

THE PROJECT

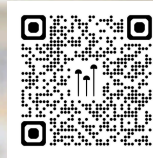
Although fungi are vital for our ecosystems, they are still often overlooked in conservation policy and practice across Europe. This neglect is no longer acceptable. In FunDive (EU Biodiversa+), we work to put fungal biodiversity on the map to improve protection efforts. Will you join us?

THE CITY JUNGLE

Biodiversity is all around us. There's no need to travel to the rainforest or the Great Barrier Reef to experience it. Our cities are teeming with wildlife — we just need to pay attention! Parks, gardens, roundabouts and backyards are home to a variety of plants, animals — and, yes, mushrooms!

WHY REGISTER YOUR OBSERVATIONS?

Fungi play important roles in urban landscapes, yet our understanding of their diversity is limited. How many species of mushrooms live in your city? By sharing your observations on iNaturalist, you will help map the diversity of mushrooms in European cities. You will learn to identify your findings, contributing to our scientific work and urban nature management. What's more, mushrooms come in many shapes, colours, and sizes. You will be surprised at what you find!



FunDive



Text: Susana C. Gonçalves & Susana P. Cunha

Design: Susana P. Cunha

Cover photo: © Susana P. Cunha

Back photo: © Susana C. Gonçalves

FunDive Link: <https://fun-dive.eu/en/get-involved/>

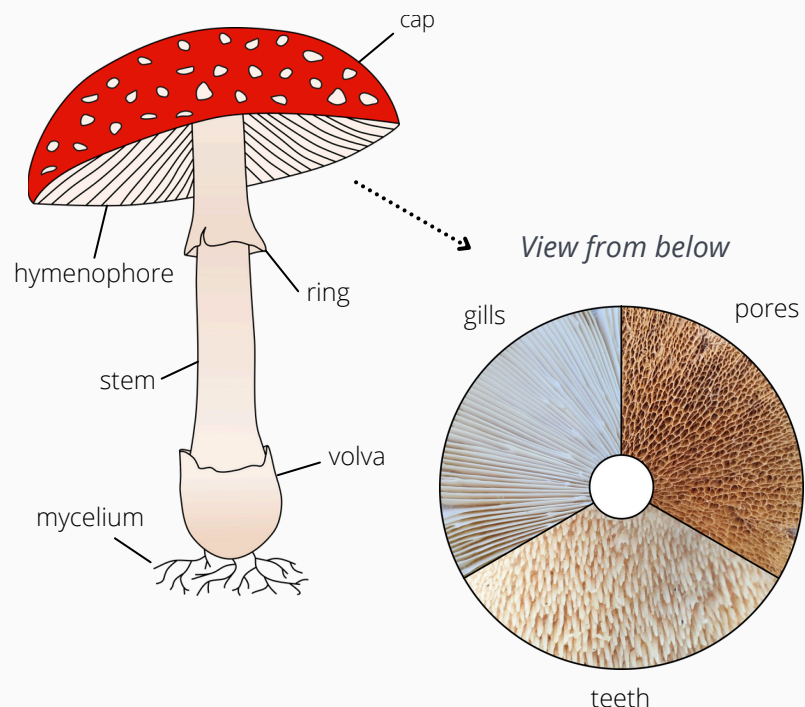


MISSION: URBAN MUSHROOMS

A citizen science campaign to map
the diversity of urban mushrooms
in Europe.

WHAT ARE MUSHROOMS

Mushrooms, including brackets, puffballs, and truffles, are the fruiting bodies of macrofungi. However, the true body of the fungus, known as the mycelium, is usually invisible and immersed in the substrate, such as wood or soil. When conditions are right, mushrooms develop and release spores, enabling the formation of new individuals. This is when we can encounter these mysterious beings, appreciate their beauty and contemplate our relationship with them. Did you know that you are more closely related to a mushroom than to a tree?



THE PARTS OF A MUSHROOM

The best-known mushrooms have a stem and a cap. In these species, the hymenophore (the structure that bears the surface where spores are produced) is located underneath the cap, and the stem may have a ring and/or a structure at the base known as the volva. The hymenophore is often made up of gills. However, variations can be found, such as tubes (which look like pores from below) or tooth-like structures. To identify a mushroom, all of these characteristics need to be taken into account.

In your search for mushrooms, you will also come across very different shapes, from shelf-like brackets growing on trees to tiny cups.

HOW TO GET STARTED?

- Sign up for iNaturalist on the app or website (www.inaturalist.org) and join the FunDive project

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/mission-urban-mushrooms>



- If available, remember to join your country's local iNaturalist network.
- Explore the city and take photos of the mushrooms around you. Turn on your GPS to automatically record the date and location and upload your photos to iNaturalist.
- Need more help? Visit <https://help.inaturalist.org/en/support>

WHAT TO DO?

- Make sure the photographs are in focus and well lit, but avoid using flash.
- Think about making the mushroom relatively large in the photograph so that the details can be seen clearly.
- Use an object for scale, for example a dark coin.
- Capture all relevant morphological features of the mushroom, such as the cap and its underside (surface of the pores/gills), and the stem, including the base.
- Document any color changes or exudation after cutting.
- Show the mushroom in situ and include its host or substrate (for example, if it grows under a specific tree, show the leaf or needles of that tree next to the mushroom, or take a separate photograph).
- Photograph the spores if you come across a deposit on leaves or other mushrooms.
- Add details that cannot be captured in the photographs to the notes section, such as any distinctive odor, taste or texture.

WANT TO GO THE EXTRA MILE?

- Join the conversation on urban mushrooms with other mushroom fans across Europe using the comments on iNaturalist.
- Quick hot air dry your find and store it in a small hermetic plastic bag. We might ask you to send it for DNA sequencing!