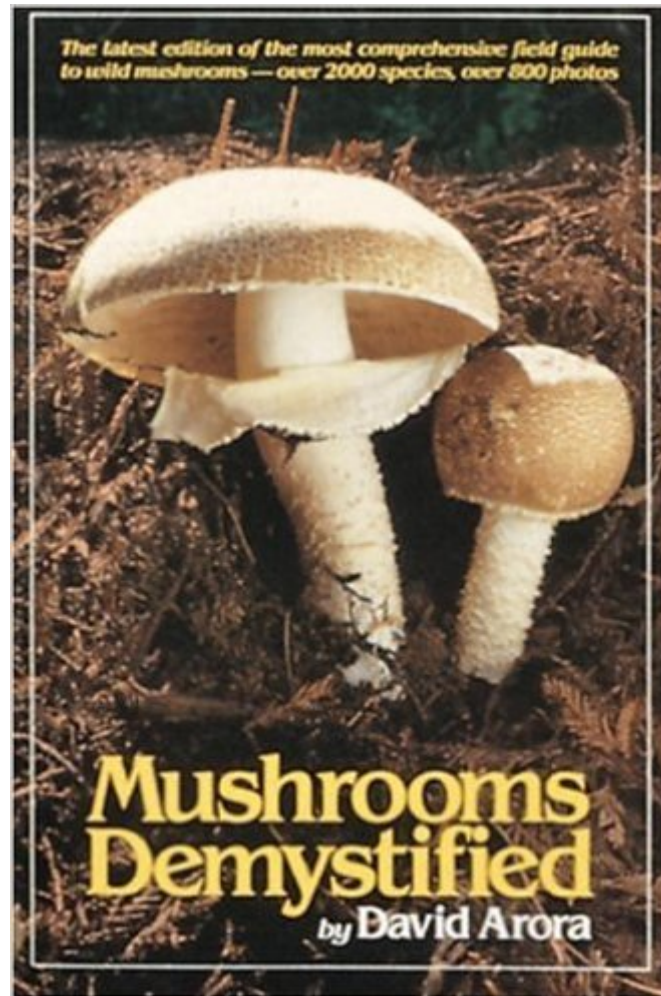


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Mushrooms Demystified



Synopsis

Simply the best and most complete mushroom field guide and reference book, **MUSHROOMS DEMYSTIFIED** includes descriptions and keys to more than 2,000 species of mushrooms, with more than 950 photographs. Mushroom authority David Arora provides a beginner's checklist of the 70 most distinctive and common mushrooms, plus detailed chapters on terminology, classification, habitats, mushroom cookery, mushroom toxins, and the meanings of scientific mushroom names. Beginning and experienced mushroom hunters everywhere will find **MUSHROOMS DEMYSTIFIED** a delightful, informative, and indispensable companion.

Book Information

Paperback: 1056 pages

Publisher: Ten Speed Press; 2 edition (October 1, 1986)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0898151694

ISBN-13: 978-0898151695

Product Dimensions: 6 x 2.1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (294 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,463 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Plants > Mushrooms](#) #14 in [Books > Medical Books > Basic Sciences > Microbiology](#) #22 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Zoology](#)

Customer Reviews

I own a lot of field guides for birds, insects, reptiles, wildflowers and on and on. If you are like me then you enjoy reading field guides like some people read novels. The usual field guides are just monotone dry descriptions and pictures. David Arora's book is apart from the rest. His descriptions are entertaining and witty and filled with good information. Just reading the descriptions is as entertaining as it gets for any book of any genre. The second edition is a door stopper of a book for size but there is very little if no fluff. The first thing any botanical field guide should have is a good dichotomous key. Arora's book has a very good key. The photos are excellent and the color plates are spectacular. If you think you can identify a mushroom with just a photo then you are treading in dangerous waters. There are countless "Little Brown Mushrooms" that can hardly be distinguished by a photo. You need a key. The same mushroom can vary enormously depending on humidity and age of the specimen. One photo like in some other guides will hardly show all variations in a single

mushroom. Photos are OK for other field guides describing birds or wildflowers but for mushrooms, a wrong choice could be life threatening. A photo of a Gomphus could look like a chanterelle. You will find yourself eating something more like cardboard instead of an epicurean delicacy. You could also think Omphalotus is a chanterelle based on a photo, making a deadly mistake. Arora's book will familiarize you with all the distinguishing characteristics that set the poisonous species apart from the edible. In spite of what I say about identifying mushrooms with photos, the black and white photos in the book do very well by showing the mushrooms in varying stages of maturity.

This book is an essential desk-reference for mushroom enthusiasts. The extensive introduction includes articles on "fungophobia" (fear of eating wild mushrooms), mushroom biology, mushrooms and the environment, scientific names and classification, mushroom collecting, mushroom identification, directions on how to use keys, mushroom FAQs, LBMs (little brown mushrooms), habitats, and a list of 70 distinctive mushrooms. This material is followed by a general key to the major groups of mushrooms, and then over 800 pages of mushroom descriptions, organized according to the key, with additional specific keys for each major group. Brief articles are provided for each individual mushroom species, including scientific name, common names (if available), and descriptive information covering (where relevant) cap, gills, stalk, veil, spores, habitat and edibility. High quality black-and-white photographs are provided for many (though not all) species. There is also a section of color plates in the middle of the book referenced by name and page number to the articles in the text. End material includes articles on mushroom cookery, preservation, and toxins, a dictionary of scientific Latin relevant for mushroom study, a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. A metric/inch ruler is printed on the back cover as a useful measurement aid. With its varied in-depth articles and large number of species covered, this book is a treasure-trove of information. It is not quite as visual as other large guides, since not all species have photos, and all the photos in the main text are black-and-white. This approach forces the user to rely on reading the details of the key, which is a very sound approach to identification. The first edition of the book was written solely about Californian mushrooms.

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