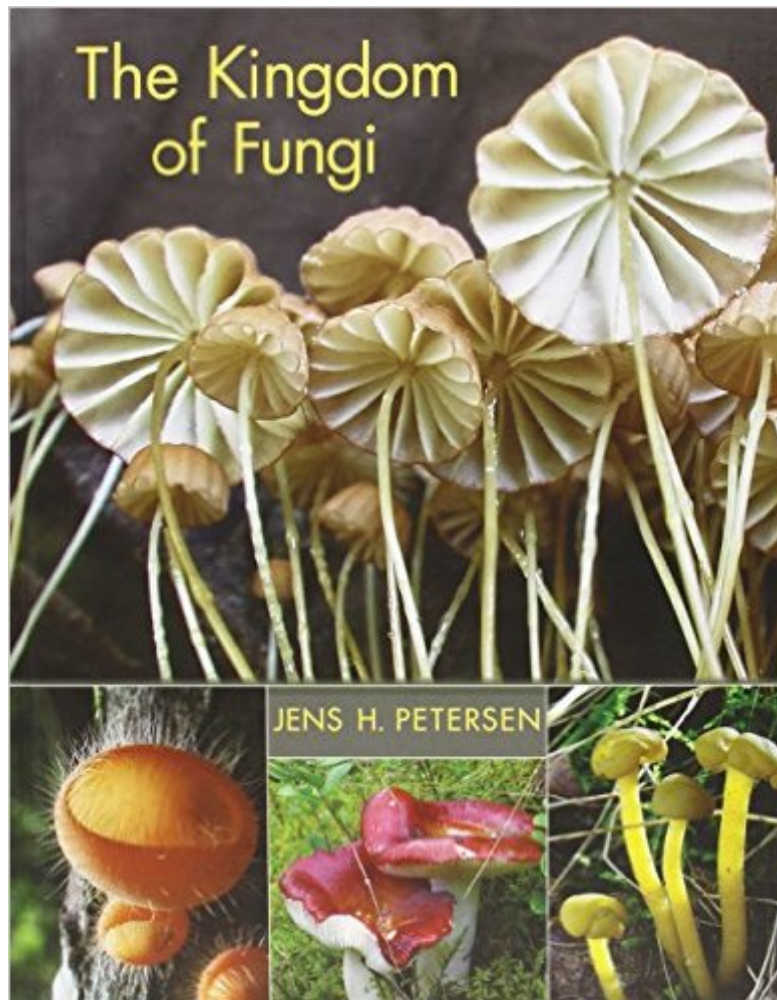


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# The Kingdom Of Fungi



## Synopsis

The fungi realm has been called the "hidden kingdom," a mysterious world populated by microscopic spores, gigantic mushrooms and toadstools, and a host of other multicellular organisms ranging widely in color, size, and shape. The Kingdom of Fungi provides an intimate look at the world's astonishing variety of fungi species, from cup fungi and lichens to truffles and tooth fungi, clubs and corals, and jelly fungi and puffballs. This beautifully illustrated book features more than 800 stunning color photographs as well as a concise text that describes the biology and ecology of fungi, fungal morphology, where fungi grow, and human interactions with and uses of fungi. The Kingdom of Fungi is a feast for the senses, and the ideal reference for naturalists, researchers, and anyone interested in fungi. Reveals fungal life as never seen before Features more than 800 stunning color photos Describes fungal biology, morphology, distribution, and uses A must-have reference book for naturalists and researchers

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There is such a breadth of knowledge about the kingdom of fungi that most beginners are unaware even exists. This is a great book to introducing beginners to just how big a field - and kingdom - mycology is. All without being overwhelming nor coming across as a college level textbook.

Do not pick this book up if you are expecting a field guide or really in depth guide to Mycology, pick this book up if you are a lover of Fungi and want to be amazed by beautiful photos and snippets of information. The Kingdom of Fungi takes a look at fungi from both a scientific standpoint as well as a

'coffee table-esque' visual guide to the various types and families. From microscopic to humongous fruiting bodies, the book starts with spores, hyphae, and mycelium, and gradually moves through the kingdom of Fungi. I absolutely love how it blends biology and beauty, this is no dry textbook. I would say this is a great introduction to Mycology, if you know someone who has an interest in mushrooms and wants to make the leap from field guides to the 'hard stuff' I would say this is a great stepping stone. For anyone who is curious about this kind of thing, most of the fungi used as photographic examples and studies in this book are from Denmark, Ecuador, Bhutan, Sweden, and a smattering of other locations. I was amused at how many fungi that are native to Denmark are native to parts of the world that I have gone mushrooming. This is a great addition to my mushroom book collection.

