

What to do if you find it:

Make an observation

The first thing to do is to **record your observation**. We prefer to use the iNaturalist app for that (visit www.iNaturalist.org to learn more), but you could also upload your observation to Mushroom Observer (visit www.MushroomObserver.org). The QR code to the right will take you to the Fungal Diversity Survey (FunDiS for short) website to explain how to contribute to the project.



fundis.org/protect/take-action

The best thing you can do is take *lots* of photographs and notes. Typically, smartphones will automatically georeference any photos taken, but it is good practice to note your exact location, preferably with GPS coordinates, and what trees or other habitat features are nearby. For example, was the mushroom growing from decaying grass and humus, or from bare soil? Did it have a particular smell?

Collect a specimen

If you are in an area where it is allowed and have any necessary permits, **we strongly urge you to create a vouchered collection**. This means a dried specimen for deposit in a herbarium, where researchers can access it for things like DNA sequencing. If you don't know how to do this, please see:

fundis.org/sequence/sequence/dry-your-specimens

In California, collecting mushrooms is usually allowed in National Forests **with a permit**. Permits can be obtained at the headquarters of the National Forest you're visiting, and are usually inexpensive or free. However, restrictions vary among the individual National Forests, so make sure to find out the specifics when picking up your permit. State and County Parks generally do not allow mushroom picking, but regulations vary, so make sure to check your destination before you go out. In Oregon and Washington, most State and Federal lands allow collecting up to a gallon without a permit, but again, regulations vary, so check ahead of time.

Don't forget to look for other mushrooms and fungi while you're there! Keep your eyes open **mushrooms growing on other mushrooms**: they're all rare, so even if you haven't found this one, you've got something neat! Since you've already got iNaturalist open, why not record your other finds?

Most mushrooms are like fruit: picking an apple from an apple tree doesn't hurt the tree. In the same way, **harvesting mushrooms does not generally hurt the mycelium of the fungus**. We do still recommend leaving some mushrooms behind, and not picking perennial mushrooms, like brackets and conks.

Who to contact

If you think you've found this mushroom, and you're not sure about any of the above, such as how to report the find, whether you can collect it, or what to do with it once you have collected it, please contact us!

WestCoast_Rare@fundis.org

Habitat

Find the Short-branched Dendro growing out of the **decayed remnants** of other mushroom species in **moist, dark areas in mixed-conifer forests**. Possible hosts could include larger species like *Armillaria mellea* or *Hypholoma fasciculare*, but **very little is known about the ecology** of the Short-branched Dendro.

Get out into those obscure corners of the forest and **help find this elusive little fungus!**



More information

Siegel N & Schwarz C. 2016. *Mushrooms of the Redwood Coast: A Comprehensive Guide to the Fungi of Coastal Northern California*. Ten Speed Press: pg. 339.

Siegel N, Vellinga EC, Schwarz C, Castellano MA & Ikeda D. 2019. *A Field Guide to the Rare Fungi of California's National Forests*. Bookmobile: pg. 60-61. www.mykoweb.com/CAF/PDF/Rare_Fungi_of_CA_National_Forests.pdf

Schwarz C. *Dendrocollybia pycnoramella*. The Global Fungal Red List Initiative. http://iucn.ekoo.se/iucn/species_view/1000163/

The Short-branched Dendro

Dendrocollybia "pycnoramella"



Photo by Noah Siegel

RARE

Status: **RARELY COLLECTED**

Assessed: **NEAR THREATENED**

First collected in 2011, this recently discovered species is an absolute kick to find!

An **extremely rare species**, the Short-branched Dendro has **only ever been found twice**. Keep your eyes peeled for this tiny mushroom in moist, forested areas, possibly **growing from the remnants of old decaying mushrooms**.

You might just be the lucky one to find the third location for this unique little mushroom!

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Photo by Noah Siegel



Description

Truly looking like it came from outer space this *Dendrocollybia* species is a treat to find! It is tiny with its **half-inch wide cap**; it is **grey with some pale brown**, so it won't catch the eye with flashy colors. However, it makes up for all the inconspicuousness by having a **stem that is completely covered in short white side branches**, reminiscent of a blackberry stem but different. The **spores**, formed on the gills, are **white**.

The little side branches make asexual spores, and if that is not crazy enough, the mushrooms grow out of **black bumpy sclerotia** on the remnants of old rotting mushrooms. A sclerotium is for this mushroom what the bulb is for a tulip.

What else could it be?

Its bigger and much more common sister, the **Long-branched Dendro** (*D. racemosa*), is equally small- and grey-capped, but **taller**, and grows in clusters with spindly stems. The **side branches** can be up to **1/4 inch long** and they are **not nearly as densely placed** on the main stem as in *D. pycnoramella*.

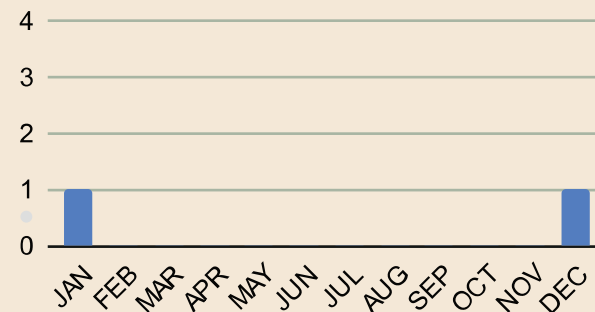
Other little grey mushrooms can be found as well, but **none of them have these side branches** on the main stem, and they **all lack a sclerotium**. But, don't ignore them, as very little is known about all those small treasures, and **many are still nameless**. They belong, depending on their spore characters, to genera like *Pseudobaesopora*, *Tephrocybe*, or *Rhodocybe*.



CAUTION: Never eat wild mushrooms without a confident identification! Contact Poison Control if you think you have eaten a poisonous mushroom: 1-800-222-1222

When & Where?

Look for this inconspicuous species in the **late Fall and Winter**. So far, it has only been sighted in December and January.



Data from iNaturalist & Mushroom Observer

The Short-branched Dendro is only known from two finds in two spots, one in **Santa Cruz, CA** and one near **Murphy in southern Oregon** in **cool, moist, sheltered places**.

Potential Range

Based on the ranges of Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), Tanoak (*Notholithocarpus densiflorus*), and Interior Live Oak (*Quercus wislizenii*). Data from Conservation Biology Institute, and USFS. www.fs.fed.us/databases/pcits/Little/ea_SupportingFiles/LittleMaps.html. Map layer from Stamen Design.

This species is in the process of being formally described and has been proposed and assessed for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, but has not yet been accepted and published.