

Key to Fungi

To be used with pictures of fungi collected by BIO 181 students from their outdoor scavenger hunt.

1. The organism:
 - a. does not appear as an individual, but has a fluffy or threadlike growth on a surface, for example, a food source Zygomycota
 - b. is macroscopic as seen from a distance of 1 meter..... go to 2

2. The organism exhibits:
 - a. an amorphous mass, spread out on the ground; can be bright yellow or other color; wet or dry with an irregular body form without distinct structures Slime Mold
 - b. a body form that grows with an organized firm structure go to 3

3. The organism:
 - c. has a sturdy dry body form, greenish/gray color, often found growing on woody plants, stone or the ground..... Lichens
 - d. has a soft, fleshy pliable body form..... go to 4

4. The organism exhibits:
 - e. a downward facing surface with gills, teeth/spines or pores that shed spores or forms a circular ball or highly branched or phallus looking body form Basidiomycota
 - f. a cup shaped structure, or an upright body form with an infolded uneven surface, but without gills, teeth/spines or obvious holes for spores..... Ascomycota

****Disclaimer: This key should not be used for determining whether or not a fungus can be eaten. This key is not specific enough to determine a genus or species. Many fungi produce toxic and/or deadly compounds.*