My entry into the mystical field of mycology was through medical mycology. In recent years I have become fascinated with mushrooms and am an avid hunter with camera. I like this book because it removes the source of some of my confusion. (Maybe PhD prepared people are not supposed to admit confusion but I do so freely.) Terms are defined and have a line drawing or a photograph. The confusing taxonomical groups are explained. The photographs are exquisite. If you want a strictly scientific text this may not be what you think you want. I have the scientific texts and this book clears up some of the confusing parts of the science. This book has helped me see the forest through trees. Sometimes it is best to step back and get an overview. In addition, the book is so beautiful it would make an excellent coffee table book as a gift.

The Kingdom of Fungi  
Jens H. Petersen  
Often there's a huge disjunct between a laudatory blurb on the back cover of a book and that book's not necessarily laudatory content. This is not the case with Danish mycologist Jens Petersen's *The Kingdom of Fungi*, about which Harvard University's Don Pfister has blurbed: "It melds the traditional classification still found in most field guides with the findings from recent phylogenetic studies. The photographs are absolutely stunning and will be the talk of the town." I will go a step further and say that not only the photographs, but the book itself will end up being the talk of any town where mycophiles dwell. The book's 800+ photographs accomplish a singular feat: they display the diagnostic features of a particular species—gill attachment or lack thereof, apothecial hairs, etc.—without sacrificing esthetics. Who would have thought that dry rot or obligate plant pathogens like *Puccinias* could be beautiful? That many of the fungi were photographed through a dissecting scope doesn't diminish their appeal at all. Quite the contrary. The *Pilobolus* looks like an exquisite chandelier.

Petersen almost always includes the scale beneath his images, and thus you won't think that a *Pilobolus* is actually chandelier-sized. He even indicates scale for a photograph of a fairy ring taken from an airplane! If I stopped here, I would be doing the book a disservice. For the text is remarkable, too. It describes the ecology and biology of fungi, where fungi grow, and human interactions with fungi. Being a Scandinavian, Petersen is a man of few words, but he makes each of those words count. Here's one of his descriptions: "In some cases, a parasitic fungus is dependent on the host staying alive. This is the case when rusts parasitize the leaves of living plants. In other cases, the fungus kills the host and absorbs the remnants. This is the case when the honey fungus (*Armillaria*) or root rot (*Heterobasidion*) kills a tree, or when a *Cordyceps* devours an insect." In writing such descriptions, Petersen seems to be following Richard Feynman's belief that every scientific truth can be expressed in simple language. In addition to commonly described and no less commonly illustrated species, *The Kingdom of Fungi* includes species that you might otherwise find only in scientific papers or in the abysms of the internet. In other words, Petersen's guide (and, to some extent, it is a guidebook) is the very opposite of a Peterson guide. The 18 images of corticioid species will be a revelation to anyone who's denigrated corticioids by saying that they all look alike. There are 8 beguiling images of rusts and smuts. And there is one image of *Amanita groenlandica*. This last species, which can only be found in the Arctic, is mycorrhizal with dwarf birch, so Petersen has dwarf birch leaves in his photograph. Indeed, most of the photographs include the substrate of a species, for without a substrate a fungus would not exist. Petersen is a professional mycologist and one of the creators of the internet synoptic key for fungal identification called Mycokey. I asked him what inspired him to do a book so seemingly different from what he had done in the past. He said: "I've always thought that people needed a broader scope than just which fungi are edible and which are poisonous. Back in 1995, I wrote a university textbook that put amateurs to sleep very fast. I wanted to put together a book that told the story of fungal life in an easy way ... a way that didn't scare people off. Thus *The Kingdom of Fungi*." To which I told him: "You've accomplished that task better in your book than any other book I know." In case you haven't noticed it, this is a rave review. At only \$29.95, *The Kingdom of Fungi* is eminently affordable, so you should go out and buy a copy, no, buy two copies, one for yourself and another for a would-be mycophile of your acquaintance. L. Millman Cambridge, MA (Review originally published in *FUNGI*, 2013, vol 6 no.2.)

Being new to the subject of fungus I find contemporary texts indispensable as I 'devour' the subject. Learning how to identify is only part of the study - getting to know what to do with the various

mushrooms lends to more depth of discovery. Being careful about what you eat is balanced by learning how you can use mushrooms to improve environments for growing gardens. The photographs also display the mushrooms as the mesmerizing art forms they can become.

Wonderful starter book with a great introduction to the world of mushrooms. I was so excited to receive this book and it far exceeded my expectations. Fantastic photos, descriptions, diagrams and information. I learned so much & I am so happy with this book. As a mushroom lover and avid hunter, this book has made a fine addition to my mushroom library! Buy it! You won't be disappointed.

Excellent book. Beautiful photos tell the story of fungus with short descriptions to explain and reinforce concepts. I learned a lot from this book and love looking at it. A great book for anyone learning about fungus/mushrooms.

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