brown, somewhat sticky to touch when moist, and, depending on age, may range in shape from conical to convex to depressed in the center. The *stem* may or may not have

a *ring*. All *Armillaria* species have a white *spore print* and none have a *volva* (compare *Amanita*).^[2]

Grossly similar species include *Pholiota* spp. which also grow in cespitose clusters on wood and fruit in the fall. However *Pholiota* spp. have a yellowish to greenish yellow cast and a dark brown to grey-brown spore print. *Mushroom hunters* need to be especially wary of *Galerina* spp. which can grow side by side with *Armillaria* spp. also on wood. *Galerina* has a dark brown spore print and is deadly poisonous (*alpha-amanitin*) – see: *mushroom poisoning*.

EDIBILITY

Edible – Choice. Honey Fungus or *pidpenky* (*Ukrainian*: підпеньки) are considered in Ukraine, Russia, Poland, Germany and other European countries to be one of the best wild mushrooms and highly prized. They are commonly ranked above *morels* and *chanterelles* and only the *cep / porcini* is more highly prized. However *pidpenky* must be thoroughly cooked as they are mildly poisonous raw. Additionally one of the four UK species identified can lead to sickness when ingested with alcohol. Therefore for the non expert mycologist it is advisable not to drink alcohol for 12 hours before and 24 after eating this mushroom to avoid any possible nausea and vomiting. However, if these rules are followed this variety of mushroom is a delicacy with a strong distinctive mushroomy and nutty flavour. Recommended reference text

for identification are Collins Complete British Mushrooms and Toadstools for the variety of field pictures in it and Roger Philips Mushrooms for the quality of his out of field pictures and descriptions.



Links

[Wikipedia.com](#)

[Kuo, M. \(2004, October\). Armillaria mellea. Retrieved from the MushroomExpert.Com](#)

[First Nature](#)

[NowIveSeenEverything](#)

[Hunter Angler](#)

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