

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 **be sure to note what trees are nearby**, and any other salient features. For example, was the mushroom growing under a madrone or a manzanita, and if so, what species?

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 voucher 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. In Oregon and Washington, you are typically allowed to collect one gallon without a permit on most public lands, but rules still vary, so make sure you check before you go.

Don't forget to look for other mushrooms and fungi while you're there! Like other Rare Fungi, part of why this mushroom is rare is because it grows **in a place that mushroom pickers don't generally go**: sagebrush shrubland! 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



Photo by Tiffany Theden

Look for the Sagebrush conk on **living old sagebrushes with thick stems and branches**. It is associated with Big Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), which covers most of the dry west, but has really only been found in southern California. **Does it occur everywhere sagebrush grows? Does it grow on other species of sagebrush?** You can help us find out!



Photo by Tiffany Theden

Big Sagebrush can be recognized by the **3 teeth** at the tips of each leaf, **pleasant fragrance** when the leaves are crushed, and the color: **blueish grey-green leaves** that are soft and slightly fuzzy. The species name *tridentata* means "3 teeth".

More information

Vlasák J & Vlasák Jr. J. 2017. *Phellinus artemisiae* sp. Nov. (Basidiomycota, Hymenochaetaceae), from western USA. Phytotaxa, 303: 93. doi:10.11646/phytotaxa.303.1.10

iNaturalist (0 obs.): inaturalist.org/taxa/1268858-Phellinus-artermisiae

Mushroom Observer (0 obs.): mushroomobserver.org/name/show_name/62308

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The Sagebrush Conk

Phellinus artemisiae



Photo by Josef Vlasák

< RARE >

Status: **RARELY COLLECTED**

Did you know there's a mushroom that grows on Sagebrush?

It's a small conk that is only known from a few spots in the sagebrush habitats in **Southern California**. We wonder if it is only found in the southern parts of the sagebrush's area of distribution, or whether it can be found throughout the range - an area which covers large swathes of the West. Are there any other mushrooms that grow in this same habitat? Mycologists don't really go mushrooming in the **vast, dry areas** covered by sagebrush, but who knows, there might be **other unique, endemic species** to be discovered!



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When & Where?

This species can be found year round, like most woody conks. If you do happen to spot one **take photos** of it, and the bush it is growing on. **If there are a few specimens around, do pick one**, but leave the others. If there is only one, take as many photos as possible, from all sides, and don't forget to snap a **photo of the habitat as well**.

Description

The Sagebrush conk **does not form a distinct shelf**, but is attached to the sagebrush branch over the whole distance of its back. It is around 2 inches wide, about an inch deep at the top, with a **greyish brown top**. The **pores are brown to grey**, roundish, with 4–5 per mm, but in the lower part of the fruitbody they can reach 2 mm long. **The pore surface often shows deep cracks in it**. The triangular shape of the fruitbody is revealed when one cuts it in half lengthwise, which also reveals the layers of tubes. The tubes can be up to 5 mm long.

What else could it be?

This is really the only species known to grow on sagebrush. Manzanitas, Chamise and very occasionally Mountain-mahogany can be host to the **Manzanita conk** (*Ph. arctostaphyli*). That species has a **much flatter fruitbody** that sticks out from the shrub's trunk. Its **pores are a bit smaller and round**, 5–6 per mm, and it has not been found on Sagebrush; it is not uncommon on Manzanita. Both can be found the whole year round.



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

