

New Brunswick Mushroom Identification Chart

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Species	Season	Where It Grows	Key ID Features	Dangerous Look-alike	Edibility
Golden chanterelle (Cantharellus spp.)	Jul – Oct, peak Aug	Mossy ground in Acadian mixed wood under yellow birch, red spruce and balsam fir; heaviest in the central highlands and behind the Fundy coast	Egg-yolk to apricot orange; blunt false gills that fork and run down the stem; apricot smell; solid pale flesh; grows from soil	Jack-o'-lantern (sharp true gills, clusters on wood); false chanterelle (thin true forked gills on conifer debris)	Choice; cook well
Black trumpet (Craterellus fallax)	Jul – Sep	Mossy slopes in beech and sugar maple stands of the central highlands and the lower river valley	Grey-black, thin-fleshed trumpet; no true gills; smoky-sweet smell; hides flat in leaf litter	None serious in New Brunswick	Choice
Hedgehog (Hydnum repandum, H. umbilicatum)	Aug – Oct, peak Sep	Mossy conifer and mixed Acadian forest, province-wide	Orange-tan cap with soft spines underneath instead of gills; firm white flesh	None; the spines are definitive	Choice
Lobster mushroom (Hypomyces lactifluorum)	Late Jul – Sep	Mixed Acadian forest floor near hemlock, spruce and fir; the most-recorded edible fungus in the province	Hard, pimpled orange-red crust over dense white flesh; no visible gills; faint seafood smell	Soft or deteriorated specimens; pick only firm, bright ones	Good; cook well
King bolete / porcini (Boletus edulis group)	Aug – Oct, peak Sep	Spruce and fir in the Restigouche and Madawaska boreal uplands and the Nepisiguit headwaters	Brown bun cap; white pores ageing olive; fine white netting on a thick stem; flesh does not stain blue	Bitter bolete (pink pores, dark netting); avoid all red-pored or blue-staining boletes	Choice
Bay bolete (Imleria badia)	Aug – Oct	Conifer duff and mossy ground under spruce and pine, common through the north	Chestnut-brown cap, dry to slightly tacky; pale yellow pores that bruise slowly blue-green	Other boletes; gentle blue bruising on pale pores is the give-away; avoid red-pored boletes	Good; cook well
Chicken of the woods (Laetiporus sulphureus group)	Jul – Oct, peak Aug – Sep	Living and dead hardwood, especially oak and maple in the Saint John River valley and the south	Bright orange overlapping shelves with a sulphur-yellow pore surface; no gills; soft edges when young	Jack-o'-lantern (true gills, clusters from wood); identify the host tree, conifer specimens upset some stomachs	Good; young soft edges only, cook well
Hen of the woods / maitake (Grifola frondosa)	Sep – Nov	Base of mature oak in the southern valley and the Fundy lowlands, at the eastern edge of its range; returns to the same tree	Grey-brown rosette of overlapping spoon-shaped fronds from one branching base; white pores underneath	Black-staining polypore (tougher, bruises black)	Choice; cook well
Oyster mushroom (Pleurotus ostreatus, P. pulmonarius)	May – Nov, flushing after rain	Dead and dying hardwood: poplar, beech, maple, alder, and cottonwood along the river bottoms	Shelf-like white-to-tan caps; gills running down a short off-centre stem; anise smell; white-lilac spore print	Angel wings (thin, pure white, on conifer wood; avoid)	Good
Lion's mane (Hericium erinaceus, H. americanum)	Sep – Nov	Wounds on living hardwood and fallen beech and maple logs; uncommon here but unmistakable	Cascading white spines; no cap, gills or pores; H. americanum branches like coral	None; nothing dangerous resembles it in New Brunswick	Choice; cook well
Shaggy mane (Coprinus comatus)	Aug – Oct, peak Sep	Lawns, gravel road edges and disturbed soil in every town in the province	Tall shaggy white cylinder; gills dissolve into black ink with age	Common ink cap (reacts badly with alcohol); pick only young, all-white specimens	Good; cook the day you pick it
Giant puffball (Calvatia gigantea)	Aug – Oct	Pasture and field edges, hayfields and old farm ground	White sphere the size of a football; flesh pure white and uniform when sliced	Amanita egg-stage buttons; slice top to bottom to check for a hidden cap outline	Good; only while pure white inside
Morel (Morchella spp.)	Early May – mid Jun	Cottonwood, elm and silver maple bottomland along the Saint John River; old orchards; burns the spring after a fire	Honeycomb-pitted cap fully attached to the stem; completely hollow from tip to base when sliced	False morel (Gyromitra esculenta: wrinkled not pitted, chambered inside, never hollow)	Choice; always cook
