









# WHAT IS A MUSHROOM?

-  Mushrooms are just a small part of larger living things called fungi.
-  They are the 'fruiting body' of fungi.
-  Mushrooms spread the spores which allow the fungus to reproduce.
-  They come in many shapes and colors.
-  They are often found on decaying wood or other decomposing material.
-  There are over 10,000 known mushrooms in the U S A.

## WHAT DOES A MUSHROOM DO?



**Nature's Recyclers:** fungi break down organic matter and allow other living things to use the essential nutrients.



**Plant Helpers:** More than 90% of all plants live in a mutually beneficial relationship with fungi, this is known as a symbiotic relationship. These fungi exchange nutrients for photosynthetic sugars.



**Message Carriers:** The fungi that live in symbiosis with plants (mycorrhizae) carry chemical 'messages' through the web of mycelium in the soil.



**Pollution Removers:** Fungi can remove harmful chemicals and reduce the presence of harmful bacteria in water and soil.



**Food Source:** Mushrooms are the only non-animal based complete form of protein and have many antioxidants, prebiotics, minerals and vitamins.

## PARTS OF A MUSHROOM

