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# Divine Mushrooms And Fungi



## Synopsis

Filled with beautiful color photographs, *Divine Mushrooms and Fungi* is a must-have for anyone who wants to step into the magic mushroom field of ethnomycology. With detailed information on how to distinguish magic mushrooms from potentially dangerous lookalikes, this guide also features a detailed history of the ritual use of magic mushrooms among pre-Columbian inhabitants of the New World and the evolution of the use of psychedelic fungi from sacred rituals to today's recreational use. Common epithets used for naming mushrooms around the world are accompanied by photographs and descriptions of both magic mushrooms and their poisonous lookalikes. An ideal companion for mushroom-gathering forays, *Divine Mushrooms and Fungi* provides readers with the sacred knowledge that can lead to a visionary experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“If you are truly fanatic about the literature of psilocybin, then this book is surely intended for your eyeballs.” —Paul Krassner, author of *Magic Mushrooms and Other Highs* and *From Toad Slime to Ecstasy*; John W. Allen, the mushroom man, is our celestial tour guide in a school without walls. Rogue scholar, adventurer and gentleman forager, his works surrounding psychedelic mushrooms are must reads. Allen's books are essential and always a treat. —Thomas Lyttle, editor of *Psychedelic Monographs and Essays* and *Psychedelics Reimagined*

John W. Allen is an amateur ethnomycologist living in North America and author of ten books, including the oldest selling identification guide on entheogenic mushroom identification, and more than two dozen articles on the subject of visionary mushrooms. Allen is the editor and author of the series Ethnomycological Journals Sacred Mushroom Studies. He has photographed mushrooms in America, Hawaii, Southeast Asia, Great Britain and Europe. Allen discovered a new entheogenic mushroom species from Thailand, named *Psilocybe samuiensis* Guzmán, Bandala and Allen. He has lectured at conferences and symposia, given many slide-show presentations on the history and identification of entheogenic mushrooms and mushroom art throughout the ages at universities worldwide. In 2013 the mushroom, *Psilocybe allenii* Borovicka, was named after John Allen. He lives in Santa Cruz, CA.

Needed better proofreading and some pictures' quality was not good but I loved the storyline and content. I would say most problems with this book were at the fault of the publisher not the author. I give it 4 stars based on subject matter and storyline.

Not too bad of a book for a somewhat non scientific reference.

This book is informative and easy to read. Love it :)

Divine Mushrooms and Fungi John W. Allen John Allen is a well-known amateur ethnomycologist who has lectured about and been an advocate of psychedelic mushrooms for 40 years. He is the author of 11 books, has discovered and named a species of *Psilocybe*, and recently had a new species of magic mushroom named for him, *Psilocybe allenii*. John Allen's latest book, *Divine Mushrooms and Fungi*, was just made available in late 2014. The book consists of two parts; the first half of the book is a sort of rambling essay of the author's initial quests and encounters with magic mushrooms, first hitchhiking around Hawaii and later in the Pacific Northwest. The second part of the book attempts to be a little more technical and is mostly descriptions of many of the more notable magic mushrooms, where to find them, how to identify them, and dosage to take (if that's part of the reason for using this book). In the year prior to this book's publication, I'd heard much discussion of it and so I was eager to receive a copy. On most levels this book is a disappointment. The book's cover twice describes the photographs and illustrations as "stunning." They are not. Most of the photos are blurry; some are of

such low resolution and pixellation as to leave the reader unsure what was photographed. At the Ronin website, the publisher tantalizes with this description of Divine Mushrooms and Fungi: "Mind-blowing descriptions of the hallucinations from the dissolute and disintegrating to the mystical and profound. How to find and identify magic mushrooms. Make cultures, spores, spore prints, and rye grain spawn supported by an abundance of beautiful, detailed photos that are a must have for the amateur to professional mycologist." There is actually no description whatsoever of how to make cultures; rye grain spawn is not mentioned in the book. Divine Mushrooms and Fungi suffers most from the obvious lack of an editor. Much of the text is poorly laid out and even repeated in other sections. The book is fraught with typographical errors (I mean just about every page, including the back cover, and most ironically in the Acknowledgements where the publisher thanks two individuals for spell-checking!). There are typos in the Bibliography and in the Suggested Reading. Even the Index is a mess; most entries I checked show an incorrect page number where the word or passage was to be found. The mushroom descriptions and technical data (in part II) are mostly useful (even if the photographs are not). But even here, there were a number of glaring inaccuracies and errors that a good editor would have caught. In discussing how to make a spore print in "Identifying Psilocybian Mushrooms" we find "If the spore print is chocolate to purple brown then the mushroom is probably a Psilocybe." Unless it's one of the hundreds of other mushrooms with spore prints of that color or close (e.g. Agaricus, Coprinus, Coprinellus, Parasola, Psathyrella, Paneolus, Stropharia). If Allen were to leave the Pacific NW where he calls home and come to the East, he'd see quite unlikely to ever see a Psilocybe species. In discussing the bluing reaction, Allen states that *Inocybe calimistrata* is not active nor is it toxic. This may actually be true but that species was long considered toxic (the majority of *Inocybes* still are considered toxic); furthermore, few people can accurately identify any *Inocybes* to species. In how to avoid confusing magic mushrooms with dangerous and deadly mushrooms, Allen points out that "Amanita species have caps which are scaly." Never mind that the photograph right above this description shows an *Amanita phalloides* with an entirely smooth cap, free of any scales or warts. "Their stems have a ring near the top and a large bulbous base at the bottom which may or may not resemble an egg (a vulva or a volva)." This description is correct for a minority of *Amanita* species. In the section "Little Brown Mushrooms" I think the author was in over his head. There are a bewildering number of LBMs out there and who among even the experts can know

them all? Many are known to be quite toxic. Allen reassures us that despite this, Psilocybe are LBMs but *“These species can grow in many different environmental settings and are easy and safe to recognize if happened upon by those interested in experienced [sic] their magic.”* No way. And that *“Always remember that there are more active Psilocybe species in North America and Mexico that can be found in urban and suburban settings than in any other region of the world.”* Again, this may be true for the Pacific NW (and to a small extent in the Gulf Coast area), but come east of the Rockies and you *“d be very hard-pressed to ever see a species of Psilocybe.”*-Britt A. Bunyard (Review originally published in FUNGI, 2015, vol 8 no.1.)

I loved this book! It's a sparkling treasure chest of truly magnificent, absolutely stunning photography, masterfully blended with rare scientific and historic information about the enchanted world of magic mushrooms. The author shares his enormous bounty of secret and sacred knowledge on this important subject, and this book is a magic portal into new dimensions of reality and mind.

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