



THE MUSHROOM MENAGERIE

ceramic installation



The Mushroom Menagerie is an art installation by Jamestown, NY artist Wendy Bale. Over 50 regional mushrooms are created in mixed media; primarily ceramic. This document is a guide to the species depicted here and their roles in the ecosystem.

The common names vary widely, for further reference the ones used here are found in the Peterson Field Guide on the listed pages.

1. COLLARED PINWHEEL *Marasmius rotula*



Collared Pinwheels grow in an array of habitats, including woodlands and fields on dead deciduous wood and debris. Sometimes called the resurrection fungus, its revived by rain. The stems –so impossibly thin– for this ceramic sculpture are made of wire.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 64

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2. KING BOLETE *Boletus edulis*



This large mushroom grows in association with conifer trees, especially Norway spruce, Hemlock and White Pine. It forms a symbiotic relationship with these trees and they both benefit. It has pores instead of gills under its cap and is also known as a Penny Bun.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 252

3. VIOLET WEBCAP *Corinarius violaceus*



Sometimes called Violet Cort, this mushroom is affiliated with both conifers and deciduous trees. It is found in the soil, but always near trees. The webby veil, which covers the gills on the fruiting body is represented in this sculpture with kozo paper.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 204

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4. SHAGGYMANE *Coprinus comatus*



Shaggymanes are part of the Inky Cap family and as they mature the caps turn black and dissolve. They are also known as “Lawyer’s Wig”. It is widely distributed in North America and favors disturbed ground, found alone or in clusters.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 234

5. SMOOTH CHANTARELLE *Cantharellus lateritius*



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6. SLIPPERY RING WEBCAP *Cortinarius trivialis*



One of many species of brown cortinarius, Slippery Ring Webcaps are known to be found under Quaking Aspen, but can also associate with Spruce and Birch trees. Slimy when young, the sculpture depicts a dry, older specimen discovered under the Spruce trees in the artist's yard.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 180

7. GIANT PUFFBALL *Calvatia gigantea*



When mature, these look like soccer balls in the field. Once thought to be saprotrophic (feeding on decay) they are now believed to be mycorrhizal—however not with trees—possibly with certain types of grass. The fungus dries out, turns brown and releases clouds of spores.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 367

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8. AMETHYST TALLOWGILL *Laccaria amethystina*



Hardwood forests (represented by the beech leaves in this wall sculpture) are the home of these colorful mushrooms. Often found in deep leaf litter, they have a symbiotic relationship with the trees. Some field guides call this “Amethyst Deceiver”, but all common names listed here follow the Peterson names.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 202

9. OLD MAN OF THE WOODS *Strobilomyces strobilaceus*



“Old Man” communicates with oaks and other deciduous trees through thread-like mycelium. As a nod to this relationship, the sculpture includes a fallen oak leaf. This is a type of bolete, with pores instead of gills under its cap.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 274

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10. REDBELT *Fomitopsis pinicola*



This shiny lacquered polypore is usually found on downed trees and stumps, but can also be parasitic on living trees causing brown rot. They are perennial and the yellowish/white bands are the new growth, the black older areas are from previous years.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 202

11. CAESAR'S DEATHCAP *Amanita jacksonii*



This widespread colorful mushroom looks like a bright egg coming out of a white sack (called a volva) under oaks and pines. It is interconnected with these woodland trees. The fruiting body takes on many forms and changes color as it matures. They can be vivid red or orange fading to more yellow.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 202

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12. BLUE STAIN *Chlorociboria aeruginascens*



Also known as Green Elf cup the mycelium stains decaying wood a blue-green color. This evidence is more often seen than the tiny fruiting bodies of this saprobic species. Often found on oak logs this beautiful wood is prized for use in woodworking and marquetry. The sculpture includes another woodland favorite, the Red Eft.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 332

13. HEMLOCK REISHI *Ganoderma tsugae*



The “Spark Fungus” of this entire collection! During a trip to Cook Forest in Pennsylvania the artist discovered these “lacquered polypores” decorating the trunks of old growth Hemlock forest. They were so beautiful, she was inspired to replicate them in clay—complete with carrion beetle.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 202

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14. FLY AGARIC *Amanita muscaria*