Honey mushroom (Armillaria group)	Sep – Nov	Dense clusters on and around dying hardwood, stumps and buried roots; the most-recorded gilled mushroom in NB	White spore print; ring on the stem; dark hairs at the cap centre; grows in tight clusters	Deadly galerina (rusty-brown spore print, same logs); spore print every batch	Edible with caution; always cook well
Velvet foot (Flammulina velutipes)	Late Oct – Apr, fruiting through thaws	Dead and dying hardwood, especially elm, poplar and willow; a cold-weather mushroom	Sticky orange-tan cap; white spore print; dark velvety stem base; no ring	Deadly galerina (rusty-brown spore print, ring on the stem, no velvety base); spore print every batch	Good; cook well
Wine cap (Stropharia rugosoannulata)	Jun – Oct	Not a forest species here: naturalised in wood-chip beds, gardens, landscaped mulch and trail edges in towns	Wine-red to tan cap fading with age; dark purple-black spore print; thick white stem with a thick ribbed ring	Other ringed brown mushrooms on mulch; the dark purple-black spore print settles it	Good; cook well
Matsutake / pine mushroom (Tricholoma magnivelare)	Sep – Oct	Sandy ground under jack pine and spruce; local and patchy, mostly the northeast and the Miramichi barrens	Thick white cap streaked cinnamon-brown; cottony ring; firm tapering stem; strong spicy cinnamon smell; no volva	White Amanita (a sac-like volva at the base and no spicy smell); dig the whole base	Choice
Chaga (Inonotus obliquus)	Year-round; easiest after leaf-fall	Living yellow and white birch in the northern boreal country	Black, cracked, burnt-looking exterior with a rusty-orange interior	Birch burls (wood-hard, no orange interior)	Tea and extract only; harvest sparingly
Destroying angel (Amanita bisporigera, A. virosa)	Jul – Sep	Mixed Acadian and hardwood forest province-wide; the most-recorded amatoxin mushroom in NB	Pure white throughout; free gills; skirt-like ring; sac-like volva buried at the base; white spore print. Dig the whole stem; slice every white button top to bottom	Mistaken for puffball buttons; meadow mushrooms; any young white gilled mushroom	DEADLY – amatoxins; symptoms are delayed 6 to 24 hours
Death cap (Amanita phalloides)	Aug – Oct where it occurs	NOT established in New Brunswick: no verified records. It travels in the root balls of imported ornamental trees. The NB amatoxin risk is the destroying angels above	Greenish to bronze cap; white free gills; ring; sac-like volva; white spore print	Mistaken for lawn and boulevard gilled mushrooms, where it does occur	DEADLY where it occurs – amatoxins
Deadly galerina (Galerina marginata)	Aug – Nov, and again through winter thaws	Clusters on dead conifer and hardwood; the same logs as honey mushrooms and velvet foot	Rusty-brown spore print (honey mushroom and velvet foot both print white); ring on the stem; no velvety stem base	Mistaken for honey mushrooms and velvet foot	DEADLY – amatoxins; the most likely fatal mistake in New Brunswick
False morel (Gyromitra esculenta)	May – Jun, overlapping morel season	Sandy soil under conifers and disturbed ground, province-wide; heavily recorded here	Reddish-brown brain-like wrinkled cap, not a pitted honeycomb; solid or chambered inside, never hollow tip to base	Mistaken for true morels	DEADLY – gyromitrin; there is no reliable home preparation
Jack-o'-lantern (Omphalotus illudens)	Jul – Oct	Clusters on hardwood stumps and buried roots, southern half of the province	Sharp true gills, not blunt forking ridges; tight clusters from wood, not single from soil; gills glow faintly in the dark	Mistaken for chanterelles; chicken of the woods	Poisonous – severe gastrointestinal illness
Green-spored parasol (Chlorophyllum molybdites)	Jul – Sep	Rare in NB, at the northern edge of its range; lawns, playing fields, fertilised grass	A GREEN spore print; cap, scales and ring all look right, so print every lawn parasol	Mistaken for shaggy parasol; other edible lawn parasols	Poisonous – severe gastrointestinal illness

Never eat any wild mushroom you have not identified with certainty against multiple features. When in doubt, throw it out.

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