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 USA.

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:
- Cap
- Gills
- Stalk
- Universal Veil (or not)
- Ring
- Cup
- Mycelium