

Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science

Volume 35 | Annual Issue

Article 22

1928

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Recommended Citation

Martin, G. W. (1928) "Notes on Iowa Fungi – 1927," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*, 35(1), 131-133.

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NOTES ON IOWA FUNGI — 1927

G. W. MARTIN

I. *Merulius americanus* as a timber rot.

Merulius americanus Burt is apparently rather common in Iowa, the failure to record it more frequently probably being due to the fact that it has been confused with *M. lachrymans* Fr., the common European timber rotting fungus. The latter species is rare in America, according to Burt. We have several records of *M. americanus* from old cellars and from logs in woods. In January, 1928, it was found in Iowa City in great abundance under the porch of a house only three years old. It had completely rotted the floor boards and the 2" x10" fir timbers supporting them and had formed sheets of hymenium-bearing tissue on the brick supporting walls. The porch had been constructed without ventilation and this, of course, accounted for the rapidity and luxuriance of the growth. The incident furnishes a striking example of the amount of damage this fungus can do in a short time when conditions are favorable for its growth.

II. *Collybia myriadophylla* Pk.

This rather small, but attractive species, characterized by close, deep lilac gills and minute spores, has heretofore been reported, according to Kauffman,¹ only as growing on coniferous wood. We have a typical collection from Johnson county, where it was growing upon an oak log.

III. *Tricholoma panaeolum* Fr.

This is one of several aberrant species of the genus *Tricholoma* having spores of a dingy flesh-color. Through the kindness of Professor J. C. Gilman of Ames, I received a representative collection from Lake Mills, Iowa, where they were found by Mr. C. V. Holsinger. I find no previous record of its occurrence in North America, although Kauffman reports the variety *caespitosum* Bres. as frequent in Michigan. According to Rea² the variety differs from the typical form in its caespitose habit, the mealy apex of the stipe and the narrower gills. Kauffman³ adds that the variety is characterized by a slowly peppery or disagreeable taste. One

¹ Agaricaceae of Michigan, 1918. P. 761.

² British Basidiomycetae, 1922. P. 238.

³ Agaricaceae of Michigan, 1918. P. 712.

group of specimens in Mr. Holsinger's collection is caespitose, but in all other respects they agree with the typical form. The taste was pleasant, somewhat farinaceous. The horn colored line at the base of the gills, emphasized by Rea, is very characteristic and may be noted in the specimen at the right in the illustration (Fig. 1).

IV. Longevity of fruiting bodies of *Pleurotus ostreatus*.

On March 12 a large number of fruiting bodies of *Pleurotus ostreatus* Fr. was noted on stumps, where they had obviously wintered over from the preceding autumn. The caps were old and

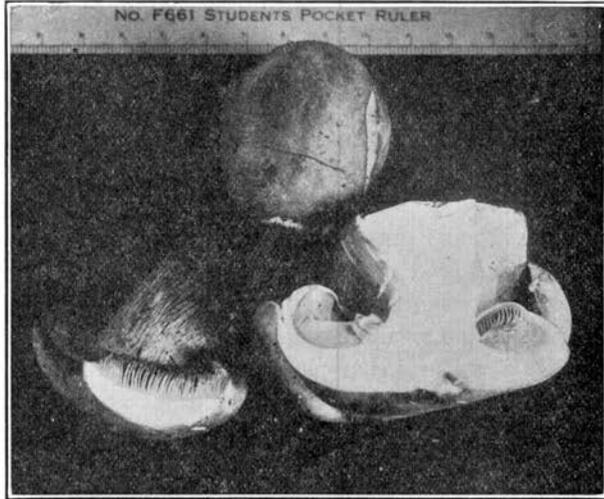


Fig. 1. *Tricholoma panaeolum*.

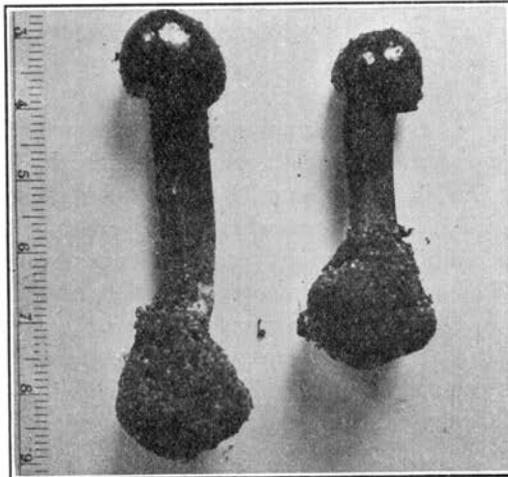


Fig. 2. *Cordyceps capitata*, on *Elaphomyces*.

dingy and weathered and the tops were covered with mold colonies. They could not have been produced later than the preceding November. One cluster was brought into the laboratory and placed on a table without protection or covering of any sort. The following morning the top of the table in the vicinity of the fruiting bodies was covered with a thick mass of spores. While a number of the tougher agarics are known to possess long-lived basidiocarps this long persistence is unusual in a subfleshy species.

In this connection it may be noted that sporophores of *Polyporus cinnabarinus* Fr., obviously developed the preceding fall, and collected in late April, were still shedding spores abundantly. It seems probable that this may not be unusual among the annual polypores.

V. Cordyceps capitata Lk.

This handsome Cordyceps (Fig. 2), a parasite on *Elaphomyces*, is an interesting addition to the flora of Iowa. The specimens were collected at Homestead, Iowa county, in October, by Miss Margaret Wolf and Mr. D. B. Creager.