



About Our Cover

The orange peel fungus (*Aleuria aurantia*) of the order Pezizales is an ascomycete fungus that is noticeable in late summer and fall throughout many parts of North America and Europe. This ascomycete produces thin, brilliant orange ascocarps (the fruiting body of the fungus) that resemble orange peels that stand out in the drab colors of autumn and give the fungus its name. Young ascocarps are generally cup-shaped, with a whitish, fuzzy bloom on the underside. As the ascocarp develops, the shape of the fungus may change (as seen in the photograph here) depending on its contact with other objects in the environment through which the fruiting body grows. Fruiting bodies vary in size from a fraction of a centimeter to 10 cm in width or more and generally grow in clusters on disturbed and bare soils – often in clays. Orange peel fungus is reportedly edible, but not highly prized. Because the orange peel can be confused with fungi that are poisonous or of unknown edibility such as *Otidea* spp. or *Caloscypha* spp. – only seasoned pickers should attempt to collect this fungus for consumption. This photograph, taken by Roy Rea of the University of Northern British Columbia, was captured in October in Moore's Meadow, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada, with a Canon 5D camera and a Sigma DG Macro 105mm 1:2.8 lens.

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