

Common Mushrooms in Waterlow Park



Wood Ears (*Auricularia spp*) are jelly fungi. They can grow on logs, like here in the Upper Pond Nature Area, or on branches of trees, especially elder.



Stag's Horn or Candle Snuff Fungus (*Xylaria hypoxylon*)

This fungus grows on dead wood in the soil and can be seen all year round.

Candle snuff fungi are medically important because they have anti-viral properties and contain compounds that are active against some human carcinomas.



The **Fly Agaric** (*Amanita muscari*) links underground with birch trees in a mutually beneficial relationship. This one fruits in autumn by the large birch tree near the Sir Waterlow statue.



This “Chicken of the Woods” (*Polyporus sulphurous*) grows on a Prunus tree near the Toddler Playground. It took the opportunity to colonise a wound where the tree had lost a branch. It can now cause a brown rot, hollowing out the heart wood, but will leave the living sap wood of the tree untouched.



As the holes demonstrate, the mushroom in turn is eaten by slugs and beetles.



White Coral (*Clavulina coralloides*) forms densely packed tufts, 2.5 to 8 cm high. It lives on the ground under deciduous and coniferous trees. Tufts like the one in the photo appear in autumn in the half circle beds near the entrance by St Joseph's Church.



Aptly named **Collared Earthstar** (*Geastrum triplex*) this mushroom lives amongst leaf litter of deciduous trees. It measures 3 to 5 cm across. A group of these appeared in the sensory border by Lauderdale House in autumn.

Photos by Rita Drobner, Hiroyo Whiteside and April Cameron

Reference book: "Mushrooms" by Roger Phillips, Macmillan Publishers 2006