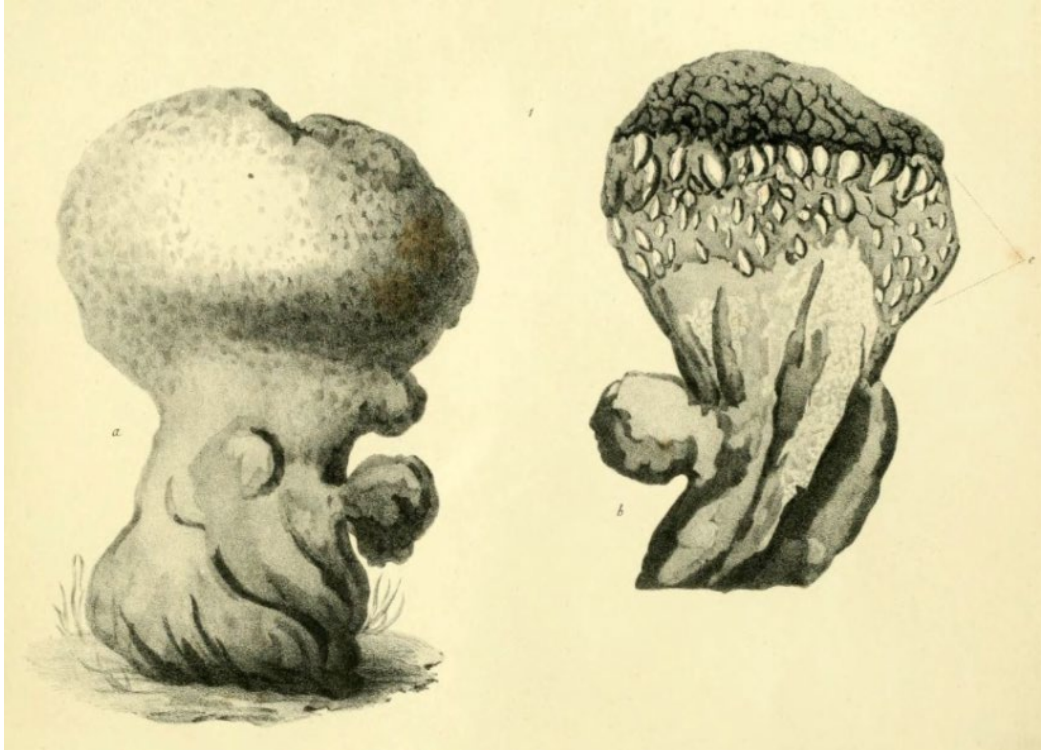


# *Pisolithus tinctorius* (Mont.) E. Fisch.



Montagne, in Webb & Berthelot, Hist. nat. Iles Canar. (Paris) 3(2): 87 (1840)

*Pisolithus tinctorius* is a medium to large-sized species with a wrinkled peridium, at first white to yellowish white then turning dark brown and dry, pseudostipe thick and medium-long, with excrescences, and dark brown rusty spores in mass. The original description cites it as being found in the Canary Islands, specifically in the mountains of Palma and La Gomera, under *Cistus monspeliensis*; sequences have also been found in Sardinia (Italy, UNITE SH1035157.10FU). It is expected to be found associated with *Cistus* in higher areas of the Canary Islands.

#### ORIGINAL DESCRIPTION:

“Description: Large fungus, 4–5 inches, extremely fragile. Peridium or cap globose, slightly depressed, wrinkled, 3 inches high and thick, irregular. Stipe 2 inches long and thick, confluent with the cap, somewhat contorted, deeply sulcate, roughened with swellings or globose/hemispherical tubercles. If we give more trust to the icon than the description, the colour is from sooty to brownish-black, extremely similar to volcanic slag. Flesh blackening, cellular, with superior and inferior polyhedral cells, succulent. Peridioles ovoid, varying in size, at first whitish then themselves blackening, reticulate in appearance, stuffed with spores referring not badly to tobacco reduced to powder.

Habitat: At the roots of some indeterminate *Cistus*, parasitizing, found by Cl. Despréaux on the mountains of the islands of Gomera and Palma.

Observations: One cannot conceal the great resemblance between this species and that found near Astrakhan in sands by Buxbaum, who figured it in his first work, tab. 58. Allow me to cite here two passages from that author’s text, which will show how much affinity his mushroom has with ours: “the flesh,” he says, “if indeed young, consists entirely of whitish grains of mucilaginous black material, swollen projections staining with dark brown colour.” And further: “it finally cracks open into powder... which not unlike the compressed rapé” Here now are the very terms of Mr. Despréaux’s description, on which mine was written with the aid of the drawing: “Globular cap, irregular, rough, of fragile consistency like burned, of a dark brown colour resembling volcanic slag. Blackish powdery flesh containing numerous irregular cells, some ovoid whitish, others more advanced in age as if reticulated, all full of abundant dust resembling fine tobacco powder.

Thick, tortuous, irregular, tuberculate pedicel of the same colour as the cap and fragile like it.”” Thus one sees that apart from the stipe, which is yellow in the Astrakhan species and composed of numerous reticulate roots, while in ours it is the same colour as the cap, that is brown; apart also from a slightly diverse internal structure, the other differences are of little importance. One must however take account of the different seasons in which the two mushrooms appear. *Polysaccum tinctorium* is still close to *P. crassipes* DC. (Micheli, t. 98, f. 1) from which it seems specially to differ by its white peridioles and not sulphur-coloured.”

KEY REQUIREMENTS:

We are looking for specimens of *Pisolithus* from the Canary Islands and Sardinia, associated with *Cistus* but all specimens will be welcome to clarify the relationship between this species and the continental *P. arenarius*, *P. arhizus*, *P. calongei* and *P. capsulifer*. We need a well document collection, with pictures of the outside of the specimen as well as the longitudinally cut basidiome, and a good habitat description with at least potential hosts identified (*Cistus*, *Pinus*, others) and coordinates.

Mauro Rivas-Ferreiro