

Shaggy Mane Mushroom

Tuesday, April 18, 2017

Shaggy mane, also known as "inky cap", is a short-lived delicacy found in high-nitrogen areas like a fertilized lawn.

When young, it's an elongated shaggy-capped ovoid with vertical gills tucked tightly inside.

As it ages, the cap raggedly dissolves itself from the bottom up - gills deliquescing into a black "ink" as they flip up and outwards to release spores.

Individuals of all ages are found together in one fruiting.



To carve the mid-sized specimen:

- 1) Cut a block of 1.5 x 1.5" stock into 1.75" length.
- 2) Using a 1" forstner bit, drill a shallow hole into the underside of the block.
- 3) Round the block into a bell shape.
- 4) Thin the walls of the forstner hole out to match the bell shape.
 - a. The chatter lines left by a less-than-sharp knife work great for gills.
- 5) Detail the bottom edge of the cap - choose several of the following:
 - a. Ragged edge



- b. Split edge - deliberately split a thin layer off the edge of the block to leave a short area of riven fibers exposed. The vertical grain works great for gills.



- c. Folded-up fillip where the cap has flipped up to convex
 - a. Sketch a curve for the new edge of the cap
 - b. Shorten and thicken the mushroom wall to echo the curve
 - c. Undercut the top edge of the cap to give some extra dimension.



Materials for the mid-sized specimen:

- Carving knife
- Cap: 1.5" x 1.5" stock, 1.75" length, grain running vertically
- Stem: .5" x .5" stock or .5" dowel, 1.75" length
- 1" forstner bit
- Soot or black stropp-dust for shading the bottom of the cap
- Finish: spray finish, if desired. Matte finish is most accurate.
- Save the large shavings to use as grass for "habitat" when mounting the carving to a base.



- 6) When satisfied with the silhouette, carve vertical gill lines inside the bell and on any flipped-up edges.
- 7) Round off the stem. It may narrow briefly inside the cap.
- 8) Carve an "annulus" ring where the cap would have joined the stem before it opened.
- 9) Glue the stem to the center of the cap.
- 10) For the "shaggy" - working in rings around the cap, peel up the thinnest possible slices of wood, leaving the top edges attached. If we're lucky, the edges will curl.
- 11) Rub soot into the bottom edge of the cap, any exposed gill surface, and if desired, a few of the bottom rings of curls.