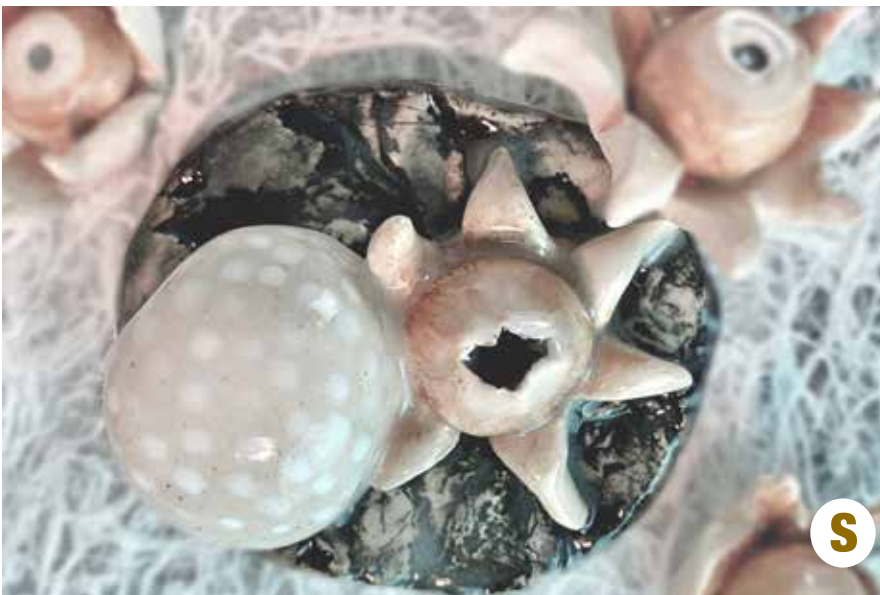


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Straight out of a fairy tale! The most infamous—and recognizable— toadstool of all, Fly Agaric comes in various shades of red, orange and yellow. It can be found near living trees where its mycelium has a symbiotic relationship with the tree roots. It is reported to attract flies. And then kill them.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 118

15. DAISY EARTHSTAR *Geastrum floriforme*



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These tiny Earthstars are saprobes found near dead trees. They start out like a tiny puffball, then break open to reveal the “arms”. The rays react to moisture (hygroscopic) and close up in the dry weather to protect the spore sack only to open again when it rains.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 370

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16. GREENGILL *Chlorophyllum molybdites*



This very widespread mushroom is often found in large fairy rings in suburban lawns. Other common names for it are Green-Spored Lepiota or the more menacing “The Vomiter”. The gills are actually white, but become stained with the green spores as they mature.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 110

17. TURKEY TAIL *Trametes versicolor* & YELLOW WAXY CAPS *Hygrocybe flavescens*



These fungi perform two different roles in the forest. The Turkey Tail breaks down dead wood and is commonly found on stumps and fallen logs. Waxy Caps are known to form mutualistic relationships with plant roots, exchanging nutrients for sugars produced by the plant’s photo synthesis.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 282, 140

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18. SLIPPERY JACK *Suillus luteus*



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This fall mushroom is also called “Sticky Bun”. They are mycorrhizal and here in North America can be found under two-needle pines, like the Red Pines in the artist’s western New York yard. The cap is thick and sticky, the pores under the cap release cinnamon brown spores.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 254

19. RESINOUS POLYPORE *Ischnoderma resinosum*



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A bejeweled species! The amber resin droplets found on the rim of this sculpture are represented here with art resin-coated tree sap. The Resinous Polypore breaks down dead and dying hardwood trees and is also occasionally found on conifers.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 286

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20. BLACK MOREL *Morchella angusticeps*



These club-shaped mushrooms sometimes pop up near recently dead or dying trees. Old orchards are another good place to look.

They are an elusive favorite with mushroom hunters during their very short spring season. Tricky to predict, they don't always appear again where once found.

More information:
Peterson Field Guide, p. 348

Q: Why you put your favorite at the end of the Mushroom Menagerie?

A: That's easy! Everyone knows the morel goes at the end of the story!

–Wendy Bale

*Wendy Bale is a visual artist and sculptor in Jamestown, New York.
See more about her art practice at WendyBaleArt1st.com*

Sources used in researching this project include:

- The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben
- www.mushroomexpert.com
- Mushrooms of the Northeast: A Simple Guide to Common Mushrooms by Teresa Marrone and Walt Sturgeon .
- National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms by Gary Lincoff
- Peterson Field Guide To Mushrooms Of North America by Karl B. McKnight. Joseph R. Rohrer Kirsten McKnight Ward, Kent H. McKnight