Coprinus comatus

The cap can be from 3 to 7 centimeters wide, and tall even more than 15 centimeters. In case of younger specimens, the cap is vertically elongated. In case of older specimens, the cap is usually bell shaped. The whole mushroom is mostly white colored, although in older specimens, a light brown color can occur on certain parts. The stipe is cylindrical and hollow, with the bottom usually somewhat widened. The gills are very densely packed and are white colored. However, when older, they darken and form a dark liquid resembling ink. The spore print is black colored.

The lower parts of the stipe skin react with guaiacol to form a bluish green color, while the mushroom flesh forms a golden yellow color when in contact with iron sulphate.

The shaggy ink cap is a relatively common species that grows on meadows, especially if they have been fertilized with manure. It is also common in various types of human settlements, along roads, on manure, in parks, along rivers. It grows in many different types of habitat. It can be found mostly in Europe, North America and Australia.

This mushroom grows in spring, from April to June. It can also be found in fall, from September to December.

Very tasty and respected mushroom. It is however important that we mention that mostly younger specimens are consumed, which haven’t yet started to form the characteristic liquid resembling ink. The picked specimens also shouldn’t have any red or brown coloration (on the gills).

There are almost no other species with which the shaggy ink cap could be confused with. Eventually, one could confuse it with some other species from the Coprinus genus, however, in most other species, there is no occurrence of red colored gills in the early stages of decomposition of the fruit body.