

NCRC&DC FACT SHEET: TURKEY TAIL



Turkey tails (*Trametes versicolor*) are common woodland mushrooms. These saprophytes are “bracket” fungi –growing shelf-like—and occur in diverse locations in Mendocino County forests (and elsewhere) on dead or rotting stumps and branches. The "versicolor" portion of its name is because these fungi are very variable in color, most often within the brown to red range.

How To Identify Turkey Tail: Similar mushrooms include false turkey tail (*Stereum hirsutum*), which often has a bright orange hue. While both species have separate concentric color zones, and surfaces that are velvety to touch, the underside is where the clue can be found. Turkey tails hold spores in tubes, so undersides should display tiny holes visible to the naked eye. False Turkey Tail has a smooth bumpy underside with no pores. Another similar mushroom is *Trichaptum abietinum*, which lacks a common name, and which looks somewhat like a faded Turkey tail with some washed out color variability and zonation. This fungi has little teeth or bumps of tissue where its spores are produced and a distinctive lilac-colored cast.

Benefits of Turkey Tail: Some research is being conducted on these mushrooms for their medicinal value as adjunct cancer treatment including colorectal cancer and leukemia.



For more information, please visit:

<https://www.macalester.edu/ordway/biodiversity/inventory/turkeytailfungus/>